

Practical Work Place Skills: First Steps (SCQF level 3)
SDS Customised Unit – H37L 04

Skills Development Scotland	
Practical work place skills: First Steps (SCQF level 3)	
<p>This unit is designed to be delivered as part of a wider employability programme, or as a standalone unit appropriate to candidates undertaking a work placement, to demonstrate the generic work place skills that are sought by Scottish employers for entry level work. Candidates who have achieved this unit will have demonstrated their ability to apply appropriate employability skills, behaviours and attitudes endorsed by the work placement organisation over a period of at least 150 hours. This may be delivered in more than one work place and through variable models. It does not require that the work place activity is undertaken in the manner of substantive employment.</p>	
<p>Learning outcome 1: Demonstrate appropriate application of simple core skills in the context of a work placement environment (What you want the candidate to do)</p>	Evidence
<p>Performance Criteria: (How you want the candidate to do it)</p>	Evidence of actual performance that the candidate uses straightforward communication, ICT and numeracy skills to the employer's required standard over the period of the work

<p>1.1 Employ appropriate, simple communication, ICT and numeracy skills in familiar/routine and pre-planned contexts to meet the needs of the work placement organisation</p>	<p>placement. Evidence must be integrated through the production of an employer graded report for each performance criteria based upon the agreed requirements of the candidate before they began their placement</p>
<p>Learning outcome 2: Demonstrate application of personal management skills and behaviours within a work placement environment</p>	<p>Evidence</p>
<p>Performance Criteria:</p> <p>2.1 Follow work placement employer policy in relation to time keeping and attendance requirements</p>	<p>Evidence of actual performance that the candidate follows work place policy in relation to time keeping and attendance to the employer's required standard over the period of the work placement. Evidence must be integrated through the production of an employer graded report for each performance criteria based upon the agreed requirements of the candidate before they began their placement</p>
<p>2.2 Follow work placement policy and procedures in relation to safe working practices</p>	<p>Evidence of actual performance that the candidate follows safe working practice to the employer's required standard over the period of the work placement. Evidence must be integrated through the production of an employer graded report for each performance criteria based upon the agreed requirements of</p>

	the candidate before they began their placement
2.3 Dress appropriately in relation to the requirements of the work placement	Evidence of actual performance that the candidate dresses appropriately in relation to the requirements of the work placement when attending the work placement activity. Evidence must be integrated through the production of an employer graded report for each performance criteria based upon the agreed requirements of the candidate before they began their placement
2.4 Demonstrate a positive and responsible approach to learning within the work placement environment	Evidence of actual performance that the candidate demonstrates a positive and responsible approach to learning when attending the work placement activity. Evidence must be integrated through the production of an employer graded report for each performance criteria based upon the agreed requirements of the candidate before they began their placement
Learning outcome 3: Demonstrate straightforward team working skills, behaviours and attitudes under frequent supervision within the work placement environment	Evidence

<p>Performance Criteria:</p> <p>3.1 Demonstrate a positive attitude to working with work placement colleagues, mentors and supervisors</p>	<p>Evidence of actual performance that the candidate demonstrates a positive attitude to working with colleagues, mentors and supervisors when attending the work placement activity. Evidence must be integrated through the production of an employer graded report for each performance criteria based upon the agreed requirements of the candidate before they began their placement</p>
<p>3.2 Demonstrate willingness to participate in basic supervised and pre-planned tasks allocated within the work placement</p>	<p>Evidence of actual performance that the candidate demonstrates willingness to participate in tasks allocated when attending the work placement activity. Evidence must be integrated through the production of an employer graded report for each performance criteria based upon the agreed requirements of the candidate before they began their placement</p>
<p>3.3 Demonstrate ability to follow straightforward instructions from supervisors, asking for appropriate clarification and under frequent supervision</p>	<p>Evidence of actual performance that the candidate follows straightforward instructions and asks for clarification or assistance when required when attending the work placement activity. Evidence will be integrated through the production of an employer graded report for each performance criteria</p>

