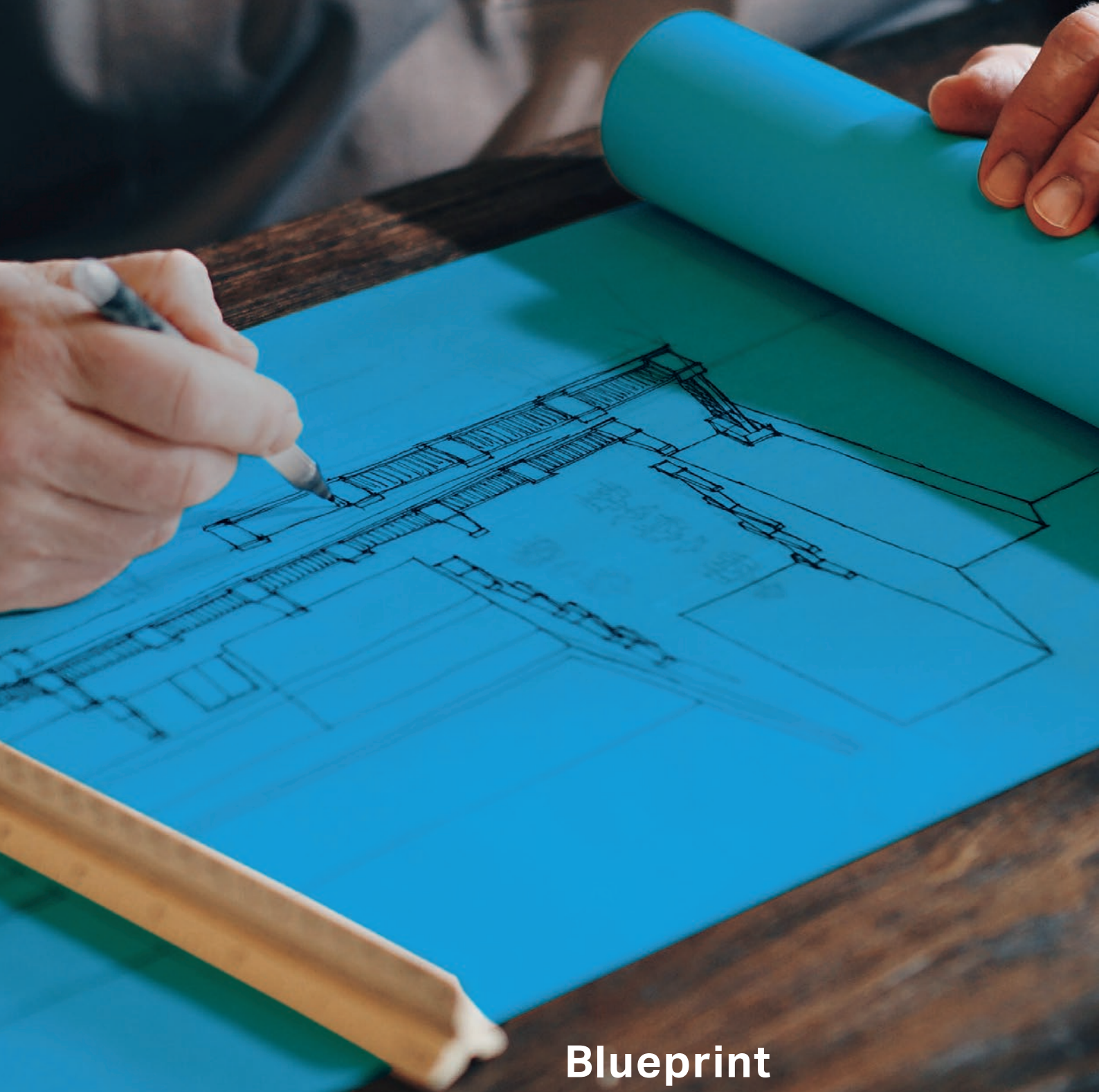


**MAYOR OF LONDON**

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**Blueprint**

Hosting Work Experience

# MAYOR OF LONDON

## London Enterprise Adviser Network (LEAN) Blueprints

Welcome to the LEAN Blueprints. We created 5 blueprints to help schools and businesses create effective opportunities for students to learn about careers. We've included suggestions and ideas for everything we think you'll need to plan and run successful and impactful careers projects.

