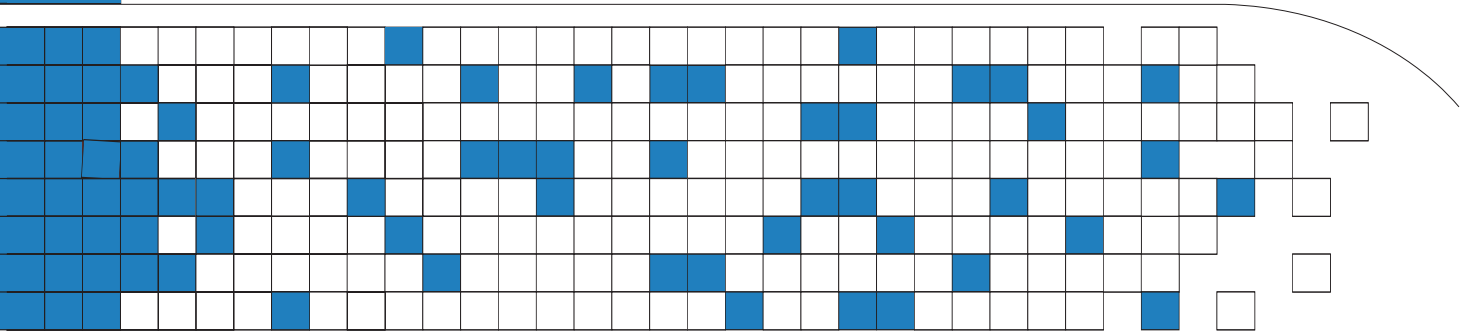


# Work-related learning at key stage 4



**First replication study: a QCA-commissioned report on the development of work-related learning in the three years since September 2004.**



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## Acknowledgements

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## Introduction and background

Work-related learning (WRL) became a statutory requirement of the key stage 4 curriculum from September 2004. WRL is defined as planned activity that uses the context of work to develop knowledge, skills and understanding useful in work, including learning through the experience of work, learning about work and working practices, and learning the skills for work. While it is the responsibility of each school to determine the nature of provision and the opportunities to acquire WRL that each student is given, it is a statutory requirement to have regard to QCA guidance. This responsibility allows room for some interpretation for prevailing local circumstances and differentiation to match the needs of individuals and groups of learners.

Before 2004, most young people already experienced some WRL during key stage 4 (eg work placement), though the quality of that experience varied widely. The aim of making WRL statutory was to ensure that all young people received suitable and high-quality provision as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. By making it statutory it would lead to greater clarity, coherence and quality.

To measure the impact of the new requirement QCA carried out a baseline study. This study of the initial responses and attitudes to WRL among learners, schools and some of their key partners was published in 2004. *Work-related learning: baseline study 2004* revealed that many schools were setting in place management structures, including policy and the coordination necessary for success, or building these into their school development plans. Evidence showed that young people were very well disposed to WRL, to some extent more so than were key stage 4 teachers. Employers too favoured WRL, and sought guidance on how their unique contribution might be effective.

In the three years between the baseline study and this first replication study, QCA has carried out research and monitoring surveys through questionnaires, focus groups and literature studies. Also during this time, other research has been commissioned, evaluations undertaken and inspection evidence assembled and published.

It is in this context that this first replication study is now undertaken. It draws principally on the QCA-commissioned studies from Ipsos MORI and from Monitoring Curriculum and Assessment (MCA), together with other analysis and research undertaken directly by QCA. It cross-references the findings of these to parallel sources of evaluation and evidence, not proposing causation, but signalling plausible relationships and possible circumstances that have been contributory factors to change.

### Key findings

- There is clear evidence that the place of WRL in the secondary school curriculum has become much better established over the three years since the 2004 baseline study.
- Most schools are implementing the range of learning objectives defined in legislation and expanded through the non-statutory guidance. There has been an increase in the provision that schools make for all their students. Enterprise activity has seen the largest increase.
- The findings of survey reports on the perceptions of students and teachers, inspection evidence and summary research also provides unambiguous substantiation for this more secure place for WRL. There is a clear trend in schools toward the belief that WRL is important for all learners.

- Management and leadership of WRL are now more often on a firm footing. Representation at senior leadership team is becoming widespread and coordinators frequently receive curriculum time for their duties and recognition through responsibility posts.
- Greater flexibility in the key stage 4 curriculum provides a helpful and supportive context that has contributed to the stronger position of WRL.
- Most teachers are using work-related contexts in their teaching, but this varies widely from one subject to another.
- On the whole, young people enjoy WRL and perceive it to be of considerable relevance and importance in helping them achieve what they want to do in the future. Their self-reported reactions to learning in the nine broad areas of WRL are strongly positive, a finding that is consistent with inspection evidence and research.
- Students value individual advice and guidance, and the contact with employers and other people at work that well-planned WRL provides for them.
- Work experience is valued highly both by young people and employers.
- Most learners enjoy enterprise activities and an increasing proportion takes accreditation of this through specific certificates, or within vocational qualifications where the structure accommodates learning from experiences of work.
- Parents are reported to be generally supportive of the curriculum developments that schools are undertaking.
- Employers make a unique and often largely selfless contribution to the learning. They seek better guidance and information on the character, focus and development of their role.
- Professional development for teaching staff is broadening from a fairly narrow base, but remains far from widespread or comprehensive. This may contribute to the more mixed picture of professional attitudes toward some elements of WRL and its usefulness in the daily work of teaching and learning.

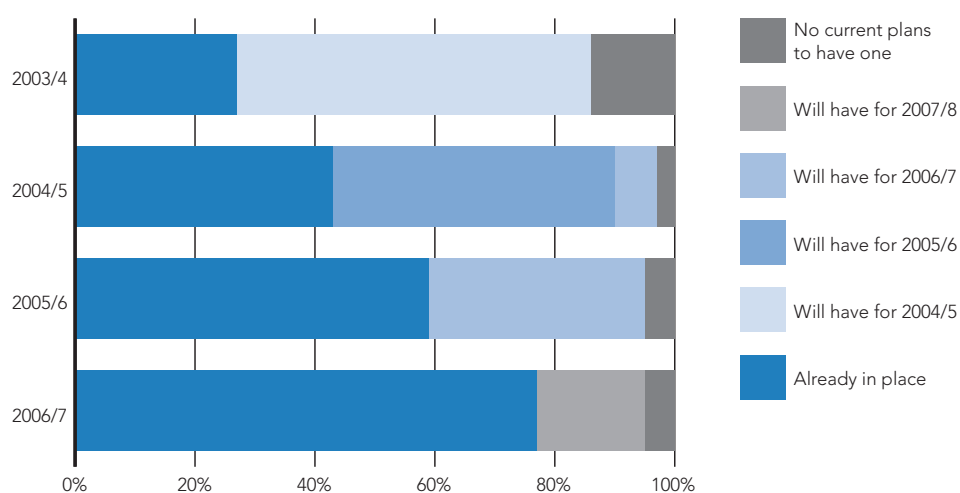
## Leadership and management

### Key points

- Policy, management and development planning have all improved sharply in the three years since the WRL statutory requirement was introduced.
- The great majority of schools now have a written policy for WRL and monitor its effectiveness through the mechanism of the school improvement plan.
- Most schools have a designated coordinator for WRL.
- The development and implementation of the WRL requirement has been positively supported by the national policy context and evolving curriculum flexibility as well as the developing 14–19 agenda.

### Policy

#### Does your school currently have a written policy on WRL?



The likelihood that schools will have a written policy on WRL has changed sharply since the baseline study of 2003/4. The proportion having a policy in place was below one-third in 2004; by 2006/7 it has risen to almost 8 in 10, with a further 15 per cent certain they will have completed this development within the year. By 2006/7 only about 1 school in 20 has no current plans for a WRL policy.

More than 85 per cent of schools had a written policy for careers education and guidance in 2006, fewer than 3 in 100 had no plans to regulate this area through school policy by autumn 2007.

Development planning is being secured strongly within the organisational arrangements and structures of most schools. By 2007 more than 8 schools in 10 reported the presence of WRL within their school development plan and a further one in six would have this in place within the year. The coherence of this key part of development planning is supported through the requirements of legislation. The Children Act requires attention be given to the achievement of economic wellbeing, enabling learners to access

**95:** the percentage of schools who expect to have a written policy for WRL by the end of education year 2006/07

opportunities where they can safely make a positive contribution while enjoying and achieving their progress during the years of compulsory schooling.<sup>1</sup> The provision of WRL is a key contributory part within this agenda.

Coordination of WRL is now on a more secure basis in the majority of schools. MCA surveys found that by 2007, 9 in 10 schools reported having a coordinator in post (an increase of 50 per cent since 2004), nearly two-thirds of these have time allocated in the timetable for this role and more than half of post holders receive an allowance in recognition for the additional responsibilities entailed in this work.

Coordinators and senior managers are helped in this broad effort by current arrangements for self-evaluation. Under sections 4b and 5e of the 'Self-evaluation form',<sup>2</sup> structures are provided through which evidence of development, progress attainment and change can be conveniently recorded.

Effective leadership and management has been cited by Ofsted as a key factor in securing good quality provision:

*Work-related learning had been in place for five years and contributed, to [the school's] excellent curriculum. The headteacher and the management team had a clear rationale for lifelong learning and linked it to improving the curriculum and teaching.*<sup>3</sup>

MCA reported in 2006 that around four in 10 WRL coordinators are members of the school's senior management team. A significant minority of the coordinators have a background in business education and often combine WRL and enterprise roles.

Although there is a statutory requirement and non-statutory guidance, specific learning outcomes for WRL are a matter for local determination. Surveys undertaken by MCA show that around half of schools have identified learning outcomes for WRL, with a further third expecting to do so by next year (2008).

Professional development for teachers about enterprise is uneven in scale and the extent to which all teaching staff are provided for. MCA's 2006 survey found in nearly a third of schools enterprise-specific training has been given only to the enterprise coordinator in the last year. Almost 40 per cent of schools had given training to a few staff and only 16 per cent have given all or most of their staff enterprise-specific training.

## **Ethos and context**

Implementation of WRL is locally determined with due regard to the guidance. In these circumstances, local attitudes may contribute strongly to the context in which this learning is undertaken. In part, they also build an ethos around the work and may influence the perceptions of learners, their parents and key partners in the community, particularly employers.

In some schools, work-related activities, such as extended work experience, are rooted in practices intended to boost inclusion or tackle disaffection from a curriculum that is failing to serve the needs of small groups or individuals. Schools were asked about these issues including their attitudes and priorities.

