

Springpod Big Work Experience Challenge

Teacher Guidance Notes

The Big Work Experience Challenge, delivered in partnership with the Department for Education, is designed to support young people to explore a wide range of career pathways, engage meaningfully with learning, and make informed decisions about their future education and employment options.

As part of the programme, students earn Rockets – Springpod’s reward system that recognises positive engagement and meaningful actions, such as exploring pathways, completing experiences, and reflecting on their choices. Rockets are intended to motivate participation and celebrate progress rather than competition.

Further information about Rockets and the Big Work Experience Challenge is available [here](#).

This Springpod programme supports students to explore future pathways, skills, and real workplaces through high-quality virtual experiences. It is designed to be non-linear, allowing schools to adapt delivery to suit their timetable, curriculum, and careers strategy. There is no expectation that every student completes every activity.

Flexible delivery

Teachers are encouraged to use the programme in a way that works best for their school. You may:

- spread sessions across the year
- focus on specific sessions only
- revisit sessions with the same cohort
- use activities as independent learning or guided lessons

Session guidance

Session 1 – Getting Started

Focus: Account setup and orientation

Use for: Tutor time, first session of a careers day or week

Teacher role: Light-touch support only

Session 2 – Future Pathways

Focus: Post-16 and future options

Use for: Options support, careers lessons. Independent or classroom learning, enrichment

Teacher role: Encourage students to explore at least one pathway

Use reflection questions for discussion or written work

Session 3 – Building Skills & Experience

Focus: Employability and transferable skills

Use for: Independent or classroom learning, enrichment

Teacher role: Allow choice between programmes. Reinforce how skills transfer across jobs

Session 4 – Employer Focus & Digital Skills

Focus: Real workplaces and future skills

Use for: Independent or classroom learning, enrichment

Teacher role: Link learning to curriculum subjects. Highlight employer expectations and values

Session 5 – Reflections and Actions

Focus: Consolidation and next steps

Use for: End-of-programme reflection

Teacher role:

- Use reflections as evidence of learning

- Support realistic next-step planning

Gatsby Benchmark Alignment

This programme supports multiple Gatsby Benchmarks:

Benchmark 1 – A Stable Careers Programme

Providing structured activities sequenced to support your careers programme. Engage your parent/carers with your planned activities and publish your Springpod activities online to communicate with all stakeholders.

Benchmark 2 – Learning from Career and Labour Market Information

Students explore pathways, employers, and future skills. Students learn from up-to-date LMI embedded in all experiences as well as future pathways.

Benchmark 3 – Addressing the Needs of Each Young Person

All Springpod programmes aim to broaden ideas and challenge misconceptions and stereotypical thinking with role models with embedded career stories and role models. Reflection and self-awareness tasks are included in all experiences. For some pupils Springpod programmes are an essential part of their work experience programme breaking down barriers to physical placements due to additional needs.

Benchmark 4 – Linking Curriculum Learning to Careers

Digital and employability skills link directly to subjects and real jobs.

Benchmark 5 – Encounters with Employers and Employees

Students engage with real employer content and employee stories. They build knowledge on future ready skills and provide opportunities to apply those skills to real-life scenarios. Virtual experiences complement (they do not replace) in-person experiences as part of a progressive programme of work experience.

Benchmark 6 – Experiences of Workplaces

Springpod experiences provide insight into real working environments, highlighting the skills valued in the workplace as well as future pathway options. As part of a progressive programme, schools can build on additional activities such as talks, workshops, employer visits or physical placements.

Delivery Options

Schools use Springpod in a variety of ways, including:

- collapsed timetable careers days
- careers or enrichment weeks
- PSHE and tutor time
- targeted support for specific year groups

The programme is flexible, student-led, and designed to fit around existing school priorities. Teachers can select specific sessions, allow independent exploration, and track progress easily through the Springpod Teacher Dashboard. Please complete this [form](#) if you would like a reporting dashboard.

Final Top Tips

- Create a student account yourself to explore the programmes and familiarise yourself with the student sign up process
- There is no required order
- Students do not need to complete everything
- Progress is saved automatically
- Reflection matters more than speed
- The programme supports exploration and informed decision-making.

Contact Jo.bishop@springpod.com if you need support at any time.