How can the company benefit from this task?
Allowing a student to observe an employee at work can be a great way of training the student to do a task by letting them see an experienced employee do it first. Alternatively, a student can follow a product as it is handed from employee to employee along a set process. Work shadowing can be a great experience for the employee involved and can be used as a professional development tool.

How can the work experience student benefit from this task?
The best way for young people to learn how to do a task is by watching experienced people do it first – especially if they ask questions along the way about what the employee is doing and why they’re doing it this way. This will enable the student to be able to do the tasks themselves later. It can also help build the confidence of a young person by giving them the chance to see work taking place before the pressure of completing work themselves.

Instructions for Staff:
If you know what tasks you will be expecting the students to undertake, build in time at the start of their placement for them to see the tasks being carried out by more experienced workers.

Desired Output:
The student should be more knowledgeable about the work done at the company, and may have seen a task performed that they will then be expected to attempt.

Maximum Time to Be Given:
Shadowing should be for limited amounts of time – e.g. an hour. This ensures the student does not feel like they are just there to watch, and it takes the pressure off the observed employee who might find the students’ questions distracting.

Hint:
Ensure the member of staff is prepared and willing to be shadowed. If they are performing a task the student will be performing later, this should be made clear.

See also:
Carry Out Part Of A Process
Observe A Payroll Process
Assist IT Helpdesk
**Carry Out Part Of A Process**

**How can the company benefit from this task?**
You can quickly train a work experience student to undertake a part of a process and have them directly contributing to the team’s work.

On a factory production line, a work experience student can take responsibility (under supervision) for a specific part of the manufacturing process. Even in an office scenario, there are certain parts of processes that can be delegated to a work experience student to save you time and effort. E.g. scanning and filing documents, completing forms etc.

**How can the work experience student benefit from this task?**
This task gives the student responsibility for a part of the process giving them an understanding of how a number of small tasks come together to create a work flow. They will also learn the practical skills to carry out their task.

**Instructions for Staff:**
Select a part of a process for a student to carry out. Ensure students understand the expectations for quality and timeframes, and ensure they are supervised whilst carrying out the task.

**Desired Output:**
The product is in the required state for the next part of the process

**Maximum Time to Be Given:**
If this is a regular process carried out by your own staff, you should encourage the student to complete the task in a comparable timeframe. If this is a repetitive task, it may be best to timetable this for a limited amount of time, e.g. a few hours.

**Hint:**
It is a good idea to first give students a tour (real or virtual) of the whole process, so they see where they fit in.

**Case Study**
At the Siemens variable speed drives plant in Congleton, work experience students are timetabled to rotate around processes on the production line. They spend a full morning or afternoon on PCB Assembly, MM4 and Coating, Surface Mounting, F7 Testing and other parts of the process. They have a different, named mentor for each part of the process. Students can get real hands on experience in the factory and their feedback consistently praises the mentors who give them a real outlook of the world of work.
How can the company benefit from this task?
Keeping a workplace and its records tidy and organised can be a health and safety requirement and/or a data protection requirement. More than that, it’s also about the professionalism of the company. Young people can assist in the day-to-day tidying of the office and its records, or can radically re-organise your office and records if needed.

How can the work experience student benefit from this task?
Being organised as a company and individual makes working life easier, but it is also important for health and safety and data protection law. This task will test and prove a young person’s organisational skills and give them responsibility for looking after the office and/or records.

Instructions for Staff:
Identify a workload for the student: this might be regular filing as part of day-to-day operations or a special project to reorganise a set of records. Ensure the student understands the current filing systems and check their work afterwards.

Desired Output:
A tidy workspace; records properly filed etc.

Maximum Time to Be Given:
As a potentially monotonous task, this is best kept relatively short (e.g. 2 hours).

Materials Needed:
• The young person may need labels/file dividers etc

Hint:
Filing sometimes necessitates leaving students in store rooms/archives. Once you are satisfied the student is getting on with this task, make sure you don’t forget about them – go and check on them to see how they are getting on regularly.

