WORK EXPERIENCE QUALITY STANDARD

Helping young people into work

It is well established that well planned work experience – volunteering to do work with the aim of gaining skills to prove/improve employability - significantly increases the chances that individuals will gain employment.

Employers too benefit from work experience with its opportunity to get to know new potential employees before taking the decision to employ.

Unfortunately, work experience has recently received bad publicity with the media portraying it as “unpaid forced labour”; some employers have stopped offering work experience and young people are finding it hard to gain worthwhile work experience.

The term “Work Experience” covers a diverse range of opportunities – there is no nationally accepted standard and usually no recognition or accreditation of the skills gained by those on a placement, or the commitment of the employees and employers who provide work experience.

The Fair Train Quality Standard for Work Experience addresses all of these issues by providing:

- Nationally accredited **Frameworks** for employers and training providers offering work experience, including within Traineeships, to ensure it is of a good quality and covers all the characteristics proven to enhance the chances of gaining employment.
- A **Quality Standard** for Work Experience for those who work to the Frameworks. The Standard distinguishes between Bronze, Silver and Gold Level.
- **Guidance and recognition** for employers/employees offering work experience.
- Opportunity to recruit new staff via work experience, reducing advertising costs.
- Opportunities for young people on work experience to **gain credit towards apprenticeships** in recognition of the skills they have gained.

The Fair Train Work Experience Quality Standard is funded by the **UKCES** and the frameworks have been developed with help from:

- The Department for Education
- the National Apprenticeship Service
- Skills Third Sector
- TUC
- National Careers Service
- LEPs
- Employers
- Training Providers
- Third Sector National Learning Alliance
- AeLP
- AoC
- OfSted (observer)
- The National Council for Work Experience
- Places for People
- ENABLE
- Rathbone
- MIND

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UKCES
UK COMMISSION FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS

FEATURES AND BENEFITS

Why adopt the Fair Train Work Experience Quality Standard?

Thank you for your interest in the Fair Train Quality Standard for Work Experience. Your interest in the Standards illustrates your desire to help young people become work ready.

Features and Benefits

The Quality Standard:

- Is an independent nationally recognised Quality benchmark that is recognised by key government departments, quality and fundraising organisations who have steered and supported its development
- Identifies you as a training provider and employer committed to providing high quality work experience to develop young people and your workforce for the future
- Provides independent evidence, to the public funding bodies and main contractors, of the quality of work experience you organise and offer
- Is applicable to all ages
- Helps you to avoid potentially damaging comparisons with those providing poor quality work experience and contributes to your position as an ethical employer who aims to help the local community. This provides reassurance for customers who use your organisation and potential customers
- Is supported by a Framework for you to use to evaluate your current arrangements
- Is a three level Standard: Bronze – Silver – Gold, that includes aspirational elements to help you improve the quality of the experience you offer
- Is a quality benchmark that can be referred in inspections
- Allows you, if you wish, to feedback to inform future development
- Is available at ‘no cost’ during the development phase and affordable once nationally rolled out

WORK EXPERIENCE QUALITY STANDARD

Employer Framework
Bronze Standard

This is the entry level for employers and covers the essential elements that should be put in place by any employer offering work experience.

ORGANISATION

- Regards work experience as a voluntary activity to be undertaken willingly by young people or adults seeking to improve their skills in the work place

PLANNING THE PLACEMENT

- Employer holds valid and adequate insurance including: Employers' Liability and Public Liability
- Appropriate HR procedures and policies are in place, including:
  - Health, Safety and Welfare; equal opportunities; normal working hours
  - Safeguarding (with vetting and barring checks only if applicable)
  - A work experience agreement including: hours/days of attendance, notification of absence, holidays/training days etc.
- Advise training providers of types of work experience you can provide

