

**COMHAIRLE NÁISIÚNTA NA
gCÁILÍOCHTAÍ GAIRMOIDEACHAIS**

**NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR
VOCATIONAL AWARDS**



Module Descriptor

Work Experience
(Work Placement, Work Practice,
Work Based Learning)

Level 2 W20008

September 2001

www.ncva.ie

Level 2 Module Descriptor

Summary of Contents

Introduction	Describes how the module functions as part of the national vocational certificate framework.
Module Title	Indicates the module content. This title appears on the learner's certificate. It can be used to download the module from the website www.ncva.ie .
Module Code	An individual code is assigned to each module; a letter at the beginning denotes a vocational or general studies area under which the module is grouped and the first digit denotes its level within the national vocational certificate framework.
Level	Indicates where the module is placed in the national vocational certificate framework, from Foundation to Level 3.
Credit Value	Denotes the amount of credit that a learner accumulates on achievement of the module.
Purpose	Describes in summary what the learner will achieve on successfully completing the module and in what learning and vocational contexts the module has been developed. Where relevant, it lists what certification will be awarded by other certification agencies.
Preferred Entry Level	Recommends the level of previous achievement or experience of the learner.
Special Requirements	Usually 'none' but in some cases detail is provided here of specific learner or course provider requirements. There may also be reference to the minimum safety or skill requirements that learners must achieve prior to assessment.
General Aims	Describe in 3-5 statements the broad skills and knowledge learners will have achieved on successful completion of the module.
Units	Structure the learning outcomes; there may be no units.
Specific Learning Outcomes	Describe in specific terms the knowledge and skills that learners will have achieved on successful completion of the module.
Portfolio of Assessment	Provides details on how the learning outcomes are to be assessed.
Grading	Provides details of the grading system used.
Individual Candidate Marking Sheets	List the assessment criteria for each assessment technique and the marking system.
Module Results Summary Sheet	Records the marks for each candidate in each assessment technique and in total. It is an important record for centres of their candidate's achievements.
Appendices	Can include approval forms for national governing bodies.
Glossary of Assessment Techniques	Explains the types of assessment techniques used to assess standards.
Assessment Principles	Describes the assessment principles that underpin the NCVA approach to assessment.

Introduction

A module is a statement of the standards to be achieved to gain an NCVA award. Candidates are assessed to establish whether they have achieved the required standards. Credit is awarded for each module successfully completed.

The standards in a module are expressed principally in terms of specific learning outcomes, i.e. what the learner will be able to do on successful completion of the module. The other elements of the module - the purpose, general aims, assessment details and assessment criteria - combine with the learning outcomes to state the standards in a holistic way.

While the NCVA is responsible for setting the standards for certification in partnership with course providers and industry, it is the course providers who are responsible for the design of the learning programmes. The duration, content and delivery of learning programmes should be appropriate to the learners' needs and interests, and should enable the learners to reach the standard as described in the modules. Modules may be delivered alone or integrated with other modules.

The development of learners' **core skills** is a key objective of vocational education and training. The opportunity to develop these skills may arise through a single module or a range of modules. The core skills include:

- taking initiative
- taking responsibility for one's own learning and progress
- problem solving
- applying theoretical knowledge in practical contexts
- being numerate and literate
- having information and communication technology skills
- sourcing and organising information effectively
- listening effectively
- communicating orally and in writing
- working effectively in group situations
- understanding health and safety issues
- reflecting on and evaluating quality of own learning and achievement.

Course providers are encouraged to design programmes which enable learners to develop core skills.

1 Module Title Work Experience

2 Module Code W20008

3 Level 2

4 Credit Value 1 credit

5 Purpose This module is a statement of the standards to be achieved to gain an NCVA credit in Work Experience at Level 2. It is a mandatory module for all National Vocational Certificates at Level 2.

The module is designed to meet the needs of learners undertaking a wide range of Level 2 vocational education and training courses. Work Experience is a planned experiential learning activity and is an integral part of an educational process. It involves learners preparing and planning for work, working under direction in a specific vocational area and reviewing and evaluating that work. The experience of work enables learners to develop work skills, evaluate employment opportunities and cope with changing work environments.

The three units: Planning and Preparation, Experience, and Review and Evaluation should be viewed as an integrated package. Course providers are encouraged to design programmes which are consistent with these learning outcomes and are relevant to learners needs and experience.

This mandatory module incorporates a choice of three modes of undertaking work experience:

- **Work Placement**
- **Work Practice**
- **Work Based Learning**

Participation in any one mode will satisfy the requirements for work experience. All modes are designed to allow learners to learn from ongoing, substantial and active involvement in a specific work environment.

