

# Not just making tea...

# Reinventing work experience



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**Julie Kenny CBE**

Chair and Chief Executive of Pyronix Ltd  
UKCES Commissioner  
Vitalise Businesswoman of the Year 2013

As well as running a small business, I am also Chair of the Board of Governors at Maltby Academy in South Yorkshire and board member of the Sheffield City Region Local Enterprise Partnership. From meeting and working with young people it seems to me that there are two main barriers to them achieving their potential: lack of confidence and lack of ambition. That's why I'm passionate about opening young people's eyes to the vast range of opportunities available to them and exposing them to role models who can demonstrate that anything is possible if you put your mind to it.

Of course, I'm not the only employer who feels this way. Many of us want to help, but we sometimes need a bit of encouragement or some support to get involved. As employers, there is one very important thing we can do and that's to offer exposure to the world of work. Not just the traditional week or two week placement during the summer term of tea-making, filing and making phone calls – that doesn't suit all employers and doesn't always work for young people. Rather, a broader range of contacts between employers and young people that can help open young people's eyes to jobs they have never thought of, inform career decisions and help them successfully move from education into work. This type of 'work inspiration' builds the resilience and behaviours they need to succeed, and instils the ambition some of them lack.

We know that it's becoming increasingly difficult for young people to combine work and learning, and we look at the reasons why in this guide. But employers can help, and shouldn't be put off by the common misconceptions about work experience. Firstly, there is very little red tape involved in offering work experience placements. Second, as I said above, work experience isn't – and shouldn't just be – a two week placement in the summer holidays. And finally, work experience isn't a burden or a "nice to have" for employers; as you'll see, there are many business benefits to be gained.

If you're tempted to get involved, I've included a list of guides and initiatives to help you offer great opportunities to young people. If you need more convincing there are a number of case studies at the end of this guide, from large corporates to small businesses who are working to give young people the experience they need – and enjoying it!

I hope you will feel inspired by what you see. There are many businesses and educational establishments not yet involved who could be, and lots of scope for those already doing something to do more, or to enhance their efforts by joining forces with others.

*Julie A. Kenny*

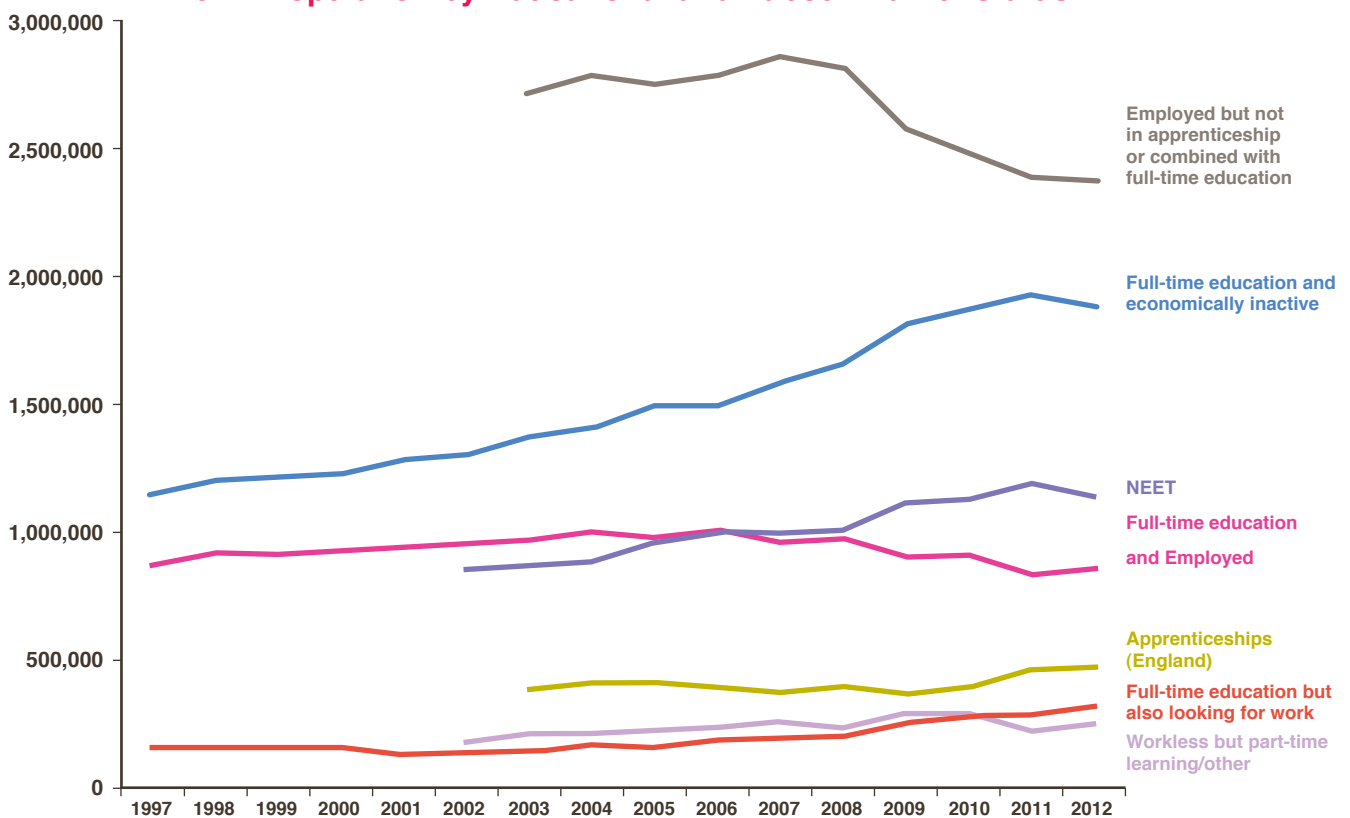
# Why is work experience so important?