STARTING THE PLACEMENT

- An effective induction process is conducted on the first day. Covering at least:
  - Welcome discussion, guided tour and introductions to the team, placement supervisor and/or mentor
  - Explanation of the Health & Safety procedures, fire evacuation procedure and first aid arrangements and obligations of the learner
  - Expected dress code, use of PPE and any other workplace expectations & conduct
  - Role overview, normal working hours, breaks and holidays, contract of employment (if applicable)
  - Collection of emergency contact details, relevant medical and personal details and a demonstration of effective logging system of personal details in accordance with data protection should be completed
  - Advise the learner of the Work Experience Framework and the Fair Train Complaints email address complaints@fairtrain.org

THE PLACEMENT

- Provide the learner with work experience as described at the induction
- Provide appropriate supervision at all times
- Provide the learner with opportunities to raise issues, in confidence, if required
- Where appropriate the employer should support any "off the job" training required

CONDUCTING REVIEWS

- Provide regular opportunities for review of progress, including praise for achievement and constructive feedback on areas for improvement

END OF PLACEMENT

- Provide feedback on the learner's performance during the placement and a written statement of reference to be used by the learner

WORK EXPERIENCE QUALITY STANDARD

Employer Framework
Silver Standard

The Silver Standard is the second level of quality. By achieving the Silver Standard you are offering good employment practises ranging from strong communication lines, supportive supervision and evidence of learning and development.

The Silver Standard assumes full compliance with the Bronze Standard mentioned previously, PLUS the following:

ORGANISATION

- Employer considers which job areas are suitable and provides a list of possible opportunities for work experience learners

STARTING THE PLACEMENT

- Every learner has their own Individual Learning Plan (ILP) which sets out objectives for the work experience and allows them to track their progress throughout their placement

PLACEMENT

- Employer provides a mentor/buddy where each learner has their own designated supporter who should provide one-to-one support
- Learner is provided with opportunities to develop transferable skills within the placement e.g. health and safety training, food hygiene, development of numerical and language skills
- Employer provides guidance on writing CVs from an employer perspective

CONDUCTING REVIEWS

- The employer conducts **frequent** one-to-one reviews with the learner. These should be at least monthly for long-term placements
- Reviews focus on the achievement of objectives in the ILP and development of SMART objectives
- Opportunities for the learner to gain paid employment with the employer are explored

END OF PLACEMENT

- Employer provides feedback on the vacancies that exist within the organisation for employment and assists with the application process

WORK EXPERIENCE QUALITY STANDARD

Employer Framework
Gold Standard

The Gold Standard is our highest level of quality. By reaching Gold Standard you are demonstrating exemplar performance in employment practices, including; commitment to the progression of learners, supportive supervision and management throughout the work experience as well as dedication to the progress and future development of the learner's skills and developments.

The Gold Standard requires full compliance with the Bronze and Silver Standard requirements mentioned previously, PLUS the following:

PLANNING THE PLACEMENT

- There is an approved companywide policy for work experience, either as a separate document or within other HR policies
- Work experience is seen as a potential route to employment when vacancies arise

STARTING THE PLACEMENT

- Employers provide the learners with a clear potential pathway for development from work experience to permanent employee either with the current employer or externally, and help the learner to consider what this will entail
- A detailed and clear learning pathway is developed with the learner. This pathway includes: a description of the breakdown of departments, the job role(s) that the individual will gain an understanding of and demonstration of the skills that will be developed throughout the placement

PLACEMENT

- The employer provides support and guidance to the learner to help them gain paid employment, this should include but not be limited to: advice on suitable job roles, formal interview practice and feedback
- A formal record of skills gained is maintained throughout the placement
- Where appropriate the learner works to nationally recognised Standards and is assessed for competence

CONDUCTING REVIEWS

- Evaluation of the learner's development and progression is maintained within a documented appraisal system that includes monthly reviews and quarterly appraisals
- Progress towards nationally recognised Standards of competence is reviewed and documented
- Learner maintains a record of their achievements

END OF PLACEMENT

- Support is provided at the end of the placement to help the learner obtain paid employment within or outside the host organisation
- Employer works closely with the organisation arranging the placement to co-ordinate advice offered on the local jobs market
- Employer provides a formal reference, based on the original Individual Learning Plan which covers all skills and knowledge achieved during the placement

WORK EXPERIENCE QUALITY STANDARD

Training Provider Framework
Bronze Standard

The Fair Train Framework begins with Bronze level. This level is the entry level for Training Providers and covers the essential requirements required by any provider arranging work placements in order to achieve the Fair Train Quality Standard.

