



An Employer's Handbook for Work-Based Learning

**Whitby & District Fishing Industry Training
School**



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Introduction

If you are interested in learning or are already providing or expressing interest in providing a work-placement, taking on a new recruit or training one of your existing employees, we hope that this Guide will help you understand the services and support which we can provide and the role which you can play in the process.

How can work-based learning help?

We know that recruiting the right crew for your vessel and ensuring that they have the relevant skills and knowledge to do the job you require will be of paramount importance to you. We can help you in these activities through our work-based learning programmes, which will provide you with a number of key benefits:

- cost effective recruitment
- development of a well trained, well-motivated workforce
- help meet the costs of learning
- increased productivity through better trained crew
- improved company performance
- demonstrate your commitment to staff development

Work-based learning is also a good way of ensuring that your business complies with the 'Time Off for Study or Training' employment right for 16 and 17 year olds which was introduced in September 1999.

What is work-based learning?

Work-based learning is part of a national programme of government funded provision to raise the skill levels of young people - the employees of the future. It aims to develop an individual's knowledge and skills within the workplace environment and presents a real opportunity for young people who want to continue their learning outside full-time further and higher education. It provides support for young people (learners) to work towards the achievement of Vocational Qualifications (VQs). Over 100,000 forward thinking employers are currently developing their employees in this way, ranging from small employers who employ less than five staff to household names such as J Sainsbury, Rolls Royce and American Express.

What are Vocational Qualifications?

Vocational Qualifications are designed around the skills people use at work and cover all types and levels of work. There are five levels within the VQ system ranging from level one covering basic work activities up to level five for senior management. Each VQ is made up of a number of units of competence which set out what an individual must be able to do in a given area and to what standard. National standards are set by national employer led-bodies, who know exactly what skills are needed to do each job well. Each individual unit is assessed and credited and an VQ certificate is awarded when all of the required units have been achieved. Assessment activities normally take place within the workplace by a qualified assessor.

As part of their learning programme, learners will also be developing their Functional Skills. Functional Skills address the personal development of an individual and cover English and Mathematics. Functional Skills are considered by employers to be an essential part of occupational competence. They are delivered with the VQ but are separately certificated.

Our staff will be on hand regularly to help you understand what VQs are and to ensure that learning is delivered to national Sea Fish Industry Authority standards.

What are Diplomas in Maritime Studies – Sea Fishing?

Each year, around 300,000 young people nationally choose an Apprenticeship or a Diploma. Currently the company delivers the Diploma in Maritime Studies – Sea Fishing.

How Whitby & District Fishing Industry Training School will help...

We will work with you to:

- identify suitable learners and work placement opportunities
- identify existing crew who may benefit from learning
- plan and design learning programmes to meet your needs and those of the individual
- provide off-the-job tuition to support learning which is taking place in the workplace
- monitor learner progress and provide help and support where necessary
- assess learner competence in the workplace
- work with the national Awarding Bodies, such as City and Guilds and SQA, to award nationally recognised qualifications (VQs and Functional Skills) to learners
- provide on-going support and training to you and your crew in all aspects of the above.

The following sections of the Guide provide further information on the role which WDFITS plays, and how this supports the role which you can play in the work-based learning process.

Recruiting and selecting learners

The recruitment and selection process aims to attract and select learners who are best suited to the work and the learning opportunity you can offer. Having discussed your particular needs we will match your requirements with the skills and experience of our learners and shortlist those whom we feel would be most suited to the position you are offering.

Whitby & District Fishing Industry Training School's role.....

- produce informative promotional material to attract suitable candidates
- link with careers service, schools and other external organisations to attract as many suitable candidates as possible, including those who may be currently under-represented in your workforce
- use effective and fair selection methods
- refer suitable candidates to you for placement
- discuss the benefits with you of non-employed status learners

Employer's role.....

- advise us on the placements available and the characteristics which potential learners will require
- take action to consider applicants from under-represented groups
- give applicants accurate information about the work which they will be doing and the learning which you will provide
- treat all candidates fairly and consistently during the selection process
- advise us of any existing employees whom you wish to train

Inducting learners

Having got the right person you will want to ensure that they stay with you. One way of doing this is by providing a well-planned induction programme. Induction learning will help learners settle quickly onto your vessel by helping them understand the environment in which they are based and the job which they are doing. We will complement this by providing an induction to tell them about their learning programme.

Whitby & District Fishing Industry Training School's role.....

- provide an induction for learners on their learning programme
- explain about work-based learning and the role of everyone
- advise you on workplace induction and initial learning
- train learners to gain the mandatory health and safety at sea certificates
- explain how VQs are achieved
- explain to learners their rights and responsibilities
- to check that learners have understood the information which they have been given at induction
- provide learners with written information to support what they have been given during induction, which they can refer to in the future

Employer's role.....