29% of employers say that experience is critical when recruiting young people and a further 45% say it is significant. The majority of employers think young people are well prepared for work but where they don't, this is down to lack of experience. Lack of experience is also the number one reason that employers turn young job applicants away<sup>1</sup>. So, for employers, experience is clearly vital.

Work experience is also crucial for young people. Young people with 4 or more work experience-type activities under their belt are 5 times less likely to be not in education, employment or training<sup>2</sup>. This is true even for graduates – those with work experience get better degrees, higher wages and are less likely to be unemployed<sup>3</sup>.

The problem is the labour market for young people has been changing and this has led to a lack of high quality career pathways that offer a blend of work and learning. The chart below shows there has been a huge rise in full-time education that isn't combined with work, that there are fewer opportunities for work more generally and that, as a result, there has been a steady increase in the number of young people in full time education looking for work. Meanwhile, the numbers of those who 'earn and learn' has plateaued.

**16-24 Population by Educational and Labour Market Status**



<sup>1</sup> See UKCES 'Scaling the Youth Employment Challenge' and 'the Youth Employment Challenge' for more details and sources

<sup>2</sup> Education and Employers Taskforce - Work experience: Impact and delivery - Insights from the evidence (April 2012)

<sup>3</sup> BIS Research Paper No. 143 - Learning from Futuretrack: impact of work experiences on HE student outcomes

Work experience is also important because, put simply, it works. A recent Ofsted report<sup>4</sup> looked at the quality of careers guidance in schools and found room for improvement. It highlighted examples of good careers advice, many of which include activities with employers such as site visits, talks in schools and so on.

A report by the National Careers Council<sup>5</sup> also refers to the usefulness of work experience in helping young people gain relevant and trusted information about the world of work.

In a similar vein, a recent OECD report<sup>6</sup> says that we need to develop better links between the world of learning and the world of work, because:

*“Learning in the workplace allows young people to develop “hard” skills on modern equipment, and “soft” skills, such as teamwork, communication and negotiation, through real-world experience. Hands-on workplace training can also help to motivate disengaged youth to stay in or re-engage with the education system and makes the transition from education into the labour market smoother”.*

In response, the government recently released an ‘Inspiration vision’ on careers for young people<sup>7</sup>, stating that:

*“We need to provide more inspiration for young people, more real-life contact with the world of work so that when they come to make big decisions, they understand where different choices could take them in the future”.*

At the same time, the Department for Education has introduced important changes in post-16 education to coincide with the raising of the participation age to 17 in England. Work experience now forms an integral part of 16-19 study programmes and as such schools and colleges are expected to offer their students high quality and meaningful work experience as part of each study programme. The intention is for students to gain valuable experience of the work environment and develop their employability skills.

So there is a pressing need for more opportunities for inspiration and experience of work. Currently, however, high quality engagement between business and education is patchy with only 27% of employers offering work experience<sup>8</sup>.

On the positive side, there is potential to grow this number. When employers are asked why they don’t offer work experience, 37% of them say it’s because they have “no suitable roles”. A broader and more flexible understanding of work inspiration may help them realise that every business has the potential to inspire a young person, whatever their size or sector. Meanwhile, 20% of employers who don’t offer work experience put this down to a lack of approach from local schools, colleges or universities and 16% say it’s due to a lack of time and resources. So for this 36%, it seems they would offer work experience if asked or if some of the hassle of setting it up were taken care of<sup>9</sup>. Capitalising on this latent demand could lead to a significant increase in opportunities for inspiration and experience of work for young people.

**27%** of employers offered work experience in the past year

<sup>4</sup> Ofsted - Going in the right direction? Careers guidance in schools from September 2012

<sup>5</sup> National Careers Council - An Aspirational Nation: Creating a culture change in careers provision

<sup>6</sup> OECD - Skills Outlook 2013

<sup>7</sup> Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and Department for Education - Careers Inspiration Vision

<sup>8</sup> UKCES – “Scaling the Youth Employment Challenge”

<sup>9</sup> All figures in this paragraph from UKCES – “Scaling the Youth Employment Challenge”

# Mythbusting

## There is little red tape

Although just 6% of employers mention red tape as a reason why they don't offer work experience, even the perception of bureaucracy and health and safety regulations can put employers off.

The government is working to cut down any red tape and make the process of recruiting and developing young people more transparent. Here are some of the changes that have been introduced:

- Employers do not need to carry out an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services (formerly CRB) check on members of staff supervising young people aged 16-17. If an education provider requests such a check for this group, employers would be entitled to refuse.
- Employers' liability insurance now covers work experience students, provided insurers are

members of the Association of British Insurers. This can be confirmed with insurance companies.

- Simplified Health and Safety guidance makes it clear that if organisations already employ young people, risk assessments won't need to be repeated for work experience students. And employers with fewer than 5 employees won't need a written risk assessment.

For more information, visit the Health and Safety Executive's website and read the guidance on work experience here. [www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/index.htm)

*"Work placement arrangements are too often seen as over-bureaucratic and burdensome, putting off potential employers. We must tackle this."*  
**Judith Hackitt, Chair, Health and Safety Executive**

## It isn't just a two week placement

As National Grid put it, *"In the old days, work experience for school students often amounted to little more than spending a week in a company, making the tea, a spot of photocopying, quick tour of the plant, tick the box and done"*<sup>10</sup>. This definition of work experience is out of date – and it doesn't work for businesses or for young people.

For work experience to really work, it needs to be redefined. The Department for Education has helpfully described three patterns that work experience for 16-19 study programmes is expected to follow<sup>11</sup>.

- Experiential work experience is *"one or two short periods of work experience or other work-related learning to test out vocational ideas connected to future study or employment options, such as study visits, projects and engagement with local enterprise"*.
- The vocational model is *"focused on a particular vocational area to contribute directly to a study programme"*.

- Finally, the extended model focuses on *"developing employability skills, with maths and English covering the majority of the study programme time"* and will apply to students on a traineeship, who need additional support to prepare them for apprenticeships or a Supported Internship.

