

Work-Based Learning On- the- Job Training

What is Work-Based Learning?

The Tri-Agency has defined work-based learning as practical, hands-on activities or experiences through which a learner interacts with industry professionals in a workplace, which may be an in-person, virtual, or simulated setting. Learners prepare for employment or advancement along a career pathway by completing purposeful tasks that develop academic, technical, and employability skills.



Career development begins as early as elementary school with students participating in career fairs and accelerates in middle school as students take career exploration classes. In high school students can choose to complete a program of study related to one of 14 career clusters. Students in a completing a program of study typically spend the first two to three years receiving classroom instruction in the knowledge and skills they will need to be successful in a chosen occupation. Students have the opportunity to complete their program of study with work-based learning through a Practicum or Career Preparation for Program of Study course. Students can spend up to three class periods a day participating in paid or unpaid work-based learning experiences.

Practicum Courses

Every program of study includes at least one Practicum course a student can take for an on-the-job training experience. A student can earn two or three credits for a practicum course that can be scheduled at the beginning or the end of the school day to meet the employer's needs. Students must meet with the practicum teacher in class for the equivalent of one class period a week. For example, a student in a school that has 50 minute classes can meet with the teacher for 10 minutes a day or meet once a week for 50 minutes.

Career Preparation for Programs of Study

Career Preparation for programs of study is similar to the Practicum courses except the student must be in the classroom with the teacher for one class period every day. A student in a 3-credit Career Preparation for Programs of Study course will have two periods to work during the school day. Students in the 2-credit Career Preparation for Programs of Study course will have one class period to work during the school day.

Scheduling for Success

There are a number of factors to consider when scheduling a student to be at work. First, work periods must be scheduled in a way that enables the student to travel to the training site and work beyond the school day. Typically work periods are scheduled at the end of the school day. Depending on the school's bell schedule, it is possible for a student to be on campus until lunch and work the last three periods of the day. If the employer's day ends at 5:00 the students could potentially work 4 hours per day during the school week. In some cases, the best opportunity for a student to work is in the morning. In this scenario, the student can go to work before the school day starts and work the first two or three periods before traveling to school. This may also allow an athlete to participate in work-based learning experience and play sports. When a school district is using the Career Preparation for Programs of Study course, they need to consider the best time to schedule the period the students must be in class so that it appropriately aligns with a student's work schedule.

The Student, the School, and the Employers Obligations

The rules and regulations for the Practicum and the Career Preparation for Programs of Study courses are in the [Student Attendance Accounting Handbook](#). Written training plans must be on file for any student participating in either a paid or unpaid work-based learning experience at an approved training site except for a student participating in an unpaid Practicum or Career Preparation for Programs of Study course for which the teacher of record provides all training. The training plan for the student must be on file within 15 school days of the student's employment date.

The student agrees to diligently participate in the work-based training experiences and conscientiously pursue the coordinated classroom course of study as outlined in this training plan. Work-based learning experiences will be assigned by the training sponsor and performed according to the same company policies and regulations applicable to regular employees. The student agrees to take advantage of every opportunity to improve his or her efficiency, knowledge, and personal traits in order to pursue further education and enter the chosen occupation as a desirable employee.

The company and school are responsible for providing students with opportunities for training in the basic skills of an occupation and knowledge of related technical information. In order to provide a systematic plan for well-rounded training, a schedule of work-based training experiences and a parallel classroom course of study have been coordinated and agreed upon by the training sponsor and CTE teacher. The teacher assigned to teach courses involving work-based learning experiences must physically visit each student's training site at least six times each school year.

Why should you consider hiring a student?

The work-based learning experience should be a win-win for all that are involved. The student will have the opportunity to work in the field they have trained for, earn a paycheck and learn financial responsibility. They have work experience to add to their resume and potentially have hours that will count towards an apprenticeship and or a certification. The employer contributes trained personnel to the workforce and potentially trains their next generation of workers. The school provides outstanding learning opportunities for students without the cost of expensive tools and facilities. Students who participate in work-based learning opportunities are more likely to become CTE completers and graduate College and Career ready.

**For additional information on a high school plumbing program, contact the CTE team at TEA:
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