Learning Outcome 4: Review and evaluate own strengths and experiences in relation to the world of work	
4.1 Identify own strengths and weaknesses in relation to the work experience, reflecting upon feedback from the work placement provider	Written/oral evidence of reflection on own strengths and weaknesses in relation to core skills, personal management & team working skills and behaviours in the work place
4.2 Identify areas for improvement in relation to work skills.	Written/oral evidence of at least 2 areas where could improve in relation to work skills behaviours and attitudes
4.3 Identify action points for improvement in relation to work skills	Written/oral evidence of action points relating to areas of improvement identified in 4.2

SUPPORT NOTES

Content/context

This unit is designed to support employability programmes in schools, colleges, learning providers and other organisations who wish to integrate a substantial period of work place activity into the programme and utilise employer opinion as part of evidence generation as is identified in the SDS Introduction to Work Place Skills - *Practical Work Place Skills Unit*. Whilst the exact time allocated to the delivery of this unit is at the discretion of the Centre, the work placement time must total at least 150 hours. The notional time for learning, teaching and assessment is therefore 150 hours.

This unit is suitable for candidates who have had no previous experience of working within a real work place but ideally candidates will have undertaken preparations to undertake their work placement activity through preparatory activity with a tutor.

This unit **should be delivered** within a genuine work place with external employers wherever possible. However, unlike the unit *Practical Work Place Skills*, it may be that the workplace is a “protected” or more flexible environment. For example, it may be suitable for delivery within voluntary sector organisations and in institutional work environments which are not necessarily commercial or directly customer facing. The candidate must fulfil a minimum number of hours within the workplace in order to demonstrate their generic “employability” skills over the 150 hour total period, but delivery may be broken up. For example, it may be one day per week over a full academic year. The skills, behaviours and attributes that the candidate is expected to demonstrate are those identified by business organisations including the CBI. This includes:

- Planning and preparation
- Team working
- Problem solving
- Core skills of communication, ICT and numeracy
- An underpinning positive attitude.

It is expected that candidates undertaking this unit will develop their employability skills within entry level job role activities, i.e. those benchmarked against the SCQF at levels 3-4, but will be under frequent supervision from the placement provider and will undertake simple, routine, familiar and pre-planned tasks within the workplace.

Characteristic of a “Quality” Work Placement Experience for IWPS	Requirement
The work placement environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work place should ideally be a “real” place of work where business takes place. This may be in the private, public or third sector. However, realistic working environments may be appropriate such as those found in colleges and some 3rd sector placements • The work place environment must have paid employees or self-employed individuals • The work place must have appropriate health & safety compliance, insurance and Equality policy in place and be compliant with Scottish employability law
The terms and conditions of the placement activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The business must give the candidate activities and responsibilities that mirror the requirements of a “real” job where they can use, with guidance, basic tools and materials safely and effectively. It would be expected that they carry out simple, familiar and routine tasks which have been pre-planned, applying basic skills. • The candidate must complete at least 150 hours of placement activity. This may be delivered in a flexible manner such as half a day per week (But equally may be more substantive).

	<p>Placements therefore will therefore span over a variable time and should be agreed locally prior to commencement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The candidate is expected to follow the rules and policies of the organisation in the same manner that any other employee does (giving consideration to the fact that they require regular supervision and support).
Process requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work place must demonstrate commitment to agreeing, implementing and assessing the activity of the candidate.

Delivery, learning and teaching approaches

This unit must be delivered within a real work place environment. However, this may be a “protected” or more flexible environment as defined in the context statement above.

In preparation for the work placement the roles, tasks, expected behaviours and attributes that the candidate will carry out should be agreed between the learning provider and the employer. It is important that the learning provider manages the expectations of the employer in relation to the candidate and there should be room for some negotiation as to how the agreed standards are interpreted. Every work place culture has its own implicit standards which should be made explicit to prepare the candidate.

