

Construction Work Tasters

A Guide for Employers



DYW | Developing the
Young Workforce



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Employer's guide to planning & running Construction work tasters

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Part 1 - Introduction

I. Who is this guide for?

This guide is for employers looking to participate in the construction work tasters project. To achieve success, the project requires companies of all sizes to get involved. We recognise that SMEs provide a large proportion of the apprenticeship opportunities out there, so if your company is at the smaller end of the scale we are particularly keen to support you with this initiative.

Much like the industry itself, construction work tasters lend themselves well to collaboration - whether it be principal contractors co-ordinating their supply chain to deliver a large-scale event or multiple SMEs working together to showcase different trades and disciplines. Joint planning and pooling of time and resources can help to engage a more diverse group. It can also make delivering work tasters more sustainable over the long-term.

Organisations that can host work tasters, examples -

- Construction companies
- Design and engineering consultancies
- Training providers
- Trade associations
- Not for profit organisations

People that can run work tasters, examples -

- Community Engagement / Benefits Officers
- Construction and Site Managers
- Supervisors
- Training Managers / Officers
- Experienced tradespeople / Senior Designers



Part 1 - Introduction

II. What is a construction work taster?

Construction work tasters help to provide a positive and realistic experience of the industry and to raise awareness of the range of roles on offer. With the industry facing unprecedented skills shortages - work tasters can highlight career paths to young people, aged 16 – 25, that they may not have previously considered.

From planners and designers to tradespeople, as well as all of the ancillary and management roles in between, work tasters can help young people find the profession or vocation that is right for them.

Work tasters are shorter than traditional work experience placements. They're 1/2 day to 2 days duration, employer-led and with a practical / site element involved. Work tasters typically take place within a work environment (employers have also linked up with construction academies and set-up small temporary worksites to provide the best possible experience).

Ideally, your work taster should contain six key elements - an introduction, health and safety induction, practical activity or shadowing, Q&A, site tour and evaluation (these are highlighted in yellow in the example schedule below).

Construction Work Taster Schedule

Date: 20/08/25 Location: Head Office, 424 Steel Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1XX

Time	Session	
08:45 - 09:00	Arrival - report to reception	
09:00 - 9:30	Welcome	Plan for the day, why choose construction?
09:30 - 9:45	Health and safety induction	Site safety, code of conduct, emergency procedures, PPE
09:45 - 10:45	Practical activity	Bricklaying and insulation workshop
10:45 - 11:00	Break	
11:00 - 12:00	Meet the.....	Site manager, apprentice scaffolder, architectural technician & ecologist
12:00 - 12:45	Lunch	
12:45 - 14:00	Site Tour	Be inspired & gain some onsite insight with a tour of one of our local building projects
14:00 - 15:00	CV clinic	Tips for successful applications, take part in a mock interview
15:00 - 15:30	Debrief & evaluation	Feedback from your supervisors and your chance to give feedback on the day's activities

On the day

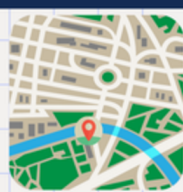
PPE will be provided (collect from reception).
Please take a packed lunch hot & cold drinks will be provided.

Contact

Name: Rachael Slater,
Community Engagement Officer

Contact number: 07891 XXXXXX

Where to find us



Part 2 - Getting Started

I. Aligning goals & objectives

By considering the following when planning your construction work taster -

- Workforce / skills plan;
- Key performance indicators;
- Any public contracts which you have recently tendered for / been awarded (which specify the delivery of community benefits);

you can design the work taster in a manner that works for you e.g. improving KPI scores in community engagement / enhancing community reputation whilst assisting with apprentice selection and retention, and reducing turnover in relation to the latter.

II. Selecting & preparing participants

- Identify the schools / colleges / areas you would like to target.
- Discuss the scope of the work taster with your team / companies you intend to work with - do you wish to showcase specific trades / disciplines or will the work taster have broader appeal? Giving the participants a 'taster' of as many roles as possible increases the likelihood of finding a good fit with their future career.
- Consider co-designing the construction work taster with the participants themselves. Whether via a school visit or questionnaire - find out what they'd like to gain from the experience. Such input may lead to better outcomes.
- You may already have existing connections with educators that you can utilise. The Construction Work Taster team and the regional teams at DYW can also help you identify young people who are a good match for your work tasters. Links to regional teams can be found in Part 4 - 'Where to get help'.

Part 2 - Getting Started

III. Risk Assessments and PPE

Use the following checklist to help ensure you are ready to host your construction work taster and / or site tour -

- You have an up-to-date risk assessment covering particular risks that may arise for young people on site / during the work taster. Ensure that any control measures identified are implemented
- Your schedule includes a health and safety induction
- Adequate levels of supervision can be provided on site / during taster activities
- You have ensured that any equipment and machinery used during the work taster is in good condition and safe to use
- You have trained first-aiders and first-aid equipment available at the work taster location(s)
- You have received emergency contact details for all of those attending, as well as the details of any medical conditions that may require additional support
- Your insurance (Employer's/ Public Liability etc) covers young people visiting your site
- Employers should ensure that participants have the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE)

Should obtaining PPE for work taster attendees present a barrier to delivering your work taster, or you require any support with risk assessments - please get in contact with the Construction work taster team.



