



WORK-BASED LEARNING RESOURCES



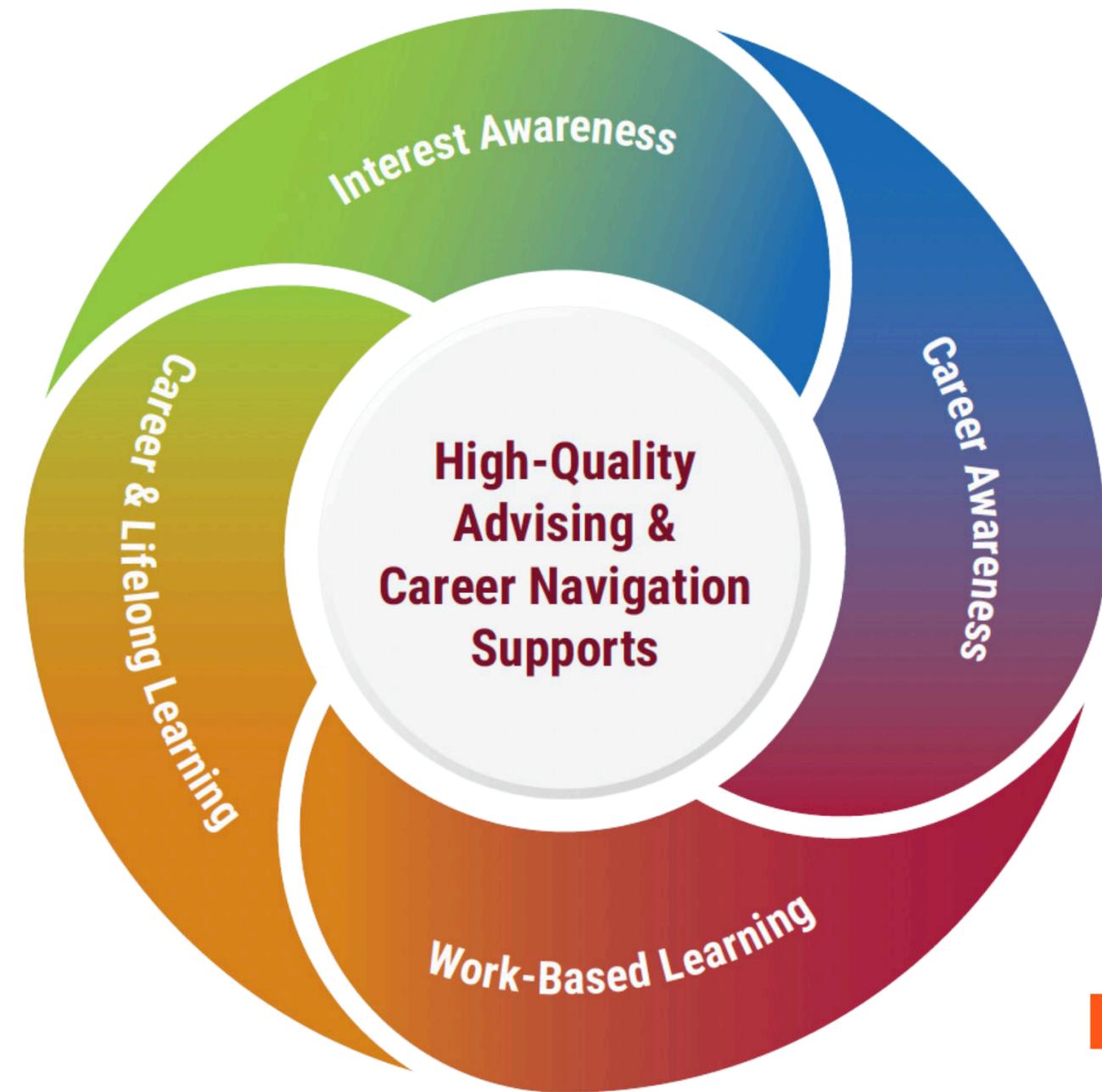


TABLE OF CONTENTS

- [Career Development Continuum](#)
- [Texas Tri-Agency Work-Based Learning Continuum](#)
- [7 Principles of High Quality Work-Based Learning](#)
- [NCTX Work-Based Learning](#)
 - [Objectives](#)
 - [Monitoring](#)
- [Statewide Objectives for WBL](#)
- [NCTX Work-Based Learning](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

CAREER DEVELOPMENT CONTINUUM

Career development is the process of choosing a career, improving skills, and advancing along a career path. It is a lifelong process of learning that includes exploration, building self-knowledge, and making decisions in pursuit of meaningful employment.





