

EXPERIENCING WORK ...?

Transition from School to Further Education and Employment

Report of the one-day information and consultation event

held on Wednesday 18th October 2006

at Glamorgan Cricket Club (Sophia Gardens, Cardiff)

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Introduction:

Work experience is the first opportunity for young people to interact with the adult world of employment. It is therefore vital that it is a worthwhile, valuable experience that motivates them to plan for further and higher education and, ultimately, employment. This is particularly important for young people with visual impairments as currently 75% of blind and partially sighted adults of working age are unemployed (RNIB, 2004).

The Welsh Assembly Government expects work-focused experience to 'provide opportunities for learners to improve their knowledge and understanding of, and skills for, the world of work, enterprise and entrepreneurship based largely on learning by doing' (Learning Pathways 14-19 Guidance, section 1.4). It sees business and industry as playing an important part in the learning core for all 14-19 year olds in Wales.

However, anecdotal evidence has suggested that work experience placements may be less than successful for many young people with visual impairments. The topic was researched in 2006 and a summary research report produced. This report is available in both Welsh and English languages from the RNIB website¹.

RNIB Cymru held this consultation event to explore the challenges around making work experience placements successful for both employers and young people with visual impairments. We would like to thank all who took part and contributed on the day. This document aims to represent the different voices within the debate.

The full RNIB Cymru research findings (methodology etc) are reported in the document: 'Research Report: Work Experience as part of the Welsh Curriculum 14-19 for Young People who are blind or partially sighted', which is available from RNIB Cymru in English and Welsh languages. This event report highlights only the main observations and the subsequent presentations and discussion arising on the day of the consultation event.

Nicola J. Crews
Cardiff, November 2006

¹ www.rnib.org.uk/cymru

Nicola Crews - Summary of Research Findings

It is known that young people with disabilities find transition into adulthood very difficult (Keil 2005, RNIB 2001). Moreover only 25% of blind or partially sighted people of working age are in employment. This may be because 90% of employers rate blind or partially sighted people as either 'difficult' or 'impossible' to employ (RNIB 2004).

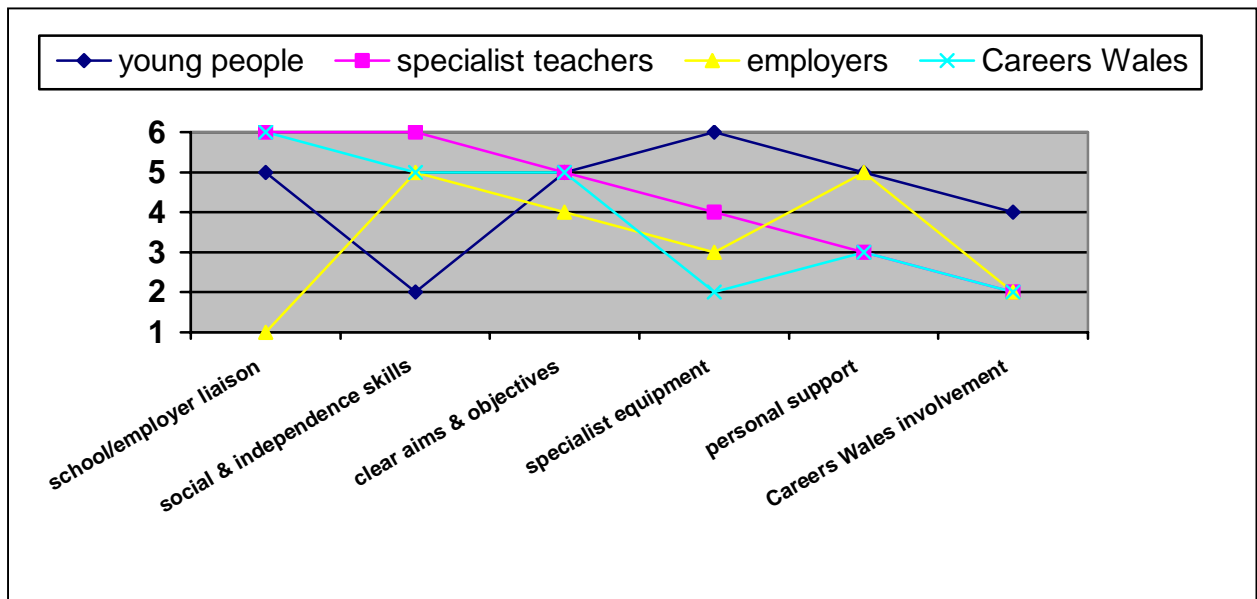
Joseph Rowntree Research (2005) found that at age 16, the aspirations of disabled young people were the same as able-bodied young people – that is the same income for a full-time job. However at age 26, young people with disabilities were four times more likely to be unemployed and were earning approximately 11% less than their non-disabled peers with the same qualifications.