See also:
Stock (Or Stationery) Replenishment/Ordering
Reception Desk
Post Duties
Data Entry & Updating Records
Reception Desk

How can the company benefit from this task?
Reception is usually a busy place where there are always jobs for work experience students; shadowing receptionists, helping to welcome guests, providing badges, contacting internal staff to collect visitors, preparing refreshments for guests etc. Once the student is confident on the reception desk they can provide valuable support for the staff there.

How can the work experience student benefit from this task?
The best way to find out about the company’s customers and suppliers is by working on reception. It is an ideal place for the student to learn about the whole company rather than the work of just one department. Spending time at reception will enable the young person to develop communication skills, confidence, and awareness of the organisation and telephone skills.

Instructions for Staff:
Introduce the student to reception staff and give them some simple tasks to take charge of – answering the telephone, greeting guests etc.

Desired Output:
Students assist the day-to-day operations at reception and gain confidence in speaking to customers, using the telephone and awareness of the organisation.

Hint:
Time spent on reception could be part of the students’ induction, could be a regular part of their schedule (e.g. assisting at particularly busy morning periods each day) or could be a one-off session as the student experiences a range of departments.

See also:
What Is Good Customer Service
Post Duties
Data Entry & Updating Records
Word Processing
Post Duties

How can the company benefit from this task?
If you have a Post Room it can be a great place for students to lend a hand to tasks that need doing and can be where they can begin to understand in a practical sense the organisation structure and the jobs that people do in each department. The student can be made responsible for the collecting and sending of the post each day, for franking and ensuring post is opened and logged appropriately.

How can the work experience student benefit from this task?
By supporting the delivery of post to each department or collecting it each morning students will gain confidence in meeting different people, asking questions and taking responsibility. It is also a great way to find out about the work of the company and the jobs done in each department.

Instructions for Staff:
Identify parts of the post processes that students can be given responsibility for, and train them to carry out these tasks independently.

Desired Output:
Post is collected/delivered professionally, appropriately and on time.

Maximum Time to Be Given:
This depends on the size of the company – it will take longer for larger organisations.

Hint:
This is a great task for students to be given responsibility for throughout their placement, and could be built in to their work schedule as a regular task.

See also:
Reception Desk
Office Equipment Training
Data Entry & Updating Records
Word Processing
How can the company benefit from this task?

One common office task is the typing up of letters, meeting agendas and minutes, brainstorming sessions, proposals and more. These tasks can be ideal for work experience students to undertake. Young people often have excellent IT skills, and can type-up letters, meeting agendas and minutes, brainstorming sessions and proposals quickly. They can also ensure that such documents are well presented and formatted.

How can the work experience student benefit from this task?

The task will give young people a chance to apply their IT skills in a vocational setting, giving them an understanding of how word processing makes life easier in an office environment. They will be able to see their work being used to benefit the team giving them job satisfaction.

Instructions for Staff:

Ask students to do some word processing for you. Ensure they feel confident with MS Word or other word processing software. If you have an example of how you want the finished document to be presented, you should give the student this example.

Desired Output:

A completed, professional looking document with no spelling or grammatical errors.

Maximum Time to Be Given:

2 hours

Materials Needed:

- Computer and word processing software (e.g. MS Word)
- Documents to be typed
- Examples of finished document formats
- House style guides (if appropriate)

Hint:

You may be surprised how difficult students can sometimes find this task, which may have more to do with their unfamiliarity with the office jargon than their literacy skills. It may be worth spending some time putting together a small “Jargon Buster” (or asking a work experience student to put one together).

See also:

Reception Desk
Data Entry & Updating Records
Create A ‘How To…’ Guide
How can the company benefit from this task?
Information about customers, suppliers, orders and so on is key to the running of most businesses, and keeping databases and spreadsheets up to date is an important job that needs doing. Often data entry can be done by work experience students with only a little training. As well as day-to-day data entry, you can set students a project on systematically checking that information is up to date.

How can the work experience student benefit from this task?
The task will give young people a chance to apply their IT skills in a vocational setting, giving them an understanding of how word processing makes life easier in an office environment. They will be able to see their work being used to benefit the team giving them job satisfaction.

Instructions for Staff:
Ask students to do some data entry for you. Ensure they understand how to use the spreadsheet/database and what fields they need to complete. It is a good idea to walk through the first few items of data entry until they are confident in inputting data.