INTEREST AWARENESS

- Activities that support learners and workers to explore and identify personal interests, strengths, personality traits and values
- Learners and workers begin to reflect on the connection between their attributes, the type of life they want to lead, and future careers
- Example activities: Personality assessment, strengths assessment, value assessments, interest inventories



CAREER AWARENESS

- Activities that support learners and workers to understand the range of career options available to them and to identify careers of interest
- Learners and workers begin to understand skills, competencies, education options and credentials aligned with careers of interest
- Career awareness activities also provide a foundation for work-based learning and prepare participants to make the most of these opportunities
- Example activities: Project-based learning and industry projects, career curriculum, career fairs



WORK-BASED LEARNING

- Practical, hands-on activities or experiences through which a learner interacts with industry professionals in a workplace, which may be an in-person, virtual, or simulated setting
- Learners prepare for employment or advancement along a career pathway by completing purposeful tasks that develop academic, technical, and employability skills
- Activities: Career exploration, career preparation, career training

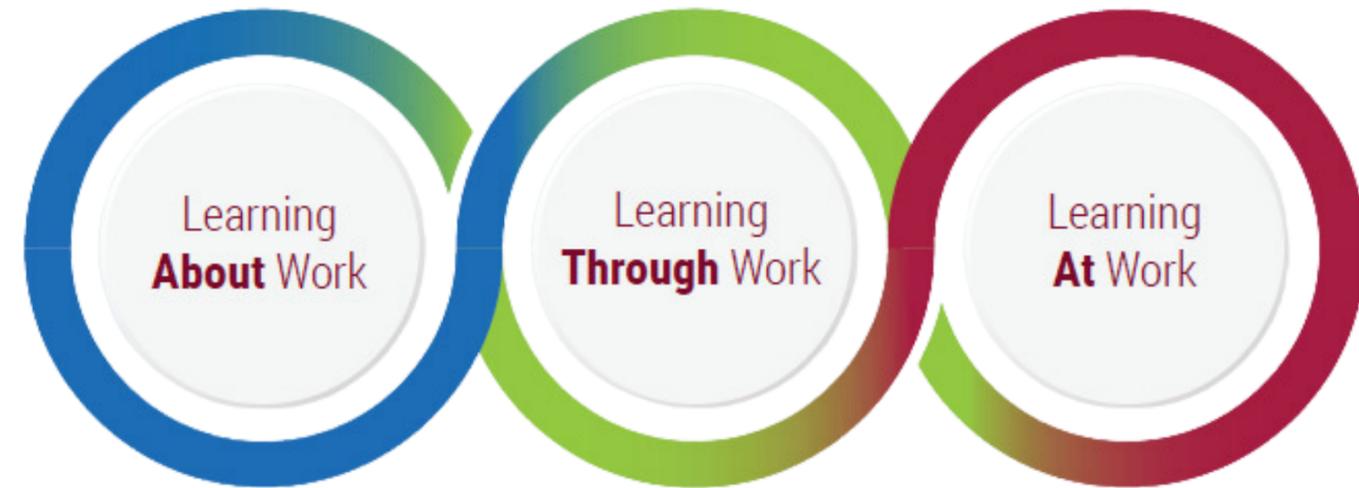


CAREER & LIFELONG LEARNING

- Activities include both formal and informal learning opportunities used throughout people's lives in order to foster continuous development and improvement of the knowledge and skills needed for employment and personal fulfillment
- Includes the transition into a career, navigating career shifts and identifying the necessary skills, competencies, credentials, connections and conditions to enable career and economic development
- Example activities: Upskilling, reskilling, professional development

TEXAS TRI-AGENCY WORK-BASED LEARNING

CONTINUUM



DEFINITION

Practical, hands-on activities or experiences through which a learner interacts with industry professionals in a workplace, which may be an in-person, virtual, or simulated setting. Learners prepare for employment or advancement along a career pathway by completing purposeful tasks that develop academic, technical, and employability skills.