The professional standing and status of WRL and careers education and

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<sup>1</sup> The Children Act 2004 provides the legal underpinning for Every Child Matters: Change for Children programme.

<sup>2</sup> Refer to [www.Ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.Ofsted.gov.uk) 'Self-valuation form'.

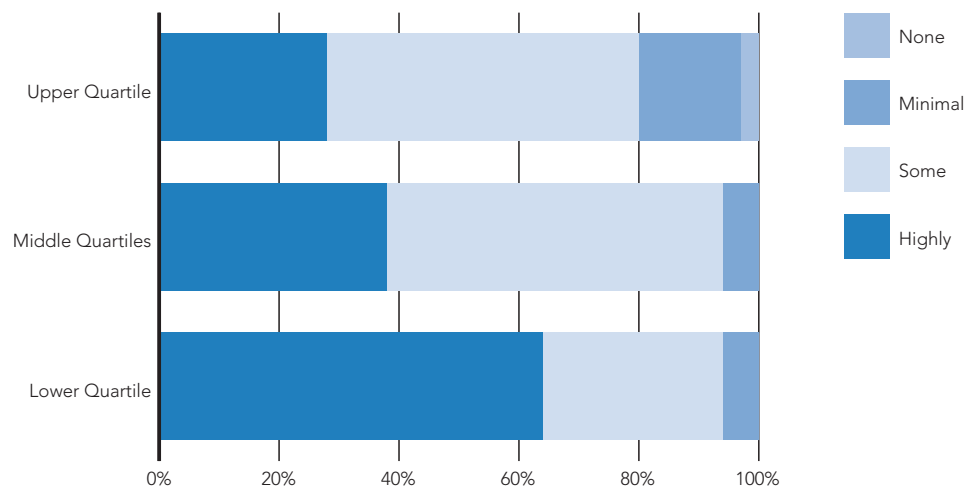
<sup>3</sup> Ofsted, *The key stage 4 curriculum: increased flexibility and work-related learning*, May 2007. p. 12.

guidance (CEG) are perceived by schools to have improved over time. MCA found that around half said the status of WRL had increased in key stage 3 and almost 80 per cent said this had occurred in key stage 4. There were increases too in the status of CEG, but to a lesser extent (around 40 per cent in each key stage reported increases of status).

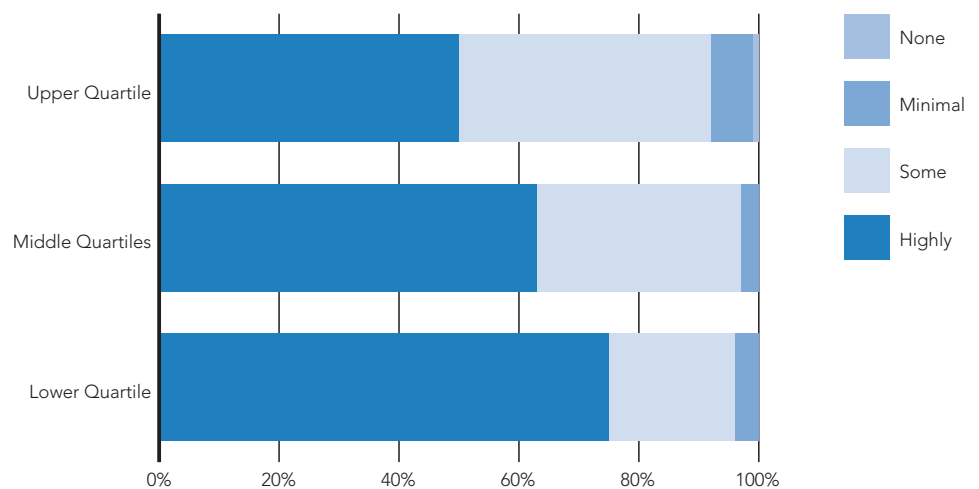
These increases in perceived status are pronounced, have accelerated in the most recent years, span key stages 3 and 4, and to a less extent post-16.

There is a clear positive trend in schools toward the perception that WRL is important for all learners. While the significance of WRL (in the sense of immediacy and potential for direct value in the first steps after compulsory schooling for a particular learner) is seen to be high for those in the lower quartile of general attainment, around half now regard WRL as highly relevant to the needs of the upper quartile as well.

### How significant is WRL in helping students of different abilities achieve their life goals (2004)?



### How significant is WRL in helping students of different abilities achieve their life goals (2007)?





The charts show that between 2004 and 2007 an increase of 22 per cent of schools regarded WRL as 'highly significant' for learners in the upper quartile (50 per cent compared with 28 per cent in 2004). This is part of a trend. In relation to learners in the middle quartiles, 62 per cent of schools believed WRL to be highly significant, compared to 38 per cent three years earlier. A similar increase is noted in relation to learners in the lower quartile, up from 62 per cent to 75 per cent.

Overall, schools still hold that WRL is most significant to students in the lower quartile of current attainment, in the sense of helping them attain their life goals. Nevertheless, around 9 schools in 10 now regard WRL as being significant or highly significant to learners in the upper quartile.

Also by 2007, around 7 in 10 schools expected the prominence of WRL in their school to increase in the coming year. Despite this, some mixed impressions remain. Respondents are more ambivalent about the general professional attitude of colleague teachers toward WRL, feeling that about two-thirds were positive or very positive toward this area of the curriculum, and that about one in eight was indifferent. Fewer than 1 in 50 was thought to be very or generally negative.

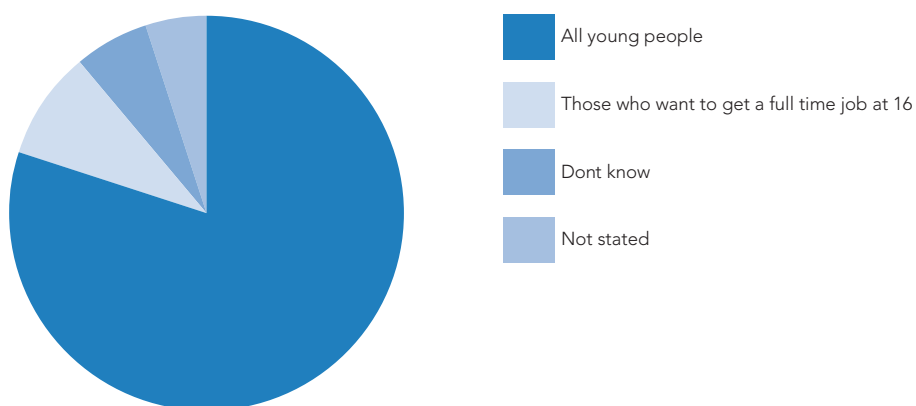
There is a consistent pattern of improving attitudes toward WRL, growing status of it as an essential area of learning and, albeit more gradually in professional perceptions, as a part of the curriculum that has strong relevance to all learners irrespective of their level of current attainment.

## Student voice, parents and employers

### Key points

- There is increasing convergence in the views of learners and teachers on the importance of WRL in the curriculum for all students.
- Young people enjoy WRL and find it very relevant to their life goals.
- Those who, on leaving school, are not in employment, education or training (NEET) have received less effective support and information, advice and guidance.
- Parents are the strongest source of influence on young people's choices. In workless households, parents still try very hard to encourage their children into work and careers but, and this is in common with many parents generally, find difficulty in being accurate in the advice they give.
- The media give the least positive impression of work and careers to young people and this, given their influence, is disappointing.
- Employers make a unique and valuable contribution to WRL – this lacks a robust research base and more effort is now appropriate.

### Who do you think should learn about jobs and working life while they are at school?



The attitudes of teachers are now similar to the firmly held position of students themselves. Asked in 2003/04 who should learn about jobs and working life while they are at school, 79 per cent of students said 'all young people' and 9 per cent 'only those who planned to get a full-time job at 16'.

By 2007, the dominant view among students remained as firm as ever and 80 per cent again said that all young people should learn about these areas. The only change occurred among those who were unclear ('don't know' down to 6 per cent from 8 per cent three years ago).

Young people enjoy WRL. About 7 in 10 key stage 4 students in maintained secondary schools said they enjoyed the work a 'fair amount' or a 'great deal'. Black and Asian students

**80:** the percentage of school students who believe that all young people should learn about jobs and working life while at school

regard the importance of learning about work and jobs as a far higher priority, about twice the proportion saying they enjoy the work a great deal. Disappointingly however, there are 1 in 6 who 'don't enjoy it very much'.<sup>4</sup>

Some of the causes for the significant minority who do not find the work enjoyable may be discerned from research studies and inspection evidence. The study by Lord and Jones (2006)<sup>5</sup> across a range of earlier evidence suggests a decline in levels of students' general enthusiasm for schooling as they grow older. This is only partially counteracted by the newness and optimism resulting from option choices in key stage 4, but remains uneven. Learners particularly value being given some responsibility and practical activities in WRL. Young people who become NEET, or are in work without training, received less information advice and guidance in general (DfES research RW102).

Inspection evidence from Ofsted showed that '...the overwhelming majority of students ... continued to be very positive about changes to their curriculum. Most schools reported improved attendance and motivation as a result of changes.' Where needy young people were concerned, 'appropriate curricula, particularly the provision of vocational courses, re-engaged many students. Behaviour and attendance improved and the courses raised the achievement.'

There may also be contributory influences on students' experiences of enjoyment of WRL from their private circumstances. Ipsos MORI found that students from households where both parents work are about a fifth more likely to regard WRL as relevant to all pupils, compared with those from households where neither parent works. In the latter case, the 'instrumental value' of WRL was seen to take priority as students from workless households were much more likely to believe that WRL was most important for those young people who would aim to get a full-time job at 16.

**51:** *the percentage of school students who would like to be at university by the time they are 19*

For all young people, parents are the most influential source of advice on careers<sup>6</sup> and education/training pathways. However, parents have difficulty in providing advice to their children that is accurate, and need more support. Parents with children who are likely to drop out of education or training and become NEET are a very positive influence on keeping their child in the system. However, they are often troubled, and need help and support.

