

WorKingOptions

IN EDUCATION

Helping young people fulfil their potential



WorkingOptions

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We've engaged
20,000+
young people

We help young people to fulfil their potential through employability and life skills

Working Options in Education helps young people (14-19) to aim high and fulfil their potential.

Our employability and life skills programme is delivered free in schools, colleges and online through our well-established links with employers, particularly in the food, drink and retail industry.

We offer young people multiple interactions with employers, including expert insight from industry, skills workshops, online content, access to industry events, work experience and placements.

The widening opportunity gap in employment prospects means that we particularly focus on engaging disadvantaged young people.



300+

free sessions
in schools and
colleges

600+

school and
college students
invited to high
profile industry
events

400+

volunteers
providing young
people with
industry insight

We've delivered 300+ Insight from Industry sessions and employability skills workshops free in schools and colleges

// The opportunity for our students to get exposure to such industry experts was extremely valuable. They inspired our students to be proactive in both creating and taking opportunities to develop their employability skills. //

Andy Pritchard, sixth form tutor



I should follow my passion

I need to work hard



I can do what I want

I realised...

my future is in my control



more confident



believe in myself



better understand what work's all about

It made me...

understand business



broaden my horizons

feel positive about my future



// The Working Options session at my college showed me the motivation I needed and that no matter what I do or where I've come from I can do what I want. I recently had an interview with Morrisons. I'd had lots of interviews before, but this one I wasn't nervous. I went in with my head held high and luckily I got it! //

Ameena, Sixth form student

88% of young people said they felt more confident and positive about their future after taking part in a Working Options session

We've invited 600+ school and college students to attend high profile industry events



83% of student attendees spoke with industry leader delegates

// This kind of *access to top-level business people* is such a privilege - a wonderful opportunity for our students! //

Sixth form college tutor



82% of student attendees said they'd consider a career in food, drink or retail

// Very engaging. Being able to practice my networking skills really helped me with my questioning – *talking to actual industry professionals* was an experience without compare.

Sixth form student delegate



We have 400+ volunteers providing young people with insight from industry

Our volunteers speak at Insights from Industry sessions, lead employability workshops and provide online content.



// Working Options in Education is a wonderful platform for us to promote the amazing and varied opportunities in our industry. More importantly, it gives us an opportunity to give students real-world examples to help consolidate their learning and achieve their goals. //

Lee Mountain, Asda



// I talked about hard work, confidence and self-belief. Some students sat on the edge of their seat listening to every word. //

Abbi Buszard, Grow Your Own Organic Learning Ltd.



// I've really enjoyed all the sessions I've spoken at so far. There are always great questions and it's nice to feel I'm making an impact. I get a lot out of it too! //

Julia Dixon, Diageo



Supporting education

Our programme supports schools and colleges to deliver the 'Gatsby Benchmarks' for their students and links with curriculum areas.



Fulfilling potential

We believe every young person should have the opportunity to develop the employability and life skills they need to fulfil their potential. We particularly focus on engaging young people in areas of high deprivation.



Connecting industry

We've developed strong links with the food, drink and retail industry, because it employs 1 in 8 people in the UK, in a wide range of roles and careers.



Building confidence

Young people consistently tell us that participating in our programme has a positive impact on their self-esteem and confidence.



Improving employability

We know there is a direct correlation between the number of interactions young people have with employers, their academic attainment and future employability.

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Our impact - 2019/2020

It's been an unusual academic year with schools and colleges closed for 4 months and many of our volunteers working from home during COVID-19. We responded quickly by delivering our popular Insights from Industry and employability workshop sessions virtually for the first time, and significantly increasing the content in our Student Zone.

It's clear that the fall out of the pandemic will disproportionately affect the employment prospects of young people, particularly those from deprived communities where the opportunity gap will widen further. Our programme to give young people the skills they need to move confidently from education to employment is even more vital.

9,000
young people
engaged
Total: 20,000

24
new school
and college
partners
Total: 150+

124
sessions for
young people
delivered
Total: 345

88% students
participating in our sessions
feel more confident about their
future post- education

9,000

We engaged young people in our employability and life skills programme in schools, colleges and online – 60% from areas of high deprivation. Young people have the opportunity to attend up to 4 sessions with us in a year

24

We secured partnerships with new schools and colleges, taking our total to over 150

We ran 56 insights from industry sessions and 23 employability workshops to 4,971 young people in schools and colleges - with a particular focus on areas of high deprivation - and 45 more sessions virtually, a total of 124 sessions

We launched our new website with online content for students and educators –

25,147 users

27,271 sessions

45,764 page views

93

We published posts to our online Student Zone including 55 bitesize videos from industry leaders with lesson plans for educators and a life after lockdown guide

100

We recruited new volunteers from industry taking us to over 400

We launched two advisory boards – **for students and educators** – to ensure we are **fit for purpose, meet students' needs and are in line with government, educator and curriculum standards**

We focussed more on **the impact of our programme on individuals**, and will build on this with **more robust data on longer term impacts next year**