TEXAS TRI-AGENCY WORK-BASED LEARNING CONTINUUM

LEARNING...

... ABOUT WORK



Career exploration activities in this stage of the continuum are introductory and usually short-term. They provide participants with an opportunity to learn about industries and employers that may be unfamiliar.

Models include:

- Worksite Tours
- Job Shadowing
- Simulations
- Informational interviews with employers

... THROUGH WORK



Career Preparation activities in this stage of the continuum provide participants with extended opportunities to increase their knowledge of a field and gain employability skills and some entry-level technical knowledge or skills.

Models include:

- Internships
- Pre-Apprenticeships
- Cooperative Education
- Service Learning

... AT WORK



Career Training activities in this stage of the continuum engage participants as paid employees to gain specific skills, in conjunction with classroom or lab instruction, in a specific industry or occupation.

Models include:

- Apprenticeships
- Youth Apprenticeships
- On-the-Job Training
- Transitional Jobs

Work-Based Learning Quality Standards

PRINCIPLE 1: ALIGN TO CAREER PATHWAYS

Work-based learning experiences build knowledge, skills, and competencies aligned with in-demand careers and support participants in advancing along career pathways, leading to measurable economic success.

QUALITY INDICATORS

- Definitions of knowledge, skills, and competencies to be gained are generated by employers
- Alignment to in-demand industries and occupations identified via LMI and employer feedback
- Skills and competencies aligned to industry standards
- Knowledge, skills, and competencies to be gained support advancement in an industry
- Alignment with industry focus of each participant's chosen secondary or postsecondary program of study
- Assistance to employers in addressing any legal and liability concerns



Work-Based Learning Quality Standards

PRINCIPLE 2: INCORPORATE MEANINGFUL JOB TASKS

Participants in work-based learning must have opportunities to engage in appropriately complex and industry-relevant tasks that build career skills and knowledge.

QUALITY INDICATORS

- Tasks that are representative of work in a particular industry, not general support roles
- Appropriate mentoring and supervision to support learning
- Well-defined activities and job tasks clearly linked to targeted skills
- Job descriptions clearly outline tasks that build knowledge, employability skills, and technical competencies
- Increasingly complex tasks as participants develop proficiency
- Mentors and supervisors are prepared to effectively support participants' growth
- Education and training prepare participants to take on complex tasks



Work-Based Learning Quality Standards

PRINCIPLE 3: IDENTIFY AND VALIDATE SKILLS TO BE GAINED

WBL programs are more valuable to both participants and employers when everyone has a clear understanding of the skills that participants are expected to attain and when there are clear guidelines for verifying that participants have mastered those skills. WBL supports the development of both industry-specific technical skills and employability skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving.

QUALITY INDICATORS

- Skill needs are communicated by employers to education and training providers
- Clear learning goals and approaches to validation of skills
- Formal assessments allow learners to demonstrate competencies, with employers validating skills learned
- Reflective practices for participants lead to continuous learning and integration with larger learning goals
- Individual learning plans co-created by participants and supervisors



Work-Based Learning Quality Standards

PRINCIPLE 4: REWARD SKILL GAINS AND OFFER COMPENSATION

Skill development is recognized and rewarded through mechanisms such as opportunities to take on greater responsibility, high school or postsecondary credit, opportunities to transition to permanent employment, and promotions for incumbent workers. Participants earn compensation as appropriate for the work they complete.

QUALITY INDICATORS

- Framework, including metrics or benchmarks, for measuring and rewarding skills development is co-created by employers and educators
- Mechanisms for rewarding skills development—and how they are linked to career entry and advancement—are clear to both employers and participants
- Participants earn compensation if performing work like that done by paid employees
- Recognition that offering compensation makes WBL accessible to a wider group of participants



Work-Based Learning Quality Standards

PRINCIPLE 5: SUPPORT ACADEMIC PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

By demonstrating the real-world value of classroom learning and providing students with opportunities to apply and contextualize their knowledge and skills, WBL supports and accelerates academic progress and achievement at the secondary and postsecondary levels.

