

# Unit 18: Work Experience

<b>Unit code</b>	<b>M/618/5059</b>
<b>Unit level</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Credit value</b>	<b>15</b>

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## Introduction

A crucial part of a professional's skills, abilities and competences are developed through work and they are refined through practical experiences and 'learning by doing'. Employers rate work experience above all else and HN qualifications aim to make students work ready by preparing them with the appropriate balanced skills profile that employers require.

Integral to achieving 'work readiness' is the need for practical application and contextualisation of learning; a perspective that is increasingly sought after by employers. Curriculum that helps students gain real-world, relevant experience in their chosen careers has proven to be an enabler for graduate progression to employment and of considerable value to students' personal and professional development.

This unit aims to enable students to develop personal and professional skills by engaging them in practical tasks and activities in a relevant workplace. The unit is designed to facilitate supervised learning in a workplace that can fit around full-time or part-time student commitments, it enables an employer and an academic supervisor to monitor and support students through a goal-orientated process. The minimum work experience hours required for completion is 80 hours.

Students will be given the opportunity to identify and plan their own skills development in line with a chosen career path or direction. It is expected that students negotiate and agree work experience in an appropriate work context, agreed by the employer and academic supervisor. To allow students to evaluate the process and any shortcomings in their development going forward, they will monitor and record evidence from the tasks and activities they undertake.

## **Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this unit students will be able to:

- LO1 Investigate the value and benefits of practical work experience for career and personal development
- LO2 Plan suitable and relevant work experience in an appropriate sector organisation
- LO3 Undertake appropriate work experience to develop professional skills and competences
- LO4 Evaluate personal skills and competences developed during practical work experiences.

## Essential Content

### LO1 Investigate the value and benefits of practical work experience for career and personal development

*Organisational contexts for career development:*

Different service sector sub-sectors and organisational contexts.

The key roles and responsibilities found in different service sub-sectors.

*Learning and development in work environments:*

Academic knowledge vs practical knowledge and skills.

Learning theories, including Bloom's Taxonomy, Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences and Bandura's Social Learning Theory.

Concept of application of theory to practice.

The benefits of practical learning.

Career progression and employer expectations of key employability skills, e.g. interpersonal skills, communication skills, critical thinking, presentation skills, leadership skills, teamwork.

The importance and value of soft skills to the hospitality industry, soft skills vs hard skills.

### LO2 Plan suitable and relevant work experience in an appropriate sector organisation

*Setting development plans, goals and objectives:*

'SMART' planning, writing of goals and objectives.

Self-assessment of skills and competences.

Learning and development approaches:

Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic (VAK) learning styles, Honey & Mumford learning cycle, KOLB's learning cycle.

Different learning approaches, e.g. shadowing, in-house courses and on-job training, online learning, formal training, buddying, secondment, coaching and mentoring, job rotation, workshops, conferences.

*Preparation tools and techniques for career development:*

Looking at job applications, CV and interview preparation.

Interview and presentation skills.

The importance of understanding the appropriate uniform and dress code for the job role in relation to the interview process.

Service sub-sector specific equipment and requirements.

### **LO3 Undertake appropriate work experience to develop professional skills and competences**

*Carry out planned tasks and activities:*

Engagement in tasks such as projects, routine duties, operational issues, formal training, legal compliance, process development.

People management and leadership.

Application of problem solving, contingency planning, coordinating tasks, teamwork.

Professional conduct and behaviours to display while working, presenting a brand identity, the importance of uniformity in presentation.

### **LO4 Evaluate personal skills and competences developed during practical work experiences.**

*Recording of actions and activities in suitable formats:*

Methodical record of experiences gained during work, linked to skills to be developed.

Recorded in appropriate methods such as journal, logbook, diary, portfolios, online records.

Creation of evidence in appropriate formats.

*Reviewing and evaluating progress:*

Reflection of career development and learning in the work environment in areas such as: systems, interpersonal skills, problem resolution, incidents and accidents, teamwork and management practices.

Recommendations on how to enhance future development plans, e.g. different work context, alternative roles and titles, locations, preparation methods, time management.

## Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

Pass	Merit	Distinction
<b>LO1</b> Investigate the value and benefits of practical work experience for career and personal development		<b>D1</b> Critically evaluate the benefits of practical action learning to underpin theory and approaches in the work environment.
<p><b>P1</b> Explore and discuss different learning theories that could be used to inform a suitable work experience.</p> <p><b>P2</b> Examine the benefits of practical work experience for professional skills and career development.</p>	<p><b>M1</b> Evaluate a range of different learning theories in practice, to highlight and emphasise the benefits of action learning for career development.</p>	
<b>LO2</b> Plan suitable and relevant work experience in an appropriate service sector organisation		<b>D2</b> Analyse and interpret actions, activities and approaches, adopted in a structured development plan, to gain appropriate work experience in a service sector organisation.
<p><b>P3</b> Construct a development plan for skills and career advancement in a chosen service sector context.</p> <p><b>P4</b> Explain a range of tools and techniques that can be used to acquire appropriate work experience in a service sector organisation.</p>	<p><b>M2</b> Devise an in-depth development plan that provides a detailed outline of the approaches, tools and techniques applied to gain appropriate work experience in a service sector organisation.</p>	
<b>LO3</b> Undertake appropriate work experience to develop professional skills and competences		<b>D3</b> Critically reflect on development processes within the workplace to establish strengths and weaknesses of the different approaches adopted.
<p><b>P5</b> Conduct appropriate work experience to develop specific skills for career development whilst producing on-going evidence of work performance.</p>	<p><b>M3</b> Examine the development processes within a work context to maximise growth opportunities within the work experience.</p>	

Pass	Merit	Distinction
<p><b>LO4</b> Evaluate personal skills and competences developed during practical work experiences.</p>		<p><b>D4</b> Justify the evaluation and recommendations of different approaches to enhancing development in practice.</p>
<p><b>P6</b> Evaluate skills, performance and career development to identify areas for future advancement.</p> <p><b>P7</b> Recommend methods and techniques to enhance development processes in the given service sector work environment.</p>	<p><b>M4</b> Produce an evidence-based evaluation of work experiences, making actionable and tangible recommendations for enhanced development processes.</p>	

## Recommended Resources

### Textbooks

DONE, J. and MULVEY, R. (2016) *Brilliant Graduate Career Handbook*. Essex: Prentice Hall.

GRANT, K. and HOOLEY, T. (2017) *Graduate Career Handbook: Life after graduation, maximise your employability, get a graduate*. Trotman.

ROOK, S. (2016) *Work Experience, Placements & Internships*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

ROOK, S. (2019) *The Graduate Career Guidebook*. London: Macmillan.

### Websites

[www.cipd.co.uk](http://www.cipd.co.uk)

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development

(General reference)

[www.mindtools.com](http://www.mindtools.com)

Mind Tools

Career Support Resources (General reference)

[www.nationalcareers.service.gov.uk](http://www.nationalcareers.service.gov.uk)

National Careers Service CVs, Skills Health Check

(General reference)

### Links

This unit links to the following related unit:

*Unit 17: Professional Identity and Practice*