



the **WOW** factor

**An Introduction to
Education for Employability**



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Sector Skills Councils

Skills for Logistics
Construction Industry Training Board
Go Skills
Automotive Skills
Improve – Food and Drink Manufacturing
EU Skills

Schools, Employers and Key Stakeholders

St Peter's High School, Derry
Bombardier Aerospace
Bondelivery
TNT
DHL
Oh Yeah Centre (Start Together Studio)
Remax Estate Agents
Moyallen Foods

Knock Travel
Lagan/Ferrovia Construction
Eurotile
Rowan Riding
Invest Northern Ireland
KanTeq Ltd
Bryson Charitable Group
Women's Tec Charity
Hill Engineering
The Royal Navy
NI Fire and Rescue Service
Abacus Recruitment
Almac
Balcas Timber
Ballymena Academy
Ecoseeds
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Housing Association
Karacha
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NI Careers Service
NW marketing
Orchardville
Portadown Credit Union
Powerscreen
Quinn Direct
Rankin's Farm
Small Bikes
South West College
Whitewater Consulting
Wright Bus
Clarity Business Training
Lumos Design House

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Introduction

Education for Employability became statutory for both Years 8 and 11 in September 2007. It will be rolled out across Key Stages 3 and 4 in the coming years.

The WOW Factor is a non-statutory programme of learning and teaching that addresses and interprets the statutory requirements of Education for Employability at Key Stages 3 and 4. It is a way for teachers to develop the overall aim and objectives of the curriculum and the principles that underpin it:

- connected learning
- skills development
- assessment for learning.



Enjoying
work!

What is Education for Employability?

Education for Employability is delivered through four key dimensions:

- Work in the Local and Global Economy;
- Career Management;
- Enterprise and Entrepreneurship; and
- Skills and Qualities for Work.

The aim of Education for Employability is to ensure that all young people develop the personal qualities, skills, knowledge, understanding and attitudes that will give them a strong foundation for lifelong learning and work. These skills are equally important for all young people regardless of if they want to go straight into the world of work or study a course at university.

Education for Employability also ensures that pupils:

- develop knowledge about the different career options available to them;
- discover what their skills and personal capabilities are;
- recognise the importance of choosing a fulfilling career;
- recognise the importance of enjoying work; and
- can make informed career choices based on knowledge about the world of work.

The Statements of Minimum Requirement (SOMR) for Education for Employability offer opportunities for schools to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individual pupils. They are available online at www.nicurriculum.org.uk

What is The WOW Factor?

The WOW Factor is a series of units for each year group. Each unit provides learning, teaching and assessment opportunities that can be run for four to six weeks. The title refers to the need for young people to be able to make informed decisions about their future *world of work* (WOW).

The philosophy of this resource reflects the ambitions for the recently introduced statutory curriculum. The statutory curriculum now places a greater emphasis on skills development and on learning for life and work. This is recognition of the fact that areas such as career planning and enterprise and entrepreneurship should be at the heart of young people's education from day one of second level education.

In support of this, the WOW Factor:

- builds on the excellent work taking place at Key Stages 1 and 2;
- offers schools a comprehensive programme to address all aspects of Education for Employability;
- promotes a learner-centred approach to implementing Education for Employability;
- includes career planning information and guidance;
- emphasises employability skills development while exploring relevant employability issues; and
- supports the Department of Education's framework for Careers Education, Advice and Information Guidance (CEAIG).

The WOW Factor also complements the existing Year 8, Year 9 and Year 10 materials, which were designed as individual lessons.

Who Developed The WOW Factor?

To develop this series of resources, we worked closely with employers in Northern Ireland to obtain up-to-date information and expertise on employability issues. Throughout the development, we presented the

materials to a range of stakeholders, including teachers, who provided invaluable feedback and helped shape the final result.

Why Did We Develop The WOW Factor?

We developed the WOW Factor in order to provide a flexible, coherent and progressive programme that builds upon the work taking place in primary schools.

The aim is to bring about coherence at a strategic level by presenting a programme of learning and assessment that addresses, in a relevant way, the objectives of policy makers for the Northern Ireland economy (such as Invest Northern Ireland's *Accelerating Entrepreneurship Strategy* and the *Northern Ireland Regional Economic*

Strategy, which was published by the Department of Finance and Personnel).

In addition, we developed the WOW Factor in direct response to your requests. Many school principals and teachers have asked us for support in translating the SOMR into learning and teaching activities that are appropriately challenging and that offer a flexible, progressive and consistent approach from Key Stage 3 into Key Stage 4.

How Does the WOW Factor Help Teachers?

The WOW Factor helps teachers in the following ways:

- each unit provides a selection of ideas that teachers can use and develop for Education for Employability.
- we've built in choice by presenting teachers with a variety of pathways to follow when developing their curriculum themes.
- we've carefully designed the units to help schools meet the SOMR for Education for Employability.

- each activity focuses on specific element(s) of the skills framework. However, teachers can easily adapt the focus to address a range of skills, including cross-curricular skills, if they wish.

In addition, our Employability microsite on www.ccea.org.uk lists a number of useful websites that provide up-to-date information to support each unit.

How Is this Resource Organised?