'Work experience introduces young people to the world of work and is a valuable and essential part of their education' (Health and Safety Executive 2002). It is therefore vital that our young people have a well supported and good quality experience.

The range of placements available to young people with sight loss closely mirrored the employment trends for Wales. The public sector took the most young people on work experience (75%) followed by the manufacturing sector (15%) and the agricultural sector (10%). Specialist teachers and careers officers reported that the roles popularly undertaken tended to be job shadowing, reception, administration and childcare. Support for the placement was provided by Careers Wales and specialist teachers (visual impairment). Careers Wales support tended to vary between the six companies, but the critical role seemed to be that of the specialist teacher who was involved in placement identification, providing equipment and/or a support worker, liaising with the employer and post-placement evaluation.

The young people themselves all wanted more say in the placements they received and for the placement to be more relevant to their needs and aspirations. Less than half of the focus group participants were satisfied with their placements with lack of understanding of their abilities, staff attitudes and lack of choice in the placement venues being the most popular complaints.

When the critical success factors for work experience are mapped, a disparate picture emerges (1 = low priority / 6 = high priority):



The closest correlation was the need for clear aims and objectives for the work experience, followed by the need for personal support when this is required to support the placement. Employers clearly value the social and independence skills of the young people and personal support for their placement. However the young people did not see the relevance or importance of having good social and independence skills, recognising only that inadequacy in this area may mean that more support is required.

The research highlights the need for equality of opportunity, to be promoted through increased employer awareness, increased involvement of the young people in setting the aims and objectives for the placement, and supporting the young people to develop good social and independence skills. There is also the need for equality of access and support through strengthening the Careers Wales profile, planning the involvement of specialist teachers (VI) and providing personal and technology support where necessary.

In conclusion, it is vital that this introduction to the world of work is meaningful and successful, giving a valid impression of the world of work – and also to ensure that education programmes address the acquisition of the social and independence skills that employers so clearly value.

Charlotte Bishop – Work Experience: How it was for me.

Charlotte, currently a student at Ty Coch College, Swansea, described the work experience that she did whilst a pupil at Cefn Saeson School in Neath. She is partially sighted.

Charlotte had wanted to work in catering and managed to gain a placement in a restaurant owned by a friend of her parents. There is a resource base for young people with visual impairments at Cefn Saeson school and the staff there were involved with doing health and safety / risk assessments before she started the placement. They also supported her by a member of staff visiting the restaurant whilst she was there on placement and arranged for some specialist equipment (e.g. a cutting guide) to be available.

Charlotte really enjoyed the placement and got on well with the staff there. She commented that many of the diners were surprised to see her working in the restaurant because of her visual impairment.

Although her parents had been trying to dissuade Charlotte from going into catering because they thought she would experience difficulties, Charlotte herself wanted to see whether catering was a future career for her. As a result of the placement she has come to her own decision that it is not what she wants to do. She is now studying business studies at Ty Coch College.

The greatest value of the placement for Charlotte was that gave her the chance to try something she really wanted to do – and enabled her to decide for herself whether it was right for her as a career. She stated that the work experience has stopped her from taking the wrong route at college, as without it she would have continued to study catering.

Pat Heap – the Role of the Specialist Teacher.

