



WORK BASED LEARNING

Information for Students

What is Work-Based Learning?

WBL (work-based learning) means any type of learning which takes place simultaneously or consecutively in both traditional classrooms and workplace settings – thus is it **a form of education which combines the application of academic, technical, and employability skills in a work setting with the support of classroom and workplace mentors.**

In essence, WBL is learning that takes place within the workplace using tasks or jobs for instruction and practical purposes. It may be formal and structured, using instructional plans, or informal, occurring incidentally, in the process of normal daily work, for example, through experience, practice, mentoring or demonstration.

There are a number of formal work-based learning programmes, which typically aim to:

- develop vocational skills that contribute to recognised vocational qualifications;
- develop general work habits and job-readiness;
- help students to understand what is involved in jobs so that they make better career choices;
- give disadvantaged people and job seekers access to opportunities to work that they might not otherwise have.

In formal types of WBL, the learner might be legally an employee (specific cases of formal traineeships, internships, and traineeships) or a student (for example in certain traineeships, internships, work placements, and in cooperative education).

Dual education (DE) is a specific kind of formal WBL educational system.

What is Dual Education?

Dual education system (DE) is a specific form of work-based learning education system in which the professional qualification is acquired through a) practical training in a real working environment and b) training in a vocational or professional school. Typically, it combines **apprenticeships in a company** and **vocational education at a vocational school** in one course.

After finishing primary school, young people can opt for secondary vocational education. Secondary vocational education and training (VET) can be imple-

mented in a **typical scholarly form** (students are involved in practical education and training both at their school as well as at a company, they have the status of a student) or in **apprenticeship form**, (where most of the educational programs are implemented as practical in-company training – work-based learning, they have the status of a student and a status of apprentice during their practical training while working at the company).

Both forms of education are equivalent as they are carried out on the basis of the same educational programmes. This allows for the transition from apprenticeship to school form during education.

An apprentice is a student, who has an apprenticeship contract with a company and is obtaining education and training within an educational program for the acquisition of a secondary vocational or professional education. Half of their education and training is done in the vocational school, the other half is in-company training. A mentor is in charge of the apprentice's in-company training.

A mentor is a person employed by a company or a self-employed entrepreneur that has the appropriate education, work experience, and pedagogical-andragogical training. A mentor is an expert who is in charge of the students in their work-based learning during their apprenticeship programme. The mentor guides, directs and advises the apprentice during their training and learning.

What are the goals of DE/WBL?

- better development of competences, higher qualifications and better skills in accordance with the needs of the economy
- easier transition from education to work market: earlier professional socialization
- earlier employment of young people and more coordinated supply and demand of human resource

Why get involved with DE/WBL?

- DE/WBL is a hands-on approach to learning.
- Work based learning can make studying more interesting and more relevant to later ("real life") work.
- It can improve the student's job prospects by connecting them to potential employers who may offer jobs after they graduate.
- The student participates in a real-life working environment.

- Vocational school provides an opportunity to find a job after completing studies.
- Vocational school provides the opportunity to learn in a place equipped with modern working tools and with mentors that have a deep understanding of the developmental trends in the field.
- DE/WBL offers students an opportunity to enter labour market already highly skilled and with experience in their respective profession.
- Attractive activities carried out by teachers who know their trade Work based learning is also a way of increasing social inclusion.
- DE/WBL offers students opportunities to develop personal and social skills – and put them in real life use as they learn.
- When students complete their training, they have relevant qualification in their profession – thus their chances in finding employment increase.
- Work-based learning can be a powerful way to develop generic skills such as team-work and problem solving, and basic work habits.
- DE/WBL training curricula is tailored to the needs of the student and the company – which means students can learn while doing things they like doing and are meaningful to them and their prospective future employers.
- DE/WBL systems provide students with early opportunities to enjoy the benefits of working environments, including remuneration, which increases their social stability and allows for a smoother transition into adulthood.

What do students have to say about their experience with DE/WBL?

- I like being able to understand the things we learn at school in practical settings.
- After my programme is done, I will obtain a profession, and I know I will later on obtain an employment.
- I like spending so much time in company, exploring my profession in real environment.
- I like learning by doing things.
- It is great to have an experienced mentor who takes care of my studies and passes their work experience onto me.

- I choose to enrol in an apprenticeship programme, because I receive an apprenticeship award for the work I do for the company.

More information

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