QUALITY INDICATORS

- Coherent learning experiences that embed WBL in secondary and postsecondary programs of study and pathways
- Alignment with classroom learning and curricula developed collaboratively by employers and education and training providers
- Alignment with course requirements and learning objectives so WBL counts toward high school and/or postsecondary credit
- College credit is available through articulation agreements or credit for prior learning, allowing participants not enrolled in educational institutions to continue a pathway to a college credential if they choose to do so
- Postsecondary credit earned is transferable to other institutions and leads to credentials of value



PRINCIPLE 6: INTEGRATE OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP PROFESSIONAL NETWORKS

Intentionally embed opportunities to build professional networks within WBL experiences and ensure that participants are educated about the value of professional networks to their future careers.

QUALITY INDICATORS

- Formal and informal mentoring supports participants in building relationships with professionals in the field
- Opportunities for participants to connect with employees at multiple levels and in multiple roles in an organization
- Career navigation structures, including advising or coaching
- WBL participants are informed about the value of professional networks and supported in mapping and maintaining connections developed through WBL
- Connections to multiple employers and utilization of industry-wide standards



Work-Based Learning Quality Standards

PRINCIPLE 7: MEASURE SHARED PROGRESS

Employer, participant, and program outcomes are measured and monitored using metrics that are transparent and hold all partners accountable for success.

QUALITY INDICATORS

- Data is collected, monitored, and disaggregated to evaluate program performance and drive continuous improvement
- Public reporting on outcome data to track success for both participants and employers
- Metrics include reflect the expected contributions of all WBL program partners, including education and training providers, employers, and regional conveners
- Formal partnership structure supports program implementation and progress monitoring



NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS PATHWAYS WORK BASED LEARNING

Through work based learning, students are exposed to and become familiar with the work environment relevant to their chosen field.

Work based learning experiences provide students with practical knowledge on their chosen career path, which can help them prepare for future employment.



NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS PATHWAYS WORK BASED LEARNING OBJECTIVES



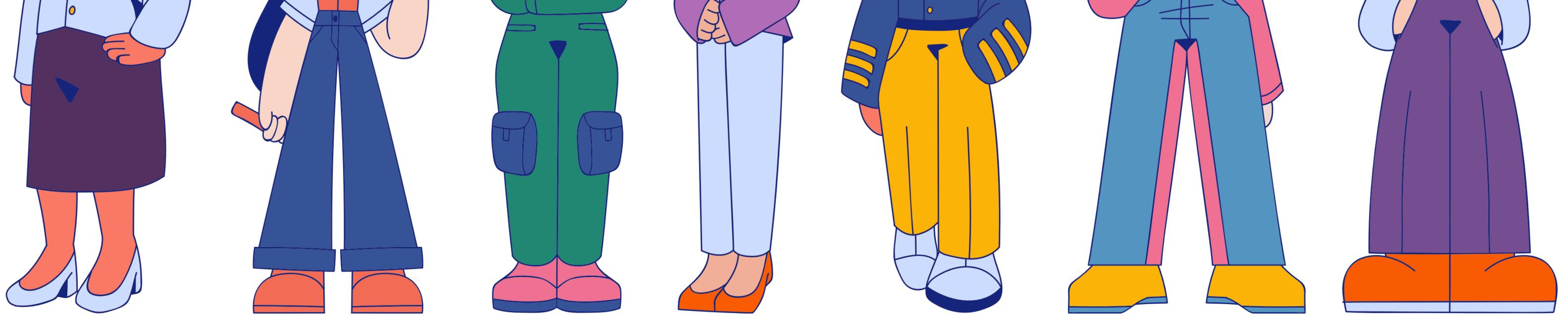
Under the guidance of industry professionals, students should be able to acquire relevant and practical industrial skills upon completion of work based learning.