Pat Heap had recently retired from her post as teacher in charge of the visual impairment resource at Llandeyrn High School. In that position she was frequently involved with supporting work experience placements and, when asked, stated that she was involved in forward planning: visiting the employer prior to the placement, sorting transport, giving training to the placement staff, making routine visits during the placement and being 'a phone call away from any problems'.

In her presentation Pat stressed the need for someone who knows the young person to approach the employer in order to broker the placement. Giving awareness training to the placement staff was another important role.

The young person needed to have transport sorted, and to have practical orientation to the work experience so that they knew what was expected of them, the lay-out of the office / venue (including the location of the toilet) etc.

Pat stressed that personal contact from the specialist teacher reassured employers and prepared them for the young person arriving on work experience. It was therefore key to the success of the placement.

Christine Chapman, AM – Work Experience in the context of Curriculum 14-19.

(Full text of the Minister's speech is available on request).

Learning Pathways is one of the Welsh Assembly Government's flagship policies and we have developed it in a unique way involving all the stakeholder organisations and young people themselves. It is true to say that the learning and skills agenda is very much at the forefront of developments at the moment. Not only have Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies including ELWa and ACCAC merged into the Welsh Assembly Government, but we have also published key strategies and Action plans to continue our drive to make Wales a true Learning Country. The Learning Pathways 14-19 Action Plan is one of these key documents.

Implementing Learning Pathways 14-19 will transform young people's options and opportunities as it puts the learner first and focuses on raising standards for every young person, widening options and providing greater flexibility to vary the speed and direction of an individual's pathway. It consists of a blend of six key elements, which will ensure that, over time, all learners receive the appropriate balance of learning experiences that best meet their needs and enable them to receive the support and guidance they need to realise their potential.

The six key elements are:

- Individual Learning Pathways to meet the needs of each learner;
- Wider choice and flexibility of programmes and ways of learning;
- A Learning Core which runs from 14 through to 19 wherever young people are learning;
- Learning coach support;
- Access to personal support;
- Impartial careers advice and guidance.

Additional funding of £41m has been made available up to 2008 to support new aspects of Learning Pathways, and we are looking to see where existing funding can be put to better use to ensure access for all learners to the six key elements.

The Learning Pathways Guidance II, launched on 3rd May this year, outlined the Welsh Assembly's Government's ongoing commitment to provide information on this far reaching programme as it is rolled out. The 14 -19 Action Plan 2006 -2010 is a key component of the Guidance and drives forward the 14 -19 agenda at strategic and operational levels. Learning Pathways will continue to be nationally managed and locally delivered with a National Project Group, working through four sub groups, and 14 - 19 Networks in each of the twenty two local authority areas in Wales.

The following recommendations are included in the Action Plan:

- 14-19 Networks will be asked to ensure equality of access to all aspects of Learning Pathways as they develop for learners with additional needs (from September 2006).
- 14-19 Networks will be asked to monitor access to Work Focused Experience (WFE) for learners with additional needs,

young people in care, those from disadvantaged backgrounds and those with disabilities.

- Peter McGowan, the Vocational Skills Champion, will work specifically with employers to challenge stereotyping in race, gender and disability (from April 2006). Peter has a strong background in both business and education and has been working closely with us in the Assembly Government, and other key partners such as employer groups, the SSDA and Careers Wales. His role is to influence and drive up demand for vocational skills amongst employers and work with schools, colleges and other providers to improve the range and quality of what is on offer.

Work Experience as we have known it has been a short excursion into the world of work, one to two weeks pre-16 and a further week post-16. This experience has not necessarily always been linked to the course the student was undertaking or the career they aspired to. The resources deployed by schools, employers and Careers Wales to accommodate and support this activity is massive, not surprising when in 2005-2006 in excess of 55,000 young people participated. Work Focused Experience, as part of the Learning Pathways 14-19 curriculum development, is a major change. WFE as part of this new methodology will need to be more focused on the student's courses or training, academic achievement or requirements and later career aspirations. Placements may be for as long as required and may involve complex patterns of working between schools, colleges and employers to accommodate them.