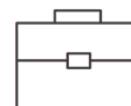
In this Blueprint you'll see information on:

1. What is work experience?
2. Why host work experience?
3. How to host work experience

### What is work experience?

Around 80% of employers think work experience is essential and two-thirds of employers would be more likely to hire a young person with work experience over someone with none. Despite this, [UKCES reports](#) that only 27% of employers offer work experience<sup>1</sup>.

Through the [Gatsby Benchmarks](#) schools and colleges across England have been challenged with providing every student with an experience of the workplace. This will require thousands more businesses opening their doors to young people in their local community.



BENCHMARK 6

### Why host work experience?

Experiences of the workplace can play a key role in preparing young people for adult work environments. Many will not have visited a workplace like yours before and these young people will be at a significant disadvantage should their first experience be at a job interview.

Work experience can help demystify work, break down some of the unsaid rules and etiquette in the workplace and help raise the aspirations of young people. Ultimately it gives a young person a chance to picture themselves working at your organisation.

### What's in it for your business?

Over half (53%) of all employers who offer work experience say it is because "it provides the experience young people need". These employers recognise the intrinsic value of work experience, which is that it helps young people eventually get into work. There are also a number of business benefits:

- Support your Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) objectives.
- Influence and inspire the future workforce, potentially finding future employees.
- Engage, develop and motivate members of staff through their engagement with the student(s).
- Gain insights from a new age group, bringing fresh ideas and approaches.

## How to host work experience

### 1. Define your work experience offer

Hosting work experience can take a number of formats. Before you reach out to schools, determine internally the following:

- Number of placements
- Duration of placement
- A lead and backup contact at your organisation
- Which teams will be involved?
- Approximate dates (be as flexible as possible).
- Whether expenses will be provided?
- What you want them to learn from the experience?

### 2. Decide on the type of student you want to work with

You may wish to consider a student from a particular age group, with required skills or competencies, whether they need to have a prior interest in your industry or if they should be studying a related subject.

Try to keep the number of restrictions to a minimum to ensure that as many students as possible can access the opportunity. Remember many students may not have been given the opportunity to develop relevant skills previously or may simply not have encountered your industry/role before.

### 3. What are you required to do – cutting through the bureaucracy

Under health and safety law, work experience students are your employees. You should treat them no differently to other young people you employ. If you have never employed a young person (under 18) before, take a look at the [Health and Safety Executive's guidance](#). You should be asked by the school/college to provide:

- A risk assessment – If you have not employed a young person before you may need to review and amend an existing risk assessment. If you have fewer than five employees, you are not required to have a written risk assessment. See the [British Youth Council's](#) guide for an example risk assessment.
- Your Employer liability insurance certificate - Your existing employers' liability insurance policy will cover work placements provided your insurer is a member of the Association of British Insurers, or Lloyds, so there is no need for you to obtain any additional employer's liability insurance if you take on work experience students.

## 4. Do you need to have a DBS Check?

If the student is aged 16 to 17 it is unlikely that your staff will be required to have a DBS (Disclosure and Barring service) check.

However, a school or college will request criminal record check in certain circumstances – particularly where the student is under 16 or when you or one of your employees that will have regular unsupervised access to the young person. The school or college will notify you if this is necessary.

See the Department for Education's [Keeping children safe in education](#) (paragraph 186) for more information.

## 5. Finding students for your opportunity

To ensure your opportunity reaches a wide pool of students, you can use the following options:

1. Contact the [London Enterprise Adviser Network](#) (LEAN) who will link you with a local school.

The LEAN will have a full-time member of staff, an Enterprise Coordinator, who will be able to connect you with a school/college that is looking for work experience placements for their students.