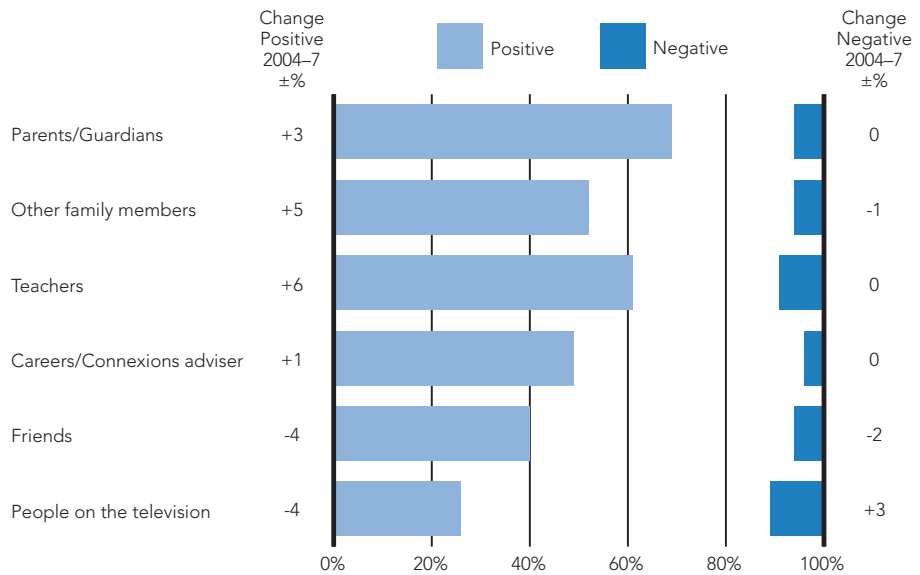
Young people say they gain a positive impression of jobs and working life from their parents/guardians, other family members, teachers and careers/Connexions advisers. All of these sources of influence have grown stronger since 2004, as shown in the chart.

People on television are perceived by students to convey strongly negative impressions of jobs and working life. Indeed, this source of influence appears to have become more negative over the period 2004–7. The influence of friends is positive on only 4 in 10 students (the television, only a quarter), and like 'people on television' has become more negatively disposed over the intervening period.

<sup>4</sup> Data from the Ipsos MORI's survey has been extracted to include here only those students in key stage 4, it does not currently include students in special schools or independent schools.  
<sup>5</sup> Lord, P. and Jones, M., QCA-commissioned research, *Pupils' experiences and perspectives of the national curriculum and assessment*, 2006  
<sup>6</sup> DfES EdComs desk research, '90 per cent participation project', RW102, 2004.

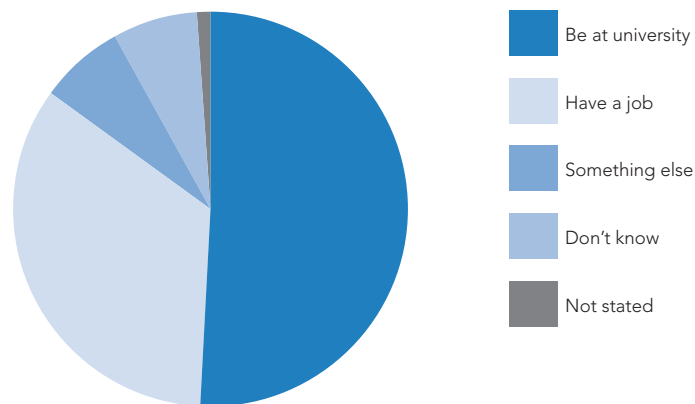
## Jobs and working life: the influence of others (Ipsos MORI)

Q. Thinking about each of the following people, have they given you a positive or a negative impression of jobs and working life?



Base: All key stage 4 students in England (887)

## Which of the following best describes what you would like to be doing when you are 19?

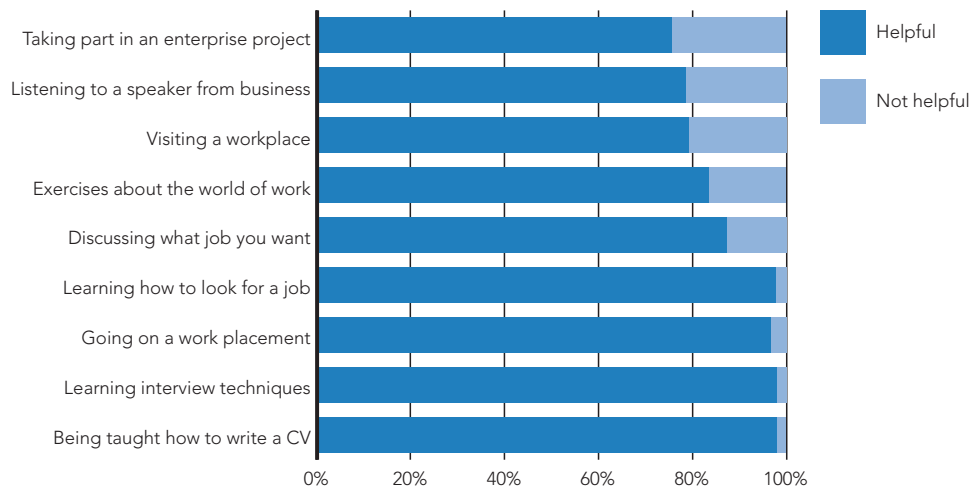


Notwithstanding the variety of range and differences of view that influence young people, the overwhelming majority are clear, committed and have ambitions for their immediate future. Only 7 per cent expressed no formed view, while the proportion aiming to 'be at university' is now above half (an increase of 2 per cent over three years) or 'have a job' by age 19 is above a third (down by 4 per cent in three years).

Around 1 in 10 more female students than males want to be at university by the time they are 19 (57 per cent against 47 per cent). This difference in proportion is very similar to the percentage difference in attainment of five or more higher GCSE grades among key stage 4 pupils, where girls attain more highly than boys. Though the evidence is not conclusive, it seems likely that young people at this stage not only hold ambitions, but hold them within a frame of realistic expectations anticipating their likely chances of progression from one stage to the next and respond to survey questions accordingly.

Students as a whole perceive there to be considerable relevance and importance in WRL in helping them achieve what they want to do in the future. Indeed, they rank the skill of drafting a CV very highly. This and other 'instrumental' aspects of WRL is rated by more than 9 in 10 young people as helpful to them. Other very highly rated elements are learning interview techniques, going on a work placement and learning how to look for a job.

### How helpful will each of the following be in helping you do what you want to do in the future?



The chart indicates how students rate the helpfulness to them of nine areas of WRL.

### Parental attitudes

In 2007, more than seven in 10 schools reported that parents were 'generally or very' positive about WRL in the school curriculum. In 2004, the majority of parents (95 per cent) said that it was important for students to learn about jobs and working life, no matter what they want to do at 19. This high level of support for all students to learn about jobs and working life was consistent across all types of parents, including those who are in employment and those who are not, those with qualifications and those without.

**seven in 10:**  
*the proportion of schools that report parental attitudes to WRL to be generally positive or better.*

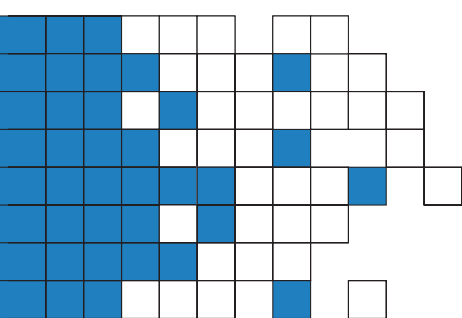
### Employers

Employers make a unique and substantial contribution to students' learning and experience. Employers contribute<sup>7</sup> as school governors, support enterprise activities and offer work experience among a range of forms of assistance. It is also clear that the level of employer support has increased over time. The reports from students show increasing range and level of work with employers.

<sup>7</sup> Employer Engagement & Education Business Links Brokerage: Literature review, Andrew Miller for QCA 2007.

Employers, of course, are 'volunteers' in the contributions they make to WRL. They are clearly positively disposed and identify key factors<sup>8</sup> that underpin their rationale for working with education. Work-related activities, in their view, should produce benefits to both (or all) partners, capitalise on what the company is uniquely or particularly well-placed to do, be clearly linked to the company's business focus and relate closely to the needs of the school concerned.

An employer survey for the LSC demonstrated that work experience boosts school leavers' earnings by £1,000 per year. Nearly 90 per cent of employers said relevant work experience was an important part of the CV and 55 per cent said that in future candidates without work experience would find it harder to find work.



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<sup>8</sup> Miller 2006.

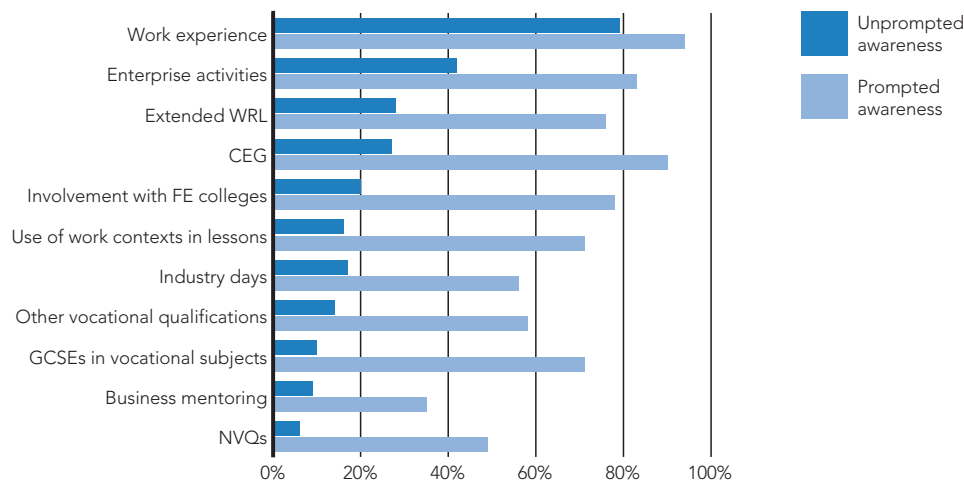
# Teachers' attitudes, perceptions and use of WRL in their work

## Key points

- Teachers continue to maintain a high level of general familiarity with their school policies and systems for WRL and for enterprise.
- Most teachers are using WRL contexts in their teaching, but this varies widely from one subject to another and more training is needed to enable most to contribute as effectively as do some currently.
- There has been an increase in uses in teaching and learning and the perceived importance across the areas of WRL – as defined in the non-statutory guidance.
- Particular subjects have increased very substantially the uses they make of WRL in their work.
- Teachers who make little or no use of WRL cite syllabus constraints or the nature of a particular subject as causes.

In the Ipsos MORI survey teachers were asked to the work-related learning provision their school offered to key stage 4 students. They were then read a list of work-related activities and asked if their school offered them.

### Subject teachers' awareness of WRL at key stage 4



Base: All key stage 4 teachers (500)

As in 2004, the level of general awareness of their school's WRL provision at key stage 4 has remained at its former high level of nearly 90 per cent. Within this there are modest variations depending upon the specialist areas of work of the teachers concerned.

