

Learning Objectives for Work Experience

Age-appropriate learning objectives are vital in preparing youngsters for Work Experience because they help ensure that students develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed at a pace that matches their stage of cognitive, social, and emotional growth. When these objectives build progressively over time—such as developing communication skills, independence, problem solving, and self-management—they equip young people with the confidence and capability to engage meaningfully in a real workplace. By the time young people reach work experience, they have already practised foundational behaviours like following instructions, working collaboratively, and reflecting on their strengths and goals. This structured progression makes the transition into a professional environment smoother, reduces anxiety, and increases the likelihood that young people will gain genuine insight and success from the experience.

Below are examples for different Year groups:

Year 7

- **Self-awareness & confidence** - Recognise personal interests and simple strengths (e.g., “I’m good at drawing”).
- **Career exploration** - Identify a few familiar jobs and think about what they do.
- **Skill development** - Show basic teamwork and listening skills in work.
- **Decision-making & planning** - Understand why subject choices matter for future opportunities.
- **Work environment understanding** – Think about what a workplace looks like and basic rules (e.g., punctuality).
- **Reflection** - Share one thing learned from this experience with someone else

Year 8

- **Self-awareness & confidence** - Identify personal strengths and link them to skills (e.g., “I’m organised, which helps with planning”).
- **Career exploration** - Explore a range of company job functions and find out about different routes into work (apprenticeships, university).
- **Skill development** - Demonstrate problem-solving and communication in work.
- **Decision-making & planning** - Start considering how GCSE choices connect to this work if it interests you
- **Work environment understanding** – Consider workplace roles and why teamwork and respect are important.
- **Reflection** – Complete the short reflection task on what went well and what could improve in a task.

Year 9

- **Self-awareness & confidence** - Assess personal skills and how they influence career preferences.
- **Career exploration** - Compare different career pathways and evaluate which align with personal strengths.
- **Skill development** - Apply leadership skills at work.

- **Decision-making & planning** – Think about a simple action plan for GCSE choices and future goals following the experience
- **Work environment understanding** - Analyse workplace expectations (dress code, communication styles) and why they matter.
- **Reflection** - Evaluate experiences to identify transferable skills and set improvement targets.

Year 10

- **Self-awareness & confidence** - Analyse personal strengths, weaknesses, and emerging career interests, linking them to specific skills required in different roles.
- **Career exploration** - Investigate industry sectors in depth and compare qualifications, training routes, and labour market trends relevant to personal goals.
- **Skill development** - Demonstrate increasing independence, initiative, and resilience by completing workplace tasks with minimal guidance.
- **Decision-making & planning** - Develop a realistic short-term career or skills plan, identifying subjects, extracurricular opportunities, and work experience that support future aspirations.
- **Work environment understanding** - Interpret workplace culture, expectations, and professional standards, including communication protocols, safeguarding, confidentiality, and responsibility.
- **Reflection** - Produce a reflective account evaluating performance, identifying transferable skills gained, and outlining next steps for improvement.

Year 11

- **Self-awareness & confidence** - Evaluate personal strengths, values, and long-term ambitions, articulating how these shape future education or career choices.
- **Career exploration** - Critically compare Post-16 pathways (A levels, T Levels, apprenticeships, vocational routes), assessing which align best with individual goals and abilities.
- **Skill development** - Apply advanced employability skills such as problem solving under pressure, professional communication, and time management within real or simulated work situations.
- **Decision-making & planning** - Create a detailed Post-16 progression plan, identifying required qualifications, deadlines, and application steps for chosen pathways.
- **Work environment understanding** - Analyse how professional behaviours (e.g., accountability, workplace ethics, digital conduct) affect reputation, progression, and long-term success.
- **Reflection** - Produce a structured reflection reviewing readiness for future work or study, using feedback to set targets for personal and academic development.