Desired Output:
Records are input accurately and completely.

Maximum Time to Be Given:
Data entry can be an onerous task. If there is a lot of data entry, it can be best to schedule this for regular morning or afternoon sessions with other tasks scheduled in between for students to look forward to.

Materials Needed:
- Computer and access to database/spreadsheet
- Original data forms/documents

Hint:
It is important to check students’ data entry as incomplete or erroneous entries can cause problems when using the data.

See also:
Reception Desk
Word Processing
Handling And Presenting Data
Brainstorming Business Development Opportunities
Facilitating A Meeting

How can the company benefit from this task?
Team meetings are a normal part of a working week, and as part of the team a young person should be attending these. You could ask students to take minutes or action points arising from internal meetings and then type these up and distribute. They could also set the room up for the meeting, get refreshments, photocopy, prepare meeting documents and tidy the room up afterwards. Even if these are not tasks which you would normally do, it is a great activity for a student to do and practise.

How can the work experience student benefit from this task?
There are many ways the student can ensure the meeting goes smoothly, which will help them to develop a range of skills such as using written communication skills to make notes, IT skills to type these up and organisational skills to prepare the room and resources.

Instructions for Staff:
Think about the meetings your team / department has and how a young person can assist as well as observe a meeting. If you want a student to set up a meeting, make it clear what your expectations are and train students to use any equipment needed. If the student is to take minutes, show them examples of previous minutes first so that they know what the expectations are.

Desired Output:
Students contribute to the smooth running of a team meeting and demonstrate / develop their organisational, communication and / or IT skills.

Maximum Time to Be Given:
As appropriate.

Materials Needed:
• As appropriate

Hint:
If you have a daily briefing, the first one attended by the young person can be used to demonstrate the tasks they will complete for subsequent briefings.

See also:
Office Equipment Training
Word Processing
How can the company benefit from this task?
Many companies use direct phone extensions for different staff members, and keep paper or electronic lists of these extensions. Other companies may maintain lists of company mobile phones. These can quickly become out of date as staff move to different desks or as members of staff leave and arrive at the company. Checking and updating the list is a good task for work experience students to complete.

How can the work experience student benefit from this task?
This task is a great chance to develop a young person’s organisational and IT skills and which allows them to help the business work smoothly.

Instructions for Staff:
Show students the current phone list (explaining the use of extensions if appropriate). Explain that it has not been checked / updated in a while, and that you would like the student to do this.

Desired Output:
A complete an up-to-date phone list.

Maximum Time to Be Given:
2 hours

Materials Needed:
- Current phone list
- Access to computer to amend / type new list
- Access to internal telephone

Hints:
How this is carried out will vary from company to company – it could be done by the student going around the office and talking to staff in person, or by dialling all the extensions.

See also:
Office Equipment Training
Handling And Presenting Data

How can the company benefit from this task?
Reports, statistics and charts are part of day-to-day operations for many businesses, and students with great IT and mathematics skills can be very valuable in creating these, whether they relate to customers, orders, staff or stock levels. Producing reports, statistics and charts can help the company put their work into perspective.

How can the work experience student benefit from this task?
The student will be able to develop IT and maths skills, giving them an understanding of how their education will serve them in the workplace.

Instructions for Staff:
Give the young person a copy of a data set that they can manipulate. Make sure the original data is safely stored away so that any mistakes won’t cause a problem. Give clear instructions about how you would like this data to be output.

Desired Output:
Accurately and well presented data about customers, orders, staff etc.

Maximum Time to Be Given:
3 hours.

Materials Needed:
- Data set
- Access to a computer and appropriate

Hint:
Students will vary in their confidence and ability with statistics and reports. Start with something very simple and very easy to find in the data, and then check their results. If the student is capable, set them more demanding reports to create.

See also:
Data Entry & Updating Records
Customer Satisfaction Survey
Stock (or Stationery) Replenishment / Ordering

How can the company benefit from this task?
Stock taking/checking is a task in which a young person can be very valuable to a company. It’s always useful for stock levels or stationery levels to be checked against expected inventories. This might include checking deliveries against what was ordered or creating inventories of existing stock/stationery supplies.