A range of *"enterprise-related activities and entrepreneurial skills"* can complement these placements to further enhance young people's employability prospects.

**So rather than the old-style model of work experience, a more comprehensive package of 'work inspiration' includes providing good quality information, mock interviews, talks in schools, site visits, challenges, competitions and project work, mentoring, and virtual activities alongside experiential, vocational or extended full-time placements.**

<sup>10</sup> National Grid website - [www.nationalgridconnecting.com/work-inspiration/](http://www.nationalgridconnecting.com/work-inspiration/)

<sup>11</sup> Department for Education - Post-16 work experience as a part of 16 to 19 study programmes

Research<sup>12</sup> shows half of young people aged 14 and above would like more work inspiration-type opportunities of the sort set out below:

- **Good quality information** is invaluable. Employers can work with schools and colleges to make sure young people have relevant, up to date and good quality information to help them navigate through their education and career.
- Setting up **mock interviews** doesn't demand much time or resource from employers but can mean the difference between young people sailing or struggling through their first interviews.
- **Talks in schools or site visits** can bring industries and sectors to life for young people. They also help to dispel long-standing myths about specific jobs – for example, that “construction is just dirty work and manual labour” or “nursing is only for girls”. Plus, sending employees out to talk in a school or supervise a visit gives them valuable skills and experience as well.
- **Challenges, competitions and project work** are all fun and interesting ways to give young people a flavour of the world of work. These kinds of activities also benefit employers, as young people can bring a fresh perspective and new ideas to business challenges.
- **Mentoring** is the activity that young people are least likely to have taken part in, but it's also one of the best ways of building their confidence and employability skills. At the same time, it can help employers encourage the creation of a talent pipeline into their businesses as well as developing and motivating their existing staff.
- **Virtual activities** shouldn't replace face-to-face work experience but can complement it. This is especially the case for providing good quality information, setting up business challenges, competitions and project work, and mentoring, as all of these could be done online.

### Employer engagement activities that young people have undertaken and want more of (% of young people)



<sup>12</sup> Edge Foundation - EDGE Annual Programme of Stakeholder Research: Business in Schools

## There are business benefits

Over half (53%) of all employers who offer work experience say it is because “it provides the experience young people need”. These employers recognise the intrinsic value of work experience, which is that it helps young people eventually get into work<sup>13</sup>.

But they also identify business benefits:

### Brand loyalty and profile

The ethos of company brands, the way they conduct their business and in particular their recruitment practices are more important than ever. Giving back to local communities and to a higher cause in the form of offering work experience is likely to lead to increased brand loyalty and profile, and in turn to greater profits.

### Market insights and customer base

Young people often bring fresh ideas and approaches which open up new and emerging customer groups and markets. A younger perspective is valuable where markets are rapidly changing or rely on a youthful customer base.

### Staff development and engagement

Staff can really benefit from managing young people on work experience placements. A study by Corporate Citizenship found that staff who participated in partnerships with schools and colleges used this engagement to develop a wide range of skills, including communication, coaching and counselling, influencing and negotiation<sup>16</sup>. Supervising and coaching young people on work experience also offers an excellent opportunity to develop management capabilities, especially for those who may not usually have these responsibilities or who are just starting out as managers.

*“We were all given opportunities as young people, and as business people we are in a great position to keep this going. It’s often difficult for SMEs to find the time to invest fully in young people, but at Albatross we do our best to offer really high quality work experience. It’s worth it both for us and for the young people we work with.”*

**Sean Taggart, Albatross Group**

*“Sustainability is a large part of many client bids now. Having very strong credentials is important, it might not win you the deal but often you can’t compete without a good sustainability story... Work inspiration is a key element of Capgemini’s national approach [to sustainability].”*

**Michelle Perkins, Capgemini**<sup>14</sup>

*“From our perspective we gain insights into this important age group around their views and experiences of our programmes and their aspirations for future content, which is essential for us to understand as they are our future audiences.”*

**ITV [source: ITV website]**<sup>15</sup>

*“Our young partners bring so many benefits to the business. They help us to adapt quickly to the latest trends and give us insights into new markets.”*

**Charlie Mayfield, John Lewis**

*“We used this [mentoring scheme that offers development opportunities for older workers and more support and guidance for younger workers] to sell our campaign to bring in young people to managers.”*

**Emma Wordsworth, Veolia**<sup>17</sup>

<sup>13</sup> UKCES – “Scaling the Youth Employment Challenge”

<sup>14</sup> City and Guilds - Making work experience inspiring for young people

<sup>15</sup> ITV website - <http://responsibility.itvplc.com/community-and-giving/inspiring-young-talent.aspx>

<sup>16</sup> Corporate Citizenship (2010). Volunteering – The Business Case. The benefits of corporate volunteering programmes in education. City of London: London

<sup>17</sup> CIPD - The business case for employer investment in young people



## Workforce diversity

Every business recognises the value of a diverse workforce and a broad talent pool. Young people are a huge part of this.

## Talent planning

“Growing your own” is a major way for employers to futureproof their business and in this context work experience isn’t just a gateway into a career for young people: it’s a gateway for employers into securing talented and loyal employees. Businesses have a great opportunity to shape their workforce according to organisational need, and train them up to plug specific skills and experience gaps.

## Derisking recruitment

Offering young people work experience placements can serve as an informal “try before you buy” period both for businesses and for young people. This means that any decision to commit to a permanent position will be an informed one on both sides. Even if the placement doesn’t lead to a job, the experience of work they will have gained means the community or sector will benefit from an increased pool of work-ready recruits.

