



CALL FOR EVIDENCE: WORK PLACEMENTS IN TECHNICAL EDUCATION January 2017

Putting policy into practice

The Government has recently announced plans to reform technical education in England. The [Post-16 Skills Plan](#) outlines its intentions to develop a framework to help support young people and adults into sustainable skilled employment. The availability of work placements (lasting 1-3 months) for learners on college-based technical routes will be central to the successful delivery of the reforms.

Learning and Work Institute (L&W), in partnership with Fair Train, has been commissioned by Department for Education (DfE) to conduct a call for evidence to understand what effective practice in work placements looks like, how current work experience may be increased in scale, how this can be achieved, and the challenges to delivery. The call for evidence provides an opportunity for providers and employers to help inform and influence future policy and practice.

How to get involved

These changes are far-reaching and we are keen to hear from wide range of post-16 providers, employers and other stakeholders. We are interested to hear from those who currently deliver work placements of one month or longer, those who provide work experience which could be increased in scale, those who have offered them in the past but have stopped, and those who have not offered work placements before and why this is.

We are therefore asking for you to submit evidence on your experiences of work placement practice. If you have evidence you would like to share, please:

1. [Submit a response to an online survey](#), relating to past or present work placement delivery in Post-16 sector.

Respondents will have the opportunity to indicate their interest in featuring as a good practice case study.

2. During January and February 2017, we will be holding **workshops** to discuss work placements in technical education. These seminars will be held in:
 - **London** on 25th January 2017, 12.30 – 4.30pm
Address: Westminster Conference Centre, 1 Victoria St, Westminster, London SW1H 0ET
 - **Sheffield** on 1st February 2017, 12.30pm - 4.30pm
Address: Novotel Sheffield Centre, 50 Arundel Gate, Sheffield, S1 2PR
 - **Leicester** on 2nd February 2017, 10.30am - 2.30pm



Department
for Education

L&W LEARNING AND
WORK INSTITUTE



Address: Learning and Work Institute, 21 De Montfort Street Leicester, LE1 7GE

If you are interested in attending, please register your interest by emailing:

kashif.mirza@learningandwork.org.uk.

Places are limited and will be allocated on a first come first served basis. We welcome attendance from a range of stakeholders, but priority will be given to FE providers and employers. These are free events and lunch will be provided.

We will collate all the evidence received in a report for DfE. The deadline for submissions is **Friday 17 February 2017**.

Overview of the technical education reforms

A report from the [Independent Panel on Technical Education](#) led by Lord Sainsbury recommended reform to the skills system and technical education to ensure they are more orientated towards the needs of the labour market. On Friday 8 July 2016 the [Post-16 Skills Plan](#) was published, this accepted each one of Lord Sainsbury's recommendations and outlined the government's plans to reform technical education and develop a framework to support young people and adults to into sustainable skilled employment and meet the needs of the economy.

The reform to the skills system is a significant challenge. It aims to deliver more highly skilled people who are trained effectively to grow the economy and raise productivity, and ensure prosperity and security for individuals. After studying core academic subjects until at least age 16, young people will be presented with two options; the academic or technical option. The technical option will prepare individuals for skilled employment which requires technical knowledge and practical skills valued by industry. It will cover college-based and employment-based (apprenticeship) education, building on recent apprenticeship reforms.

This reformed technical education system will require a strong network of post-16 providers who, along with employers, should take ownership of the vision set out in the Post-16 Skills Plan. Employers will be at the heart of this system and will take the lead in setting standards. Providers and employers will work much more closely together. There will be a common framework of 15 routes across technical education, delivered in either a college or apprenticeship setting.

Essential to the delivery of these reforms is the availability of work placements for learners on college-based technical routes. Work placements offer the opportunity for learners to gain practical occupational skills and behaviours, which are difficult to learn in an educational setting.

At present, evidence suggests that learners participate in work experience, which is typically short in duration, often one to two weeks. Work placements available through technical education routes will be longer lasting, structured placements of up to three months, with an employer in an industry relevant to the learner's study. This will represent a major change to the current post-16 system where work placements of a significant length are not commonplace.

Further information

If you would like further information about the call for evidence, please contact Kashif Mirza, Senior Researcher, Learning and Work Institute: Kashif.Mirza@learningandwork.org.uk.