How can the work experience student benefit from this task?
The young person will utilise their organisational skills and learn how this part of the business operates.

Instructions for Staff:
Give the work experience student responsibility for checking incoming or outgoing orders. This could be a regular activity throughout their placement. Alternatively, set a morning or afternoon aside for them to undertake a stock take or create a list of stationery supplies, identifying areas for replenishment. This can be extended so that the student completes a stationery order form based on their stock cupboard survey.

Desired Output:
A completed accurate stock take/orders successfully checked against inventories/completed stationery order.

Maximum Time to Be Given:
As appropriate

Materials Needed:
- Inventory (if appropriate)
- Access to stock/stationery to check
- Stationery request/order form
- Stationery catalogues

See also:
Tidying, Filing & Organising
Completing/Checking a Purchase Order Request/Invoice Request
Preparing Goods For Sale Or Delivery
Preparing Goods For Sale Or Delivery

How can the company benefit from this task?
Customer service is at the heart of most businesses, and ensuring goods are prepared as expected is a vital role that work experience students can undertake. This might involve putting goods together for delivery, or packaging items for sale.

How can the work experience student benefit from this task?
Young people can exercise their eye for detail and their ability to provide a reliable and consistent service by preparing goods for sale and delivery. This is a key role where they can ensure the reputation of the company by making sure goods are prepared exactly to specification.

Instructions for Staff:
Ensure the young person understands exactly what quality is expected before goods are sold or delivered, and check that they produce this by checking regular samples of their work.

Desired Output:
Goods prepared for sale or delivery in line with company expectations.

Maximum Time to Be Given:
A morning or afternoon session.

Materials Needed:
- As appropriate. This may include goods, packaging etc.
- A check list or ready list for students to mark off.
- Labels or address details as necessary.

See also:
Tidying, Filing & Organising
Completing / Checking a Purchase Order Request / Invoice Request
How can the company benefit from this task?
Companies need robust financial procedures and work experience students can lend an extra hand in getting the paperwork sorted and a keen pair of eyes to double check everything.

How can the work experience student benefit from this task?
Entering purchase order requests and invoice requests or double checking them is a great way for students to gain in-depth experience with financial procedures in business.

Instructions for Staff:
Identify an area of your business finances that students can contribute to. Ensure a suitable member of staff supervises the student entering data.

Desired Output:
Completed PO or Invoice requests, or a list/spreadsheet indicating checked POs/invoices and noting any potential issues.

Maximum Time to Be Given:
3 hours.

Materials Needed:
- PO/Invoice request forms
- How to complete a PO/Invoice request guide (if applicable)
- Data to be entered or checked

Hints:
It could be a good idea for the student to shadow finance procedures for a while before working on them themselves.

See also:
Shadow An Employee / Observe A Process
Observe A Payroll Process
Data Entry & Updating Records
How can the company benefit from this task?
Letting students observe a payroll process can be a great way to help a young person learn on their placement by watching a professional in action. There may be parts of the process they can assist with, so letting them first observe can be a useful training tool.

How can the work experience student benefit from this task?
Observing how a finance department processes payroll is a great way for students to gain in-depth experience with financial procedures in business.

Instructions for Staff:
Ensure an employee or team is happy to be observed and that the observation is scheduled at an appropriate time.

Desired Output:
The student has seen real business financial processes in action and can contribute to a part of the process.

Maximum Time to Be Given:
3 hours

Materials Needed:
- A process diagram (if appropriate) for the student to follow

See also:
Shadow An Employee / Observe A Process
Completing / Checking a Purchase Order Request / Invoice Request
Data Entry & Updating Records
How can the company benefit from this task?
It’s not uncommon for companies to have reams of forms, letters, presentations and other documents that have been designed with function in mind over style. Ensuring documents are well presented and formatted is sometimes a luxury, but one which a creative and IT-savvy work experience student can provide. If you have documents that are functional rather than nice to look at, let the student see if they can create documents that are practical, professional and appealing.

