

Appendix 308: Acceptable Work-Based Learning Activities

To meet the requirements for Work-Based Learning (WBL), centers must assign students to acceptable WBL activities that meet or exceed the following:

Field Trips. Well-planned field trips to businesses and industries provide students with exposure to work places and are excellent opportunities for career exploration. In the Career Preparation Period (CPP), these trips must be structured so that students are not only able to observe workers and their activities, but also to discuss topics such as the knowledge and skills required by the jobs, the challenges faced by workers, and career pathways. In the Career Development Period, field trips must be planned around specific jobs/tasks that may not be readily available for students to experience to provide students exposure to specialized technology or equipment being used in the industry (e.g., a field trip for students in cement masonry or heavy equipment operation to observe a concrete pour/finishing on a bridge construction or a field trip to an industry convention in the local area).

Job Shadowing. Students typically engage in job shadowing as part of their career exploration activities during CPP. The student “shadows” an employee or worker at a work site to learn more about a particular occupation or industry. Similar to field trips, job shadowing activities must be structured and supported by in-class preparation and follow-up to help students make the connection between the experience and their academic coursework, career technical choices, career success skills development, and/or future educational options. Students in CDP also benefit from job shadowing in helping them refine their Personal Career Development Plan (PCDP) goals and prepare for other WBL engagements. Students can obtain WBL credit through participation in the Annual Groundhog Job Shadow Day.

Career Technical Skills Training. Students who are training in career technical areas eligible for Career Technical Skills Training (CTST) funding can be assigned to work on CTST projects, except for construction mock-ups, as part of their work-based learning assignment. Students must be involved in CTST project planning and evaluation, as feasible.

Service Learning and Special Projects. Students training in career technical areas that are not eligible for CTST funding can obtain WBL credit through service learning and special projects. For volunteer community service to qualify as a service learning project, the objectives of the community service must be linked with learning objectives. Centers must ensure that the activity focuses on the students’ acquisition and comprehension of values, skills, and knowledge content related to their PCDP goals during their participation in the project. Special projects are a means for centers to take advantage of opportunities to participate in special events in their local area. Students must be engaged in assignments that are directly related to their career technical training to obtain WBL credit. The staff assigned as Project Coordinator should evaluate the quality of student participation in these projects.

Center-based Enterprises. A center-based enterprise engages students in producing goods and services as part of their Job Corps training. These experiences must be structured to provide students with a venue to learn and practice not only their career technical skills, but also career success skills, customer service, and the basics of entrepreneurship. With staff assistance, students must be assigned to perform business functions such as planning, scheduling, budgeting, recordkeeping, and the production and distribution of goods and services. For instance, many centers operate an in-house restaurant as part of the Food Services or Culinary Arts program,

while others offer in-house computer repair and maintenance as part of the center's Technology program. A supervising staff member must provide guidance, feedback and formal performance assessments to participating students.

Clinical Experiences. Clinical experiences are typically required in Health Occupations programs with many states setting a minimum number of clinical hours as part of the requirement for completing a course of study. These assignments are generally supervised by a licensed professional, who provides direct oversight of student activities at the clinical site. In other career technical areas, such as Child Development, minimum practicum hours are also specific to the requirements of the state, or the college if the course is articulated. Centers who have child care facilities on site should take advantage of WBL assignments that may be available on center under the supervision of the child care center director.

Cooperative Education. Cooperative education focuses on job-specific assignments at employer sites, designed to provide highly individualized experiences for students, based on their career focus and the skills/competencies that they need to acquire. These assignments require formal memoranda of agreement between the center and the employer, a training plan that lists the Training Achievement Record (TAR) competencies that the student needs to acquire from the WBL assignment, and defined performance standards. The Job Corps career technical instructor or the center WBL staff must work in close coordination with the on-site WBL supervisor to evaluate student performance and deal with any issue that may arise in relation to the student's assignment. Cooperative education assignments are local assignments (on or off center) appropriate at pre-determined CTT completion benchmarks.

Internships. Internships are short-term placements, similar to cooperative education, that provide students with on-the-job experiences directly related to their career technical areas of training. However, unlike cooperative education which focuses on the acquisition of skills and competencies, internships focus intensely on the actual practice of career technical, applied academic, and career success skills, and the demonstration of student readiness for actual job placement. These paid or unpaid assignments, whether on or off center, must be covered by formal memoranda of agreement. For the duration of the assignment, students must be treated the same way the employer treats any of its employees. Any internship assignment must be accompanied by specific job functions and responsibilities to which the student is held accountable by a work site supervisor who provides the center with each intern's performance evaluation at the conclusion of the assignment. Internships are appropriate for local and home-based WBL assignments that help determine students' career transition readiness. Centers must continuously identify internship opportunities that lead to permanent employment.