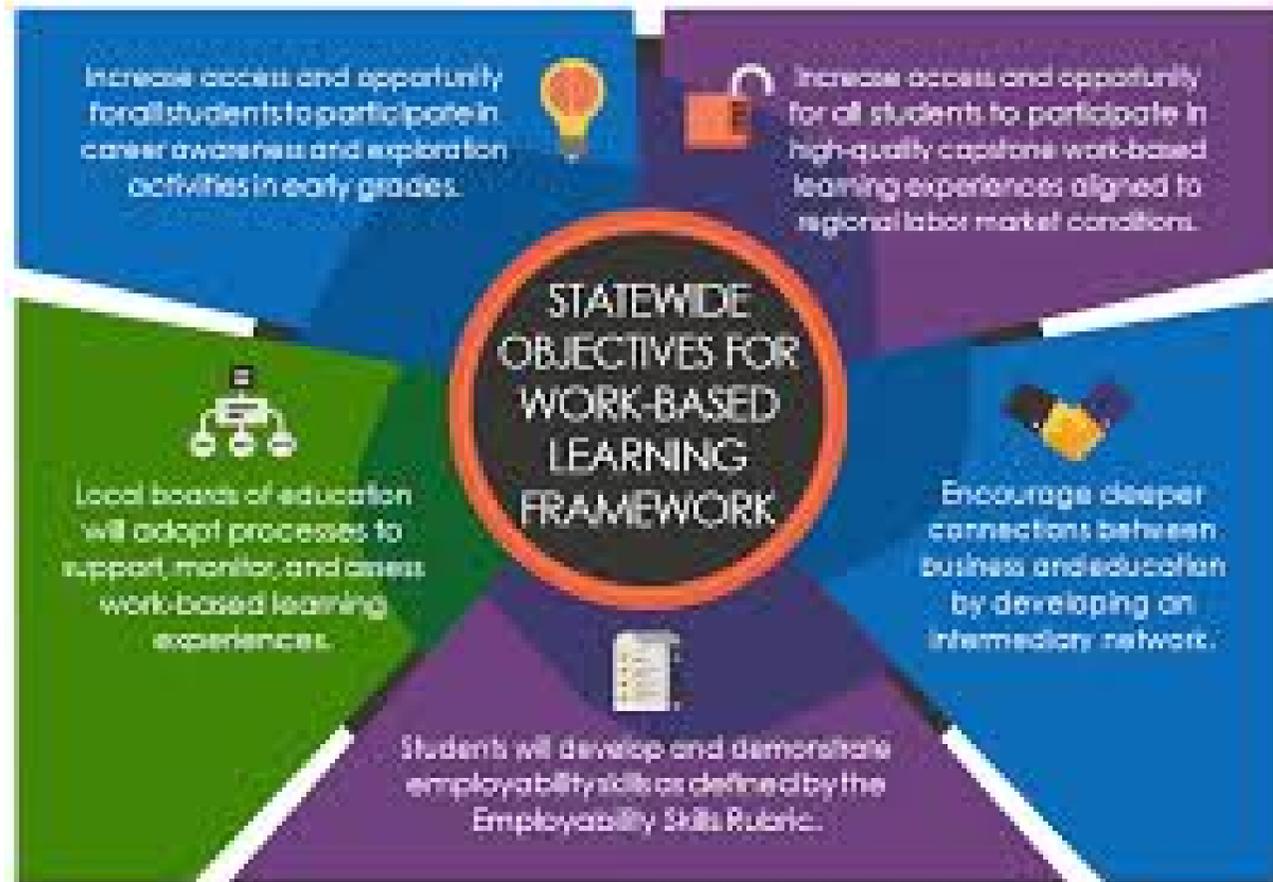
Students should be able to enhance their technical expertise and proficiency upon completion of work based learning.



Students should be able to successfully perform duties and responsibilities in their chosen industry upon completion of work based learning.



MONITORING WORK BASED LEARNING



The Texas Education Agency developed the Texas Work-Based Learning Framework to support school districts and charter schools in the development and improvement of their work-based learning efforts. The framework establishes statewide objectives, provides a definition of work-based learning and a delineation of capstone experiences, demonstrates that work-based learning activities should occur beginning in early grades and continue through postsecondary education, explains the theory of work-based learning, and outlines the pillars of work-based learning success.

Schools and employers can effectively use the Texas Work-Based Learning Framework to monitor and enhance their work-based learning programs by following key steps.

