

A BETTER WAY *to work*



A TUC Educational Resource
for Careers, Citizenship
and Work-Related Learning



Acknowledgements

The materials were originally written by Julia Fiehn and Andrew Miller, Centre for Education and Industry, University of Warwick. This revised fourth edition, which is produced as a web-based resource in PDF format rather than a hard-copy publication, has been edited by Professor Andrew Miller, Director of Active Learning Research Associates Ltd.

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Foreword

Employment is an issue of growing relevance to the lives of young people. In addition to their contact with the world of work through work experience, work-related learning and Citizenship, many young people also combine part-time work with their studies. *A Better Way to Work* is about making sure that young people have a proper understanding of employment rights and responsible behaviour in the workplace. Young people need to know about the importance of health and safety at work, how to tackle discrimination and how to exercise their rights. They also need to understand the importance of employers and employees working together in partnership to improve performance. *A Better Way to Work* helps teachers to bring all of these issues into the classroom in a way that young people can relate to.

This is the fourth edition of the pack. With the introduction of citizenship studies into the school curriculum many of the activities in this pack look at the role of employees as good citizens with a sense of social responsibility. This responsibility is at the heart of our trade union values: ensuring that we live in a just society without discrimination, that we work with employers to ensure that our workplaces are safe and that we all enjoy access to training and development. This pack is designed to bring those values to life – and I hope you find it useful.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brendan Barber". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. Below the signature is a short horizontal line.

Brendan Barber
TUC General Secretary

A Better Way to Work

About the materials

A Better Way to Work is a set of educational materials which is designed to help young people to prepare for the world of work. It has been written for use with school and college students from 14 to 19 years of age. Some of the activities are suitable for use with young people attending youth clubs and work-based training centres. The materials fit with the aims of careers education and guidance and the statutory orders for Citizenship. They will also help schools to meet the statutory requirement to provide a programme of work-related learning for all students in key stage 4.

The first edition of the pack was developed by the TUC, working in collaboration with affiliated trade unions. Specialist trade union staff were consulted about particular activities and information for the pack was provided by the TUC and trade union information centres. The materials were trialled and tested through a series of focus groups in England and Wales. Since publication the pack has been distributed and used widely across the country.

The revisions in this fourth edition take into account: changes to employment legislation across the European Union; the impact of the statutory orders for Citizenship; guidance on post-16 Citizenship; national guidance on careers education and guidance; and QCA guidance on work-related learning. Case study material and examples have been updated to reflect new developments in the workplace and mergers between trade unions. Case studies have been linked to the specifications for the applied GCSEs whenever appropriate. The activities can also be used on new vocational courses including the Young Apprenticeship programme.

Included with each unit is a simulation. Teachers, lecturers, EBP staff, trade unionists and careers advisers may wish to use the simulations with students during industry days or other special events.

The materials consist of activities that cover important issues about working life and people in the workplace. The activities do not deal comprehensively with these issues in textbook fashion: they have been chosen to fill gaps in materials currently available to schools and colleges. Several of the activities offer a trade union perspective, but the authors have tried to ensure that the issues are treated in a balanced way and that they follow the National Consumer Council guidelines for industry-sponsored materials.

The aims of careers education and guidance

A Better Way to Work supports the development of the skills identified in the three aims of careers education and guidance for 14–19 year olds (DfES (2003) *Careers Education and Guidance in England: A National Framework 11–19*). These are:

- Self-development – students learn to understand themselves and influences on them.
- Career exploration – students develop the skills required to investigate opportunities in learning and work.
- Career management – students make and adjust plans to manage change and transition.

Citizenship at key stage 4

The activities also help to develop knowledge, skills and understanding associated with citizenship at key stage 4.

'Citizenship gives pupils the knowledge, skills and understanding to play an effective role in society at local, national and international levels. It helps them to become informed, thoughtful and responsible citizens who are aware of their duties and rights. It promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, making them more self-confident and responsible both in and beyond the classroom. It encourages pupils to play a helpful part in the life of their schools, neighbourhoods, communities and the wider world. It also teaches them about our economy and democratic institutions and values; encourages respect for different national, religious and ethnic identities; and develops pupils' ability to reflect on issues and take part in discussions.'

The importance of citizenship. The National Curriculum for England. Key stages 3–4

The statutory orders for Citizenship for students at key stage 4 include:

- knowledge and understanding about becoming informed citizens
- skills of enquiry and communication
- skills of participation and responsible action.