Work Placement Mode:

Learners fulfil the requirements of this mode by working in an established organisation/enterprise that has been deemed suitable to provide quality work experience by course providers. The learner participates in work related to the vocational award area.

Work Practice Mode:

Learners fulfil the requirements of this mode through becoming involved in a realistic work programme set up by course providers which gives substantial ‘hands-on’ experience of the vocational area. The work practice must be carefully planned, structured and monitored by course providers.

Work Based Learning Mode:

This mode is designed to enable learners to gain NCVA Level 2 accreditation for **current or prior** experience of work in a vocational area directly related to the certificate being sought. The experience of work in either case must be substantial, verifiable and relevant to the vocational certificate area.

Assessment of prior work based learning is carried out using APEAL (Accreditation of Prior Experience, Achievement and Learning). Assessment of current work based learning is available only in specific centres designated by NCVA.

6 Preferred Entry Level

National Vocational Certificate Level 1, Leaving Certificate or equivalent qualifications and/or relevant life and work experiences.

7 Special Requirements

Learners undertaking Placement or Practice modes of work experience must work the equivalent of ten to fifteen working days. A minimum of ten days must be completed in the placement or practice situation. The remaining five working days may be made up of current relevant work, paid or unpaid. Some specific certificate areas may require learners to undertake a more extensive period of work experience.

8 General Aims

Learners who successfully complete this module will:

- 8.1 develop critical awareness of the changing nature of work
- 8.2 set achievable goals for work experience
- 8.3 utilise learning opportunities presented in the work environment
- 8.4 apply work skills to consolidate learning in the vocational area
- 8.5 understand how work is planned and organised at different levels in a specific vocational area

- 8.6 appreciate the importance of safety and welfare in the workplace
- 8.7 develop capabilities, both personal and vocational, to successfully meet challenges in the workplace
- 8.8 review career choices in the light of their own aspirations, experience, abilities and available options
- 8.9 explore future employment opportunities (including opportunities for self employment, contract work, work in the social economy, etc).
- 9 Units** **The specific learning outcomes are grouped into 3 units.**
- Unit 1 **Planning and Preparation**
Unit 2 **Experience**
Unit 3 **Review and Evaluation**
- 10 Specific Learning Outcomes**
- Unit 1** **Planning and Preparation**
- Learners should be able to:*
- 10.1.1 undertake a personal and vocational skills audit in relation to a specific vocational area
- 10.1.2 identify specific goals for work experience
- 10.1.3 compile a range of relevant material for work experience eg CV, letter of application, interview records, contract, skills checklist, statement of learning goals, letter of introduction to employers, details of workplace days and times of work, etc
- 10.1.4 practise the use of effective communication methods in the workplace eg personal, interpersonal, technological etc
- 10.1.5 identify equality issues related to the workplace eg gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, etc
- 10.1.6 identify the basic rights and responsibilities of employees and employers defined by current legislation and practice in their vocational area eg gender equality, equal opportunities, health, safety and welfare, union representation, minimum wages, etc

- 10.1.7 identify key issues which influence trends in the vocational area eg globalisation, new technology, demographic shifts, etc
- 10.1.8 explore ways in which learning from other modules/learning experiences may be relevant to work experience
- 10.1.9 practise job finding skills to support future applications for employment.

Unit 2 Experience

Learners should be able to:

- 10.2.1 participate effectively in the workplace, eg carrying out tasks, meeting deadlines, good timekeeping etc
- 10.2.2 practise the personal skills which support integration in the workplace eg appropriate dress, adaptability, reliability, punctuality, health and safety awareness, appropriate use of initiative etc
- 10.2.3 maintain appropriate confidentiality about the organisation and its employees/clients/customers and users
- 10.2.4 communicate effectively with supervisor/manager, fellow workers and the general public, (including customers where applicable)
- 10.2.5 maintain a workplace diary/journal which describes, reflects on and analyses experiences in the workplace
- 10.2.6 identify the Health, Safety and Welfare regulations which apply in the workplace
- 10.2.7 undertake research into work organisations and career opportunities in their vocational award area.

Unit 3 Review and Evaluation

Learners should be able to:

- 10.3.1 critically evaluate overall performance during work experience in the light of previously stated goals, personal qualities and prior career aspirations
- 10.3.2 examine the extent to which learning from other modules/learning experiences was relevant to work experience

- 10.3.3 evaluate personal methods of meeting challenges in an unfamiliar workplace as regards conflict, criticism, meeting new people
- 10.3.4 reflect on reports by co-ordinator and workplace supervisor on personal performance, operational and co-operational skills in a workplace
- 10.3.5 explore options for future training and employment in the context of their workplace experiences
- 10.3.6 profile their vocational award area.