The form attached below as Appendix 1 outlines a method of recording preparatory discussion which will allow the learning provider to prepare the candidate for the placement. It is also suitable for recording the agreed standard against which the employer would be expected to benchmark the candidate’s performance. It is therefore important to retain this completed document as a reference of standard for the employer scorecard. It also allows the learning provider the opportunity to intervene and refer back to the agreed standards if issues arise

The learning provider should be mindful of the level of this unit and ensure that the agreement made with the employer reflects that the candidate is expected to complete only simple, routine, familiar and pre-planned tasks using basic knowledge of the work place and under frequent supervision.

Normal health and safety work placement site evaluations should also be carried out prior to the placement and this is likely to be the responsibility of the learning provider, but could be negotiated through partners responsible for the programme. It may be sensible for the negotiation of the standards for the candidate to be completed at the same time as the health and safety assessment to minimise disruption to the business.

Ideally, the candidate should receive a briefing before entering the work place, but may also be accompanied by the learning provider to the placement on the first day. The learning provider should visit the candidate regularly during the placement and speak, both with the candidate to assess their learning, and with the supervisor to determine their progress.

There should be regular and frequent contact between the learning provider and employer to maintain an understanding of how the candidate is getting on and to identify any additional support which might be required. It would be appropriate to utilise the scorecard to undertake a formative assessment after 25% of the placement activity (around 38 hours) which can be used to support the candidate for the rest of their work experience activity.

Assessment

There is a requirement to complete 2 instruments of assessment to the agreed standard:

1. The employer scorecard
2. Self evaluation of candidate's performance and actions required

1. The employer scorecard

Performance evidence is required over the sustained period of the work placement. Evidence should be recorded using a scaled approach to gain employer opinion. This approach, coupled with the discussions had between learning provider and employer in order to manage expectations at the beginning of the placement activity, should mitigate against the subjectivity identified in relation to concerns that the employer is not trained in implementing standardised assessment procedures.

Employers should also be fully briefed on considering the candidate's ability to learn and the formal assessment of competence for the scorecard should not commence until the learner has completed 25% of their placement activity (around 38 hours), giving them the opportunity to learn from early mistakes and develop. This is important for the more measurable elements including timekeeping and attendance. The placement scorecard guidance for the employer is attached as Appendix 2 to this unit and the employer endorsement candidate checklist is attached as Appendix 3. **In order to pass the first assessment task, candidates must have scores of level 3 or above in all areas. This should be substantiated by a completed scorecard signed by the designated employer supervisor from the work placement.**

2. Self evaluation log and action plan

Candidates should be encouraged to reflect upon their scores and their employer feedback, to identify their own strengths and weaknesses in relation to the world of work, and use them to score themselves, using this as a tool to plan future workplace learning.

The learning provider should be responsible for internal verification, giving consideration to the employer's experience of undertaking the assessment process. It is absolutely acceptable for the learning provider to support the employer in completing the scorecard but it is a requirement that the employer signs the scorecard. This should allow the learning provider to consider whether the employer has made a fair and reasoned judgement

Appendix 4 is a note form which will allow the employer to write down notes expanding on reasons why a score was given and should give points where the candidate has done well and areas for improvement. This may be completed by the assessor through dialogue with the employer but it is fully the assessor's responsibility to ensure that the employer has engaged with the scoring process appropriately.

Appendix 5 is an assessment template for completion of Outcome 4 of the unit, which supports the candidate in reflecting on their own experience of the work placement and allows them to identify areas for improvement and actions for improving their work skills.

Quality Assurance of Employer Scoring Process

The learning provider should be responsible for internal verification, giving consideration to the employer's experience of undertaking the assessment process. It is absolutely acceptable for the learning provider to support the employer in completing the scorecard but it is a requirement that the employer signs the scorecard. This should allow the learning provider to consider whether the employer has made a fair and reasoned judgement. The learning provider should refer back to the completed agreed standard that the candidate was working to and enter into any discussions with the employers where it is felt that there has been any deviation from the agreed standard.