As part of the required knowledge and understanding, there are a number of areas relevant to the world of work, which are explored in *A Better Way to Work*. The order for key stage 4 requires that students are taught about:

- *the legal and human rights and responsibilities underpinning society and how they relate to citizens*
- *how the economy functions, including the role of business and financial services*
- *the opportunities for individuals and voluntary groups to bring about social change locally, nationally, in Europe and internationally*
- *the rights and responsibilities of consumers, employers and employees*
- *the wider issues and challenges of global interdependence and responsibility.*

The skills of enquiry and communication, and participation and responsible action, that students should be taught at key stage 4, are also supported by *A Better Way to Work*. They are:

- *how to research a topical political, spiritual, moral, social or cultural issue, problem or event by analysing information from different sources*
- *how to express, justify and defend orally and in writing a personal opinion about such issues, problems or events*
- *how to contribute to group and exploratory class discussions and take part in formal debates*
- *use their imagination to consider other people's experiences and be able to think about, express, explain and critically evaluate views that are not their own*
- *negotiate, decide and take part responsibly in school and community-based activities*
- *reflect on the process of participating.*

Work-related Learning

Since September 2004 schools have been required to offer a programme of work-related learning to all young people during key stage 4. Work-related learning has three key strands: learning through work contexts, learning about work and work practices, and learning the skills for work. *A Better Way to Work* helps schools to deliver most of the nine elements of work-related learning set out in the QCA framework.

QCA Framework for Work-Related Learning

1. *recognise, develop and apply their skills for enterprise and employability*
2. *use their experience of work, including work experience and part-time jobs, to extend their understanding of work*
3. *learn about the way business enterprises operate, working roles and conditions, and rights and responsibilities in the work place*
4. *develop awareness of the extent and diversity of local and national employment opportunities*
5. *relate their own abilities, attributes and achievements to career intentions and make informed choices based on an understanding of the alternatives*
6. *undertake tasks and activities set in work contexts*
7. *learn from contact with personnel from different employment sectors*
8. *have experience (direct or indirect) of working practices and environments*
9. *engage with ideas, challenges and applications from the business world.*

Work experience and training provision

A period of work experience is now embedded into the key stage 4 curriculum in most schools; 97% of young people have some kind of work experience during years 10 and 11, even if it only lasts one week. Increasingly, for young people following vocational courses, work experience takes the form of an extended period of time either at the workplace or with training providers, including colleges. Under the *Increased Flexibility Programme* many young people attend college to follow Applied GCSEs and other vocational courses. The Young Apprenticeship programme provides a strong vocational focus including around 50 days of work experience on employers' premises. The specialised Diplomas, to be steadily introduced from 2008, will involve at least one week of work experience at levels 1, 2 and 3.

Although some young people have part-time and Saturday jobs, at the age of 15 many have little experience of the working world and are lacking in confidence about their work experience. Schools offer programmes of varying length to help prepare the young people for their first taste of work. *A Better Way to Work* provides tasks and activities which teachers can use in work experience preparation to increase students' knowledge and skills and to develop their confidence. The materials can be used selectively in all these vocational and work-experience contexts.

Content of the units

A Better Way to Work has five units.

Unit 1: *Trade Unions at Work*

Unit 2: *Rights and Responsibilities at Work*

Unit 3: *Equal Opportunities at Work*

Unit 4: *Health and Safety*

Unit 5: *The Future of Work*

Each unit has the same structure, consisting of:

- **Group Leaders' Notes** which describe the content of the unit and the learning outcomes for students. Background information gives additional support for teachers.
- **Introductory Activities** which introduce the topic or theme of the unit and links with citizenship.
- **Work Experience Preparation Activities** which link directly to work experience and can form part of a preparation programme.
- **Case Studies** which raise issues about the topic drawn from real examples, and encourage students to discuss the impact of the topic on workers. One case study is linked to the Applied GCSEs.
- **An Assignment** which involves students in workplace investigations and allows them to gather evidence of key skills' or functional skills' achievement or for use in a citizenship project.
- **Briefing Notes for Trade Unionists and Other Visitors** which provide background information on how trade unionists and other visitors, such as employers and careers advisers, can support teachers in the classroom.
- **A Simulation** which provides a longer and more stretching activity to engage students' interest. The simulation includes guidance on involving a trade union visitor in debriefing the activity.