The commitment of schools, colleges, Careers Wales and especially employers to providing meaningful placements is essential and the significant change in working practices must be managed and accommodated. Best practice must be identified and shared.

There has been so much research carried out in Wales along with the rest of the UK over the last 5 years that tells us that that employers are looking for young people to leave school and college equipped with a greater understanding of the world of work and of the skills needed in the fast moving world of technological change, global competition and consumer choice. This means that we need to ensure that there are sufficient opportunities for our young people to develop the skills that are needed for a successful career whatever route they choose. Young people with visual

impairments, one of whom you have heard from this morning, face special challenges and have individual requirements that must be met if they are to be able to undertake WFE and later move successfully on into the world of work.

In conclusion, we want to build on the activity and development already taking place across Wales. We want to see the emphasis in Learning Pathways and workbased learning continue in such a way that young people are further helped to develop high quality skills that can be applied in different contexts. We want a shift in emphasis towards the interests of learners, concentrating or increasing their readiness for employment rather than competition between organisations. We have an expectation of collaborative working and co-operation between all stakeholders in developing a strategic approach to area wide provision.

Ann Woodhouse and Rita Deegan – The Role of Careers Wales.

The speakers stated that they were glad to contribute to this consultation day as Careers Wales had been consulted by RNIB during the research and had concurred with the results. Consequently they are 'keen to work with our partners to improve the situation'.

Careers Wales comprises six locally-based companies that provide careers information, advice and guidance to clients of all ages on learning and employment and facilitate links between business and education. It was established as an umbrella organisation in April 2001 to work towards parity of service across Wales and towards common standards, but with the awareness of local demands and responding to local needs. there are therefore variations in the way work experience is managed across different companies, but there is no variation in the standard of the service the companies strive to provide and they work towards commonality where appropriate.

The role of the Careers Officer (as laid down in the Special Educational Code of Practice for Wales 2002) is to support a young person with a disability and/or Special Educational Need from Year 9 onwards. This means working with them, their parents/carers, their teachers and with other agencies such as social services and health to facilitate an effective and smooth

transition from school into further education (whether specialist or sector provision) or the world of work. Special needs advisers work with their work experience colleagues in the companies to support their clients into work experience placements at a time appropriate to their specific needs.

The Special Needs Careers Adviser meets with the young person prior to the time that work experience might be arranged. This could be at an interview, Annual review meetings and / or during group work sessions. This informs them of the young person's individual needs and enables them to help the school to select an appropriate placement, often from a list provided by Careers Wales. The school then contacts the employer and an individual meeting is planned in advance to ensure that the employer is fully aware of the client's capabilities, interests and how best any support needs are to be met.

All Careers Wales companies have arrangements for undertaking risk assessments with employers in respect of work experience placements. They also provide support materials for work experience such as diaries and organisers, which are available on CD Rom, large print, and in Braille.

To increase commonality in the way work experience is delivered across Wales, work is underway to develop an All Wales work experience employer database. Careers Wales is acutely aware of the need to encourage employers to offer placements to clients with disabilities. The percentage of employers willing to take a young people with a disability on placement is monitored annually and targets set for improvement each year. There appears to be a lack of employer awareness about disability issues and reluctance on the part of some employers to provide opportunities. We need to increase this opportunity base by raising awareness and changing attitudes. We need to ensure that placements are well-planned and that the young person and the employer are supported in that placement in the most appropriate way. This need to develop relationships with employers has been identified by the Welsh Assembly Government and is reflected in their appointment of a Vocational Skills Champion. This is a long-term project but hopefully the emphasis on vocational skills in the 14-19 Learning Pathways will demand the development of meaningful and positive links with employers through a variety of work-focused initiatives.

We also need to ensure that the roles and responsibilities of partners in the work experience process are clearly defined and that all staff involved in matching and negotiating placements are properly trained and given sufficient time to undertake these tasks and to evaluate outcomes. Existing good practice indicates that successful placements are achieved when adequate resources are allocated.