*“We need to think about bringing 16- and 18-year-olds into our organisation. It’s a talent issue. We need to get the right people and we don’t want to miss out on appealing to a broader section of the community.”*

**Jo Ward, Nestle** <sup>18</sup>

*“Only 17% of hospitality businesses offer work experience. We miss out on talent by not giving opportunities to young people.”*

**Iqbal Wahhab, Roast Restaurant**

*“You need to look at your organisation and identify skills gaps and then think about how young people can help you fill those.”*

**Rob Seacombe, Experian** <sup>19</sup>

*“I own a small construction business – traditionally SMEs and the construction sector are the worst at helping young people into work. But nearly half of my workforce is under the age of 30 and some of these have come through work experience placements. They were so talented, enthusiastic and keen to get going that we couldn’t not keep them on.”*

**Scott Johnson, Chas Smith Group**

# 20%

of employers who offer work experience say it helps them with recruitment

<sup>18</sup> CIPD - The business case for employer investment in young people

<sup>19</sup> CIPD - Employers are from Mars, young people are from Venus

# Tempted to get involved?

## There is guidance on structuring work experience placements

### The Department for Education

The Department for Education's webpage on work experience contains some useful advice and guidance on work experience for both business and education, including what meaningful work experience looks like and the different types that will be expected to take place as part of 16-19 study programmes.

[www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/qualifications/b00223495/post-16-work-exp-enterprise-educ](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/qualifications/b00223495/post-16-work-exp-enterprise-educ)

### The Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development have developed a practical guide for employers on how to set up and run a high quality and successful work experience programme.

It includes advice on: the benefits of work experience, good recruitment and selection practices which attract young people from a variety of backgrounds, and introducing, supporting and providing feedback to a young person during their placement.

[www.cipd.co.uk/publicpolicy/policy-reports/work-experience-top-tips.aspx](http://www.cipd.co.uk/publicpolicy/policy-reports/work-experience-top-tips.aspx)

### Business in the Community

Business in the Community offers a toolkit to help employers design and deliver work inspiration programmes. This includes one and five day templates, examples of innovative projects for young people to carry out and case studies.

[www.bitc.org.uk/programmes/workinspiration/getting-started-guide-employers](http://www.bitc.org.uk/programmes/workinspiration/getting-started-guide-employers)

## There is support for accessing young people

Contacting local schools or colleges should be the first port of call for employers who are interested in offering work experience to young people (and vice versa for schools or colleges hoping to source placements for their students).

If this isn't practical – for example, for employers in rural areas, or small businesses with little time and resource – there are a number of organisations who connect employers and young people:

### MyKindaCrowd

MyKindaCrowd is a social enterprise that helps to connect young people with the world of work by setting them real life business challenges. It works as follows: employers post real life challenges; teachers and lecturers use these challenges within studies; young people respond with ideas. The best are rewarded with work experience, an internship or a job.

For more details or to get in touch: call **0844 412 7497** or email [team@mykindacrowd.com](mailto:team@mykindacrowd.com)

### Prince's Trust

The Prince's Trust is a youth charity that gives practical and financial support to disadvantaged young people, developing key workplace skills such as confidence and motivation. The charity works with 13 to 30-year-olds who have struggled at school, have been in care, are long-term unemployed or have been in trouble with the law.

For more details or to get in touch: call **0800 842 842** or email [info@princes-trust.org.uk](mailto:info@princes-trust.org.uk)

### STEMNET

STEMNET (the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Network) operates across the UK to create links between employers and educators that tackle STEM skills shortages and other issues. By enthusing and inspiring young people about STEM, employers help to widen the understanding and awareness of STEM careers with their next generation of employees.

For more details or to get in touch: call **0203 206 0450** or visit [www.stemnet.org.uk/contact/](http://www.stemnet.org.uk/contact/) for regional email addresses

## There are networks and initiatives that link business and education

Partnerships between businesses and education are the best way for both parties to create and offer work experience placements. For employers, schools, colleges and universities can act as a long-term source of talent; for education, engaging with businesses can take away some of the strain of finding placements for students.

There are a number of existing networks and initiatives that can bring business and education together in long-term, sustainable partnerships:

### **Business Class**

Business Class operates across the UK and aims to prevent young people becoming NEET through work experience and schools' engagement with business.

The programme's unique cluster approach - grouping together schools and businesses to pool resources and share ideas rather than relying purely on individual partnerships - helps to generate greater impact for participating schools and their students. In each partnership, schools and businesses collaborate on work placements and enhancement activities which challenge traditional perceptions of the work experience model - from 'career speed networking' to Question Time panels, employability days and Dragons' Den-style contests.

There are currently over 230 Business Class partnerships grouped in 29 clusters, supported by over 145 companies. UKCES funding will create a further 27 clusters of business partnerships, supporting 135 more schools over the next 2.5 years.

For more details or to get in touch: call **020 7566 8650** or email **info@bitc.org.uk**

### **Inspiring the Future**

Inspiring the Future is a free service across England which helps employers to engage with state secondary schools and colleges by sending volunteers to talk about their jobs and sectors.

Volunteering can take place near home or work. Individuals use a drop-down menu to select which Local Authority areas they would like to visit schools in. Schools and colleges in those areas then contact volunteers directly by email.

Volunteers usually give career insight talks, which take between 20 minutes and 1 hour including a Q&A session. Schools and FE colleges may also host careers fairs which normally involve professionals from different sectors, with students moving round in a marketplace set up. Employers can simply take roll banners and marketing materials, but equally they are free to use their creativity to engage with pupils via competitions, quizzes and 'have a go' activities.

For more details or to get in touch: call **0203 206 0510** or email **enquiries@inspiringthefuture.org**

### **work-wise**

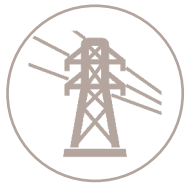
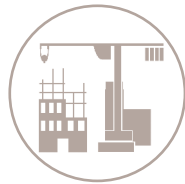
Based in South Yorkshire, work-wise is an employer led initiative. It provides young people with a broad range of inspirational and industry focused learning and development experiences to help them develop the personal attributes and skills they need for the world of work. It is supported by local employers including Newburgh Engineering, AESSEAL and the MTL Group.

