



**Learn to Create  
- promoting  
Work-based Learning  
in Europe's Cultural  
and Creative  
Industries**

# **IO5 The L2C Guide to Work-based Learning (WBL) for Employers in the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs)**

**AN INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY | 2021**

This guidebook has been developed by Materahub based on the content, which has been produced by the Learn2Create partners.

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Further information about the project and the above partners is available at: **[www.learn2create.eu](http://www.learn2create.eu)**



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## INTRODUCTION

This document is an Introduction and Summary of the full and complete whole Guide which we invite you to download from the Learn2Create project portal. The Guide is intended primarily for employers in micro enterprises - SMEs and freelancers in the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) who would like to actively engage in Work-based Learning (WBL) and for all those interested in the topic. It is a practical Guide, providing information and guidance for integrating WBL in companies that operate in the CCIs. WBL is an educational strategy that provides students and trainees with an authentic work experience that takes place in a real work environment.

The Guide provides you, as an employer, with information and guidance about the general concepts of WBL; why WBL is relevant to the creative and cultural sector; and support to exploit the benefits and opportunities of WBL in the CCIs; how to plan a successful WBL experience in the CCIs (from theory to practice) and, finally, to showcase best practices from the sector. The Guide was developed as an Intellectual Output in the international project „Learn2Create - promoting Work-based Learning Europe's Cultural and Creative Industries“, implemented through the ERASMUS+ programme with a partnership representing Italy, Poland, Greece, Spain, Slovakia and the UK.

### Note

There are certain terms such as apprentice or intern that are used largely or exclusively in WBL settings to describe the learner - since internship and apprenticeships (formal or informal) are invariably at the workplace. However, both terms can sometimes have very specific meanings in translation and can also be quite specifically or narrowly defined in different country VET systems. Our L2C project and this Guide is aimed at any type of person who is learning or being trained at the workplace in the CCIs. Therefore, throughout this document we use the term ‚learner‘ to describe the person who is undertaking the WBL experience with your company or in your workplace. In this context, our use of the term ‚learner‘ is used to describe anyone who may otherwise be described as a student, trainee, apprentice or intern in your organisation.”



## CHAPTER 1

# WBL in the creative and cultural industries: benefits and opportunities for employers

The Erasmus+ Learn2 Create project began with a question about the value of WBL in companies in the Cultural and Creative industries. Given their nature as overwhelmingly being made up of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), they often seem to find it more difficult to imagine themselves as host companies – yet, due to their history and tradition, have excelled compared to many other sectors in making WBL their training tool par excellence. The workplace is, in fact, a privileged environment for learning; work experiences allow us to grow both professionally and personally through the acquisition of technical and transversal skills that can be used professionally but also in everyday life.

Chapter 1 of the Guide provides you an overview of the benefits of WBL, focusing on the benefits for companies, which we can summarise as follows:

- 1 - Job-oriented recruitment and skills actions
- 2 - growth and autonomy in training and work
- 3 - new ideas and ways of thinking

WBL can be considered as one of the most effective strategies to bridge the gap between school and work, especially for the CCIs, by providing a concrete answer to the 'skills match' problem and ensuring the availability of skilled workers, through investment in the future workforce.

## **BENEFIT #1**

### **RECRUITMENT AND JOB-ORIENTED SKILLS COURSE**

WBL has a beneficial impact on the selection process: it allows you to recruit the best talent, thus reducing the costs of the selection process (such as where recruitment is carried out externally) and those related to adaptation within the company. It is important, and above all beneficial, that your company is an active part of the process of creating and designing the training pathway (through a company tutor), in order to make the best use of working and study time.

The L2C project, through its training platform, offers a number of useful tools for you wishing to start WBL experiences. In particular, one such tool is the Training Design Canvas, a reflection tool designed by Materahub to help teachers, trainers, coaches and mentors incorporate EntreComp entrepreneurial competences into the design of their learning interventions. Module 3, on the other hand, offers ideas for a targeted and functional interview<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> see module 1 on Learn2Create platform <https://lms.learn2create.eu/>

<sup>2</sup> see module 3 on Learn2Create platform

## **BENEFIT #2**

### **GROWTH AND AUTONOMY IN TRAINING AND WORK**

Most European studies show that WBL has a significant impact on growth and productivity: WBL can increase the effectiveness of the workforce and thus provide greater time effectiveness on a specific task. The presence of a learner also trains all other people in your company and enriches the management skills of the learners; WBL fosters a process of educational and work autonomy for the learner who becomes aware of his/her career path and role. The L2C project believes - and has highlighted in its reports - that learning 'on the job' in companies such as those in the CCIs fosters a greater entrepreneurial approach than in other contexts. Among the various tools created by the partnership and downloadable from the platform, the Working Diary is designed to facilitate this process of awareness of the trainee, who enters in their daily file not only what they have done but also how they intend to do it and above all what skills they possess, or have to have in order to carry out a given assigned task.