We were recognised by **Movement to Work** and **The Career and Enterprise Company** as offering a robust programme for young people, became one of only six delivery partners for the **Social Mobility Pledge Foundation** and an active member of the **Youth Employment Group**

“ Thank you for the sessions. They’re honestly amazing and I always leave learning something new. ”

**Sadia, sixth form student,
Smethwick West Midlands**

“ We LOVE all the information that you have compiled in the one place in your Student Zone for the Life after lockdown toolkit. We’ll be adding this on to our upcoming e-shot that goes out to students and parents. ”

Sixth form tutor

“ I look back to when I was at school and wish I’d been given guidance and coaching from people in different industries to learn from. ”

Chris Craig, West Mill Foods – industry insight volunteer

“ I thought the virtual session ran very smoothly and the speakers were very enthusiastic. It was incredibly easy to join and I would definitely recommend the session to friends. The biggest highlight was learning about how the guest speakers persevered even when things got tough or didn’t go their way. Ultimately, I learnt that failure is a part of life, but it’s about how you overcome the hurdle which will determine how successful you are. Perseverance and hard work will take you places and networking is also essential. ”

Sixth form student

Bridging the gap between education and the world of work

It's always great to hear from Working Options in Education alumni to see what they are up to. Here's what two of them had to say about their experiences of participating in our programme.

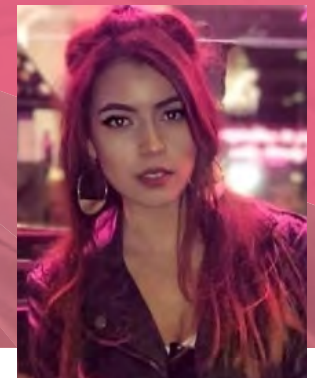
Bjion Henry (24) has worked for Google, co-founded digital media company Heue Digital and helped to produce our new website this year

“ When I think of my education growing up, I remember vividly how Working Options filled a knowledge-gap that I was lacking. Whilst my school was great at telling me I needed to get a good job in order to live a happy life and be successful, what was missing was someone to show me how and that's where Working Options helped. Thinking back to the most significant breakthroughs in my working life thus far, most have been as a result of skills first taught by Working Options such as networking and building a personal brand. The importance of such skills cannot be overstated, and yet, for the most part, they usually go amiss in school curriculums. That's why I feel so passionate about this charity and helped to design their website. ”



Shorna Khan (25) is an international Events Assistant Producer for Law Business Research

“ I cannot overemphasise the impact Working Options has played in my career. Without the support of the team I wouldn't have been given the opportunity to gain industry insight and boost my confidence. The skills workshops and industry talks helped me gain a solid foundation of transferable skills outside of the classroom. Through Working Options' career guidance, I was able to delve deeper into the world of events and marketing and decided to pursue it at University. Now, I have worked my way up and I'm an International Events Producer; my job takes me all over the world and I couldn't imagine doing anything else! I seriously recommend Working Options in Education to help kick start your career from an early age. ”



Industry partnerships



Ella's Kitchen is one of many companies that have formed an employee volunteering partnership with us. By sharing their career journeys with young people at our in Insights from Industry sessions, staff bring the world of work to life for young people. When an enthusiastic student approached after a session, they agreed to set up a week's work experience, providing valuable insight for the student and potential new talent for Ella's Kitchen.

“ All the employees that have taken part have said they really enjoyed it, found it personally rewarding and really felt they were making a difference. It's great to be bringing practical real-world examples of work to young people as they prepare to leave full time education. ”

Kim Deverall, HR/Talent Coordinator, Ella's Kitchen



Employees from executive search company Odgers Berndtson partnered with us to run a day of interactive employability skills workshops for Luton Sixth Form College students at their London offices.

“ We thoroughly enjoyed the day and hope the students did too. It really is brilliant the work you're doing and we're very pleased to support it. ”

Odgers Berndtson

“ This was an amazing experience and definitely, one I won't ever forget, I gained a lot of knowledge on interviews, CVs and many other things. ”

Sixth form student

“ The staff had really pulled out all the stops to make our students feel comfortable in an unfamiliar environment and to impart invaluable information on CV's, interview technique and good practice on social media. I hope that many other schools/colleges and more of our students are able to experience going into a workplace and hearing from employers directly. ”

Luton Sixth Form College Tutor

If your company would like to discuss an employee volunteering scheme, running a student workshop or can offer work experience placements, get in touch.

Get involved

We're ambitious to expand.
We want to:

- deliver our programme in more secondary schools and sixth form colleges, and virtually
- engage more young people in areas of high deprivation
- further increase the online employability and life skills content for students and educators in our Student Zone.

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Get in touch

👉 www.workingoptions.org.uk

✉ enquiries@workingoptions.org.uk



Provide work experience

Partner with us to provide industry experience for young people in your business.



Support our work

Fund our programme, so we can engage all 14-19 year olds to fulfil their potential.



Volunteer with us

Join us as a speaker, skills workshop leader or provide online content.



Book a session for your students

Book one of our free sessions at your school or college.

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