[Download Texas WBL Framework](#)





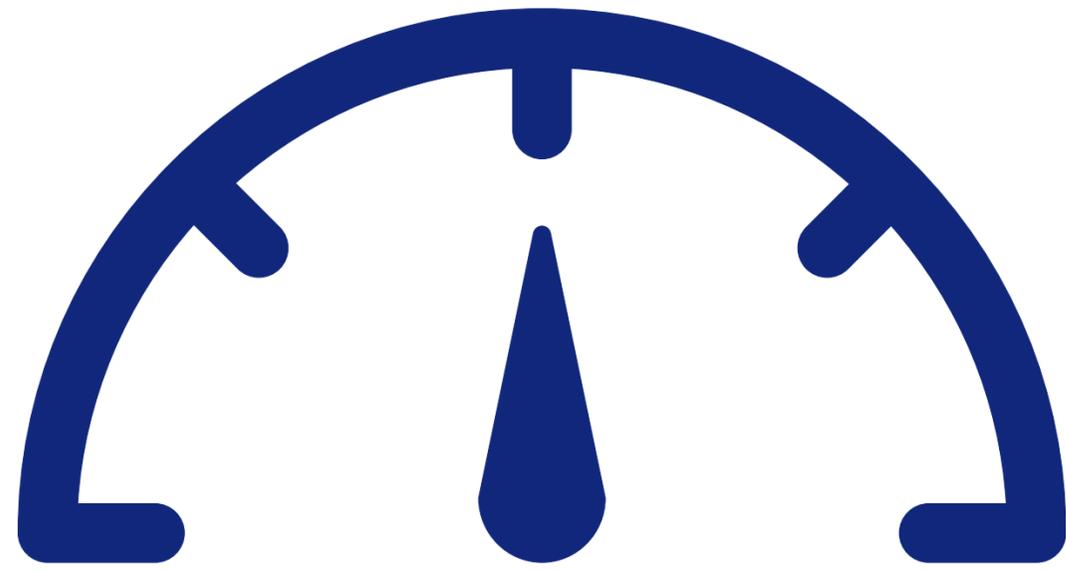
Establish Clear Objectives

Establish Clear Objectives: The framework outlines statewide objectives for work-based learning, such as increasing access and opportunities for all students to participate in career awareness and exploration activities from early grades through postsecondary education. Schools and employers should align their programs with these objectives to ensure they are meeting state standards.



Capstone Experiences

Define and Implement Capstone Experiences: The framework provides a definition of work-based learning and delineates capstone experiences that should occur throughout a student's educational journey. Schools can use this information to design comprehensive work-based learning activities that build on each other and provide meaningful career preparation.