2. Contact your local [Education Business Partnership](#) or equivalent local provider

Local providers can manage this process for you and will have additional expertise to offer. However, schools are charged a fee for using these services and so a number of schools are unable to offer work experience via this route.

3. Contact local schools or colleges directly

If you have a specific school/college in mind and want to build a longer-term relationship, we recommend contacting their Career Leader. Their details should be listed on their website's careers page or on their 'provider access policy'.

## 6. Check-in with the school/college work experience lead

Each school or college will have their own checklist but they are likely to cover the following:

- The risks at your workplace and how these will be managed
- Your planned induction process for the placement student, including any opportunity to meet them beforehand.
- The student's physical and psychological capacity
- Dress code, location, hours of work.
- How to report issues or truancy

## 7. Devise the workplan

Our four top tips for your workplan are:

- Provide students with a short project that they can work on throughout the placement. This will help ensure they can work unsupervised when needed. Projects could include:
  - a. Keep a daily diary of work they are doing and how this links to what they're learning at school. This can be turned into a presentation or article for the business's internal communications.
  - b. Review a series of the company's products and write up your suggestions for how they could be marketed.
  - c. Develop ideas for how the business could market their early-talent programmes to young people like them.
- Give students with the opportunity to meet a range of different teams and colleagues.
- Set open-ended and real to life tasks to inspire students and develop their enterprise and problem-solving capabilities. They might just surprise you with the ideas they come up with.
- Try to retain some flexibility in the workplan so you can respond to areas they show an interest in.

## 7. Provide a thorough induction

The induction is one of the most important parts of a student's work experience.

Many students will not have visited a workplace previously and so might not understand typical workplace etiquette.

Our tips:

- Ensure they are introduced to their key contact for the placement and one or two other members of the team. Providing them with multiple people to ask for help can be invaluable if their key contact is suddenly called away.
- Provide a thorough overview of your workplace, including toilet location, fire escapes, timings for the day and when and where they should have lunch.
- Discuss the risks outlined in your earlier risk assessment and how they are controlled. Check that they understand what they have been told and know how to raise any concerns.
- Provide a clear outline of what they will be doing with their time with you, including a plan or schedule detailing where they will be and who to meet.

See the CIPD's ['Making Work Experience Work'](#) for further guidance on what to include in your induction.

## 8. Check-in frequently with the student

Try to check-in with the placement student(s) daily and encourage them to reflect on what they have learned, enjoyed and disliked. Being able to adapt their workplan in the light of these conversations can help ensure the placement is a positive experience for both you and the student.

The school/college may also arrange to check in with you, either by phone or email or in person. If you are experiencing significant issues or have concerns do not feel as though you must wait for your scheduled catchup with the school/college, particularly you believe there may be a safeguarding issue.

## 10. Collect feedback and record learnings for future placements

Quality work experience should provide both the student and school/college with feedback on how well the student has performed during the placement. This will help them reflect on the learning that has taken place.

You should also give the student an opportunity to provide feedback to you on their experience. Evaluate the feedback and record it so that colleagues can learn from your experiences in the future.

### Wider resources

This has been a quick overview of the processes involved in organizing work experience. We recommend these resources for more detailed advice:

[British Youth Council - Unleashing the potential of work experience: A guide for SMEs](#)

[CIPD - Making Work Experience Work](#)

[Health and Safety Executive's Guidance](#)

[UKCES – Not Just Making Tea](#)

[BITC Work Inspiration Toolkit](#)

[Have your work experience accredited by Fair Train](#)

### LEAN Blueprints

Don't forget about our other blueprints available at [www.london.gov.uk/LEAN](http://www.london.gov.uk/LEAN):

**Gatsby Benchmark 5 blueprints**  
(for schools)

**Gatsby Benchmark 6 blueprints**  
(for employers)

- Speed Networking Event
- Professional Interview Day

- Employer Insight Visit
- Work Experience

If you have any ideas on how we can improve these blueprints, please contact [enterpriseadvisers@london.gov.uk](mailto:enterpriseadvisers@london.gov.uk)