Work-wise has recently expanded into summer camps, which include a two day employability skills induction programme and an eight day real work placement in an engineering or manufacturing environment.

For more details or to get in touch: email **Janice@work-wise.co.uk**

# Still need convincing?

What follows are case studies from employers of all shapes and sizes, who inspire young people and give them experience of the world of work. The majority of these are corporate or large employers, who often have more time and resource to put these kinds of opportunities together. But SME employers are also featured, and they are increasingly getting involved in tackling youth unemployment. The message here is that every business can do something, no matter how small, to inspire young people.



# Sky

## An inspirational talent pipeline



**Size:** 20,000+ **Sector:** Media

Sky devotes significant time and resources to inspiring young people.

*“Tackling youth unemployment is important to us, we recognise that the media industry can be difficult to start out in – we want to open up a variety of opportunities and help young people across all the communities in which we work. Of course, there are benefits for us too – one of which is staff engagement. Staff at all levels get involved in these activities [to inspire young people] or act as mentors and it’s great development for them.”*

**Martha Jennings, Senior Future Talent Consultant**

As part of this, Sky Academy - the company's flagship programme for helping young people reach their potential - aims to inspire young people and give them the information and skills necessary to succeed in life and work. Highlights include Sky Sports Living for Sport, Sky Academy Skills Studio and Sky Academy Starting Out. Sky Sports Living for Sport is a free-to-access schools initiative that uses sports skills and the star power of athlete mentors to improve the confidence and life skills of young people; Sky Academy Skills Studio provides young people with the opportunity to use state of the art technology to create news reports on subjects that they are studying at school.

Sky Academy Starting Out opens up Sky to young people, offering work experience and employment opportunities to help raise their aspirations and prepare them for the world of work. To match the needs of young people at different stages in their journey from education to employment, Sky offers a range of work experience, placement, apprenticeship and graduate programmes.

Sky creates hundreds of work experience opportunities every year. All young people who apply and are successful attend a Monday morning induction, where they are given a high level overview of the organisation and a tour of the site. They also get a notebook with ‘top tips’ on how to make the most of their opportunity both during and after it. For those young people who are unsuccessful, Sky responds to their emails and offers general career advice. Martha sees work experience as a real area of growth and hopes to formalise and expand it over the next few months. She explains that:

*“Our work experience programmes are the backbone of all the rest of our initiatives, including the apprenticeships and graduate programmes. We want to build a talent pipeline and invest in people from a young age.”*

### Nestlé A win win



**Size:** 8,000    **Sector:** Food and drink

Nestlé UK and Ireland launched the Nestlé Academy in 2011. Given the skills shortages that the industry is facing, the company recognised the need to engage and attract young people into the Food and Drink manufacturing sector generally, and into Nestlé specifically.

As part of the Academy and a new Youth Employment Initiative, Nestlé has committed to offer paid work experience to 300 young people over the next three years. These will be opportunities to gain experience within a factory, an office or field sales teams and will provide not only on-the-job experience, but will also help develop skills such as presentation or negotiation abilities. The aim is to give young people the skills and confidence they need to find employment, whilst also engaging young people with the food and drink sector and the routes and career options available within the industry.

Nestlé is also working in partnership with MyKindaCrowd to reach over 12,000 young people in the UK through online challenges and 4,000 young people through employability skills workshops in 40 schools and colleges close to Nestlé UK sites. This programme covers areas such as Yorkshire & Humber, Derbyshire, Newcastle, Sussex, Cumbria and Scotland and will be specifically targeting disadvantaged communities with higher than average free school meals eligibility. The programme will also promote careers within the food industry and build positive and sustainable relationships with students and teachers, whilst providing Nestlé UK employees with training and mentoring opportunities through a dedicated volunteering programme.

*“The ultimate aim of this initiative is to raise aspirations amongst young people within our local communities, through equipping them with employability skills and strengthening our talent pool into the future.”*

**Jo Ward, Head of Talent and Resourcing**

## National Grid

### Investing in the next generation of engineers



**Size:** 9,800 (in the UK)    **Sector:** Energy

National Grid thinks long term, and an important part of that is ensuring that young people have the necessary interests, ambitions and skills to become the next generation of engineers.

*“The future of National Grid, and perhaps the whole UK economy, depends on young people becoming interested in STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and maths) and staying interested in them.”*

**Tony Moloney, UK Manager of Education and Skills**

National Grid recognises that a major challenge for the sector, and for the company, is the negative perception of engineering amongst young people and a lack of interest in STEM subjects. To tackle this, the company encourages Year 10 students to develop a passion for STEM subjects during a free-to-access week long residential trip that runs throughout the year. Students learn about the reality of energy and careers in engineering and participate in hands on work based activities. This is designed to be a fun and informative experience that challenges preconceptions by moving beyond the constraints of the classroom environment.

Last year National Grid started piloting GetSkilled – an initiative designed to support NEET (not in education, employment or training) 16-21 year olds. It includes a tailored, employment-related module and inspirational work placements to develop the skills and aspirations of young people who find it hard to progress, helping them move into employment or further training.

This year the company is working on Careers Lab, a pilot project working towards improving the provision of careers advice to 13-18 year olds. The aim is to encourage businesses to participate in providing consistent support to schools in their efforts to guide students into rewarding careers.

National Grid also works in the wider field of youth engagement as a pioneer partner in the National Trust’s Step Up and Serve Campaign, which aims to double the number of young people involved in social action.

## Barclays

### Helping one million young people with LifeSkills



**Size:** 53,000    **Sector:** Finance

Barclays’ approach to helping young people get ready for work stems from their belief that tackling youth unemployment is one of the most profound issues affecting our society today. They recognise that businesses must play an active role in helping to get our next generation of young people ready for work, as this issue is too great for the Government, teachers or parents to tackle alone.