## **BENEFIT #3**

### **NEW IDEAS AND WAYS OF THINKING**

There is also a central theme for the Cultural and Creative Industries: the products of companies as yours (especially those in the 'Art' sector, but no less so for others) are based on good IDEAS. In these working environments, the increase in human capital in the company translates not only into an increase in production, in terms of possible products and services, but also - and above all - into an increase in the number of ideas circulating in the company that reflect the interests and needs of the next generation of customers and consumers. The key is to find a space to share ideas.

## CHAPTER 2

# How to plan a Work-based Learning experience

The importance of planning the learning experience in advance becomes easier to understand when we consider the different benefits that you can obtain through work-based learning:

- Intellectual experiences
- Career awareness and development opportunities (e.g. knowledge and practical skills required to enter a new field, knowledge of a company's needs and expectations)
- Opportunities to improve professional skills
- Opportunities to improve soft and transferable skills
- Social and networking experiences
- Knowledge of the labour market in general

One of the foundations of work-based learning is learning by doing and experiential learning. In an active learning environment, learners should be offered real-life situations and scenarios to which they can observe and respond. You - Employers, mentors and trainees in vocational education and training (VET) - should work as a team and set common goals.

If your company aims to structure a mutually beneficial work-based learning experience, there are several tips and tools that could help you in this process.

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<sup>3</sup> see module 3 on Learn2Create platform <https://lms.learn2create.eu/>





### **Assessing what the learner already knows by putting the learner at the centre:**

Personalised learning (flexible learning that adapts to the needs of each individual learner) is a valuable approach. That is why an initial assessment is necessary and useful.

### **Assigning mentors who can provide the help the learner needs and deserves:**

The mentor is a central person in the WBL process. Some of the essential characteristics of a mentor are as follows:

- Up-to-date knowledge of the sector
- Practical experience in the field
- Pedagogical knowledge, preferably in adult education
- Being motivated and willing to commit

### **Setting learning outcomes:** Learning outcomes should describe in detail:

- what the learner knows, understands and is able to achieve at the end of the learning experience;
- what competences they are able to use as a learning outcome, competence being defined as 'the ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities in work or study situations and in professional and personal development'.



**Prepare several documents that will guide the learners and record the process and progress:** such as the Personalised Learning Plan, the Individual Training Agreement and the Training Plan. These documents set out responsibilities and duties in a specific and organised way and make it easier to document the process and progress made by the learner. Other useful tools are the formative assessment diaries. These diaries specify, for a particular learner, which learning outcomes and units should be achieved together with the associated ECVET points<sup>4</sup>.

**Networking and peer learning:** Finally, it is important to remember that a work-based learning experience should be a social experience. Learners benefit most when they have the opportunity to share their knowledge, skills and experience with others, work with others and receive feedback from other people as well as their mentor.

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<sup>4</sup> European credit system for vocational education and training (ECVET) allows learners to accumulate, transfer and use their learning in units as these units are achieved. This enables building a qualification at learners' own pace from learning outcomes acquired in formal, non-formal and informal contexts, in their own country and abroad. The system is based on units of learning outcomes as part of qualifications that can be assessed and validated. Read more at the link: <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/projects/european-credit-system-vocational-education-and-training-ecvet>

## CHAPTER 3

# Matching the employers' mission and vision to those of the learners

As Entrepreneurs, you operate and develop your businesses by formulating the vision and mission of your organisations. The vision and, above all, the mission of a large cultural institution receiving ministerial or local government grants must be completely different from that of a one-person business operating in the field of graphic design or music. The visions and missions of NGOs are also different. Consequently, their requirements for employing a learner or volunteer are also very different. Therefore, in this chapter we propose to categorise the issues according to the size, type and nature of the entity.

### WBL experience in cultural institutions

In general, cultural institutions include large entities funded by state or local budgets of various levels. For different reasons, they seem the most attractive institutions from the point of view of the learners. For example, they are recognisable, have a reputation and often a long history. An internship at such an organisation is certainly prestigious but it's not the only and better solution to boost one's professional career. Moreover, universities and colleges very often recommend these institutions for student internships and collaborate with them.

For years, Poland has had a very large internship programme in cultural institutions run by the National Centre of Culture called 'Internships in Cultural Institutions'!





- (+) A major advantage of the programme is its national character and the participation of large and renowned cultural institutions.
- (-) Its weaknesses are a lack of remuneration for internships and undefined internship conditions for potential participants.
- (-) It is only during the interview that the candidate finds out what is really expected of them and what they will do.