Careers Wales works with partner organisations who are able to support young people into and through work experience. However many of these projects – by virtue of their funding mechanisms – are short term and, once the funding comes to an end, the services provided are unsustainable for core service providers such as Careers Wales.

Availability of placements does vary across Wales. In some rural areas both schools and the Careers Companies have difficulty in identifying sufficient placements to meet the demand. Where there are insufficient opportunities for work experience Careers Wales companies have devised alternative activities such as simulated work experience and master classes to provide a work related experience for young people. These may include, for example, a small group visit to an employer's premises providing an opportunity to find out about how the business operates and the range of jobs that are undertaken.

Good preparation for work experience is a key aspect of a successful placement. Careers Wales can help prepare students in a number of different ways including health and safety briefings and in helping to clarify the objectives of the placement. Work experience is often talked about in terms of an insight into a chosen career. This may be the case for a few pupils (and it's more likely to be related to a vocational area for post 16 students) but in most cases work experience provides a more general insight into the world of work. It provides an experience of working in unfamiliar surroundings, of interacting with new people, of being treated as an adult, of working longer hours. For some young people getting up early and arriving at work on time every day for a week or two is a major achievement. By describing work experience in this way we can better manage young peoples' expectations. But in order to capitalise on the experience pupils require coping strategies.

In developing young peoples' self esteem, confidence and social skills Careers Wales can support in another way. There are excellent opportunities for developing these skills and attributes through enterprise activities, which encourage team working, communication and problem solving – skills that can be further developed during work experience. In preparing for such activities Careers Wales Advisers work closely with teachers to adapt the programmes to meet the needs of the particular group of pupils.

Another programme that Careers Wales manages is employer mentoring. Mentors are recruited from businesses and trained to work with individuals or small groups of young people in schools over an extended period. Schools identify those pupils that they consider will benefit from the programme and work with the mentors in setting clear objectives. They may range from improving motivation to completing course work on time but in each case the mentor brings an employer perspective to the situation. Of course there are never sufficient employer mentors to meet the demand but there are some very committed employers who find the resources to support the programme.

One final programme that I want to mention is teacher placement into business and industry. Through this programme teachers spend time with an employer updating their knowledge and understanding of a particular sector and then use this information to develop an area of the curriculum. The time spent with the employer provides the opportunity to develop a better understanding of each other's needs.

Clearly with the spotlight on work focused experience there is a need to increase the number of employers that support the curriculum and Careers Wales has an important role to play in brokering the links between schools and businesses. The Minister has already mentioned the importance of impartial careers advice and guidance, but Careers Wales is also involved in another way. Some of you may be familiar with our website careerswales.com of which e-progress file is an integral part. We are developing the site to support the requirements of the 14-19 learning pathways and to make the site more accessible. As a result of consultation with young people, parents and professionals and providing that the technical implications can be overcome we plan to develop text to speech reader and text only versions that will apply to both English and Welsh languages on the site. The software needed to do this will be embedded on careerswales.com and apply to any

subsequent developments. In addition, I am please to report that earlier this month the site achieved the Plain English Campaign Internet Crystal Mark. We hope that in implementing these developments that more users will be able to access the whole range of opportunities afforded by careerswales.com

Sian Callaghan (Head of Regional Corporate Affairs) – Centrica as an employer of blind or partially sighted people.

Sian started her presentation with two definitions of diversity:

- 'Diversity is the mosaic of people who bring a variety of backgrounds, styles, perspectives, values and beliefs as assets to the groups and organisations with which they interact.
- Diversity acknowledges each person is different and unique.

Centrica knows, through staff surveys, that 15% of employees are of ethnic minority origin, 2.8% have a disability, 20% are over 45 years of age and 33% are women. It therefore aims to develop an inclusive workplace that integrates diversity into the management and business practices, raises awareness and understanding and facilitates the sharing of good practice and initiatives across the group.