ORGANISATION

- Regards work experience as a voluntary activity to be undertaken willingly by young people or adults seeking to improve their skills and/or experience in the work place
- Aims to help learners progress from unpaid employment to paid employment as soon as is practicable
- Complies with all legislation relating to unpaid learners in the workplace

PLANNING THE PLACEMENT

- Carries out and documents a Health and Safety Check
- Conducts a Risk Assessment
- Provides learner with details of skill development opportunities available in the placement
- Interviews learner to establish past experience, areas of interest, employment aspirations, skills required and key contact details
- Matches placement to learner
- Provides a single named vocational contact and telephone number

STARTING THE PLACEMENT

- Tutor meets the learner with the employer within 5 working days of the start of placement
- Provides the employer with key details on each learner
- Agrees with the learner and the employer the skills to be gained and documents this on an Individual Learning Plan (ILP)
- Provides name, email and telephone number for employer to use in the event of concerns
- Advises the learner of the Work Experience Framework and the Fair Train Complaints email address: complaints@fairtrain.org

SUPPORT DURING THE PLACEMENT

- Acts promptly to address issues of concern to employer or learner
- Acts where the placement is not meeting the needs of the learner or the employer

CONDUCTING REVIEWS

- Visits the employer and documents a periodic review based on the ILP
- Contacts learner weekly by phone / email

CHANGING PLACEMENT

- Meets with learner and employer in person to review and document outcomes in line with the work experience Individual Learning Plan

END OF PLACEMENT

- Meets with learner and employer in person to review and document outcomes in line with the work experience Individual Learning Plan

WORK EXPERIENCE QUALITY STANDARD

Training Provider Framework
Silver Standard

The Silver Standard is our second level of quality. By reaching Silver Standard you are successfully delivering good training practises.

The Silver Standard of our quality framework requires full compliance with the Bronze Standard requirements mentioned previously PLUS the following:

ORGANISATION

- Has a documented work experience policy approved by Senior Management
- Maintains data on work placement and progression into employment
- Has a designated lead for work experience and IAG staff accredited to Matrix Standards
- Identifies an individual to provide pastoral support to work experience learners

PLANNING THE PLACEMENT

- Interviews employers to establish work experience and employment opportunities available
- Establishes travel arrangements
- Establishes financial support arrangements
- Provides learner with name, email and telephone number of independent pastoral support
- Provides the learner with a fact sheet on employer placement including key contact details

STARTING THE PLACEMENT

- Agrees the Individual Learning Plan with both learner and employer
- Updates Fact Sheet on employer as necessary
- Vocational Tutor introduces the learner to the employer on the first day and carries out an induction to the placement
- Checks progress at the end of the first week

SUPPORT DURING THE PLACEMENT

- Identifies and arranges additional training / skills development as required to enhance the probability of the learner gaining paid employment in their chosen sector
- Arranges with employer, or otherwise, coaching in CV writing, interview skills and practice, as appropriate for the job role sought
- Regularly provides learner with details of apprenticeships available within provider

CONDUCTING REVIEWS

- Visits placement, conducts and documents review frequently (fortnightly for long term placements) using the Individual Learning Plan
- Review includes employment aspirations and suitability of placement to learners needs
- Schedules and sets objectives for next visit

CHANGING PLACEMENT

- Evaluates the suitability of placement at each review and provides any learner whose placement is not working with a suitable alternative placement

END OF PLACEMENT

- Works with the employer to provide an informative Statement of Achievement to support learner in applying for employment
- Statement of Achievement covers vocational, transferable and behavioural factors

