



The Gold Award for Languages

*The Work
Experience
Challenge*

**Routes into Languages
Yorkshire and the Humber**

THE WORK EXPERIENCE CHALLENGE

This challenge can fit in with the standard work experience week(s) organised in many schools.

Students should complete work experience with an employer where foreign languages are used. Or they could go into a monolingual workplace and examine how foreign languages might be useful in that organisation.

Ideally, students would actually use the target language while on placement, but it is not essential in order to receive the award. The most important thing is to see and reflect upon how languages can be used in a work environment. Examples could be:

- Multinational Businesses
- Exporters
- University
- Travel Agency
- Tourist Office
- Translation Bureau

BUT OUR SCHOOL IS NOT ABLE TO OFFER WORK EXPERIENCE PLACEMENTS TO OUR STUDENTS...

If your school is not able to offer work experience to your students, this does not stop them from taking part in the Gold Award.

One option could be for students to use their own contacts to find an appropriate work placement during school holidays.

Another alternative is to carry out a project as if they were working for a local organisation, for example:

- Could students produce foreign language signage for the local bureau de change / railway station / library?
- Is there a local festival / attraction where foreign visitors might appreciate an information pack in their own language?
- Could students create menus of local dishes in a foreign language, or find typical specialities from another country to welcome visitors to a civic event?
- Would a local business like a phrasebook to help them export into a new market?
- Instead of spending time working with an employer, a group could visit their premises for a tour and then complete a language challenge based on what they have seen?

If students contact a business to inform them that they could be the inspiration for a challenge, the manager might want to display their work on the premises, or perhaps visit the school to make a presentation or talk to a group about their work.

SOME OF OUR STUDENTS STRUGGLE WITH ENGLISH. HOW CAN THEY DO WORK EXPERIENCE IN ANOTHER FOREIGN LANGUAGE?

There are many benefits of the Work Experience Challenge for students with limited command of English:

- If they spend time in an English-speaking workplace, they can reflect on how it has helped their English to improve and the importance of this for their future.
- On the other hand, they might choose to work in an organisation serving their own language community, providing an insight into other aspects of multilingualism (dealing with suppliers, other businesses etc.).

BUT OUR SCHOOL DOES NOT HAVE CONTACTS WITH THE RIGHT KIND OF EMPLOYERS

If you foresee difficulties accessing employers, do try and explore all local contacts that you and your colleagues in the school might have. You could also try some of the following:

- Inspiring the Future (<http://www.inspiringthefuture.org/>) is an organisation that links schools with people in industry who are willing to volunteer their time.
- Many areas have an Education Business Partnership (EBP), which promotes quality work experience for students.
- Your local Chamber of Commerce is a good source of business contacts.
- Contacts in internal and external careers services should have ideas.
- Why not try appealing for help via social media?