Centrica is aware of the needs of people with visual impairment in their company. The use awareness raising internally and have produced guidelines on employing people with visual impairment in conjunction with RNIB. Basic guidance is provided to Occupational Health Advisors and Human Resources Delivery Managers and an important part of Group Policy in making reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities. These adjustments may include providing materials in braille, large print or on cassette, providing large PC monitors and adaptive software programmes (e.g. Zoom text). The key to success is to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to perform their job to the best of their ability.

Sian stated that Centrica had a 'limited track record of success' in employing blind and partially sighted people. It doesn't offer structured work experience to any potential employees regardless of diversity issues because of the complexity of the training involved for its work. All of the partially sighted employees have

been recruited through the New Deal initiatives with the support of RNIB. This has been both advisory (for staff and employer) and practical – to enable solutions to be found and objections overcome.

Sian concluded with two case studies. Catherine works in the Cardiff customer contact centre and is partially sighted. She was recruited three years ago via the New Deal programme and works in the support and administration team. Catherine had previously worked in back room catering jobs where she felt there was little career development. However she has now had IT and call centre training and has gained new skills and greater confidence. Catherine nominated the company for a Remploy ‘Leading the Way’ award.

Neil works in the Manchester office and was also recruited through New Deal. He is partially sighted and requires a screen magnifier and software, large print keyboard and Zoom Text facilities. He now holds a diploma in IT and would like to progress his career in this area. Neil has highlighted advice and support from RNIB as being ‘invaluable’ for him in the workplace.

Reports from Discussion Groups.

1. Preparing Young People for Work Experience

Background:

The research showed that there is an apparent mis-match between the beliefs and expectations of young people with disabilities and the professionals regarding the impact of their visual impairment and level of social and independence skills.

Specialist teachers, employers and Careers Wales advisors all considered that the social and independence skills of the young person were an important factor for the success of work experience. The young people taking part in the survey, however, felt that their social and independence skills should not be a barrier to work experience – although they admitted that they might need more support where these skills were lacking. In addition, it is apparent that the comfort-zone of the employers is greatly enhanced by the provision of a support-

worker. Other findings indicated that lack of accessible transport, affecting travel to and from work experience placements, was a potential barrier to effective placements.

Aim(s) of discussion:

- ✓ to identify the skills required by the young person to effectively participate in work experience.
- ✓ To suggest ways in which the young person can be prepared for the work experience.

Feedback:

For a successful work experience it is important to change the attitudes of employers, parents and the students. There are problems with time and resources, which are different in different parts of Wales, and it is important to look at the barriers: transport; ignorance; lack of information etc.

Skills identified as being needed by young people with visual impairments included: team work, the ability to follow instructions, confidence and resilience, communication and language skills – especially the ability to speak Welsh – qualifications, to be seen to be IT, numeracy and literacy and ‘softer’ skills. In addition they need to prove that they are trustworthy and reliable, motivated and can use their own initiative. They must be capable of meeting challenges in unfamiliar places and may need some support to enable this.

There was some discussion on what we are preparing the young people for. It was suggested that job clubs in school give an insight into looking for a job, interviews, placement visits and skills. Mentoring arrangements usually fall to the school, but Careers Wales are involved with Health and Safety issues. There was a question about who decides what is a suitable placement and how to balance risk with the demands of the Disability Discrimination Act.

All young people have individual abilities and it is important to manage the expectations of both the employer and the student. The employer must be prepared in order for the placement to have value and meaning. This preparation may involve disability awareness, talking about the abilities of the student as well as the disability.

It was felt important that the student learned body language, how to dress, how to communicate to ask questions, and also how to communicate their needs. Early preparation was felt necessary in order to promote the independence of the student. Similarly it is important to communicate with the student's parents / carers in order to allay any fears they might have about the placement.

Who should do the preparation? It is important to work together with parents and to obtain all essential background information. It is important that the 'postcode lottery' of support and placements ends and that provision of specialist equipment and physical access is considered (Disability Discrimination Act). A job coach would be useful for many young people with disabilities and mobility / rehabilitation officers must be involved. Young Enterprise and special careers fairs have their place, as does Careers Wales.

