**Discussion Group Notes – Work experience as part of career development - 16September 2024**

**Schools Discussion Group**

* Work experience as a shared learning activity in a school, i.e. students learning vicariously from each other about the different experiences they had. From a political perspective (i.e. getting staff and school leaders to 'buy in' to WEX), it is important that WEX is seen as an enhancement to school life and something to celebrate
* Work experience as more than just about individuals narrowing down their vocational choices - so much more to be learnt about work ethic, work cultures, etc.
* Starting early to introduce pupils to employers, e.g. Lara arranges Zoom meetings for groups of pupils with employers (to link back to the first point, the pupils learn from each other's questions). She has noticed that Since Covid and also linked to pupil's use of social media (pupils don't pick up the phone any more - they use Instagram, etc.), pupils don't know how to talk to the employers
* Clarity of objectives - the importance of all partners and participants  having a shared understanding of what WEX is for. (There are new issues like '50 hours worth' thinking and the idea of life-work blend as an alternative to life-work balance, but the fundamentals which we still haven't got right are still relevant!

*Anthony Barnes*

**Work Experience in Employment** **Discussion Group**

Work experience as part of career development – NICEC Network Meeting 16th September 2024

* What is the difference between intermediate labour market (ILM) and work experience as work-based opportunities for the unemployed? ILMs are created jobs running alongside other jobs, they are real jobs but temporary (and do not replace another job) and are paid: ‘heavy duty and about skills acquisition’. Work experience jobs are not paid, and are more about skills orientation and updating (showing you what has or hasn’t changed in the workplace) and often aimed at those out of the labour market for a while.
* Logic of classification – depends on your point of view e.g. whether you are a learning provider, part of the system, an employer or an individual struggling to re-enter the labour market. The Coop example that Jane Mansour introduced developed with the provider Ingeus, shows how when programmes are codesigned you are better able to meet multiple perspectives and to address some of the challenges of tailoring provision, addressing complex needs and managing exits. Employer buy-in is of critical importance.
* Employer logic for work experience might be to ‘try before you buy’ (about how to find people and save on recruitment costs) or to shape the longer-term skills supply. But arguably the work experience programmes for unemployed is about creating opportunities for people to see what the job is/to see jobs that they might not have encountered or known about and to “turbo-charge” their search for work and sense of personal agency.
* Some of the models and resources used in employment sector – eg A day in the life of might have wider application to schools?