When commenting generally, and without prompting, most teachers refer to work experience at levels that have changed slightly over the past three years. However, the level of response about enterprise activities has more than doubled, to above 40 per cent of mentions compared with only 19 per cent three years ago.

In 2007, far fewer teachers than three years ago mention extended work experience and involvement with local colleges of further education. This articulation is wholly consistent with the data, which clearly show a strong growth

in the perception that WRL is relevant to the learning needs of all young people (as opposed to those rejecting schooling or disaffected).

Teachers with WRL responsibilities are consistently more likely to mention spontaneously all aspects of work-related learning provision than their counterparts. However, unprompted awareness of work-related learning activities remains similar across all key stage 4 subjects.

After prompting, two marked changes are clear:

- more than eight in 10 teachers comment on the role of enterprise activities in their school (83 per cent compared with 60 per cent in 2004)
- almost six in 10 (58 per cent) comment on the likelihood that their students will take a vocational qualification (36 per cent in 2004).

Both of these sharp changes are coherent with national developments, the former, through the statutory requirement, the latter, the rapid growth in participation in key stage 4 in GCSE in vocational subjects and other vocationally related qualifications.

Responses to the structured questions show that work experience, enterprise activities, careers education and guidance and extended work experience are high in teachers' perceptions.

## Using WRL in teaching and learning

Around three-quarters of key stage 4 subject teachers are personally involved in delivering WRL activities. Most frequently, this takes the form of using work contexts and materials in their programmes. This proportion has increased markedly since 2004 (76 per cent compared to 69 per cent in 2004). Similar trends are reported over enterprise activities (38 per cent in 2007 from only 15 per cent in 2004), GCSE in vocational subjects (28 per cent versus 22 per cent) and other vocational qualifications, a level that has doubled in three years from 10 per cent to 20 per cent.

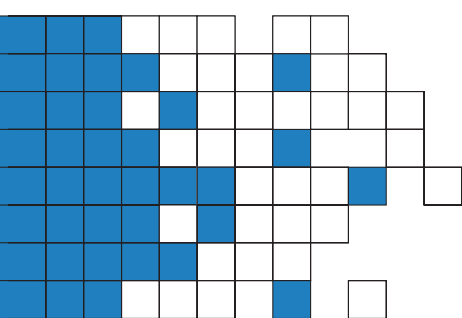
Some learning activities remain quite modest in scale: business mentoring for example is reported in fewer than 1 in 10 instances and NVQs specifically, remains unchanged at 9 per cent.

Subject teachers in art and design, design and technology, social science/PSHE remain, as in 2004, more likely to be involved in delivering WRL activities than other teachers. However, the adoption of WRL activities into subject learning has expanded sharply in several other areas. For example, in 2007 humanities teachers were about three times as likely to be involved (30 per cent from only 11 per cent three years ago) as are science teachers and mathematics teachers, both reporting broadly similar rates of change.

## Barriers to use

Of teachers reporting no use of WRL activities in their work, about six in 10 cite the constraints of their syllabus or the absence of any requirement through the coursework. A far smaller proportion now compared with three years ago adheres to the view that it is 'down to the nature of the subject' (this proportion has declined from about half to less than one in five).

Lack of support from outside agencies is seldom perceived to be a significant barrier, though is quoted in a few instances.





# Work-related curriculum and responses to it

## Key points

- Virtually all areas of WRL are increasingly provided for all students.
- Only a very small proportion of schools now makes no use of a particular area of WRL.
- Work experience continues to be highly regarded by the great majority of young people – few report largely unproductive experiences.
- Enterprise education is held by schools to be important for all learners – WRL is increasingly seen as similarly important, but it continues to be held as of particular importance for those likely embark on their working career at the end of key stage 4 or of lower general attainment.

Almost all schools have developed a written policy for WRL and many have a coordinator in post who receives some recognition for the work entailed. In this broadly positive management context, the range of learning objectives defined in legislation and expanded through the non-statutory guidance are being implemented actively by most schools. Surveys commissioned by QCA and undertaken by MCA demonstrate over successive years strong implementation and development by schools.

In nine of the 10 elements<sup>9</sup> of WRL, there has been an increase in the provision that schools make for all their students, and a corresponding reduction in the instances where a dimension of WRL is not used.

The attention given by schools to particular areas has increased sharply: activities to develop and apply skills for enterprise and employability have increased by 13 per cent over three years and student involvement in at least one business challenge, problem solving or enterprise activity by 10 per cent.

In more detail, these changes are identified by the MCA study:

1. At least two activities to develop and apply skills for enterprise and employability is an element of the work that has developed very strongly over the past three years.

The chart shows that the proportion of schools that report providing this aspect of learning for all or the majority of students has increased from less than half to well above 90 per cent. At the same time, the likelihood that learning about enterprise will be made available only to some/selected students (for example through an options system) has diminished to below 1 in 10 of schools.

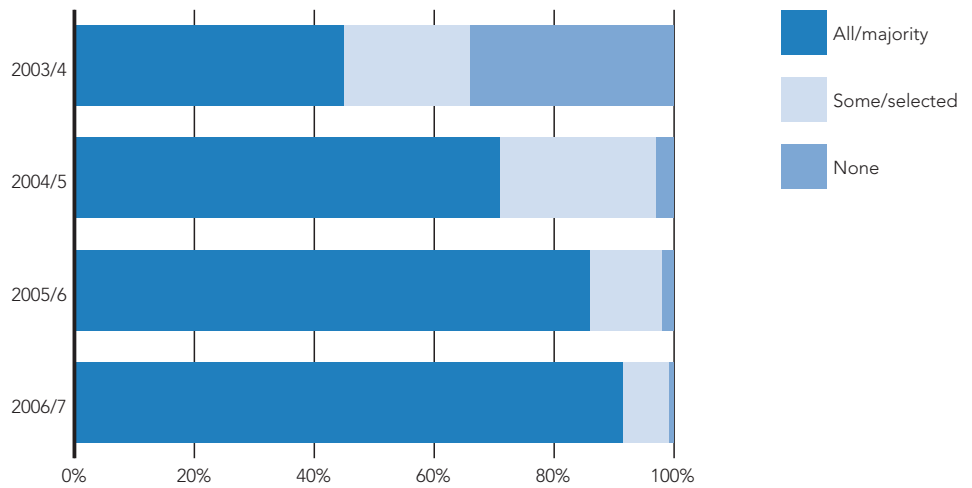
In well above 9 schools in 10, this learning is now provided for all students. Only about 8 per cent of schools provide these opportunities for selected groups, and only 2 in a 100 continue to make no provision. These levels of provision offer a sharp contrast to the picture in 2003/4 when more than 30 per cent made no provision and less than half provided opportunities for all.

Related to this element of the work, MCA reported in 2006 a range of examples of typical opportunities for skills development in financial capability within subjects and courses. These included consideration of financial awareness in mathematics, and challenge days in business education or in manufacturing. Off-timetable days enabled students to

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<sup>9</sup> The non-statutory guidance *Work-related learning for all at key stage 4* (QCA 2003), describes nine elements of provision – for survey purposes these are conveniently constructed into 10 lines of questioning.

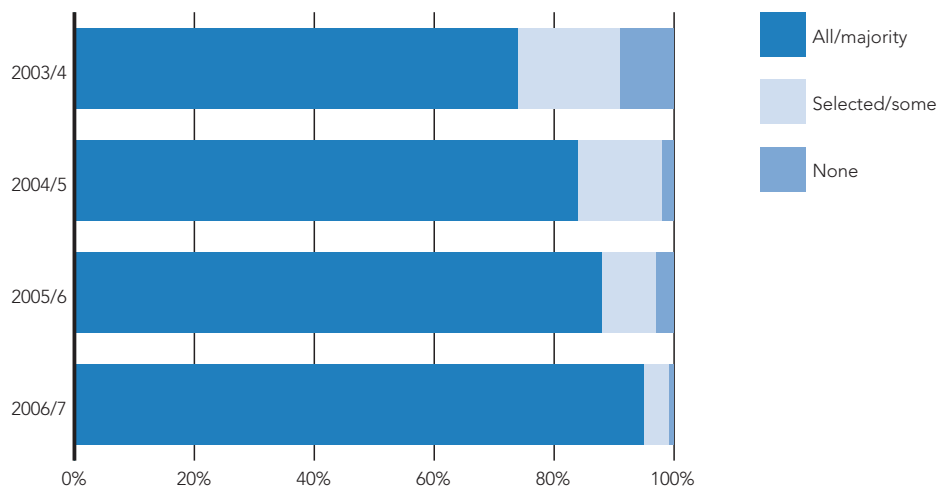
## At least two activities used to develop and apply skills specifically for enterprise and employability



create a video recording of poetry reading, or a 'championship football club', or the opportunity to manage a fictitious business in an ICT programme.

- Schools provide at least one discussion about the skills their students develop through their work-related programme in more than 90 per cent of instances.

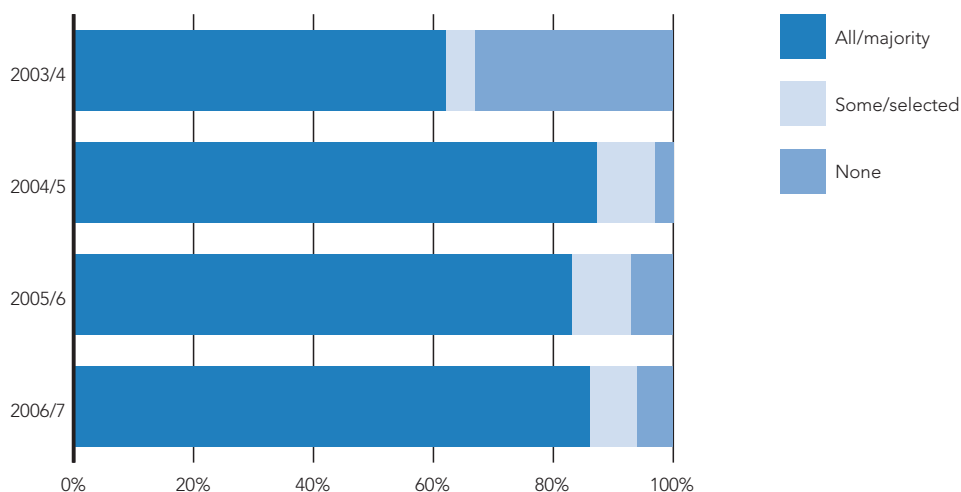
## At least one discussion about the skills they develop through their work-related programme



The evidence shows a marked improvement in the opportunities provided for young people since 2004. Provision has risen to the point where it is seen as an entitlement for virtually everyone. By 2006/7 only about 2 per cent of schools did not offer this, and a further 6 per cent made provision for some learners only. This level of provision represents consistent improvement for young people over the past four years. At the time of the baseline study more than 10 per cent of schools made no provision and a similar proportion provided for selected pupils only.