Undoubtedly young people do benefit from work experience that is properly prepared (e.g. interview techniques). There needs to be a 'running in' period, so that time is not lost, and it is important for all to know what the aims, objectives and expectations are.

2. Working with Employers

Background:

The research showed that there is a lack of opportunities for worthwhile work experience placements for young people with visual impairments. Only 24% of the young people involved in the research felt that they had received a placement related to their preferred career.

It was very difficult to engage employers with the research. Only 7/100 responded to the questionnaire and these were all from companies who had taken young people with disabilities on work experience placements.

Specialist teachers and employers reported the range of available placements as being very limited. As predicted, basic

telephone and administration roles, and child care, were common placements.

Aim(s) of discussion:

- ✓ to identify the needs of employers relating to work experience
- ✓ To suggest ways in which they can be engaged in providing work experience for blind and partially sighted young people.

Feedback:

Employers need information, specifically information about the individual students needing placements. Ideally this would take place in 1:1 discussion with employers. Awareness training (including visual awareness training) for employers was considered very important – and employers would want this training to be free of charge as in the rural areas small employers would have no budget for training. The greatest worry identified by employers was Health and Safety. Consequently there is a need to educate them and spend time in planning. Occasionally there may be a need to look at other alternatives to work experience.

It was suggested that we should focus on positives rather than negatives with employers – e.g. 25% of employers successfully work with visually impaired staff, rather than 75% of blind and partially sighted people are unemployed. In this was positive role models could be used, as people should be employed on their skill and ability and 3 million blind people in the UK is not such a minority.

We need to reach employers who, regardless of the size of their organisation, should have strong policies in place. This could be done through leaflets and newspaper advertisements – funding would be required for this (Welsh Assembly Government?). Careers Wales identify employers and have dialogue with them. Many employers have subsequently signed up with local schools. Initial discussions on health and safety issues are held following this. Careers Wales have a substantial training programme and Code of Practice.

Good experiences of work based training could be used to spread the word about employing a blind or partially sighted person. Careers Wales website has opportunity to use case studies demonstrating successful work experiences.

3. Provision of support during work experience

Background:

The research showed that the young people felt that the provision of any necessary specialist equipment and personal support was essential to enable them to overcome any physical disabilities they might have – but also for overcoming shortcomings in their social and independence skills.

Employers also rated the provision of personal support very highly. Their top three priorities were for good social and independence skills, availability of a personal support worker and clear aims and objectives for the placement.

Aim(s) of discussion:

- ✓ to identify what support may be necessary for a) the student and b) the employer
- ✓ To suggest ways in which this support can be provided.

Feedback

There is a 'grey area' with regards to the provision of equipment for work experience. One solution would be a pool of equipment within Wales that can be loaned out to employers. However there would need to be arrangements for maintenance of equipment and tutoring in its use. Working with local societies may help here.

Who needs support?

Employers	Parents	Pupils
Knowledge of types Of pupils on work experience, e.g. vision impairments	Duty of care with school	Knowledge of company

Employers	Parents	Pupils
Communication Guidance notes for employers - "how to achieve meaningful work experience"		Name of supervisor
Health & Safety checks		Information for the young people e.g. dress code/time of arrival/named person etc.
Employer needs to know what they are taking on in respect of pupils with visual impairment		Pre placement visits to look at mobility needs prior to work experience
Insurance (especially sole traders)		
Agreement	← →	Agreement
What level of support to be given to employer to enable business economics to be maintained		
Getting to and from the work placement	← →	Getting to and from the work placement
Mobility & Awareness training	← →	Mobility & Awareness training
Concerns regarding specialist equipment	← →	Concerns regarding specialist equipment

What support?

Employers	Parents	Pupils
←	Pre work experience visit vital	→
←	Expectations of parent and pupil often very different	→
←	Planning of time at work experience	→

Skills sector council - do not have a document that Careers Wales can use	← →	Skills sector council - do not have a document that Careers Wales can use
		Work experience diary and support to complete (possible mentor/buddy role)

How could support be provided?