The most essential skill is to prepare an interesting and accurate CV, which provides the opportunity to present one's real skills, experience and scope of professional interests. Later in one's professional life it is crucial to develop the following qualities. Many of them can be acquired during WBL.

Qualities to mention in a CV that are appreciated by recruiters and employers:

- 1. Creativity**
- 2. Reliability**
- 3. Positive attitude**
- 4. Strong work motivation**
- 5. Ability to work in a team**
- 7. Resilience (stress resistance)**
- 8. Flexibility (adaptability)**
- 9. Self-sufficiency**
- 10. Work ethics**
- 11. The ability to make decisions**
- 12. Self-confidence**



**WBL experience in NGOs** can provide a completely different environment for a learner.

In their operations they usually rely on funds from grants and donated projects to carry out specific activities. This creates many opportunities for volunteering in fields such as the organisation of concerts and events, but also in all other creative activities of the organisation.

- (+) opportunities for the very young - under 18 years old
- (+) opportunities for people without formal education in an arts discipline
- (+) volunteering in NGOs increases the value of the CV in professional life - many employers value this experience highly
- (+) the greatest opportunities for WBL - the possibility to develop a wide range of soft skills
- (+) friendly environment - various forms of peer-to-peer mentoring are common
- (-) the most common form is voluntary work and paid internships are very rare
- (-) if they are paid, the rates of pay are very low
- (-) very often you have to do everything from cleaning to web design and coding.

The most desired skills are:

- ability to create content in digital media
- storytelling, creation and processing of photos, films, skills related to the basics of graphic design,
- social and communication skills, basic knowledge and skills related to event organisation, teamwork

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<sup>5</sup> For a more complete idea of what peer mentoring means, see chapter 5 of the whole Guide



## WBL experience in creative businesses

The city of Krakow (which together with the Lesser Poland Voivodeship is the second region with the highest percentage of companies and organisations in the cultural sector in Poland) together with the Jagiellonian University conducted a study entitled „Competency Report” for selected segments of the creative industry in Krakow. We present the main results of the study in the context of the topic of our chapter, i.e. „ Matching the employers’ mission and vision to those of the learners”.

The five most important skills indicated by employers in the creative sector as a whole are: cooperation, commitment, integrity, English, learning

The most important soft skills identified by employers now and in the future: cooperation, commitment, learning, analytical capacity, quality assurance, initiative, adaptation, innovation

List of skills/requirements that are crucial for career advancement:

Willingness to develop	Diligence
Experience	Commitment to quality
Innovation	Honesty
English	Learn
Communicativeness	Cooperation
Creativity	Involvement
Use of graphic packages	Analytical skills
Resistance to criticism	Knowledge of tools
Courage	Understanding of the sector
Opening	



As you can see from the examples and studies mentioned above, the cultural and creative sector is very diverse. Consequently, it is impossible to propose a one-size-fits-all solution to match learners and employers' missions and visions. However, it is possible to indicate some general qualities and predispositions that seems expected by employers:

1. Formal or informal education related to the workplace - while cultural institutions require formal education at the highest possible level, NGOs and private employers place more emphasis on skills and predispositions.
2. Previous work experience is not necessary - you can learn most of the necessary things while doing WBL.
3. 'Soft skills' are very important - motivation to work, communication and the ability to learn.
4. In today's labour market it is impossible to function without digital skills, especially in the creative and cultural industries.



## CHAPTER 4

### Structuring a successful WBL programme

This chapter helps you to identify a structured methodology to plan, quality assure and evaluate WBL placements before, during and after their completion. This step also helps to identify the importance of establishing learning agreements, common frameworks and clear learning outcomes for all parties involved in WBL experience.

These are the 5 steps to structuring a successful WBL programme:

- Recruitment and payment
- Induction
- Treatment
- Supervision
- Reference and feedback



## 1. RECRUITMENT, PAYMENT AND DURATION

- Recruitment should be conducted in an open and rigorous manner to allow fair and equitable access to available learners.
- An organisation should pay learners the national minimum wage. When making decisions about how much to pay learners, it is essential to adhere to the relevant legislation at all times.
- The job advertisement should give a clear indication of the duration of the internship and, at the interview, the intern should be told honestly whether there is a real chance of getting a full-time contract.

**Principle 1: Provide a clear framework for quality assurance of apprenticeships at system, provider and company level by ensuring systematic feedback.**

## 2. INDUCTION

- Learners should receive a proper introduction to the organisation they are entering to enable them to integrate fully. Whether entering a large organisation or an SME, a learner entering the labour market may find the workplace intimidating.
- It is important to introduce learners to the staff and values of the organisation in order to help them integrate into the team and allow them to take the first step.