WORK EXPERIENCE QUALITY STANDARD

Training Provider Framework
Gold Standard

The Gold Standard is our top level of quality. By reaching Gold Standard you are demonstrating exemplar performance in training practices. The Gold Standard requires full compliance with the Bronze and Silver requirements, PLUS the following:

ORGANISATION

- Provider maintains a database of work experience placements in a range of sectors, at a range of levels, and the opportunities they provide
- Provider has a designated and suitably qualified pastoral lead for work experience
- Provider summaries local employment data to assist learners to secure employment
- Provider conducts satisfaction surveys among work experience learners and employers
- Provider has a Senior Manager responsible for regularly reviewing the progression rates from work experience to employment and the learner and employer satisfaction rates

PLANNING THE PLACEMENT

- Provides employer with access to accredited training for employer based mentoring and / or coaching skills.

STARTING THE PLACEMENT

- Has a documented induction process that ensures consistency across all placements
- Checks progress at end of first day and first week
- Pastoral lead visits learner and employer within first week

SUPPORT DURING THE PLACEMENT

- Works closely with the employer to match skill requirements of learner to opportunities within the organisation
- Frequently assists learner to identify and apply for employment vacancies within or outside the placement
- Where possible provides accreditation for any training undertaken
- Provides guidance to employer on training opportunities and accreditation available to coaches / mentors in the workplace

CONDUCTING REVIEWS

- Frequent reviews are conducted, which are a three way discussion with the learner and the employer
- Review provides learners with details of locally available and suitable employment opportunities, including apprenticeships within the training provider and with other apprentice delivery providers

CHANGING PLACEMENT

- Reviews suitability of placement at every review and provides learners whose placement is not working with a range of suitable alternatives taken from the work experience database
- Work experience policy provides a clear timescale for providing an alternative placement for learners

END OF PLACEMENT

- Remains in contact with learner and supports learner for 3 months or until paid employment has been found

WORK EXPERIENCE QUALITY STANDARD

Pricing 2014

Payments shown cover a period of **two years** from the date of registration.

During the development phase (August to 31st December 2013), accreditation will be free of charge for 12 months.

Employer

Number of equivalent full time paid employees	Gold	Silver	Bronze
0-11	£150	£50	£25
10-50	£200	£100	£50
50-250	£250	£150	£75
250+	£500	£250	£100

Training Provider

Annual turnover in the last year (£)	Gold	Silver	Bronze
0 - 500,000	£500	£250	£100
500,000 +	£2000	£1000	£250

Training providers who also wish to adopt the employer Quality Standard will be charged the training provider costs only.

Organisations who apply to increase their level during this period will pay the **difference** between the fee for their current level and the fee for the new level claimed.

Apprentice Referrals to Fair Train Training Providers

Age of Apprentice	Price Applicable
16 – 18 years old	£200
19+ years old	£100

Payments are due as soon as an apprentice is recruited and registered on the EFA data system.

ADOPTING THE QUALITY STANDARD

How to adopt the Quality Standard and its Frameworks

Email membership@fairtrain.org to adopt today.

We will provide you with a specific Engagement and Skills Coach who will work with you to support your work experience schemes.

STEP 1

Email Fair Train on membership@fairtrain.org putting **"Self-Assessment pack"** in the subject line.

Please define whether you want to adopt the employer frameworks, training provider frameworks or both and we'll send these forms across to you.

STEP 2

We will assign you with an Engagement and Skills Coach who will be able to provide guidance on how to complete the self-assessment form.

Return the completed forms via email or post to:
membership@fairtrain.org

Jessica Dodson
Fair Train
29 Warwick Road,
Coventry,
CV12ES

STEP 3

When we receive your completed self-assessment with a current and aspirational level: we will send out an email of confirmation and you can then use the Fair Train Work Experience Quality Standard logo in your marketing materials.

To ensure rigour in the Quality Standard, Fair Train operates a sample audit procedure for quality assurance. Once we have received your self-assessment we reserve the right to examine evidence to support the Level at which you have self-assessed your organisation