



# An Introduction to Teacher Externships and Real-World Learning

Real-World Learning (RWL) involves intentionally designing the curriculum so that it is relevant and contextualised, making learning meaningful and inspiring. Although this can come in many forms, this paper highlights Teacher Externships, one of our key programmes within [Real World Learning RWL](#).

## What is a Teacher Externship?

A Teacher Externship involves teachers/lecturers visiting a local employer, observing how their subject is used in the workplace and discussing different career pathways relevant to that subject. Teachers/lecturers then return to school/college and plan a project linked to the curriculum, or develop curriculum-based resources, using the business they have visited as the context and

setting. Their students complete the work or project within school, thereby: enhancing their understanding of the relevance of the curriculum; developing their employability skills; preparing them for the workplace; becoming inspired and motivated - all of which helps lead to informed career choices.

A Teacher Externship provides an opportunity to:

- Build deep and sustained relationships with employers.
- Develop teachers'/lecturers' knowledge and confidence in linking their subject to careers - *"Teacher training and CPD - One of the key issues that faces the Careers Leader is engaging teaching staff in the careers programme. In the recent Careers & Enterprise Company survey of Careers Leaders, it was identified as the 4th biggest barrier to delivering the role effectively. 43% of Careers Leaders cited it as an obstacle. This is also a barrier to ensuring teachers talk about careers when speaking to Ofsted inspectors."*
- Achieve Gatsby Benchmark 4, which states: *"All teachers should link curriculum learning to careers."*
- **Ofsted CIF 2019 –**
- Behaviours and Attitudes, *"Real World Learning (Careers Learning) has an input in the form of pupils' motivation and positive attitudes to learning as important predictors of attainment. This can be linked to the schools linking curriculum learning to careers and the inclusion of encounters with employers"*.
- Leadership & Management - That adequate CPD is provided for all staff to enable them to feel confident in delivering the career related aspects of their subject. Or as the Common Inspection Framework (CIF) puts it - *"Whether continuing professional development for teachers and staff is aligned with the curriculum, and the extent to which this develops teachers' content knowledge and teaching content knowledge over time, so that they are able to deliver better teaching for pupils."*

Source: [ncw-ofsted-handbook-2019](#)

Students were more engaged in their learning and developed a deeper understanding of the curriculum and the relevance to the workplace.

A good way of embedding careers provision into the curriculum and in a way that is sustainable, easy and has a lot of positive outcomes for staff and students.

*Teacher quotes from the externship programme*



## Benefits to an Employer

- Raises community profile and contributes to the corporate, social responsibility agenda
- Supports personal development of staff and supports CPD
- Builds long-term partnerships with schools to support future recruitment of young talent
- Inspires the future workforce
- Raises sector awareness
- Helps bridge the skills gap
- Helps support schools achieve Gatsby Benchmark 4

Feedback from our externship day was tremendous...It reaffirmed to [company staff] that training and upskilling is a positive thing.

*Comment from an Employer*

## Next Steps

To learn how you can access training to develop and deliver your own Teacher Externship Programme in your organisation, please email:

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