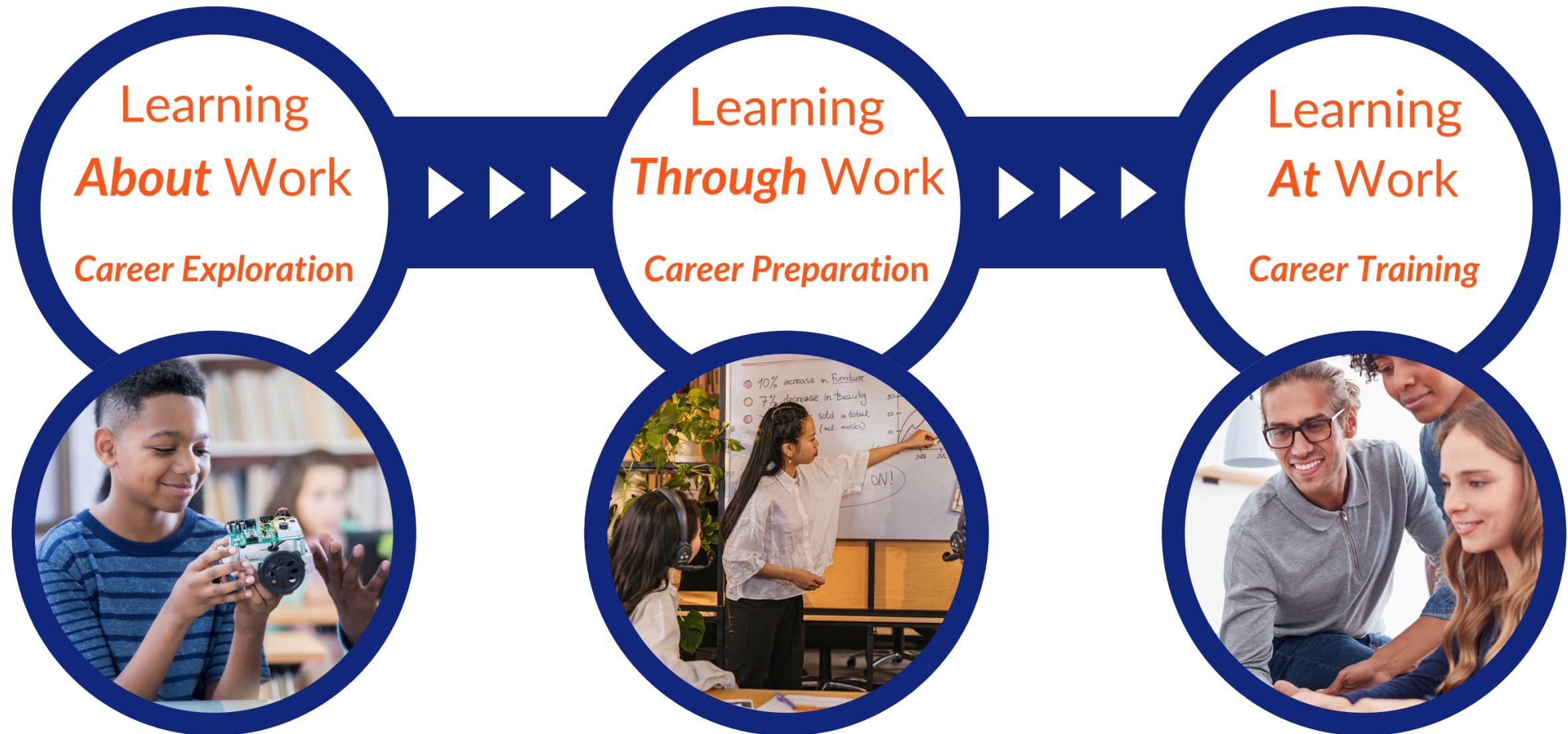


Monitor Quality Indicators

Monitor Quality Indicators: The framework includes quality indicators that schools and employers can use to assess the effectiveness of their work-based learning programs. These indicators help in evaluating whether students are developing and demonstrating essential employability skills, engaging with industry professionals, and applying academic and technical knowledge in real-world settings.



Work-Based Learning Continuum

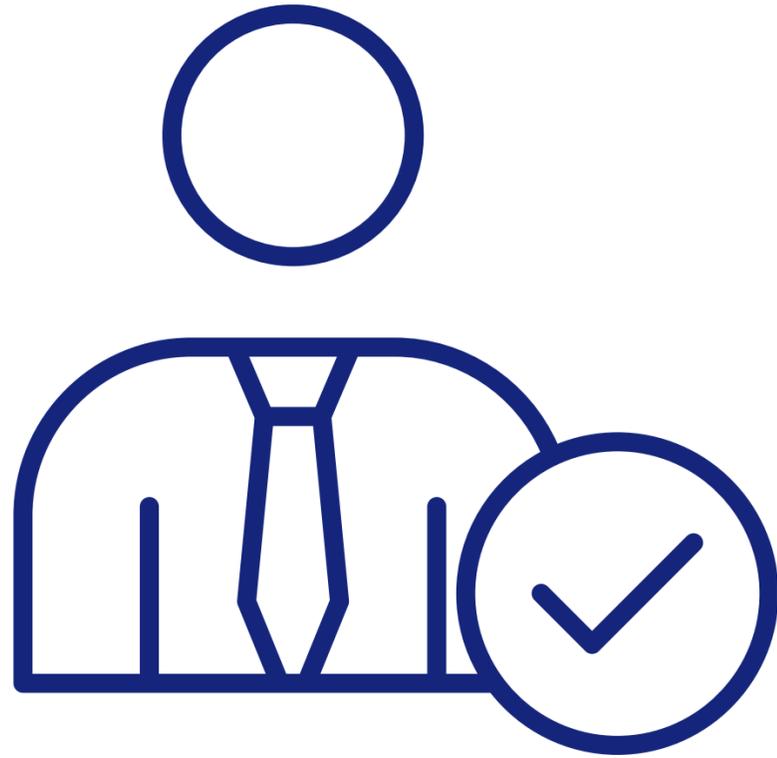


Utilize the Work-Based Learning Continuum: The framework describes a continuum of work-based learning activities, starting from career awareness in early grades to career training in postsecondary education. Schools and employers can use this continuum to ensure that their programs provide a progression of experiences that prepare students for future career opportunities.