Guidance in relation to gaining scores for candidates who have undertaken their work placement activity in more than one work place location

Where a candidate undertakes their work experience in more than one location, the assessor (learning provider) is responsible for collating and averaging scores from all supervisors that have worked with the candidate. The assessor should consider the employer scores and also the self evaluation undertaken by the candidate. Where all employer scores are below the pass level of 3 for each of the scorecard criteria, the candidate should be deemed to have been unsuccessful. Where less than 50% of employer scores are below 3 in any area, the assessor must make a fair judgement based upon collation of the other employer evidence presented to them.

Appendix 1

Agreed “contract” for work placement activity

Candidate name:

Dates of proposed placement:

Allocated work place supervisor signature:

Tutor/learning provider signature:

Requirement of the candidate	Agreed criteria between employer/learning provider	Other comment
Generally, what roles, tasks and responsibilities will be expected of the candidate?		

Are there particular tasks/protocols/ requirements expected in relation to communication (written/oral); numeracy and ICT use (should be routine straightforward and pre-planned requirements only)?		
What will be the agreed working hours (including start finish times, breaks and days per week)?		

Is there a particular dress code (including PPE requirement) expected of the candidate?		
Are there any health & safety areas that should be highlighted with the candidate before they begin in this workplace?		
Are there particular behaviours and attitudes that the employer expects from the candidate in the work place in relation to e.g. working with others, with supervisors etc?		

<p>What would the employer expect of the candidate when they are unsure about tasks allocated to them?</p> <p>Are there specific rules in the work place that the candidate should be aware of before starting?</p>		
<p>What protocols should the candidate follow in the event of lateness or absence from the work place?</p>		

Appendix 2: Employer Scorecard Guidance

Profile	1	2	3	4
Employing application of simple core skills as required by the workplace.¹	Is frequently unable to use simple skills ²	Struggles often to use simple skills even in very familiar workplace contexts	Can usually use simple skills in familiar contexts	Can always use simple skills in familiar contexts
Following attendance requirements	Poor attendance at work place and unable to provide appropriate rationale for absence	Erratic attendance with absences without appropriate rationale	Good attendance with occasional explained absences	100% attendance to fulfil 150 hours requirement
Following time keeping requirements	Arrives late, is back late from breaks without relevant excuse on more than a few occasions	Normally good but with a few lapses in time-keeping with inappropriate excuses	Good time-keeping with odd lapse e.g. on-time but not prepared to start work	Always on time at start and after breaks and prepared for work
Following safe working practices	Shows little awareness of risks within the work place	Shows some understanding of safety issues and	Generally demonstrates awareness of	Demonstrates good safety awareness and asks/flags up issues

¹ For example: produce and respond to simple oral and written communication in familiar/routine contexts; carry out simple tasks to process and access information; use simple numerical and graphical data in everyday contexts

	and is a danger to self and others	risks but has frequent lapses	safety and workplace risks	of safety concern
Following organisational dress code	Wears inappropriate dress frequently which poses a risk to themselves and others and cannot therefore fulfil tasks	Follows dress code with odd exceptions to code, e.g. forgotten to remove unacceptable jewellery	Follows dress code with rare exceptions	Always follows required dress code
Attitude to learning in the work place	Unwilling and uninterested in learning new tasks and about the workplace	Sometimes uninterested in learning but occasionally attentive and asks some questions	Usually willing to learn new things, asks questions but may require to be prompted	Very enthusiastic about learning in the workplace, asking frequent questions to improve their own knowledge
Working with work place colleagues, mentors and supervisors	Reluctant to work with others	Tries to work with others but sometimes behaviour means that it does not go well	Works well with others and contributes generally to the team effort	Works well with others and inspires team performance
Willingness to undertake tasks	Frequently reluctant to undertake tasks and demonstrates very negative body language in the work environment	Usually undertakes tasks but body language often suggests reluctance	Usually undertakes tasks but body language occasionally suggests reluctance	Always undertakes tasks with positive approach and body language