Employers	Parents	Pupils
Benefits to employers because it could lead to future employees	← →	Potential future employment
Employers Report on pupils work experience		School to recognise what pupils have achieved
		Evaluation of work experience
Recognise employers by inviting to a presentation ceremony		Certificates and a presentation ceremony
Employers forum	Parents want to understand how the work experience worked	

Next Steps

It is clear that young people with visual impairments need support in order that their work experiences are meaningful and inspirational.

RNIB Cymru is working towards gaining Lottery funding to provide for two all-Wales posts. One of these posts will be strategic, working with employers and professionals and engaging them to push the work experience agenda forward. The other will be focussed on direct work with young people, to improve their social

and independence skills and to enable them to obtain worthwhile work experience placements. In addition, RNIB Cymru is hoping to form a bank of adaptive equipment that can be borrowed by young people on work experience placements so that they can meaningfully engage with opportunities provided.

RNIB Cymru is interested in working in partnership with other organisations to move this agenda forward. If you would like more information – or to partner us in this cause – please contact:

nicola.crews@rnib.org.uk

or contact Nicola by telephone on 029 2044 9567.

Appendix 1: Programme

From 9:30	Registration and Coffee
10:00	Welcome and Introduction
10:15 – 10:45	Research Findings (Nicola Crews, Education and Children's Services, RNIB Cymru)
10:45 – 10:55	Work experience – how it was for me (A student's experience) Charlene Bishop, Cefn Saesson School VI resource, Neath.
10:55 – 11:15	The role of the specialist teacher (Pat Heap, formerly Teacher in Charge, Visual Impairment Resource, Llanedeyrn High School)
11:15 – 12:00	Discussion Groups: <i>Preparing Young People for Work Experience</i>
12:00 – 12:55	Lunch
13:00 -13:30	Work experience in the context of Curriculum 14-19 (Christine Chapman AM)
13:30 – 13:50	The role of Careers Wales (Ann Woodhouse & Rita Deegan)
13:50 – 14:10	Being an employer of blind or partially sighted people (British Gas)
14:10 – 14:20	Afternoon tea
14:20 – 15:15	Concurrent discussion groups: <i>a) Working with employers</i> <i>b) Provision of support during work experience</i>
15:15	Plenary and close



Appendix 2: Delegate List

Name		Organisation
Ann	Woodhouse	Careers Wales
Bernie	Shaw	Careers Wales Cardiff & Vale
Bob	Hall	RNIB Cymru
Bryan	Roderick	Care Council for Wales
Cathy	Vernalls	RNIB Cymru
Charlotte	Bishop	Cefn Saeson Comprehensive School
Dee	James	Careers Wales Cardiff & Vale
Donna	Harvey	Trinity Fields
Eirlys	Lamb	Universiy College of Wales, Newport
Elaine	Lewis	Careers Wales Mid Glam & Powys
Emma	Clewarth	Careers Wales Cardiff & Vale
Gail	Clarke	
Graeme	Butterworth	RNIB Cymru
Guy	Brewer	Gwent Visual Impairment Service
Helen	Saunders	Careers Wales Cardiff & Vale
Janet	Wilkins	Quest
Janet	Allen	Cefn Saeson Comprehensive School
Janice	Powell	
Jenny	Gray	RNIB Cymru
Jeremy	Howells	DELLS
John	Pugsley	DELLS
Kathleen	Strevens	ABCD
Kirsty	Hill	Cefn Saeson Comprehensive School
Linda	Blake	Cefn Saeson Comprehensive School
Michael	France	Careers Wales Mid Glam & Powys
Nathan	Tyrrell	Cefn Saeson Comprehensive School
Nicola	Crews	RNIB Cymru
Pat	Heap	Llanedyrn High School
Rebecca	Evans	SNAP Cymru
Rita	Deegan	Careers Wales
Ruth	Marks	RNIB Cymru
Sharon	Beckett	Gwent Association for the Blind
Susan	Gray	Gwent Visual Impairment Service
Verna	Marriott	RNIB Cymru
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