Part 3 -

Delivering your work taster

I. Welcome & introduction

This sets the scene for the session / day, so It's important that personnel running work tasters have the ability to inspire and engage with young people.

- Introduce yourself and the company
- Provide an overview of the day's schedule, explaining what the objectives are and what the participants can expect to gain from it
- Provide a clear explanation of what is expected in terms of conduct
- Establish rapport with an icebreaker and make the work taster as interactive as possible

II. Health and Safety Induction

Explain that health and safety is at the forefront of every construction project. Emphasise your company's commitment to protecting your workforce and everyone else affected by your activities -

- Explain that construction sites are constantly evolving, highlight the hazards, significant risks and the control measures that are in place to manage these
- Ensure that attendees are aware of any areas of the workplace / site that are off-limits
- Check that attendees understand the risks, as well as any instructions that have been provided. Make them aware of how to report / raise any concerns that may arise
- Explain that PPE is mandatory on construction sites and ensure that attendees are provided with the appropriate PPE for any practical activities being undertaken
- Highlight what to do in the event of an emergency
- Pace the flow at which this information is communicated - check that attendees have understood and ask them to raise anything that they are unsure about

Part 3 -

Delivering your work taster

III. Practical Activity/ Shadowing

The practical element can take place on a construction site, workshop, construction academy, an office environment or across a mix of all of these

- When devising activities, you may wish to base these around skills needed in growing professions and / or hard to fill vacancies
- Providing the risks are sufficiently managed, it may be possible for the participants to contribute to a live project e.g. assisting finishing trades, preparing work areas etc. One employer managing a larger site was able to section-off a small work area to allow participants to work there.
- Circumstances / numbers may restrict this element to observing an experienced team member. Consider ways of making this more relatable e.g. asking participants to take measurements, interpret drawings or by having an apprentice or younger member of staff present



Case study:

AC Whyte delivered a construction work taster to students in Lanarkshire that focused on the installation of energy-efficiency measures and solar PV panels.

Pupils gained hands-on experience of boarding, roofing and solar PV installation (undertaken at ground level) as part of the work taster.

Examples of work taster activities

- Laying courses of bricks
- Using CAD
- Painting
- Making a 3D Passivhaus model
- Using measuring instruments
- Reading and interpreting models
- Preparing and clearing work areas
- Quantity surveying costing exercise
- Wearing PPE
- Retrofit workshops
- Handcarving stonework
- Project management simulation

Part 3 -

Delivering your work taster

IV. Site Tour

Visiting active construction sites is one of the best ways for students to learn more about how construction projects work, site tours can -

- help young people to understand safety on and around sites
- provide an opportunity to interact with a range of professionals and tradespeople showing the diversity of careers within the industry

If it is not possible to incorporate a site visit within the work taster you may wish to consider alternatives e.g. VR to explore 3D models of projects or time-lapse videos of construction projects.

V. Voice of Experience / Q& A Session

This element of the work taster can run concurrently with another activity or be set-up separately in a meeting room or portacabin. Young people relish the opportunity to ask questions of those with years of experience behind them - How did you start out in construction? What is the average salary in your profession? What can I do to increase my chances of being recruited by your company?

Depending on the size and nature of your company, this could be run by a trade supervisor, or for a larger company it could involve several representatives from your team e.g. Community Engagement officer, a site manager and/ or a skilled professional. Apprentices and younger members of the workforce are a welcome presence here from a peer perspective.

This can be opened up to discuss potential career paths and opportunities within the construction industry e.g. trades/ disciplines that are in high demand, current apprenticeship opportunities or one that you may have a recruitment requirement for in the near future.

Providing guidance on the skills and qualifications required for different roles and how to pursue them can also be offered - the CITB's 'GoConstruct' website is a great careers resource if time is limited.

Part 3 -

Delivering your work taster

VI. Wrap-up and evaluation

As the work taster is brought to a close this is the time to debrief the group, answer any final questions, thank the participants for attending, provide them with any feedback and for the young people attending to give feedback via the evaluation form

Evaluation forms for completion by young people attending work tasters can be found [here](#).

We are aiming to have all attendees complete the same registration form, in order to build an understanding of 'what good looks like' from their perspective.

Photographs taken during the work taster session can also form an important part of the overall evaluation, as well as being impactful in terms of case studies and for you to use in publicity (please obtain photo permission if necessary).

Part 4 -

Where to get help

Useful websites -

DYW construction resources www.dyw.scot/construction

DYW regional group contacts www.dyw.scot/regional-groups

CITB Go Construct www.goconstruct.org

Contact the Construction work tasters team -

construction@worktasters.scot

07538 137 069

<https://worktasters.scot/>