The WOW Factor	Year 12 Units
Unit 1	Effective Working Practice
Unit 2	Support for Starting a Business – You Are Not Alone
Unit 3	Stressed Out
Unit 4	Social Responsibility – It's Everyone's Job!
Unit 5	Going Global
Unit 6	Your Future – It's In Your Hands

How Is this Resource Organised? (continued)

Each unit is broken down into themes that contain a number of learning and teaching activities. Each unit identifies targeted SOMR and opportunities for pupils to develop employability skills. We've defined these employability skills in relation to the statutory skills at Key Stage 4. For the purpose of focusing learning, only one skill has been identified within each unit. In this way, pupils are provided with specific criteria against which they can evaluate their learning.

The units are also supported by non-statutory guidance through suggested:

- learning intentions;
- success criteria;
- opportunities for assessment for learning; and
- key questions to help pupils focus their learning.

Teachers can use the broad learning intentions as an indication of whether the learning at the end of the unit has been achieved. From a lesson point of view, teachers should refine and develop the learning intentions for the pupils in their class as well as depending on the direction they wish to take the learning.

In each unit, pupils are required to complete a *Pupil Reflection Record*. We've designed this to further encourage pupils to reflect, evaluate and assess their learning.

What About Personal Career Planning?

We recognise that schools use different methods of career planning. However, the SOMR for Education for Employability specify that pupils must take part in personal career planning: '*Develop a personal career plan based on relevant information and guidance.*'

Education for Employability allows young people to make informed choices and decisions in relation to career planning.

The WOW Factor will help schools meet the SOMR linked to personal career planning. Pupils develop their own personal career plan and are constantly encouraged to consider questions such as:

- What does this mean for me?
- How can this inform my career plan?

At the end of each unit, pupils are asked to complete a *Pupil Reflection Record*. The *Pupil Reflection Record* encourages them to think about:

- what they have learned;
- how what they have learned has informed their career planning; and
- ways in which they can further develop their knowledge, understanding and skills.

We've designed the *Pupil Reflection Record* to initiate discussion between pupils and their peers, teachers and family. It might be useful to record feedback from individual pupils in their Progress File.

Do You Have to Cover All of the Content Within The WOW Factor?

No, you should view the units as a menu of suggested ideas and activities designed to help you address the statutory requirements for Education for Employability. Indeed, there is so much content, it would be impossible to cover everything!

You will, naturally, prefer some of the ideas more than others. To help ensure active engagement and

interest and, consequently, effective learning and teaching:

- familiarise yourself with the activities within each unit;
- select only the activities that you feel are appropriate for and relevant to your pupils and your school; and
- where appropriate, adapt and further develop the activities to suit the needs of the pupils in your school.

You may even choose to combine aspects of various units into a unit unique to your school.

While each unit is described and recommended for a certain year group, teachers are not obliged to follow this suggestion. Instead, they should feel free to select and order the units in whatever way is most appropriate for their pupils and school.

We also encourage schools to use additional resources available to them to support this programme.

Examples include:

- existing careers resources, including appropriate software available through C2K;
- the wider community, in particular employers who can offer expertise and experience in a range of areas; and
- school initiatives or events that can contribute to pupils' Education for Employability such as EmployabilityFEST.

How to Use the Units

Step 1: Scan the Units

This will give you an overview of the topics available. Decide how many you wish to address and the order in which you want to address them, both across and within year groups.

Step 2: Decide on Your Learning Intentions

Learning intentions are pivotal to the content selected for Education for Employability. Use the suggested learning intentions in each unit to determine what learning you want to develop throughout the duration of that unit. As you design your lessons, refine these further or select a slightly different focus for your learning intentions.

For each lesson, consider what it is you want your pupils to learn. But don't try to cover everything in your learning intentions – you need to choose a focus.

Step 3: Carry Out the Launch Activity

This is a good way to discover what your pupils already know about the theme and what interests them. With this information in hand, you can decide together which aspects to explore in more detail.

Step 4: Embrace the Units' Flexibility

At this stage, plan the detail of the ideas and activities that you want to use, expand on the ideas and even add alternatives. Remember to involve the pupils in the planning for their learning.

Step 5: Plan the Assessment – What, How and When

Within each unit, we've signposted the opportunities for assessment for learning. Pupils really benefit from knowing what is expected of them, and many of the activities encourage their involvement in the generation of success criteria. This means that you agree together in advance the focus and nature of assessment.

You can also help your pupils by using a feedback process to tell them where they have been successful and what they need to focus on in order to improve their learning. The activities also encourage pupils to assess their own and others' learning on a regular basis.

Step 6: Decide What Is Important to Record and Report

You cannot observe everything all of the time. So keep your work manageable by only recording *significant* observations, and have a focus for what you are observing. Over time you will build up a record of observations in relation to progression of knowledge and skills. Use this to inform future planning as well as to help you make judgements about what information you need to pass on to colleagues, parents and pupils.

We suggest that pupils complete their *Pupil Reflection Record* at the end of each unit and keep this in their Progress File. Over time, this will build up a profile of their learning as well as their interests. This information may be useful to careers practitioners during guidance interviews, particularly in Year 10 and Year 12.

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