The five simulations are:

Living Wage – a networking simulation in which students work in role groups sending and receiving messages with other groups about the issue of low wages among security and contract cleaning staff. Issues raised include the living wage (as opposed to the Minimum Wage), competitive tendering, union recognition and the impact of unsocial hours/low wages on family life.

Bullying – a four-person role-play set in the context of the catering industry. Workplace bullying is a current issue in the world of work which is particularly relevant to the experience of students in schools.

Select Few – in which students become members of a selection panel choosing between candidates for a variety of jobs in a retail setting. The simulation raises many equal opportunities issues.

Goodlife Superstore – in which students take on the roles of members of a health and safety committee at a superstore. A number of current issues must be confronted including stress, workplace violence and repetitive strain injury.

Nothing Ruled In, Nothing Ruled Out – in which students take on roles of management and staff at a local authority which is seeking to introduce new 'flexible' ways of working. They learn about the pros and cons of changing work practices.

Resources and contacts

The TUC and individual trade unions are happy to send out further information on the issues covered by this pack. The TUC has a website which provides up-to-date information at www.tuc.org.uk. Contact information for the TUC-affiliated unions can be obtained from the TUC, Congress House, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3LS. Telephone: 020 7636 4030. Fax: 020 7636 0632.

Many of the activities in this pack would benefit from the involvement of trade unionists. Trade unions have a wealth of information that can enrich discussions about the world of work.

To invite a trade union speaker, complete the on-line request form at www.tuc.org.uk/schools

A number of free leaflets on workers' rights are available from the 'Know Your Rights' line on 0870 600 4882. They can also be accessed through the TUC website. These include:

Maternity leave and pay

Paternity leave and pay

Flexible working time for parents

Time off for families

Time's up for long hours

Working in the UK: rights for migrant workers

Young people at work

Your job and the law

Your rights as a homeworker

More useful information on rights at work can be found at the TUC Worksmart website (www.worksmart.org.uk). A free booklet, *Unions at work: a guide to modern trade unionism and the TUC*, is also available from the TUC.

Using *A Better Way to Work*

The pack is designed as a flexible resource which can be used in a variety of ways.

(a) Industry, enterprise or citizenship events

Individual activities from the five sections could be used with groups of students on industry, enterprise and/or citizenship 'days'. During such an event, schools and colleges often invite people from the local community to work with groups of students to help them understand various aspects of the world of work and the local community. The simulations are also tailor-made for off-timetable, special events of this kind.

(b) PSHE and citizenship programmes in schools

The relevant parts of the statutory orders for citizenship are included at the beginning of this guidance. Teachers, lecturers and tutors will find the activities in all of the sections useful in supporting students' knowledge and understanding of citizenship. The activities are designed to fit into a lesson time of approximately 45 minutes. If longer slots are available, the simulations can add depth to students' understanding of the issues and help them to develop appropriate skills. Increasingly learners are expected to have a voice in the institutions which they attend. The learner voice is important in improving pedagogy and aspects of administration and management. The materials in *A Better Way to Work* can help prepare learners to exercise their 'voice'.

(c) Post-16 citizenship programmes in schools, colleges and training organisations

Providers of post-16 education and training encourage students to take up various opportunities for citizenship development. The Crick Report on citizenship for 16–19 year olds suggested that the opportunities should allow young people to develop citizenship skills within a number of different roles: community member, consumer, family member, lifelong learner, taxpayer, voter and worker. Active trade unionists provide role models for active citizenship in their use of advocacy, support for democratic participation, and engagement in local, national and international campaigns.






(d) Work experience preparation

The materials have been particularly designed to use in preparation for work experience. Each section includes an activity which can be used to raise the issues with students before they go on work experience. There is also an assignment which students could carry out while on their placement.

(e) Vocational courses

NVQs, Applied GCEs in vocational subjects and other vocationally relevant qualifications are becoming more and more common in the key stage 4 curriculum and are provided by both schools and colleges. All vocational courses should prepare students for the world of work. This will also be true of the specialised Diplomas in the 14 vocational lines of learning. Indeed, some students on these courses will undertake extended work experience as an integral part of the programme. The activities and simulations in the set of materials can be used to introduce students to the various work-related issues they will need to examine.

***A Better Way to Work* comprises five units:**

-  Unit 1: Trade Unions at Work**
-  Unit 2: Rights and Responsibilities at Work**
-  Unit 3: Equal Opportunities at Work**
-  Unit 4: Health and Safety**
-  Unit 5: The Future of Work**

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