- At least half a day for debriefing and follow-up of work experience and/or part-time work to extend their understanding of work is now provided by almost 90 per cent of schools, with a further small proportion continuing to make the provision for only some/selected groups of pupils. More than 90 per cent of students rank 'going on a work placement for a week or more' helpful to them.

### At least half a day for debriefing and follow-up of work experience and/or part time work to extend their understanding of work



The non-statutory guidance and entitlement may have contributed to the improvement in the extent to which learning from work experience is capitalised upon and discussed objectively by young people. Although guidance about this work is long established<sup>10</sup> it appears that only over the past three years has there been a sharp increase in the probability that students will undertake review and debriefing following work experience. More than nine in 10 students now have this opportunity, compared to less than two-thirds four years ago.

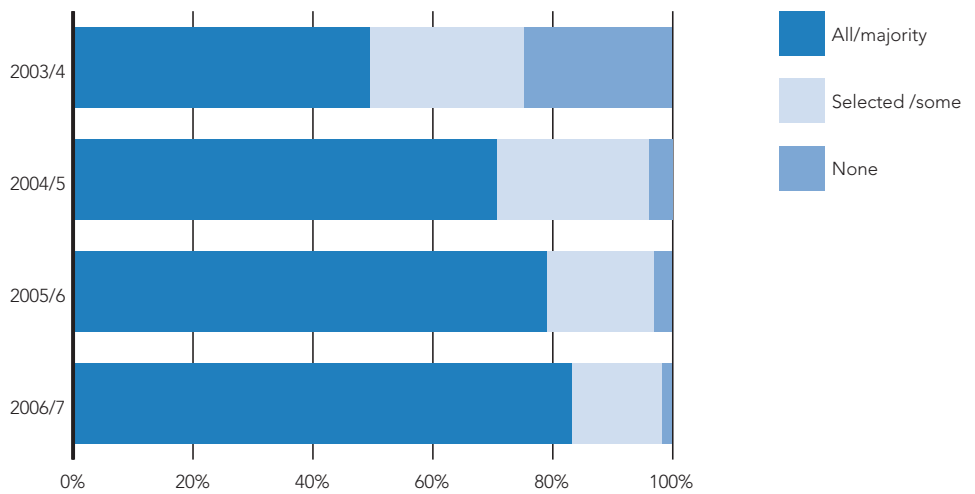
Young people value these opportunities and are clear about what they gain from them. In the National Foundation for Educational Support (NFER) 2006 report, pupils were positive about work experience and placements. They valued being given responsibility, being treated like an adult, team working and the social aspects of being alongside colleagues. From work experience placements, pupils gained skills for work especially those of working with others, and developed self-confidence, and problem solving ability. However, where students felt they did not receive enough support, their experience was undermined and feelings of isolation could develop.

- Around 8 in 10 schools provide for all students at least two curriculum activities where students learn about the way business enterprises work, working roles and conditions, rights and responsibilities in the workplace.

The extent to which key stage 4 students now learn about the way business and enterprise works, about working roles and conditions and about rights and responsibilities in the workplace has grown enormously. By 2006/7, only about 2 per cent of schools fail to make any provision for these aspects of students' knowledge and understanding. This represents an increase from about three-quarters four years ago. In more than 80 per cent of schools,

<sup>10</sup> See for example, DfES, *Work experience: A guide for secondary schools*, 2002.

**At least two curriculum activities where they learn about the way business enterprises work, working roles and conditions, and rights and responsibilities in the workplace**

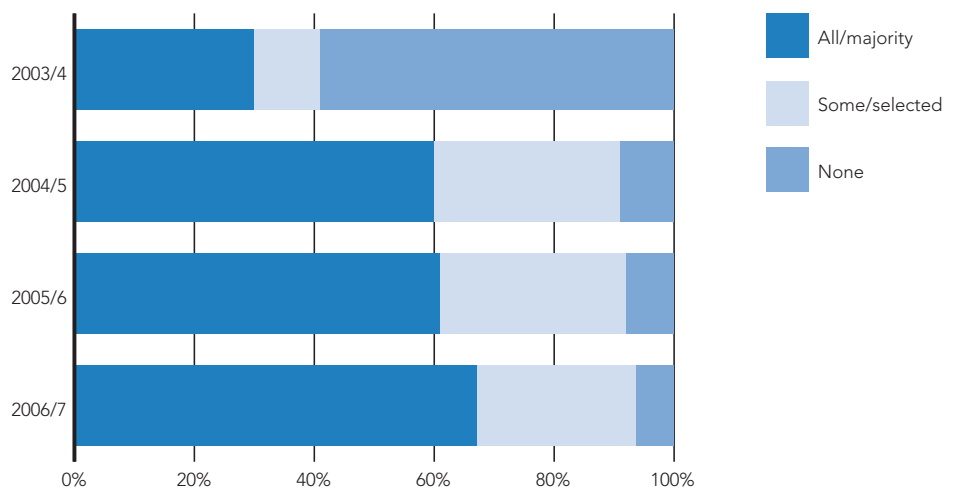


these areas are held to be essential for all or the majority of students. The proportion of schools making this provision for only selected groups or 'some students' has shrunk from about a quarter three years ago, to its lowest point, of little more than 15 per cent.

Young people also give high importance to this area of WRL. Given the likelihood that they will have, or seek, part-time jobs, this element of learning may well be perceived by them to have important immediate value.

- The provision of activities that allow all students to develop an awareness of the extent and diversity of local and national employment opportunities is one of the elements of WRL that connects directly with other parts of the national curriculum.

**At least two activities that allow them to develop an awareness of the extent and diversity of local and national employment opportunities**

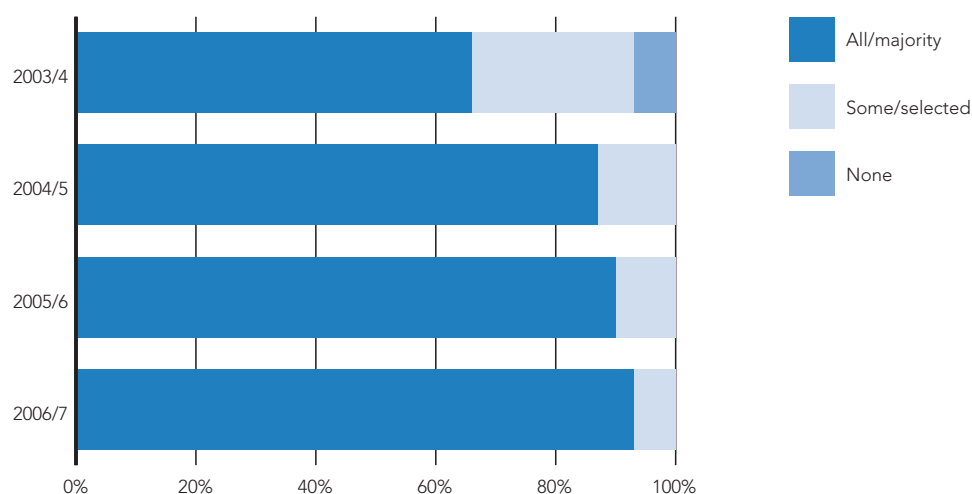


Providing all learners with at least two such activities is an element of WRL that has changed massively over the years between the baseline and 2006/7 studies.

Now, more than two-thirds of schools provide (at least) two such activities, up from about a quarter in 2003/4. The proportion making no provision for this area of learning has declined from more than half to about 6 per cent. Within this, the proportion of 'selected groups / some students' engaging in such learning has grown from less than a tenth to about one-fifth, a level that has remained fairly stable over the past three years.

6. Activities to develop their skills for career management and have a guidance interview focusing on career progression.

### Activities to develop their skills for career management and have a guidance interview focusing on career progression



The provision of these activities is a well-established aspect of work in careers education and guidance. As a consequence, high levels of activity have been reported consistently over the past three years. This is consistent with the widely reported general improvement in the status of this area.

The baseline study showed about 9 in 10 schools at that time providing skills for career management for all, and the remainder for selected groups. By 2007, well above 90 per cent of schools make such provision for everyone, with a remaining small minority, about 5 per cent, doing so only for selected groups. In addition, about half the schools reported that WRL was very important to learners in key stage 3, and about 95 per cent stated it had at least some importance.

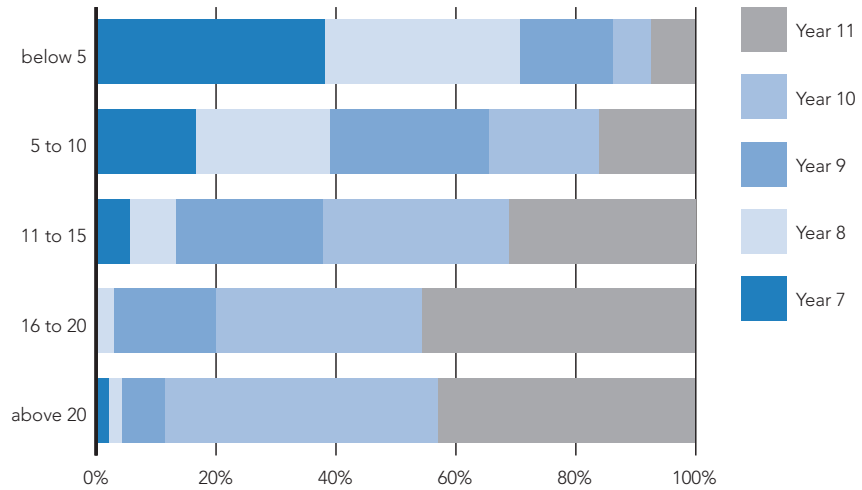
Careers education and guidance is provided predominantly by form tutors or through PSHE in years 7 and 8. There is a steady increase in the extent to which specialists provide careers education and guidance. During year 9, and throughout key stage 4, this provision is increasingly provided by specialists, rising from around a fifth to a quarter. The role of the form tutor, however, remains important throughout the secondary phase, fluctuating between about one-fifth and a half of provision.

Timetabling for CEG is largely through PSHE modules during key stage 3, and/or as part of the tutorial programme. The role of 'discrete' scheduled lessons that have a clearly identifiable place in published timetables rises sharply in key stage 4 to about six in 10 during year 10, and falls back somewhat in year 11. Collapsed timetable days and similar events are in widespread use particularly in years 8 and 9, where around two-thirds of

schools report their use. The role of subject teachers in providing impromptu commentary about the relationship between subjects and courses and careers related to them, is not identified through the MCA study.