**Principle 2: Ensure that the content of VET programmes responds to the changing skills needs of business and society**

## 3. TREATMENT

- During their time with an organisation, learners should be treated with exactly the same degree of professionalism and duty of care as regular employees. They should not be seen as „visitors” to the organisation, or automatically assigned to routine tasks that do not make use of their skills.
- Organisations should make some concessions for learners who occasionally attend job interviews or complete study requirements.

**Principle 3: Promote mutual trust and respect through regular co-operation between the WBL partners**

<sup>6</sup> Vocational education and training (VET) is a key element of lifelong learning systems. It seeks to equip citizens with the knowledge, skills and competences required in particular occupations and on the labour market.





## 4. SUPERVISION

- Organisations should ensure that there is a dedicated person (or persons) who has time set aside in their work schedule to supervise the learner and conduct regular performance reviews.
- This person should provide continuous feedback to the learners, be their advocate and mentor during the WBL experience period and conduct a formal performance review to assess the success of their time with the organisation.

**Principle 4: Ensure fair, valid and authentic assessment of learning outcomes**

## 5. REFERENCE AND FEEDBACK

- At the end of the WBL experience, you should provide learners with a reference letter detailing the work they have undertaken, the skills and experience they have gained and the content of the formal performance evaluation conducted at the end of the WBL experience.
- Learners should also be offered the opportunity to give feedback on their experience in an exit interview, giving you the opportunity to reflect on your performance in providing WBL experience.

**Principle 5: Support the continuous professional development of trainers in the company and improve their working conditions**

As an employer, you should be aware that interns provide a useful service to your company. Therefore, your responsibility is to ensure that the learner is:

- treated with respect at all times
- adequately supported and trained for the tasks they are called upon to perform
- provide the greatest possible access to learning and development opportunities.



## CHAPTER 5

# Monitoring and evaluation of WBL experiences

Monitoring and evaluation of work-based learning experiences are operational elements for you.

While monitoring is a general good practice that should be carried out in any setting for Work Based Learning experience, from one-to-one mentoring to a long-term training skills programme, evaluation is widely understood to be carried out when there are formal qualifications attached to the WBL xperience, such as an apprentice or different levels of what is called in some EU countries „dual VET training”.

## 5.1 MONITORING THE EXPERIENCE

Your aim is to describe and in some cases document the process and progress made during the workplace journey. This almost always starts by describing the initial point of the journey, this is done by the initial needs assessment, preliminary interviews and sometimes its incorporation into the process of creating a personal training plan.

As a general rule, you should have a monitoring plan which will depend on the aims and objectives of the monitoring.

This monitoring plan should state at least the following agreements between the learner and the monitoring organisation (or learning VET provider or employer):

- Tools and techniques: What we will use in the monitoring process
- How often to collect data and show results: An agreed agenda

## 5.2 EVALUATION

Assessment is one of the ways in which the quality of work-based learning is assured.

Whether or not work-based learning is evaluated, how it is evaluated, who evaluates it and how often it is evaluated will have an impact on the cost of work-based learning programmes, and thus become a question of funding as well as quality.

Who has the authority to assess and certify learning is central to the governance of work-based learning programmes?

At the same time, evaluation has a pedagogical purpose:

Did the students learn what you wanted them to learn?

With these 2 elements in mind, the third pillar for the evaluation process is its attachment to a specific curriculum.

There is a range of evaluation methods that can be used.

Self-assessment has been shown to improve outcomes when used consistently. It encourages the reflective habit of mind essential for improvement; it ensures that learners take responsibility for their own learning; it focuses attention on the criteria for success and increases effort and persistence. Although self-assessment is not sufficient on its own, it can provide a valuable supplement to learning tests. Ask learners to self-assess by providing them with self-assessment criteria or help them develop their own.

Where appropriate, peer evaluation has an impact on self-evaluation by enabling individuals to become self-critical and evaluative. Learners can generate personal action plans which are followed prior to assessment. Learners need to 'collect' separate evidence for assessment - evidence falls naturally from the activities undertaken.





Research has shown that using a variety of evaluation methods improves results.

The most generalised strategy for evaluating work-based learning in the creative and cultural industries is evidence-based evaluation.

This is due to two main factors:

- Creative and cultural industries are mostly portfolio-based in terms of access to placement and entry into the industry. Creating and using this portfolio as evidence for evaluation is the most efficient strategy.
- Creative and cultural industries are characterised by 'hands on' results and outcomes. The value they create is based on artefacts and experiences.

## 5.3 RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) recognises the contribution that an individual's previous experience could make to a qualification. As part of the initial assessment of each learner, any RPL opportunities will be identified by the relevant assessor.

Claims for credit for units through RPL will be considered in individual cases. Note that the RPL process refers to the production of evidence against ALL the requirements of a particular unit - it is not possible to claim 'partial credit' for a unit through RPL.

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