Engage in Continuous Improvement: Regular evaluations and assessments are crucial for continuous improvement. Schools and employers should use the framework to conduct periodic reviews of their work-based learning programs, identify areas for improvement, and implement necessary changes to enhance program quality and student outcomes

Continuous Improvement



Work-Ready

Being "work ready" means that a student possesses the essential skills, knowledge, and attitudes required to succeed in the workplace. This includes not only technical skills specific to a particular job or industry but also a range of soft skills that are universally valued by employers. These soft skills include effective communication, problem-solving, teamwork, adaptability, and professionalism. A work-ready student is also able to demonstrate a strong work ethic, time management, and the ability to learn and apply new skills quickly.



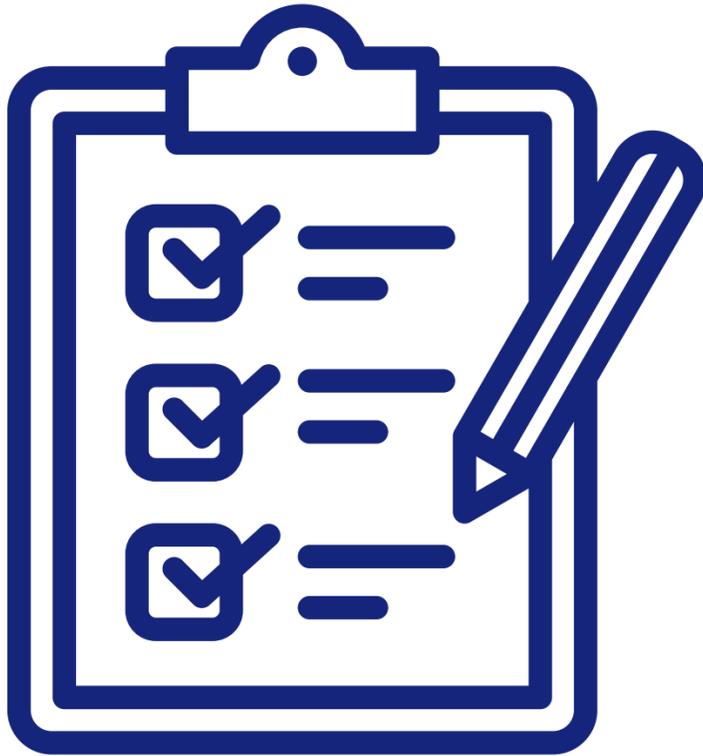
STUDENT REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Work Immersion Portfolio | <input type="checkbox"/> | Coaching Documentation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Printed Work Plan | <input type="checkbox"/> | Weekly Evaluation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Documentation | <input type="checkbox"/> | Written Activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Daily Immersion Journal | <input type="checkbox"/> | Company Assignments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Immersion Certificates | <input type="checkbox"/> | Takeaways |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Professional Resume | <input type="checkbox"/> | Peer Evaluation |



A student's training sponsor (i.e., career preparation, practicum teacher, direct supervisor) is responsible for creating work opportunities and assignments to meet the objectives outlined in the student's individual training plan. The training sponsor is also responsible for providing regular guidance and feedback on the student's performance

Earning a Grade through WBL



Evaluation

The employer should receive an evaluation form as part of his or her initial orientation. Training sponsor evaluation forms should provide a rubric that the training sponsor can use to document a student's performance on relevant knowledge, skills, and employability traits. The rubric should make it easy for the training sponsor and employer to assign scores based on the student's level of performance.

[Example WBL Evaluation Form](#)

EMPLOYER RESOURCES



NCTX Work-Based Learning Employer Guide & Checklist



FACT Education Inc. (Foundation for the Advancement of Career & Technical Education (FACT Ed) is a non-profit located in North Central Texas. FACT Ed. was honored to be named the Tri-Agency Grantee for the Texas Regional Pathways Network Regional Convener for North Central Texas. This role involves facilitating strategic planning, program development, and partnership enhancement to ensure the successful implementation of the pathways program. By bringing together key stakeholders from education, industry, and government, FACT Ed. aims to create seamless pathways that connect students to high-demand careers. Through innovative programs, strategic partnerships, and comprehensive support services, Fact Ed. is dedicated to advancing career and technical education, ensuring that all students in North Central Texas have access to the skills and opportunities needed to thrive in today's dynamic job market





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