- Using work as a context for learning within the curriculum on at least two occasions and recording evidence of their learning.

### Number of hours allocated to CEG by year group

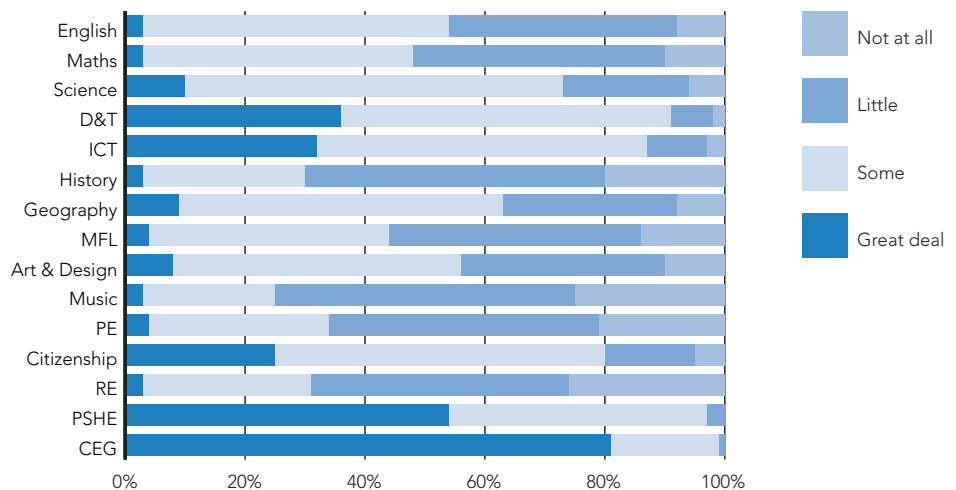


The use of WRL as a context for learning as reported by schools varies markedly between one subject and another. There is some change over time. In 2005 the highest use ('used a great deal') was made in ICT, business studies, PSHE and citizenship, but hardly at all in history or mathematics (MCA, 2005).

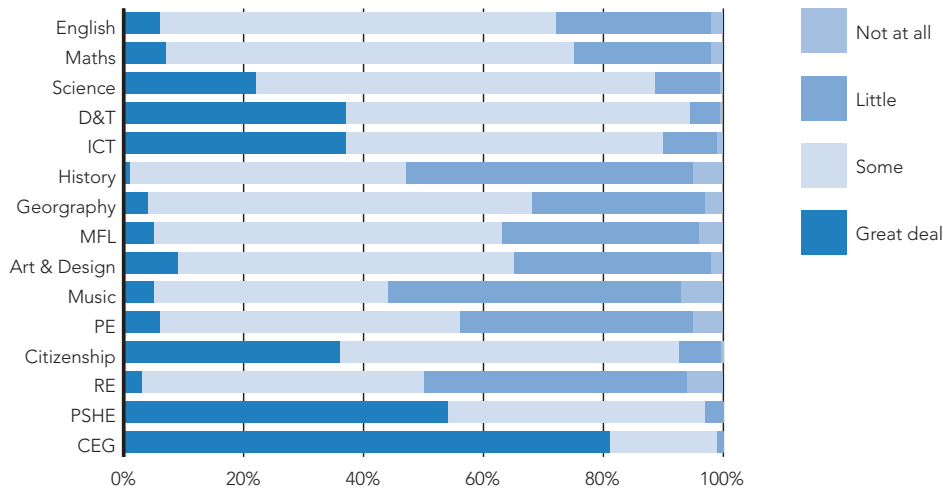
By 2007, although schools once again report high levels of use in some of the same areas of learning such as PSHE and CEG, there are changes. The 'other' category for example now shows high levels of use of WRL as a context, and may reflect the sharp increase in participation in vocational courses as evidenced by candidate entry in GCSE in vocational subjects and Ofsted surveys of the key stage 4 curriculum.

Overall, there is clear evidence of increased use of WRL generally. Some subjects report sharp increases, geography and MFL for instance, where the

### Use WRL as a context in their subject: 2003/4



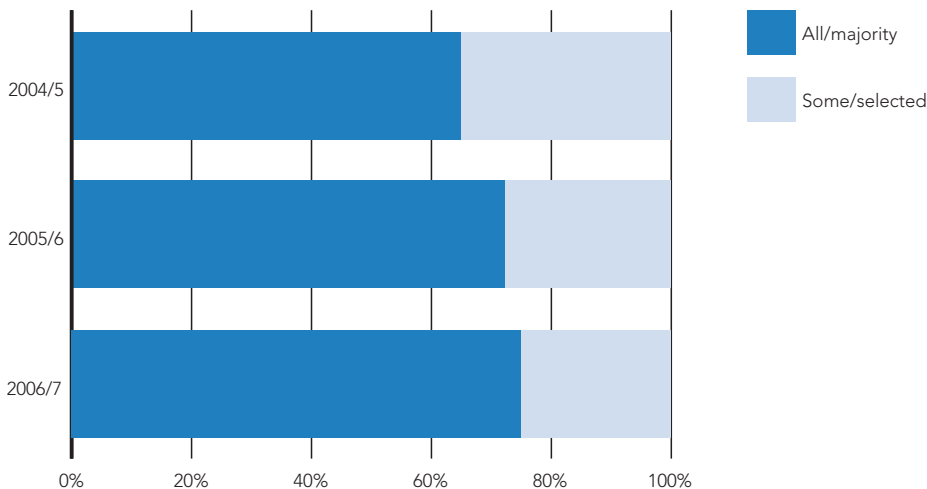
## Use WRL as a context in their subject: 2006/7



proportion making no use of WRL for context is much lower than in 2005. While there is modest growth in uses among D&T departments, the changes within history are proportionately more pronounced.

- Direct contact with a minimum of two people from different employment sectors with differing roles and working conditions.

## Direct contact with a minimum of two people from different employment sectors with differing roles and working conditions



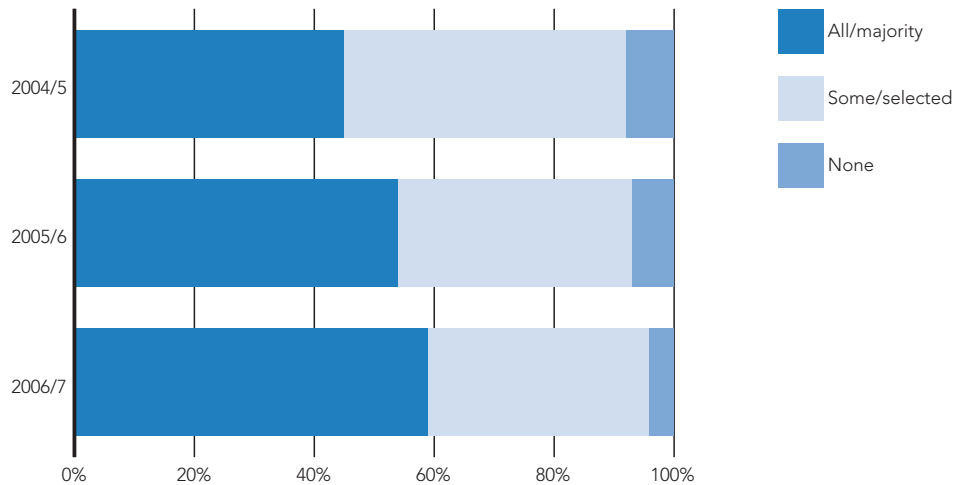
Nearly 8 in 10 schools report they make arrangements for all students to have these experiences. This represents a steady improvement over the three years since 2004, when a little above 6 schools in 10 reported they made such provision.

Within this, however, a diminishing proportion of schools make provision for selected groups only – from about a third to around a quarter. This suggests that the WRL guidance, combined with the support from LAs, LLSCs and agencies such as LSN and the SSAT, has helped schools to broaden the scope of their curriculum and increasingly provide appropriate opportunities for everyone.

However, in a similar question (MCA enterprise 2006) only around 4 in 10 schools reported that all students had direct contact with a minimum of two people from different enterprises. In contrast, in the 2007 Ofsted report The key stage 4 curriculum, 'Students generally completed a record of their work experience and employers were normally involved in this, although to varying degrees' and hence is one valid example. In consequence these differences might be attributable to imprecise definition.

- Using work practices and environments as contexts for learning on at least two occasions and recording evidence of their learning.

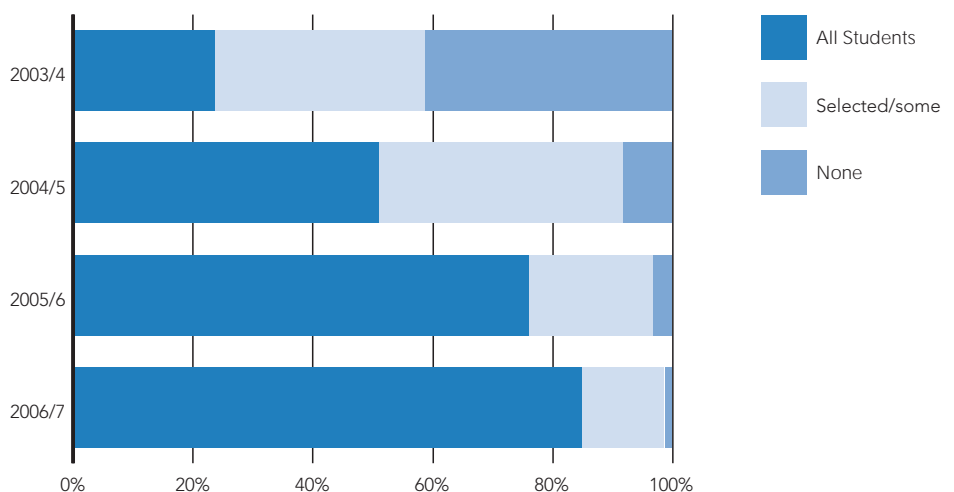
### Using work practices and environments as contexts for learning on at least two occasions and recording evidence of their learning



The use of work practices and environments as contexts for learning on at least two occasions, and recording evidence of the learning, has continued to be provided at a high level by schools. The proportion of schools making such provision has increased steadily to about 95 per cent, rising by about 2 per cent annually. At the same time, the proportion of schools where provision is for selected groups only has diminished from around 4 in 10 to less than a third.

- Involvement in at least one business challenge, problem solving or enterprise activity.

