

spark!
KICK
STARTING
CAREERS

5 DAY VIRTUAL WORK EXPERIENCE



ABOUT SPARK!



Born out of the Hounslow Education Business Partnership, Spark! is now an independent charity with 40 years experience of partnering with schools and communities, alongside a diverse range of local and national employers.

We enhance young people's employability skills, knowledge, and experience, so that they are better prepared for and able to effectively transition into the workplace, finding and keeping a job.

We enable and support long-term relationships between businesses and education to deliver:

- high quality work experience placements
- inspiring careers mentoring relationships
- a range of employer engagement and skills development opportunities

We believe it's possible for every young person to be ready and equipped to enter the world of work.

THE OBJECTIVES

1. Experience of workplaces, including, exploring career opportunities and expanding networks. (Gatsby Benchmark 6)
2. Meaningful interactive encounters with employers and employees. (Gatsby Benchmark 5)
3. Greater understanding of Career and Labour Market Information. (Gatsby Benchmark 2)
4. Greater understanding of organisational structures, job opportunities, and skills required to succeed in a workplace.
5. Improved employability skills:
 - Communication
 - Team work
 - Self-management
 - Professionalism in a virtual working environment
6. Increased confidence in own ability to succeed in a professional work place.
7. Increased motivation to succeed, and to positively engage in own learning.



THE BASICS

Throughout the 5 day virtual work experience placement students will meet and work with different volunteers from within their host employer, representing different business functions across the organisation.

Students will complete set tasks each day, as well as participating in scheduled employability and work readiness workshops, coordinated by Spark!, in partnership with the employer volunteers.

Students will be 'employed' in small groups, working independently and in teams on daily work experience tasks.

Students can be based at home, or in school, as long as they have access to a computer, reliable internet, and an appropriate workspace. Student safety is always a top priority, so online activity must be supervised,

Spark! will provide ongoing logistical support, including; establishing a timetable for delivery, sourcing employers, training volunteers, providing student workbooks, and measuring impact.



THE DETAIL

1

Spark! will work with the school or college to understand the needs of the students, to ensure a meaningful virtual work experience opportunity. Schools can choose either generic placements or can request certain industries.

2

Spark! can source the employers to host the students, agree dates and numbers of volunteers required, and support the design and structure of the placements.

3

Each day students will meet with volunteers from various business functions, who will set them specific work tasks, e.g. planning an event, designing a social media campaign, costing an activity, researching a competitor, etc.

4

For each work experience task, the volunteer will introduce themselves and talk about their industry, their role, and key skills for their jobs. They will set up the task for the day, provide context, set expectations, and supply information and resources.

5

The students will then, either independently or in small teams, work on the task that has been set for them, over an established time-period.

6

Once complete the students will present their work, and the host volunteer will review and provide feedback to the students.

7

There will then be time for further questions and answers about the business volunteer's role and their industry.

8

The virtual work experience activities will be complemented with employability workshops, engaging volunteers from the host businesses.

THE STRUCTURE

The programme for each virtual work experience will vary to best meet the needs of the students, the school, and the employer. The below is an example structure.

High quality work experience hosts will often choose to run workshops to supplement their work experience programmes, supporting students to learn about different career pathways and to apply what they have learnt.

For 5 day virtual work experience, Spark! will coordinate employability workshops, in collaboration with employer volunteers, to complement the students' work experience.

DAY 1 10am - 11am: Workplace induction and effective virtual working

- Introductions, outline of the week, goals setting, safety online, working in a virtual environment

11am - 12pm: Business task 1 - e.g. social media and marketing

- Understand social media business functions and target audience
- Plan a 6 month social media marketing campaign

12pm - 3pm: Independent working (either on own or in teams)

- Students manage their own time, follow the structure in their workbooks, and complete the set task
- Check-ins with the employer volunteer to ask questions as required

3pm - 4pm: Present back, feedback and Q&A

- Students present their task to the employer, who provides feedback, and shares their approach
- Interactive question and answers with the volunteer

DAY 2 11am - 12am: Business task 2 - e.g. planning an event

- Allocated hypothetical budget, event brief, and guidance

12am - 3pm: Independent working (either on own or in teams)

3pm - 4pm: Present back, feedback and Q&A

DAY 3 11am - 12am: Workshop 1: e.g. employability skills

- Learn about the skills employers are seeking
- Team activities, and identifying strengths and weaknesses

11am - 1pm: Research task introduction

- Students choose a company they will encounter over the week and research the company and industry

1.30pm - 3pm: Speed networking with employers

DAY 4 11am - 12am: Business task 3 - e.g. budget management

- Introduction to simple budget management, and provided with guidance

12am - 3pm: Independent working (either on own or in teams)

- Students manage their own time, follow the structure in their workbooks, and complete the set task

3pm - 4pm: Present back, feedback and Q&A

DAY 5 11am - 12am: Workshop 2: - e.g. CVs, LMI and finding a job

- Introduction Labour Market Information and simple CV formatting

12am - 1pm: Independent working on research project and presentation

1.30pm - 2.30pm: Presentations, feedback and Q&A

2.30pm - 3.30pm: Reflections on learning, celebrate achievements, and final Q&A

THE TERMS & CONDITIONS

COSTS

Generic virtual work experience placements
circa £60 - £80 per student (minimum of 12 placements)

Industry specific virtual work experience placements
circa £80 - £120 per student (minimum of 8 placements)

Occasionally we secure project specific funding, and are able to offer fully funded or discounted placements

BOOKING

Virtual work experience requires a lead in time of a minimum of 10 weeks.

The more students you wish to place in virtual work experience the more lead in time is required to source appropriate placements.

CANCELLATIONS

If the booking is cancelled by the school a minimum of 3 months before the scheduled dates, the cost of already sourced placements will be incurred.

If the booking is cancelled by the school less than 8 weeks before the placements are due to take place, the full cost will be incurred.

However we will endeavour to reschedule wherever possible

NEXT STEPS

If you have any questions or would like to discuss a booking please get in touch with Spark! on wex@sparkcharity.org.uk to arrange a time to speak with our Work Experience Manager



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