- show learners where everything is in the workplace
- introduce them to the crew they will work with and the skipper
- familiarise the learner with the health and safety procedures specific to your vessel
- explain your vessel's policies and procedures
- inform learners of their conditions of placement or employment
- provide learners with basic information about the work that they will be doing
- provide the learner with a mentor if possible

Planning and designing individual learning programmes

To help you to get the best from your learner and to develop their skills and knowledge, we will plan a learning programme that meets both their needs and your needs as a Skipper. A learning plan will be developed for each learner which shows what learning they will receive, both on and off the job, to ensure that they achieve the deckhand qualification. The plan will also identify any additional support that they may require. We will take into account any prior learning, their current knowledge, skills and experience when doing this. We will ensure that your crew is provided with whatever information they require to understand the learner's VQ programme.

Whitby & District Fishing Industry Training School's role.....

- to work with you to identify the individual's immediate learning and development needs
- assess the learner's current skills, knowledge and qualifications
- identify any personal circumstances which may affect learning or the learner
- set out the learning programme in a learning plan for the learner
- help you understand the learning programme including the VQ and Functional Skill requirements

Employer's role.....

- to help identify the individual's immediate learning and development needs
- help us plan the learning programme for the learner
- identify appropriate learning opportunities within the workplace which will help the learner develop and progress
- understand the learner's learning programme including VQ and Functional Skill requirements

Delivering learning programmes

Having planned the learner's learning programme we will work together to deliver the learning that is required to develop the learner's skills and help them achieve their qualification. Much of the learning will take place on board the vessel itself. This will typically involve learners developing their skills through observing others perform activities, practising themselves and learning from the crew. The more learning opportunities that you can provide, the greater range of skills that the learner is likely to acquire which will be of benefit to your vessel. You may also wish to consider giving the learner projects to undertake, or other opportunities that will develop their skills and knowledge even further.

Whitby and District Fishing Industry Training School provides the off the job learning and you may wish to carry out some or all of the other learning aboard the vessel. We can also provide off-the job learning sessions to support what the learner is learning in the workplace or engage external suppliers to develop the learner's theoretical understanding. We will agree when and where this will take place when developing the learning programme. In this way we can also ensure that the off the job learning which is being provided is appropriate to what the learner is doing in the workplace and vice versa.

Whitby & District Fishing Industry Training School's role.....

- provide help and advice on planning workplace learning and learning activities
- be aware of the learning activities that are taking place within the workplace
- provide appropriate off the job learning sessions to support the skills that the learner is developing in the workplace, in order that they can achieve their qualification
- keep you informed of what the learner has covered

Employer's role.....

- to help learners develop their knowledge and skills by providing a wide range of learning and learning opportunities
- allow learners to attend off the job learning sessions at agreed times
- help learners put into practice what they have learnt during off the job learning sessions
- give learners time in the workplace to compile their VQ portfolios
- initiate a meeting with us if you have any concerns about any aspect of the learning delivery

Reviewing learner progress

To check that the learner is getting the most out of their learning programme it is important to monitor their progress at regular intervals. This will ensure that any additional learning or support needs that are identified are properly addressed. We will fully involve the learner's supervisor and agree with you what is the best time for these to take place, so as not to cause disruption to normal workplace activities.

Whitby & District Fishing Industry Training School's role.....

- organise a schedule of regular review meetings
- involve the learner and crew member (usually the skipper) in the review
- find out and record the progress made by the learner
- identify additional learning and support needs and amend the learning plan accordingly
- agree and record actions and targets between this and the next review
- make sure the learner and the skipper have a copy of the record of the review

Employer's role.....

- let us know how the learner is progressing in the workplace
- advise us of any concerns which you may have regarding the learner's progress
- attend learner progress reviews when practicable
- advise on workplace learning and assessment opportunities that may occur in the period to the next review

Assessing learner competence

To gain a VQ a learner is required to collect evidence to demonstrate that they are competent in a range of different activities. Each of the units has a specific assessment or examination. This will involve sorting out material which occurs normally within the workplace or organising activities to demonstrate particular skills. The assessor/skipper will observe the learner carrying out tasks, to make sure that their work is consistent and that the standard of work required can be reached consistently. They will also examine pieces of work or information which the learner has collected to demonstrate competence. The role of the assessor/skipper is of key importance to the learner.

Whitby & District Fishing Industry Training School's role.....

- help learners and staff within your organisation understand the assessment process
- help learners understand how to collect evidence and match it to the occupational standards
- formally assess learner competence
- give constructive feedback to learners following assessment

Employer's role.....