11 Portfolio of Assessment

Please refer to the glossary of assessment techniques and the note on assessment principles at the end of this module descriptor.

All assessment is carried out in accordance with NCVA regulations.

Assessment is devised by the internal assessor, with external moderation by the NCVA.

Practice and Placement modes

Summary	Learner Record	50%
	Skills Demonstration	30%
	Assignment	20%

11.1 Learner Record

A personal journal will be compiled by candidates. It will include a description of the candidate's planning and preparation, the candidate's experience in the workplace, and a review and evaluation of the candidate's learning while on work experience. It should include:

- a description of personal planning and preparation activities, including personal skills audit and learning goals set
- a detailed description of work undertaken
- an indication of what new learning has occurred, challenges encountered and positive aspects experienced, both personal and work related
- review of learning goals
- an outline of what the candidate would do differently in any future work experience
- an outline of future plans in the light of workplace experiences.

Evidence of planning and preparation should include details of all arrangements made, with relevant documents such as information on vocational area and relevant legislation, correspondence with employer agency, letter of application with CV, details of work, contract etc.

The journal may be presented using a variety of media, including written, oral, graphic, audio, visual or any combination of these. Any audio or video evidence must be provided on tape.

11.2 Skills Demonstration

In one or more skills demonstrations, candidates will be assessed in a broad range of vocational, practical and interpersonal communication skills while in the workplace.

These workplace skills should be assessed by the workplace supervisor. The Supervisor’s Report form is supplied in the module. Further comments/observations on the Supervisor’s report may be included by the Work Experience tutor/co-ordinator.

11.3 Assignment

The internal assessor will devise a brief that requires candidates to investigate their vocational award area. The profile should:

- describe the industry/sector and its range of occupations
- detail the qualifications and experience needed for work associated with one occupation in the vocational area
- discuss employment and career opportunities in the vocational award area.

The assignment may be presented in a variety of media, for example written, audio, video, graphic, visual or any combination of these. Any audio or video evidence must be provided on tape.

APEAL mode:

Summary	Learner Record	80%
	Assignment	20%

11.1 Learner Record

A personal record will be compiled by the candidate. It will include:

- a job description which details the activities undertaken in work

- a record of work including a completed CV and a workplace reference. The reference should include either:
 - a completed Supervisor’s Report
 - OR**
 - a reference/verification of employment for the candidate from an employer, customer, client, service user
- a review and evaluation of the candidate’s learning while in work. This should include:
 - critical reflection on personal and vocational experience
 - discussion of the challenges encountered, both personal and work related
 - discussion of the positive aspects, both personal and work related
 - discussion of learning, both personal and work related
 - an outline of future plans in light of workplace experiences.

The learner record may be presented using a variety of media, including written, oral, graphic, audio, visual or any combination of these. Any audio or video evidence must be provided on tape.

11.2 Assignment

The internal assessor will devise a brief that requires candidates to investigate their vocational award area. The profile should:

- describe the industry/sector and its range of occupations
- detail the qualifications and experience needed for work associated with one occupation in the vocational area
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The assignment may be presented using a variety of media, including written, oral, graphic, audio, visual or any combination of these. Any audio or video evidence must be provided on tape.

12 Grading

Pass	50 - 64%
Merit	65 - 79%
Distinction	80 - 100%

Supervisor's Report Work Experience (W20008)

Participant's Name: _____ Centre Name: _____ Tel. No.: _____

Organisation/Company Name: _____ Supervisor's Name: _____ No. of days worked: _____

Guidelines This report forms an important part of the overall assessment of Work Experience for certification at NCVA Level 2. It should be completed by a supervisor/manager who has observed the participant in the workplace. Please indicate the participant's performance by placing a tick for each of the criteria under one of the headings. *Excellent should only be used in cases of outstanding performance.*

Criteria	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unable to Assess	Further Comments	
Interest in the work							Brief description of work undertaken by candidate	
Awareness of health & safety practices								
Appropriate dress								
Ability to follow instructions								
Quality of agreed/assigned work								
Practical Skills								Any comments or suggestions on work experience arrangements
Use of workplace equipment								
Punctuality								
Attendance at workplace								
Relating to co-workers								Any other comments.
Relating to supervisor								
Communicating with customers								
Acceptance of direction/criticism								
Initiative								
Adaptability								

Signature of workplace Supervisor: _____ Date: _____

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Glossary of Assessment Techniques

Assignment *An exercise carried out in response to a brief with specific guidelines and usually of short duration.*

Each assignment is based on a brief provided by the internal assessor. The brief includes specific guidelines for candidates. The assignment is carried out over a period of time specified by the internal assessor.