The LifeSkills programme was created specifically to help one million young people aged 11-19 to make the transition from education to work, by helping them attain vital work, people and money skills and by linking up schools and local businesses to offer valuable work experience. Young people can complete the interactive modules online, and teachers can use the resources in schools.

*“We recognised this issue was affecting many of our customers and colleagues who were rightly worried about how their sons and daughters would get into work”.*

**Kirstie Mackey, Head of LifeSkills**

Most recently Barclays has committed to an additional 1,200 work placements by 2015 (equivalent to two per cent of the company’s workforce) as part of the Government’s ‘Movement to Work’ programme, which will be aligned with their existing apprenticeship programme.

### Siemens Girls into Engineering



**Size:** 14,000    **Sector:** Engineering

Learning has always been part of Siemens' culture, and the company has an education programme that starts at primary school and continues through to graduate level.

Siemens joined forces with Lincoln College in 2003 to run a project called 'Girls into Engineering'. The scheme, based at Siemens' Lincoln business, was set up to demonstrate to girls the rewards of a career in manufacturing engineering and ultimately to increase the number of females applying for an apprenticeship at Siemens.

Every year since the project began, girls from schools across Lincolnshire have taken part in a two day challenge which sees the 14 year olds designing and making a desk

tidy by using basic materials and traditional hand skills. The project is carried out either at Siemens in Lincoln or at Lincoln College. A year later, the girls come back to Siemens for a one day challenge. During the first project, 50 per cent of the girls returned to take part and, after that were subsequently offered work experience.

In addition to its focus on bringing female apprentices into the company, Siemens also has a school engagement programme via an education portal which is open to parents, teachers, children and staff ([www.siemens.co.uk/education](http://www.siemens.co.uk/education)). It offers resources for STEM subjects at Key Stage 4 and is free of charge. Siemens also has STEM Ambassadors who engage with local schools.

### Pret a Manger Bringing back the Saturday job



**Size:** c.6,000    **Sector:** Hospitality

Working part-time whilst still a student is a great way for young people to be inspired about the world of work early on, as well as gain invaluable work experience. But when visiting school careers fairs across the country Kate Nicholls, School Leaver Programme Manager at Pret a Manger was overwhelmed by feedback on how difficult it has become for 16-18 year olds to find this kind of part-time work.

The company has responded by working closely with its partner schools to spearhead a huge change. Together, they have launched a 'Bring back the Saturday job' campaign, to engage young people who are keen for an opportunity to work part-time after school or during the weekend. New recruits will work as Team Members and have the same roles and responsibilities as the rest of their colleagues – and the same salary. Plus, the recruitment process has been tailored for students; for example, interviews will take place after school or during weekends, and adapted guidelines, forms and letters have been specifically produced for young people.

Roles are permanent with the chance to increase hours during school holidays. Kate hopes that some of the young Saturday jobbers eventually join the company full-time – a good route in would be to apply for Pret's School Leaver Programme.

The Saturday job scheme is advertised on Pret's website, and posters have been designed and sent to the company's partner schools. The scheme will pilot in London and then roll out nationally.

*"It is our responsibility as employers to provide young people with real life employability experience. This kind of work experience builds confidence, allows for independence and helps to grow these young people".*

**Kate Nicholls, School Leaver Programme Manager**



### Boots UK

#### The world of work behind the scenes



**Size:** over 7,300 in the Nottingham support office

Boots UK stores provided almost 3,500 work experience placements during 2012/13. For the past four years Boots UK has also delivered a work inspiration programme at their Nottingham support office, where they invite 100 young people each year for a two week placement to experience the world of work 'behind the scenes' and join teams as diverse as IT, Finance, Commercial and HR.

Work experience here isn't about tea runs or photocopying – the young people get involved in real projects. The kinds of activities they do varies from developing and presenting ideas for a new suncream, to getting involved in the science behind creating new products and coming up with the design and packaging for these products, to strategising a campaign for Boots UK's exclusive makeup brand, SEVENTEEN. The young people also have the chance to meet with senior executives who host question and answer sessions with them as well as sharing their career stories.

There are progression opportunities for young people on work experience at Boots UK: a number of those who were on a placement subsequently joined the apprenticeship scheme in Nottingham and are now working towards a Level 4 in Business Administration, gaining in-store work experience and working in all kinds of roles across different teams. Other students who were formerly on placements have either started roles at Boots UK or successfully joined graduate programmes. In this way, the business is investing in young people at the same time as they are investing in the future of their workforce.

**Sector:** Pharmaceutical

Boots UK also wants to help those young people who find it hard to get into the labour market because of external barriers – this is why they have partnered up with Business in the Community's RISE programme, which helps young care leavers in Nottingham access routes into sustainable employment. The business makes sure RISE participants are able to take part in a tailored version of the work inspiration programme, which is modified to suit different learning styles.

*"We have a long history of providing opportunities to young people: in 1880 Boots offered scholarships to employees that wanted to study pharmacy, and in 1913 Jesse Boot approached the Nottingham Education Committee with a proposal for providing a course of evening school education for the benefit of the young people employed at Boots. We are really passionate about supporting young people as they are the future of our business and at the heart of the communities we serve".*

**Stephanie Mawer, Learning & Development Manager**

### Marks and Spencer Make Your Mark



**Size:** 70,000    **Sector:** Retail

Marks and Spencer (M&S) have always been committed to tackling youth unemployment. Most recently, and in collaboration with The Prince's Trust, the company has set aside 1,400 work experience placements for 16-25 year olds as part of its new programme. Make Your Mark is a four-week on-the-job training and mentoring scheme that gives unemployed young people the skills, experience and confidence they need to find a job.

M&S and The Prince's Trust provide an induction at the beginning of the placement. During the four weeks of training in-store, young people also take part in specially tailored employability training modules. These consist of CV writing, interview techniques, communication and team working skills, how to manage social media profiles and advice on networking. The aim is to build young people's confidence and help them in future job searches.

