

Experiences of the workplace – example activity plan

The activity was seen as a positive experience for both the students and the National Trust staff, who appreciated the opportunity to engage with SEND students. One staff member mentioned, *"We were buzzing as a team after the event... it was a big step to realising that we can make these days happen and they will make a difference."*



Consideration	Key questions	Example – workplace visit day
Objective(s)	What labour market knowledge and workplace skills do you want young people to build through the experience?	The aim of the Insight Day is to introduce students to career opportunities within the National Trust. The event provides students with knowledge about different roles in the organisation, including conservation, legal, marketing, and operations. Key skills such as teamwork, communication, and problem-solving are developed through hands-on activities like marketing tasks and scone making.
Employer priorities	What do you want to get out of the activity?	The National Trust aims to engage with young people from diverse backgrounds and they have been matched with a SEND-specialist school, helping them to foster inclusivity and broaden access to careers in heritage and conservation. The organisation has developed its understanding of how to tailor future outreach to SEND students and refine event structures for accessibility.
Participants	Is there a target group you are looking to reach (i.e. specific year group or learner characteristics such as those in receipt of Free School Meals)? Have you liaised with the school/college to see if any learners have specific needs and how you can meet these?	The event is open to all year groups (Year 7 to Year 13) and the National Trust is keen to target local young people from diverse backgrounds and socio-economic situations. When matched with a SEND-specialist school, the National Trust team have liaised closely with school staff to understand the students' needs and make adjustments, such as incorporating concentration breaks and ensuring the activities are accessible and engaging. They have also visited the school to introduce themselves to the students and explain the plans for the day. This has resulted in some further adjustments:



		• Quiet areas and breakout rooms have been set aside, providing space for SEND students to take time away from the session. • National Trust shared a presentation video with the school prior to the event, showing what the office building space looked like and sharing what would happen on the day.
Structure of the day/week	Will you include: • Icebreakers at the start • Breaks, opportunities for movement and time buffers between activities • Lunch/refreshments • A conclusion/plenary at the end with debrief time	Agenda for the day: • Welcome & Check-in – Arrival, introductions, and agenda overview. • Introduction to the National Trust – History, mission, and career opportunities. • Interactive Activities: ○ Guided office tour ○ Historical document demonstration ○ Scone making with the in-house chef ○ Marketing task – developing a campaign for a new scone of the month ○ National Trust fact match game • Concentration Break – Fidget toys provided for focus. • Snacks and prizes plus a buffet lunch • Evaluation & Reflection – Feedback from students. • Goodbyes & Close – Summary and contact details for follow-up.
Rooms	What rooms/spaces will you be using? How will these suit the activities taking place? Will there be a tour of other parts of the building?	For the pilot, the event was hosted at the National Trust Head Office in Swindon. While this allowed students to experience an office environment, some hands-on activities were less suited to the space. A tour of the whole building was engaged as a great way to see the space but caused some disruption to those working. In future, the team are looking to host the event at a National Trust property locally.



Equipment	Do you need any equipment for your activities, such as stationary or other materials for practical tasks?	Equipment needed: • Ingredients and cooking tools for scone making. • Marketing materials for campaign creation. • Printed resources for the fact match game. • Fidget toys for concentration breaks. • Pens, white boards, stickers for evaluation and feedback, post it notes. NB: Risk assessments for the SEND group incorporated advice from school staff, such as no staples in paper documents (risk of self-harm).
Resources	Do you need to develop resources such as worksheets, information booklets or case studies?	Printed materials have been created for various activities, including fact sheets about the National Trust and resources for the marketing campaign.
Staffing	Who is running the day? How many other staff members need to be involved in each activity? What skills or experience would be useful?	The event is facilitated by National Trust staff across various departments, including marketing, conservation, and operations. Useful skills include experience in working with SEND students, knowledge of the National Trust's mission, and the ability to lead engaging, interactive sessions.
Preparation	Is there anything students might do to prepare, such as learning about your organisation or sector? Will you send them any materials in advance, such as information about your organisation or bios of the staff they will meet so they can prepare questions?	Prior to the pilot event, the National Trust team visited the school to introduce the students to the organisation and the day's agenda. This also meant the organiser of the day could amend the activities to be pitched at a level that the students would be able to engage, and amendments were made accordingly. Advanced sessions to learn more about the organisation (prior to visit) would be a useful activity for the school to run with students to boost engagement. The pilot group did display some challenging behaviour and teachers explained that they had had a full and busy week of offsite visits. Engagement could be improved if condensed scheduling challenges are avoided for the students.



Next steps	Is there anything students could do after the visit to embed or extend learning? Will you send them any follow-on activities or offer other opportunities such as more formal work experience?	Schools are encouraged to reflect on the session in their next careers lessons with the students. Following the pilot, the National Trust are open to offering more experiences with their matched school and other schools. The National Trust suggested visits to their properties and sites, for students to observe and explore career opportunities further with their families. Other suggestions being considered are: • Follow-up materials summarising key takeaways. • Organised opportunities for further engagement, such as site visits to National Trust properties. • Future structured work experience opportunities for interested students.
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