Assignments may be specified as an oral presentation, case study, observations, or have a detailed title such as audition piece, health fitness plan or vocational area profile.

Collection of Work

A collection and/or selection of pieces of work produced by candidates over a period of time that demonstrates the mastery of skills.

Using guidelines provided by the internal assessor, candidates compile a collection of their own work. The collection of work demonstrates evidence of a range of specific learning outcomes or skills. The evidence may be produced in a range of conditions, such as in the learning environment, in a role play exercise, or in real-life/work situations.

This body of work may be self-generated rather than carried out in response to a specific assignment eg art work, engineering work etc.

Examination

A means of assessing a candidate's ability to recall and apply skills, knowledge and understanding within a set period of time (time constrained) and under clearly specified conditions.

Examinations may be:

- practical, assessing the mastery of specified practical skills demonstrated in a set period of time under restricted conditions
- oral, testing ability to speak effectively in the vernacular or other languages
- interview-style, assessing learning through verbal questioning, on one-to-one/group basis
- aural, testing listening and interpretation skills
- theory-based, assessing the candidate's ability to recall and apply theory, requiring responses to a range of question types, such as objective, short answer, structured, essay. These questions may be answered in different media such as in writing, orally etc.

Learner Record

A self-reported record by an individual, in which he/she describes specific learning experiences, activities, responses, skills acquired.

Candidates compile a personal logbook/journal/diary/daily diary/record/laboratory notebook/sketch book.

The logbook/journal/diary/daily diary/record/laboratory notebook/sketch book should cover specified aspects of the learner's experience.

Project

A substantial individual or group response to a brief with guidelines, usually carried out over a period of time.

Projects may involve:

- research – requiring individual/group investigation of a topic
- process – eg design, performance, production of an artefact/event

Projects will be based on a brief provided by the internal assessor or negotiated by the candidate with the internal assessor. The brief will include broad guidelines for the candidate. The work will be carried out over a specified period of time.

Projects may be undertaken as a group or collaborative project, however the individual contribution of each candidate must be clearly identified.

The project will enable the candidate to demonstrate: (*some of these – about 2-4*)

- understanding and application of concepts in (specify area)
- use/selection of relevant research/survey techniques, sources of information, referencing, bibliography
- ability to analyse, evaluate, draw conclusions, make recommendations
- understanding of process/planning implementation and review skills/ planning and time management skills
- ability to implement/produce/make/construct/perform
- mastery of tools and techniques
- design/creativity/problem-solving/evaluation skills
- presentation/display skills
- team working/co-operation/participation skills.

Skills

Demonstration

Assessment of mastery of specified practical, organisational and/or interpersonal skills.

These skills are assessed at any time throughout the learning process by the internal assessor/another qualified person in the centre for whom the candidate undertakes relevant tasks.

The skills may be demonstrated in a range of conditions, such as in the learning environment, in a role-play exercise, or in a real-life/work situations.

The candidate may submit a written report/supporting documentation as part of the assessment.

Examples of skills: laboratory skills, computer skills, coaching skills, interpersonal skills.

NCVA Assessment Principles

- 1 Assessment is regarded as an integral part of the learning process.
- 2 All NCVA assessment is criterion referenced. Each assessment technique has **assessment criteria** which detail the range of marks to be awarded for specific standards of knowledge, skills and competence demonstrated by candidates.
- 3 The mode of assessment is generally local i.e. the assessment techniques are devised and implemented by internal assessors in centres.
- 4 Assessment techniques in NCVA modules are valid in that they test a range of appropriate learning outcomes.
- 5 The reliability of assessment techniques is facilitated by providing support for assessors.
- 6 Arising from an extensive consultation process, each NCVA module describes what is considered to be an optimum approach to assessment. When the necessary procedures are in place, it will be possible for assessors to use other forms of assessment, provided they are demonstrated to be valid and reliable.
- 7 To enable all learners to demonstrate that they have reached the required standard, candidate evidence may be submitted in written, oral, visual, multimedia or other format as appropriate to the learning outcomes.
- 8 Assessment of a number of modules may be integrated, provided the separate criteria for each module are met.
- 9 Group or team work may form part of the assessment of a module, provided each candidate's achievement is separately assessed.

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