

# Work Related Learning

## Audit Tool



### What is an Audit Tool?

An audit tool is a good way to initiate discussion and development on an issue. It enables you to make clear the range of activities which may contribute to the issue and the process can reassure colleagues that quite a lot of work may already be developed in the area. The process can also recognise local autonomy and priorities, within an institutional frame-work, and can:

- encourage development of a strategic plan to clarify how work related learning can be developed in relation to a particular discipline;
- identify how far and in what area development should take place; and
- give recognition to existing activity which contributes effectively.

However the Audit Tool also serves broader purposes:

- raising awareness by staff of practice in general and of the institution's plans;
- revealing or clarifying links between the aspect being audited and plans and strategies in other areas;
- engaging a wider constituency within the academic community; and
- facilitating dialogue and development within and between teaching units.

The purpose of this audit is **developmental**, not simply to come up with an overall score for the course. It is designed to help teachers **consider** the content and design of a course with respect to the issue of **work related learning** and to see where they could improve the course to better address this issue.

The term 'Work related learning' is used here in a broad context to include work based learning, learning at work, learning through work, placement learning and learning utilising work-based scenarios and simulations in all their forms. For particular aspects of work related learning (e.g. placements) the Work Placement Audit Tool may be more suitable. If the interest is in more inclusive employability aspects, then the more general Employability Audit Tool will be a more appropriate tool.

There are a large range of teaching situations which can involve work related learning ranging from, for example, 1 year placements through to brief problem based learning scenarios set in a work context. Because of this range of methods and contexts of use it may be appropriate for elements of this audit to be extended by the user or for particular elements to be deleted since they are inappropriate.

**The Work Related Learning Audit Tool can be downloaded from the Centre's website: [www.bioscience.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/audit.aspx](http://www.bioscience.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/audit.aspx)**

The Work Related Learning Audit Tool can be changed to suit your requirements. This audit tool was last updated in December 2011

## How to use the Work Related Learning Audit Tool

The audit should be carried out with respect to the totality of provision within a course. The numeric scoring system allows for the situation where an issue might be addressed but only superficially or at the wrong time. Only score 4 if you believe the course optimally deals with the audit point.

In the various aspects of work related learning score 0-4 for **each** of the audit points depending on how closely you believe these audit points are **optimally** achieved in the course being audited.

- Score 0 if the audit point has not been seriously considered at all.
- Score 1-4 if the audit point has been considered but reflection indicates it is
  - poorly (1);
  - partially (2);
  - adequately (3); or
  - optimally (4) satisfied.

Make a subjective judgement and score accordingly. Think about it from the student's point of view as well as that of the course team.

Having completed the work placement audit you should analyse each of the audit points with a score of 2 or less:

- What possible options could be envisaged which would satisfy the audit point?
- Do resource or other constraints make any of these options unrealistic?
- At what point in the course could appropriate changes be made?
- Which changes would most benefit work related aspects of the course?
- Can a realistic action plan be formulated to introduce these changes into the course before the next intake of students?

Are there potential **quick wins**? There may be something that you or your colleagues could do very easily that would not cost a lot in terms of resources or time.

Are there changes that require **longer term planning**? Does the change require agreement of others / resource allocation / time to implement?

Collect all your action points into the **action plan** at the back of the audit tool.

Having instituted changes as a result of the audit the process should be repeated in 12-24 months.

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### You may also be interested in:

The Work Placements and Employability Audit Tools available from the Centre, [www.bioscience.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/audit.aspx](http://www.bioscience.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/audit.aspx)



## 1. Raising awareness

	Score
Are all academic staff aware of the full benefits of work related learning?	
Do all academic staff know that work related learning elements are included in parts of the existing module / programme?	
Do all academic staff know how these elements contribute to the learning objectives?	
Are students aware at an early stage of the employment opportunities open to them?	
Are students aware at an early stage of the benefits of work related learning?	
Are students able to choose to do modules / courses which they know contain work related learning elements?	
Are the views of previous cohorts of students on the value of work related learning elements in the module / course made known to existing students?	
Is information available to prospective students about the use of work related learning in the course?	

