



Employer Engagement Strategy

Employer engagement means involving employers in developing the skills of the future workforce through links with 14-19 education and training providers.

Principles

Employers have a vital part to play in preparing young people for future careers and to help them acquire general life skills.

We aim to:

- Prepare young people for the world of work in particular and adult life in general.
- Raise teacher awareness of the world of work and the work-related curriculum.
- Contribute to the raising of standards of achievement via work-related activities.
- Support the business community in its need to create a world-class competitive workforce for the future.
- Provide high quality, comprehensive and impartial information, advice and guidance (IAG) about learning opportunities and career pathways at appropriate transition points. This will be supported by an e-based common prospectus and application process.
- Provide learning that is embedded in and supported by local labour market information (LMI) and supported by a range of local employers.
- Build good, long-lasting relationships with employers based on reasonable and realistic expectations, a dialogue based on a common understanding, well planned activities, ease of access for employers and clearly defined needs from education.

We will provide a one-stop-shop for employer engagement activities with Connexions, the EBP, WRL providers and Aim Higher all sharing data.

Background

By 2013, all schools will need to be working with employers. There will be pressures on employers to support:

- Young Apprenticeships
- Diplomas
- Work experience
- Apprenticeships

The National College for Educational Excellence has identified 5 priorities:

1. A 'National Framework'.
2. A member of the leadership team within each institution responsible for business relationships.
3. Mobilisation of business support.
4. Identification of good practice.
5. Ensuring access to high quality business brokerage.

Employer Engagement Strategy within the 14-19 Partnership

- Identify a single point of contact to co-ordinate employer engagement across the town.
- Determine employer engagement objectives.
- Identify current activity and where employer involvement is needed.
- Identify who is the lead person in each institution with responsibility for employer engagement.
- Create a communications protocol.
- Identify the points at which employers come together.
- Consider the needs of the local and the wider economy.
- Carry out a review of work experience including an analysis of learner views.
- Develop a town wide entitlement for careers education, including IAG regarding careers pathways, and preparation for work experience.
- Develop an award for employers to reflect their participation in 14 -19 activities.
- Improve employers understanding of what is happening in schools and colleges. This can be achieved through invitations to employers and employer organisations to attend recruitment and open evenings to update knowledge on facilities, equipment and curriculum offered by local institutions and by educational institutions hosting business meetings.
- Increase opportunities for teachers and lecturers to update their knowledge through professional development placements with employers, facilitated by DEBP. Each school is currently entitled to two free placements.
- Encourage and support applications for national awards such as Apprentice of the Year and National Training.
- Look at ways of accrediting student work-based learning and /or volunteering.
- Build contacts – Chamber of Commerce, FSB, Business Link, the Third Sector.
- Identify local skills gaps and match to the outcomes of the 14-19 curriculum review.
- Develop services for businesses, linked to school specialisms including the provision of training and meeting facilities.
- Develop school-based business and enterprise activities.
- Use school and EBP staff as well as learners during work experience to act as ambassadors to recruit employers for curriculum activities.
- Develop a themed staff professional development programme linked to local employers in different sectors.
- Develop a customer care strategy for the Partnership to ensure that employers are well looked after when visiting an institution.
- Develop a menu of work-related activities for each curriculum area from which employers can choose to contribute.

Guidance for Practitioners

- Think about the request from the business representative's point of view;
- Be clear about what you are asking them to do;
- Negotiate the structure of the session;
- Contact your employer before the day to make sure they are able to attend;
- Ensure any materials have been uploaded onto the computer and ensure that technical support will be available on the day;
- Brief learners about the purpose of the session;
- Make sure reception staff know that a visitor is due to arrive and ensure that a learner is able to meet and greet;
- Make it clear that you will manage the class / staff are present to support the event;
- Ensure there is time for a debrief after an activity;
- Send an email/write a letter thanking the business for their involvement.

Examples of Employer Engagement to Support Diploma Delivery

<p>Collaborative links: establishing links and building relationships with local employers and creative practitioners</p>	<p>Communication: explaining the Diploma, the role of work-related learning within it and the fact that their involvement is intrinsic to the successful delivery of the Diploma</p>	<p>Collaborative support: asking employers what their issues and ideas are and how they would like to be involved</p>
<p>Partnership: engaging employers on the outset, not just at the point of delivery. Employers should be represented on strategic groups so that they are a genuine partner and involved in the whole process</p>	<p>Involvement in Planning: involving them in the planning of the curriculum, in the delivery models and in the resource requirements</p>	<p>Involvement in Delivery: engaging employers and practitioners to support the delivery of Principal Learning through work-related learning activities, as well as other components in the Diploma, including PLTs, functional skills and the Project</p>
<p>Involvement in Assessment: involvement in assessment activities and ongoing student support, including mentoring, providing feedback on students' work, witness testimonies and formal discussions</p>	<p>Resource Development: industry already develops fantastic online and multimedia resources that support learning in the context of these sectors. These can be drawn from and adapted to support the delivery of the Diploma</p>	<p>Information, Advice and Guidance: employers can inform the IAG offered to young people, advising on employment opportunities and progression routes, and providing guidance to manage expectations</p>