- provide opportunities for the learner to demonstrate their competence in specific tasks
- help learners to collect evidence of the work that they have done
- sign statements confirming the learner's competence in specific activities
- consider training your own staff as assessors

Supporting learners in their work-based learning programme

Following the investment that you have made in recruiting the learner, you will want to ensure that they stay with you and complete their learning programme. Occasionally some learners, particularly those that come straight from school, will change their mind regarding their choice of career and their learning programme, after they have joined a vessel. We will work closely with you to ensure that learners are given proper support and that any potential problems are identified and addressed as early as possible.

Whitby & District Fishing Industry Training School's role.....

- keep in regular touch with learners and yourselves
- encourage and motivate learners in their learning programme
- show real interest in the skills which learners are developing on board
- help learners to understand the long-term benefits of learning and qualifications
- identify any problems or concerns which learners may have at an early stage
- share any identified concerns with you and agree suitable solutions where learners want to change their learning programme

Employer's role.....

- help learners to understand the long-term benefits of learning and qualifications
- provide opportunities for learners to practise their skills
- give learners time at work to develop their portfolio
- encourage learners to attend and show real interest in their off the job learning
- be aware of any problems or difficulties which may be facing learners
- share your concerns with us

Ensuring equality of opportunity within the learning process

We operate and promote a policy of equal opportunities throughout the whole of the work-based learning process. This is reflected in our recruitment practices where we welcome applications from all persons regardless of sex, marital status, race, disability, colour, age, sexual orientation, nationality or ethnic origin. We aim to treat learners fairly and equally during their learning programmes and ensure that they know what to do if they have a complaint. W & D F I T S has an anti-bullying and harassment statement within its Equal Opportunities policy. We trust that your commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity will be the same as ours.

Whitby & District Fishing Industry Training School's role.....

- promote equal opportunities throughout the work-based learning process
- have a written equal opportunities policy which staff, learners and employers understand and are committed to
- advise you on equal opportunities issues and legislation
- explain to learners how they should treat other people
- make sure that learners know what to do if they feel they are being unfairly treated, bullied or harassed in the workplace
- act on any complaints received from learners

Employer's role.....

- comply with equal opportunities legislation
- demonstrate your commitment to equality of opportunity in the workplace
- ensure equality of opportunity in selection and recruitment and learning activities
- ensure that learners are treated fairly and equally
- make sure that learners are not bullied, harassed or made to feel unwelcome in the workplace
- explain to learners what to do if they have a complaint about the way they are treated

Health and Safety

We have a positive commitment to promoting good health and safety practice in the workplace and know that this will be equally true of you. Learners placed with you are regarded as ‘employees’ for the purposes of health and safety.

Whitby & District Fishing Industry Training School's role.....

- using MCA Standards to verify that you can provide a healthy, safe and supportive learning environment
- assist you on questions of health and safety requirements of individual learners
- provide a safe and healthy working environment for learners at all times during off the job learning
- provide necessary protective clothing
- monitor health and safety practices on an ongoing basis
- provide health and safety training for learners to raise their awareness of risk
- check learners' understanding of health and safety risk awareness
- assist Marine Accidents Investigation Branch to investigate any accidents involving learners and agree preventative action

Employer's role.....

- ensure the health, safety and welfare of learners and bring your policies and procedures to their attention
- comply with health and safety legislation
- inform the learner about the skipper's responsibility for health and safety
- provide ongoing health and safety learning on board for learners
- report any accidents concerning learners immediately to us
- assess the risks to which learners are exposed at work and apply the general principles of prevention
- introduce and maintain appropriate measures to eliminate or control risks to the lowest reasonable practicable level
- ensure learners are properly supervised by a competent person
- ensure that learners are covered under public and employer's liability insurance

Maintaining standards

All work-based learning is subject to external inspection by the government's body for maintaining standards. Inspections look at the quality of learning in all occupational areas where learning is being provided, and at four general aspects: learner support, equal opportunities, management of learning and quality assurance. Inspectors typically collect much of their evidence through discussions with learners, learning providers and employers, and therefore your views and comments will form an important part of the process.

Whitby & District Fishing Industry Training School's role.....

- to produce an annual self-assessment report and action plan
- to prepare for inspection by the Government's Inspectorate once every four years
- work with Inspectors during inspection

Employer's role.....

- provide us with feedback on the quality of our learning programmes
- to take part in discussions with Inspectors during inspections as required
- to allow Inspectors to take part in discussions with learners during the inspection process

Further Information

Thank you for taking time to read this brief guide which we hope that you have found informative. If you have any questions or would like any further information on any aspect please do not hesitate to contact us at the address shown below:

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