## 2. Relationships with employers

	Score
Are there good communications with employers of your graduates?	
Do you know specifically what employers are looking for in graduates?	
Do you know what particular skills, knowledge and attitudes the employers of your students see as becoming more important in the next 4 years?	
Do you have access to new material from employers on which to base new or updated work related learning elements?	
Do employers have opportunities to contribute directly to the production, assessment and teaching of the work related learning elements?	

## 3. The work related learning element(s)

	Score
Have you identified the work related learning elements that exist in your module / programme?	
Are the learning objectives for the work related learning elements clear and well defined?	
Are the learning objectives congruent with those defined for the module / programme?	



### 3. The work related learning element(s) (cont.)

	Score
Do the learning objectives relate to attitudes as well as knowledge and skills where appropriate?	
Are the learning objectives in line with those identified in the subject benchmark?	
Are the learning objectives readily available to students?	
Are students required to reflect on the work related learning activities they have undertaken and given the time, within a structured environment, to do so?	
Are students required to document and record the outcomes of their work related learning in structured environment?	
Do students have a choice of work related learning materials within a module / programme?	
Is guidance provided on the consequences of participating in particular work related learning elements?	
Is there sufficient capacity to allow all students who wish to participate in work related learning activities to do so?	
If not, are the methods used to select the students explicit, known to the students and fair?	
Is the ratio of time involved to credit rating (or marks awarded) for work related learning elements known and comparable to that for other elements in the module / programme?	
Are the work related learning elements fully embedded and valued in the module / programme and not seen as an add-on?	

### 4. Provision of support

	Score
Are appropriate learning resources available and accessible to students?	
Are employers used as mentors / teachers for work related learning elements?	
Is there sufficient staff training to allow mentors / teachers to help students learn appropriately?	
Is it made clear what behaviours are expected from students taking work related learning elements?	
Is it clear to students taking work related learning elements what pastoral support and /or guidance is available and how it can be accessed?	



## 5. Assessment

	Score
Do the assessed tasks align with the learning objectives?	
Is assessed performance in each of the learning objectives identified separately?	
Is there ample opportunity for students to self-assess their development prior to any summative assessment?	
Are the criteria, levels of achievement and progression linked to the appropriate benchmark statement?	
Is detailed, appropriate, and timely feedback provided to students on their performance in work related learning elements?	
Are employers involved in the provision of feedback to students on their performance in work related learning elements?	
Is the assessment of work related learning elements consistent between assessors?	
Is appropriate training in assessment provided for assessors?	
Is the ratio of time involved in assessment to credit rating (or marks awarded) known for work related learning elements and comparable to that for other elements in the module / programme?	

## 6. Extra-curricula work related learning

	Score
Is extra-curricula work identified to students as a source of valid learning?	
Are extra-curricula work experience and responsibilities recorded by your students?	
Are student's extra-curricula work based activities known to staff (e.g. personal tutors)?	
Are arrangements in place to encourage voluntary work by students?	
Are there systems in place to encourage students to reflect on, identify and record learning gains from extra-curricula work?	



## 7. General and spin-off benefits

	<b>Score</b>
Are you familiar with the nature of work related learning elements incorporated in other courses / modules?	
Can you identify other areas of the module / programme in which work related learning elements can be used?	
Do you know what employers involved in work related learning elements perceive to be the strengths and weaknesses of your students?	
Have you made use of employers involved in work related learning activities to review your curriculum, provided feedback on content and methods and / or become involved in research activities?	
Has consideration been given to how the programme aligns itself to the Sector Skills Councils or appropriate Professional Bodies?	



## Action Plan

Make a note of the resources you will need and whose help will be required.

1.

2.

3.

4.