Each young person is paired with a workplace buddy and coach who supports and champions them through the placement, and provides regular feedback and guidance.

*"Our employees love working alongside these young people, welcoming them into the M&S family; they show real pride and passion in the company as a result. The programme helps with our recruitment and with the development of our employees as they take on the buddy and coach roles".*

**Sophie Brooks, Employee Engagement Manager**

At the end of the 4 week programme, if the young person performs well and receives a satisfactory evaluation from their manager and buddy, they may go straight into a vacancy if and when one becomes available. If the young person requires additional support prior to employment, or if a job vacancy isn't available at their store, they will be offered up to six months post-programme support from the Prince's Trust to find an alternative outcome.

*"Young people are the workforce of the future. If we don't act now to inspire young people into a career, we will experience a talent deficit in the future. Retail is a brilliant career opportunity for young people because the working patterns can be flexible and the job roles are so varied".*

### Rolls Royce Talks in schools from apprentices



**Size:** c.22,000 in the UK    **Sector:** Automotive

As part of the company's outreach work, Rolls Royce apprentices go into schools. The involvement of the apprentices is regarded as part of their development.

*"Often the apprentices are of a similar age to the students that they are talking to, so communication will be on a similar level. They can talk about their experiences and provide a real insight into how they got on and what students can expect."*

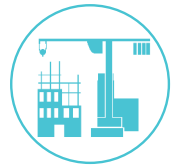
**Graham Schumacher, Head of Development Services**

Additionally, a series of activities devised by staff at Rolls Royce, are given out to schools with the aim of encouraging pupils to view science and engineering in a more positive way. Having been sent on outward bound courses to develop their team working skills, apprentices are then expected to run similar courses with the students. A science and engineering activity day based around team working is also held in schools.

*"We are demonstrating to young people that science is an exciting career and that it's not just about making bits and pieces. We want to show them that it's about problem solving and people focussed activity too."*

## Lovell Partnerships Ltd

### Designing a residential estate



**Size:** 1,600    **Sector:** Maintenance

Lovell hosted 25 students from local schools for a week of work experience, during which the students developed a project to design a housing estate.

*“ During this important time, I wanted to give them a real insight into the world of work and I also wanted to paint the construction industry in a more positive light so that young people see it as a realistic career option.”*

**Bruce Boughton, People Development Manager**

Bruce developed a curriculum-based project which linked into the recent building of a residential estate in Tamworth by Lovell. Working in teams, the students began with a blank site map and designed a residential estate, which included a road layout. Throughout the week volunteers from Lovell, who ranged from an apprentice to the managing director, gave presentations to the students, each providing a different perspective on the construction industry.

*“ One of the purposes of having guest speakers – apart from demonstrating their expertise – is to illustrate that construction is not just made up of builders and carpenters, which is often the perception of young people.”*

At the end of the week guests from local schools and The Staffordshire Business Partnership watched the students present their projects and heard about what they had got out of their time at Lovell. The feedback from students was very positive and Bruce believes that two of the students could be potential recruits into the company’s management programme. Since the work placement, he has been talking to them to see how best Lovell might support them in their learning and development in the future.

Some construction companies have a fear of having students on work experience because it is hard to ensure whether they are properly supervised. Companies can also dislike the time-consuming alternative of having students trailing members of staff. Bruce sees his model of having students ‘off-site’ as far more productive, for both the company and the students.

## Seddon Construction

### Construction as a context for learning



**Size:** 770    **Sector:** Construction

*“ School or college alone will not prepare young people for work – they need industry experience as well, and that is where we come in.”*

**Roy Cavanagh MBE, Training and Education Executive**

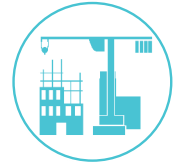
One aspect of the company’s commitment in this space is its work experience programme, coordinated by Training and Development Manager Tony Costello. Seddon offers weekly or fortnightly work placements to students from around 20 schools in the Salford and Bolton areas. As part of the induction programme, all students are made aware of health and safety on-site and issued with relevant Personal Protective Equipment. The students explore the range of career options within the construction industry by spending time in key areas such as bricklaying, joinery, plumbing and decorating. With apprentices often on-hand, students have the opportunity to ask questions about their experiences of working in construction.

Mentors from Seddon talk to students during assemblies, careers fairs, school lessons and through sector based work academies. Talks are always specific to the needs of individual young people, and always use construction as a context for broader learning.

*“ The impact on the company of training apprentices and offering students work experience has been positive and I would encourage other companies to do the same. Our employees have the philosophy of the company in them, and we train our apprentices to our exacting standards – and they have certainly contributed to the success of Seddon Construction.”*

### Land Securities

#### Working with education to inspire young people



**Size:** 600    **Sector:** Property

*“ We recognise the mutual value of positive relationships with the people and organisations close to our developments and we are committed to investing in communities. As such, we work with a range of schools, colleges and universities. The aim is to build the capacity of young people, raise the profile of the property and construction industry and do our bit to ensure that young people are job ready”.*

**Debbie Akehurst, Head of Corporate Responsibility, London Portfolio**

Each of the property company's 22 retail centres has at least one partnership with a local school, college or university based on local need. Land Securities offers students site visits to their developments, and staff volunteers provide career guidance, mock interviews and work experience placements. Work experience placements are also brokered by Land Securities with the company's extensive supply chain and partners in the construction, facilities management, hospitality and retail sectors.

Land Securities inspires young people and gives them experience of the world of work in many different ways. The company's Head Office has worked with Westminster

Education Business Partnership to offer work experience placements, and hosted 20 placements for students from schools, colleges and universities last year.