### Involvement in at least one business challenge problem-solving or enterprise activity





The involvement of students in at least one business challenge, problem solving activity or enterprise activity has become an established feature of the key stage 4 curriculum in all but a tiny fraction of schools. From a position four years ago where only about 1 school in 4 provided this learning for all students, development has increased that proportion to more than 8 schools in 10. Around 1 school in 10 continues to make such provision only for selected learners, a fraction that is decreasing from its peak level (2005) of about four-tenths of secondary schools.

Schools reported that enterprise education was guided and structured by reference to school policy in about two thirds of schools in 2006. Schools forecast this proportion to rise above 85 per cent within a year. Its profile is reported to have increased in about 7 in 10 schools and it has secured a place in the school improvement plan in a similar proportion of schools.

Around three-quarters of schools report that enterprise education is very important for all learners in key stage 4, almost all believing it has at least some importance for all their students. These levels are higher than reported importance to students in key stage 3. Coherent with these views, schools are allocating more resources to enterprise education, more than half making an increase for key stage 4, and about 1 in 3 for key stage 3.

Enterprise education is held to have at least some importance for more than 95 per cent of students regardless of general ability. Around two-thirds of schools hold it to be very important.

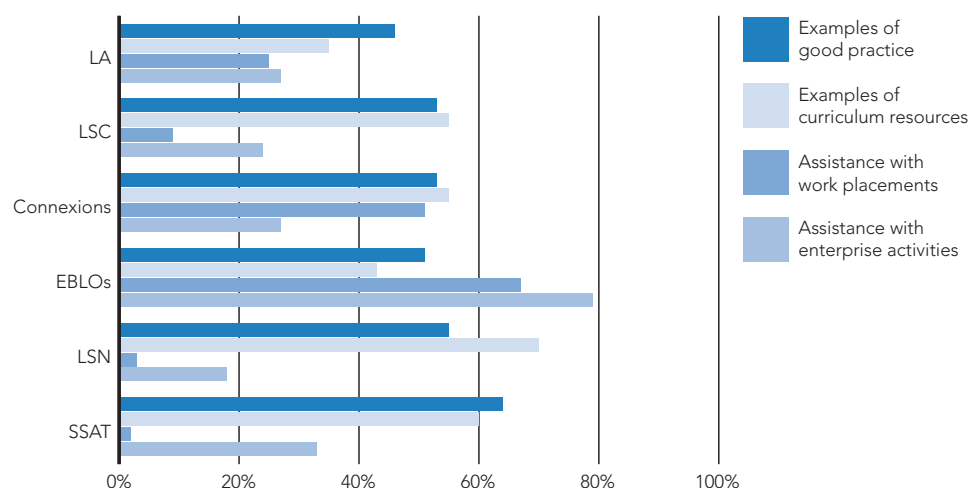
# Organisations supporting schools

## Key points

- Schools perceive six major agencies as providing support, but overall, only around 7 schools in 10 feel they receive sufficient support from outside.
- LAs make valuable contributions in each area of the work.
- Education Business Link Organisations (EBLOs) continue to be the leading providers of placement services.
- The Learning and Skills Network (LSN) and the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT) are perceived in similar proportion to be making important contributions in particular fields.

Overall, about 7 in 10 schools feel they receive sufficient support from outside organisations. Responses by schools in 2007 indicate six organisations that are significant in contributing across each of the four categories: examples of good practice, examples of curriculum resources, assistance with work placements and assistance with enterprise activities.

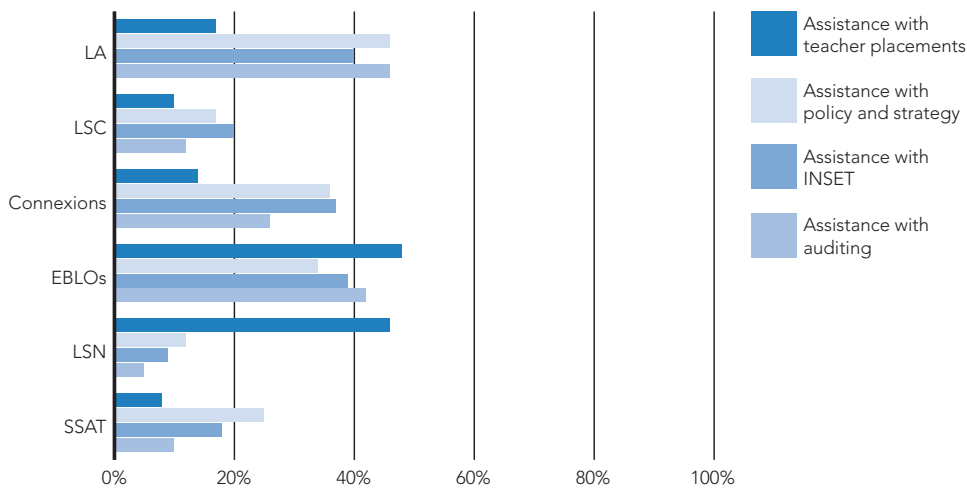
## Sources of support for schools



- EBLOs are leaders in placement services and assisting enterprise activities, they make strong contributions also in curriculum and good practice exemplification.
- Local learning and skills councils make strong contributions in exemplifying good practice and developing curriculum resources.
- SSAT also makes a very strong contribution to this area and to curriculum resources, it also supports enterprise activities.
- Connexions partnerships are, almost equally with EBLOs and the LSC, supporting by illustrating good practice and curriculum resources.
- LSN is the leading provider of curriculum resources, an area where only the SSAT is held to be making a comparable contribution.

These same organisations provide support for schools over teacher placements, school policy development and strategy, INSET and curriculum auditing. In these areas:

## Sources of support for schools



- LAs are leaders in assisting schools in developing policy, their INSET needs and in curriculum auditing
- The role of learning and skills councils in these four areas is moderate overall, being pronounced mainly over INSET
- Connexions partnerships provide strong support over policy and strategy and school INSET
- EBLOs are, again, the lead provider for placement services, being cited in around half of all responses; they provide high levels of support in three other areas too
- LSN is a major supporter of teacher placements (through its regional coordination structure)
- SSAT's strongest contribution is through policy and strategy.

There is clear evidence of change since 2003/04. In the baseline report, Connexions, EBLOs and LAs were cited as the leading providers in each of the seven categories of support then being provided for schools (based on the MCA 2004 study).

Diversification has occurred and schools have been increasingly well placed to obtain the support, guidance and exemplifications of good practice they require. These sources contribute to schools' work to inform policy, curriculum development and professional practice.

# Students' learning

## Key points

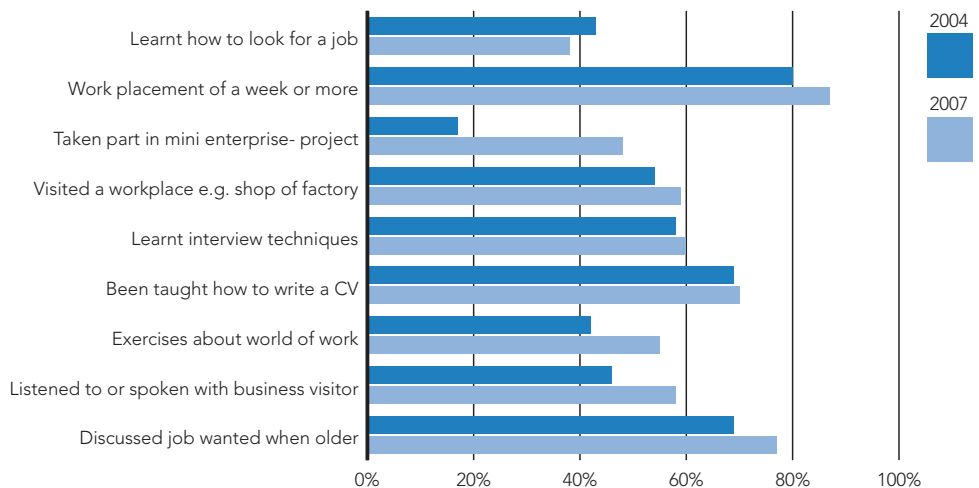
- Students generally are now receiving better provision of WRL than were students three years ago.
- Students value WRL, enjoy vocational courses and find satisfaction in the challenges that enterprise activities offer.
- More than nine in 10 students appear to undertake a work placement of a week or more – though the timing of some surveys may hinder self-reporting of this experience.
- More students regard as important 'instrumental skills', such as writing a CV or learning how to set about finding a job, than say they have been taught them.
- Reporting by schools indicates improvement in several areas where WRL contributes to economic awareness in citizenship, but this remains at a lower level than several other dimensions of the work.

## Self-reported

The Ipsos MORI survey of students' experiences of schooling invited young people to report their views and the scale of their involvement in a particular element of the WRL programme.

Self-reporting is helpful in that it reveals not only what young people feel and know, but indicates the extent of shared understanding that they hold in common with their peers across the country given the need to interpret the underlying sense of each question.

### Year 11 self-reported experiences of WRL



The enquiry shows clear evidence of a stronger position and better established role for WRL in key stage 4 in 2007 than existed in 2004.

The most striking change is with the proportion of students reporting having taken part in a mini-enterprise or other enterprise project. In 2004 the figure was 17 per cent, but this had increased to 48 per cent by 2007. This is consistent with the Ofsted findings published in 'Learning to be enterprising'.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Learning to be enterprising: An evaluation of enterprise learning at Key stage 4. HMI2148 August 2004

In several of these areas there are differences between the learning experienced by year 10 students and those in year 11. Here too, however, a trend exists that demonstrates strengthening of the place of WRL in the curriculum of both year groups over a three-year interval.

Around 9 in 10 (by the time of survey) had undertaken a work placement, around 8 in 10 had discussed their ambitions for a job in the future, nearly 6 in 10 had listened to or spoken with a visitor from business and almost half had taken part in a mini-enterprise activity or project.

Similar data for year 10 students shows differences on most elements attributable to their position in the key stage. However, it is striking that more than 4 in 10, and hence a proportion close to that for year 11, had taken part in a mini-enterprise.

Taken together these data suggest a stronger position for WRL in the perceptions of all key stage 4 students and a particularly sharp increase in enterprise activity, which is probably connected with the support programmes, work of area enterprise advisers as well as the broader influence of the WRL non-statutory guidance.

**93:** *the proportion of students who believe the skills of writing a CV will help them in what they want to do in the future*

**92:** *the proportion of students who believe that learning interview techniques will help them in what they aim to do in the future*

The evidence is consistent too with that from Ofsted survey inspections. Reporting in 2007, inspectors noted (from student responses to a questionnaire about WRL), 'They were overwhelmingly positive. Changes to the curriculum, which involved them more in learning and helped them to develop specific skills increased their motivation.' They found that about two-thirds of students were clear that it was important to understand what jobs entailed. In learners' perceptions, first-hand experience with companies and through

placements and other interactions with people at work is a preferred approach to learning.