Ability to follow instructions and ask for assistance when unsure	Ignores instructions frequently and rarely asks for assistance, contributing to poor task completion	Usually follows instructions but often diverges from them	Follows instructions with occasional lapse (often due to misunderstanding)	Always follows instructions and makes an effort to clarify them when unsure
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Appendix 3: Instrument of Assessment 1: Candidate work placement employer endorsed scorecard

Candidate name:

Employer scorer name and signature:

Date:

Result:

Assessor signature and feedback:

Profile	1	2	3	4	Candidate Score
Employing straightforward communication, numeracy and ICT skills as required by the workplace.	Is frequently unable to use routine skills	Struggles often to use routine skills even in very familiar workplace contexts	Can usually use routine skills in familiar contexts	Can always use routine skills in familiar contexts	
Following attendance requirements	Poor attendance at work place and unable to provide appropriate rationale for absence	Erratic attendance with absences without appropriate rationale	Good attendance with occasional explained absences	100% attendance to fulfil 150 hours requirement	
Following time keeping requirements	Arrives late, is back late from breaks without relevant excuse on more than a few occasions	Normally good but with a few lapses in time-keeping with inappropriate excuses	Good time-keeping with odd lapse e.g. on-time but not prepared to start work	Always on time at start and after breaks and prepared for work	
Following safe working practices	Shows little awareness of risks within the work place and is a danger to	Shows some understanding of safety issues and risks but has frequent	Generally demonstrates awareness of safety and	Demonstrates good safety awareness and asks/flags up issues	

	self and others	lapses	workplace risks	of safety concern	
Following organisational dress code	Wears inappropriate dress frequently which poses a risk to themselves and others and cannot therefore fulfil tasks	Follows dress code with odd exceptions to code, e.g. forgotten to remove unacceptable jewellery	Follows dress code with rare exceptions	Always follows required dress code	
Attitude to learning in the work place	Unwilling and uninterested in learning new tasks and about the workplace	Sometimes uninterested in learning but occasionally attentive and asks some questions	Usually willing to learn new things, asks questions but may require to be prompted	Very enthusiastic about learning in the workplace, asking frequent questions to improve their own knowledge	
Working with work place colleagues, mentors and supervisors	Reluctant to work with others	Tries to work with others but sometimes behaviour means that it does not go well	Works well with others and contributes generally to the team effort	Works well with others and inspires team performance	
Willingness to undertake tasks	Frequently reluctant to undertake tasks and demonstrates very negative body language in the work environment	Usually undertakes tasks but body language often suggests reluctance	Usually undertakes tasks but body language occasionally suggests reluctance	Always undertakes tasks with positive approach and body language	
Ability to follow instructions and	Ignores instructions frequently and rarely	Usually follows instructions but often	Follows instructions	Always follows instructions and	

ask for assistance when unsure	asks for assistance, contributing to poor task completion	diverges from them	with occasional lapse (often due to misunderstanding)	makes an effort to clarify them when unsure	
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Appendix 4

Employer Feedback

<p>Please state the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate in relation to their skills, attitudes and behaviours in the workplace</p>	
<p>Please give recommendations for the next steps for this candidates development in relation to developing their work readiness</p>	

Appendix 5

Instrument of Assessment 2: Candidate's self evaluation

Using the feedback from the employer, score yourself in relation to the following areas:

Profile	1. POOR	2. UNSATISFACTORY	3. GOOD	4. EXCELLENT
My core skill use in the workplace (comms, ICT and numeracy)				
My attendance at the work placement				
My timekeeping at the work placement				
My safety awareness in the work place				
My ability to follow dress codes in the work place				
My attitude to learning in the work place				
My team work on the work placement				

My willingness to do what asked in the work place				
My ability to follow instructions and ask for assistance when unsure in the work place				

Using your scores above, identify what your strengths and weaknesses are at the moment in relation to work skills:

My strengths are:

My weaknesses are:

What areas do you need to improve upon in relation to the world of work?

Areas where I need to improve are:

1.

2.

Identify what actions you will next take to improve your skills in relation to the world of work:

I will:

1.

2.