In London, the company designed a bespoke 'Introduction to Property Development' project which was piloted with Pimlico Academy – a group of A-level students worked with a team from Land Securities and partners over six workshops culminating in a Dragons' Den style presentation by the students. In Sunderland, staff from the company's shopping centre The Bridges are volunteering their support to a local school, helping pupils with work experience, CV-writing skills and mock interviews. The White Rose Centre in Leeds has a centre known as The Point, the result of a partnership between Leeds City College, Job Centre Plus, the National Careers Service and Land Securities. The Point focuses on retail, hospitality and customer care, and also provides a range of services, from confidence boosting advice and practical help with job searches to information on vacancies and training.

Land Securities also runs bespoke 'Get into Construction' courses with the Prince's Trust, offering young people construction training, work experience and qualifications, to help them move into sustainable jobs.

### Signature Leather

#### A real live business challenge



**Size:** 1    **Sector:** Retail

Signature Leather Limited was founded in 2005 by former jockey Tim Penn. In 2010 Tim completed a project with fashion and design students at Yale College who were tasked to design a pair of gloves that would be manufactured and promoted by Signature Leather. The project was a success, the students appreciated the opportunity to work with a 'real live' organisation and Tim benefitted from the fresh and imaginative ideas of the students.

Following this positive experience, in 2013 Tim completed a similar project with a younger age group at a local high school, to enhance the learning of the pupils. Initially, Tim gave the students a presentation about the traditional Victorian methods used to make the unique hand made gloves via a video clip of

the manufacturing process and also provided the pupils with a design brief. The pupils then went on to attend an after school textiles club in order to work on their designs and develop ideas to match the brief. Signature Leather manufactured a pair of gloves to each pupil's individual design and presented the gloves back to them at a special event at the school.

*“ This is of benefit to both the pupils and the company. They get the experience of working with a real live company whilst we get the opportunity to tap into the creative minds of young people”.*

**Tim Penn, Founder**

## DHL UK Foundation Get Into Logistics



**Size:** 6    **Sector:** Voluntary (Part of DHL)

The DHL UK Foundation run a series of programmes to engage and support young people, invest in local communities, and engage DHL staff.

A key programme, 'Get into Logistics', is run in partnership with The Prince's Trust. Aimed at 16-25 year olds, it's run at several of DHL's individual sites. The Prince's Trust advertise Get into Logistics locally to the participating sites and hold an initial taster day for young people. After an interview, the site take on 10-12 young people, who participate in the 2-4 week programme to help them gain valuable vocational skills, qualifications and work experience alongside practical help such as CV writing and mock interviews. At the end of the programme all students are offered an interview. Many have successfully been offered further work opportunities and been able to work towards completing their Warehousing and Logistics SVQ Level 2.

*"Get Into Logistics gives young people a feel for the working environment in the logistics sector. It is amazing to hear the difference that the programme makes to their lives. Not only do the young people benefit from the experience but the staff enjoy taking part and gain experience in mentoring and opportunities to teach that build their confidence".*

**Gina King, Programme Co-ordinator**

*"This is such a worthwhile project, and Prince's Trust are great to work with and have supported us the whole way through. I strongly recommend businesses get involved - once you get started, it's easy to build on".*

The Prince's Trust worked with DHL UK Foundation to help ensure this programme is suited to the DHL sites and included health and safety and manual handling aspects as well as employability skills. Get into Logistics started in 2007 and has successfully run 24 programmes up to March 2013 with a total of 261 young people completing these. The most recent ones last year resulted in all 25 young people going onto employment. A 100% success rate!

### Maltby Academy Business Ambassador Programme



**Size:** 150    **Sector:** Education

Maltby Academy is an 11-19 mixed secondary school serving Maltby and surrounding area.

*“The problem we faced four years ago was that our Year 10 and 11 students were completing the usual two weeks of work experience – but this wasn’t getting them ready for work, nor did it offer opportunities tailored to their interests.”*

So Maltby launched a bespoke Business Ambassador Programme focused around several key vocational areas – health and social care, child care, ICT, sport and construction. A role was created at the school to broker links and build relationships with local businesses and the Chamber of Commerce. Maltby recognised the importance of getting employers involved and making sure the programme was relevant and meaningful to both parties whilst flexible in its delivery.

The programme provides students with a range of opportunities to enhance their specialised learning, put it into context and engage in the world of work. They participate in mock interviews, Information, Advice and Guidance evenings, work inspiration events and more. The programme gives students the chance to talk to real employers and benefit from their advice, to see what actually happens in the world of work and to be inspired through tailored work experience.

*“It is important that we take account of students’ interests and career goals, and at the same time help make them employable and work ready. The students have commented that engaging with the world of work through their Key Stage 4 learning provides them with the confidence to explore their career options and aspirations and they feel well equipped to move on and into employment”.*

**Dave Sutton, Principal**

### Steve Brettle Fabrications Ltd From work experience to an apprenticeship



**Size:** 4    **Sector:** Engineering

Student Jack Bolton completed a work placement at Steve Brettle Fabrications Ltd, alongside his Level 2 Welding course at Middlesbrough College. The company were so impressed with Jack, they have now employed him as an apprentice.

*“We weren’t looking to take on any new staff at the time Jack started his work placement. However Jack really proved himself with his attitude and ability. He really stood out as a great candidate”.*

**Terry Pink, Supervisor**

*“I would really recommend work experience to every student. It was an opportunity to show my ability to work to a good standard, and show an employer that I am keen to develop my career. As a result, this has helped me to gain an apprenticeship. I’m learning a lot of new skills, and I’m really enjoying it!”*

**Jack Bolton, Apprentice**

*“It’s difficult to find skilled workers, which is why Apprenticeships are a great opportunity. We can train people on the job to help them start their careers. Since Jack started with the company he has gone from strength to strength, and happily does all duties asked of him. He will do very well for himself, and become an asset to the company.”*

**Steve Brettle, Owner**



The UK Commission for Employment and Skills is a publicly funded, industry-led organisation providing strategic leadership on skills and employment issues in the four home nations of the UK.

Together, our Commissioners comprise a social partnership that includes CEOs of large and small employers across a wide range of sectors; trade unions and representatives from the Devolved Administrations.

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