The research evidence is similar in general findings. Summarising more than 300 research papers and associated evidence accumulated over several years, Lord and Jones (2006)<sup>12</sup> identified a group of key characteristics that contributed to students' enjoyment and motivation in learning. These centre on broad themes, of relevance, connection to 'real life' and learning 'from people in the know' while also benefiting from information advice and guidance to help form decisions and clarify ambitions for their future lives.

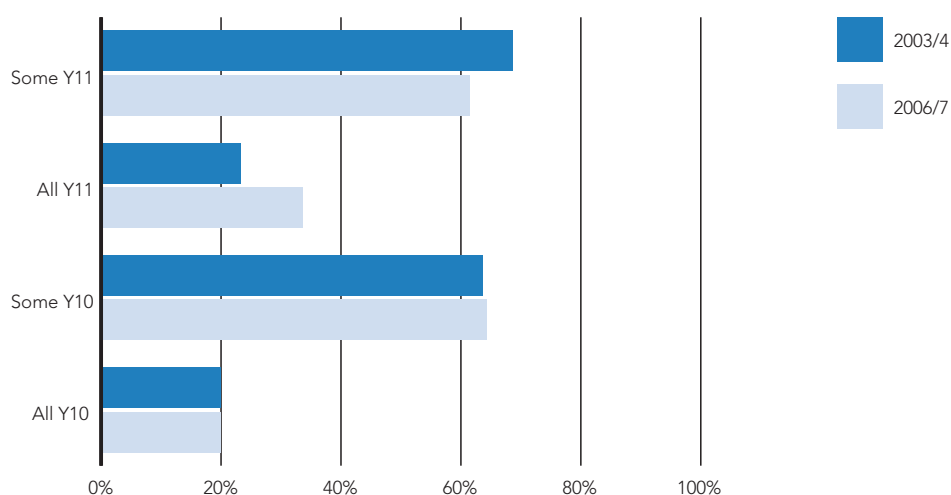
- Vocational relevance in their curriculum is important to pupils – relayed both through skills and content used in actual jobs and careers, and through direct experiences of vocational learning.

<sup>12</sup> Lord, P. and Jones, M., QCA-commissioned research, *Pupils' experiences and perspectives of the national curriculum and assessment*, 2006 (NFER)

- Research indicates that pupils do value connections made to real life in the curriculum. Pupils have identified, for example, aspects of personal safety, careers and life skills in PSHE.
- Overall then, pupils enjoy subjects involving practical activity and an element of 'newness'. Perhaps what is important is practical application – again, making 'relevance' more visible to pupils might be considered.
- Pupils see the relevance of citizenship education in terms of a preparation for their life outside school; and have also valued it making links to their own community and local culture.
- Careers education. Pupils' main sources of information on post-16 options were careers teachers and advisers, subject teachers and family. One-to-one advice was particularly valued.
- Gaining information from people in the know (for example, people already working in the field, students on the courses or from the institutions they were interested in) was also deemed valuable.

## Reported by schools

### Explain the chief characteristics of employment, self employment and voluntary work

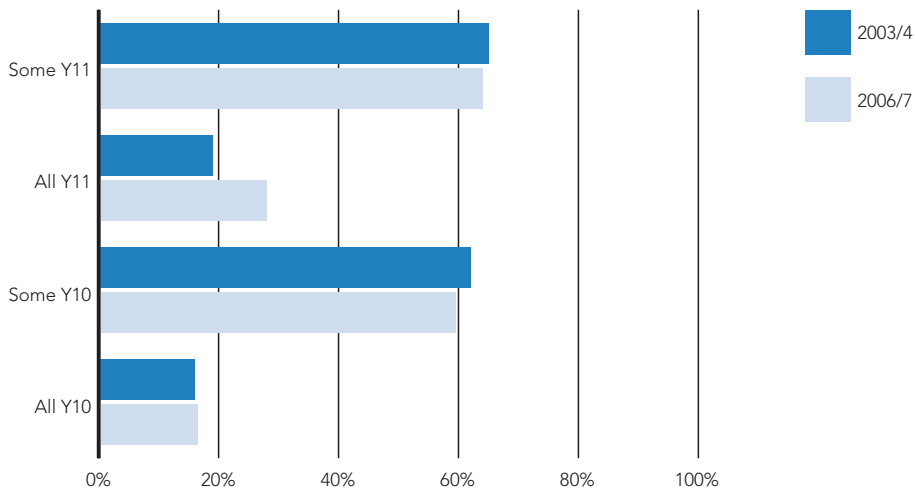


Schools report that their key stage 4 learners can explain the chief characteristics of employment, self-employment, unemployment and voluntary work. This was assessed by reference to the 2006/7 year groups and the 2007/8 year groups. The key measure, that of 'all year group', shows a pronounced increase for year 11 learners, from around a quarter to about 4 in 10.

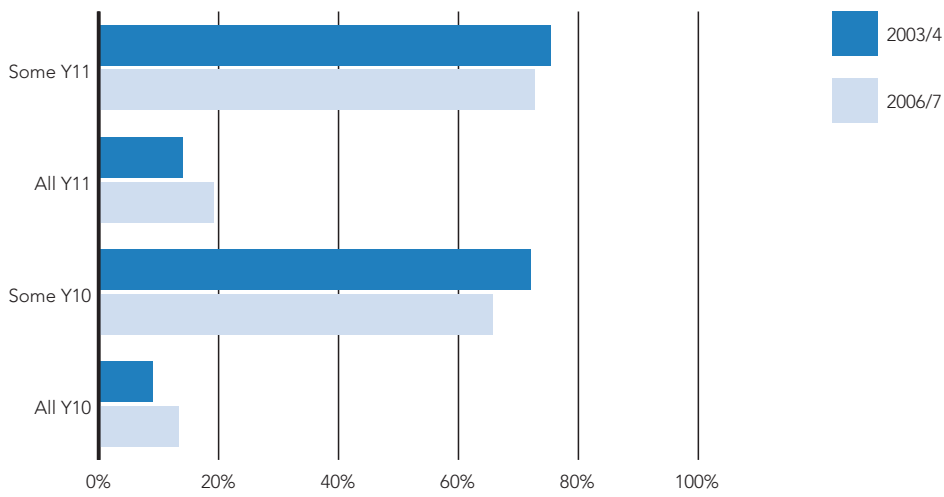
Key stage 4 learners' ability to describe the working practices of one type of business compared with another shows a marked increase in year 11 and a modest rise in year 10. Of year 11 learners, more than 35 per cent can make this distinction, around a fifth of those at year 10.

While some learners at this key stage are clear about the 'main changes happening in the world of work' (between three-quarters and 8 in 10 of 'some learners') only about a fifth of either year 10 or year 11 can confidently express or provide an analysis of current changes. This level, even though generally quite high, might be held to be disappointing given the reported high level of WRL relevance to citizenship and the apparent contribution that WRL should make to learners' understanding of the 'economically active' citizen and the causes and pace of change.

Describe the working practices of one type of business compared with another



Demonstrate an understanding of the main changes happening in the world of work



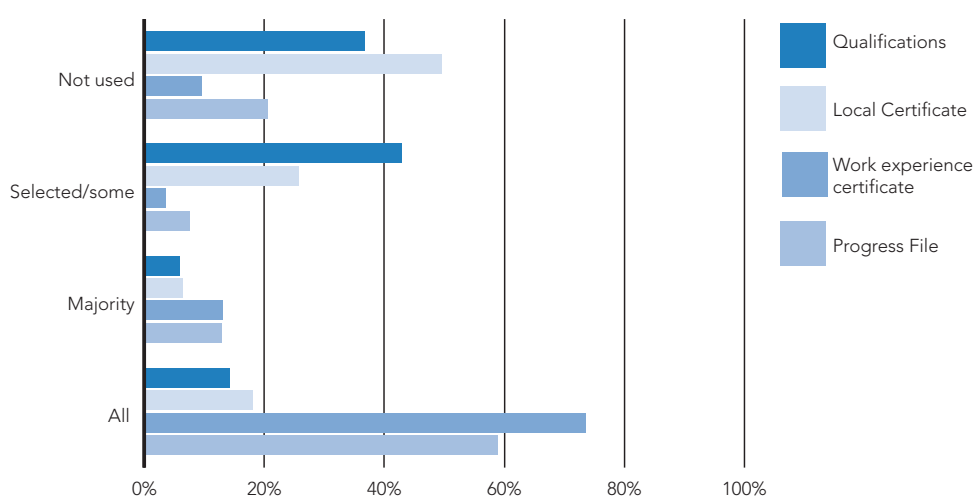
## Qualifications

### Key Points

- Nearly all schools provide some form of certification to recognise the achievement of their students in work-related learning.
- Recognition is predominantly through an identifiable work-experience certificate, which may be to a local area developed format.
- Around 4 in 10 schools enable students to gain recognition through a qualification – typically as part of a vocational course, such as an applied GCSE or a vocational qualification, a unit of which may involve working with employers or undertaking a structured work placement that is prearranged around the assessment framework of the qualification.
- About 6 in 10 schools use Progress File.

The use of Progress File has diminished somewhat (from 65 per cent to 59 per cent over 2006/7), whereas work-experience certificates are now slightly more popular (used by 74 per cent for all students versus 68 a year earlier).

### Recording attainment in WRL



The use of local certification remains at a modest scale but with a very small increase (to 18 per cent from 15 per cent a year earlier).

Qualifications as a means of recording is a complex picture:

- qualifications for 'all students' has risen marginally (from 12 per cent to about 14 per cent), but with a sharper increase, from a low base, for 'the majority' (to 6 per cent from below 3 per cent)
- certification for selected groups of students shows a sharper rise (probably as learning becomes more individualised and the curriculum more flexible) to 43 per cent.

Ofsted reported,<sup>13</sup> 'More generally, introducing vocational courses had raised the attainment of particular groups of students. One school found, for example, that the students following a Young Enterprise project achieved much better in most of their examinations than had been predicted.'

<sup>13</sup> Ofsted, *The key stage 4 curriculum: increased flexibility and work-related learning*, (ref 070113), May 2007.



Overall, there is evidence of increasing opportunity for young people to receive recognition through the qualifications system for their learning in WRL including enterprise. Where chosen qualifications do not offer a suitable vehicle for this, specific certificates are likely to be provided, or evidence assembled into the progress file.

## Annex: Main references

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