How can the work experience student benefit from this task?
Many young people have excellent creativity skills and are confident users of software such as Word, PowerPoint and Publisher and this is a great opportunity for them to develop these skills in a real work setting.

Instructions for Staff:
Make a copy of the documents you wish students to work on (keep the originals safe) and outline how you feel they could be improved. This could involve formatting a set of documents consistently, branding or re-branding appropriately, making documents more user-friendly and so on.

Desired Output:
Well presented, well formatted, and appropriately branded documents that are professional and user-friendly.

Maximum Time to Be Given:
3-4 hours, or ongoing (e.g. 2 hours a day).

Materials Needed:
• Copies of documents to be improved
• Access to a computer and appropriate software
• Branding guidelines, logos as appropriate
• Examples of the kind of finished product you’re hoping for

Hint:
Whilst students can be very creative, it is sometimes necessary to direct that creativity by giving very strict criteria for students to refer to.

See also:
Word Processing
Create A Product / Leaflet Display
Assist IT Helpdesk

How can the company benefit from this task?
If your company has an internal IT Helpdesk, a young person can be useful in handling initial enquiries, sorting basic or routine problems or simply observing professionals at work.

How can the work experience student benefit from this task?
Observing how an IT department works is a great way for students to gain in-depth experience with how IT operates in business. The student can also assist in handling initial enquiries and sorting basic or routine problems.

Instructions for Staff:
Appoint a supervisor on the IT team for the young person to shadow and who can show the young person basic tasks. These could include logging service calls, performing simple updates and so on.

Desired Output:
The student learns about IT procedures and services and contributes to the work of the IT department.

Maximum Time to Be Given:
As appropriate

Materials Needed:
• As appropriate

See also:
Office Equipment Training
 Carry Out Part Of A Process
 Testing / Checking Processes & Systems
Create a ‘How To...’ Guide

How can the company benefit from this task?
Every workplace has those little questions that people easily forget the answer to – how do I transfer a telephone call? or ‘how do I get the photocopier to staple?’ Many of these activities don’t come with ready-made ‘How To...’ guides, but a lot of staff would find such a guide helpful. Having a young person available to write a handy ‘How To...’ guide can be beneficial for months after their placement has ended.

How can the work experience student benefit from this task?
For a work experience student, everything is new and they may find themselves making notes on how to do things, like how to transfer a phone call to how to use the staple function on a photocopier. Using these notes to create a how to guide will develop problem solving, communication and IT skills.

Instructions for Staff:
Identify a task that would benefit from a user guide, and once the student is familiar with the task, ask them to type up a guide (using pictures and screen shots if possible) for other staff and future work experience students.

Desired Output:
A completed ‘How To...’ Guide.

Maximum Time to Be Given:
3 hours.

Materials Needed:
- Equipment/software relating to the task being documented
- Access to a computer and software to write up the guide

Hints:
Do pass these guides on to future work experience students (and let them improve them as they become out of date). Make sure they are circulated to staff who may find them useful.

See also:
Office Equipment Training
Carry Out Part Of A Process
Create a Product / Leaflet Display

How can the company benefit from this task?
Whether your business depends on having attractive product displays to entice customers, or whether your office / reception area could be made more dynamic through a display of promotional literature or corporate images, a young person on work experience can leave a lasting impression on your work environment.

How can the work experience student benefit from this task?
This is a great opportunity for the student to use their creativity and do something that will get noticed by the company and clients. This task will allow students to see how creative skills can be of benefit to an employer and give them the opportunity to input into the business.

Instructions for Staff:
Identify an area where a student could improve (or create from scratch) a display. This may be a notice board, a leaflet stand, a digital reception display, a window display or other product display. Ask the student to sketch out their ideas on paper and then create the real thing.

Desired Output:
A professional and dynamic display.

Maximum Time to Be Given:
This task may take some time – e.g. up to a whole day.

Materials Needed:
• As appropriate for the display

Hint:
Asking the student to draft some ideas first will help ensure that their time is used well and will give them confidence when putting the real display together.

See also:
Tidying, Filing & Organising
Preparing Goods For Sale Or Delivery
Design & Format Publications
Testing / Checking Processes and Systems

How can the company benefit from this task?
Making sure your processes and systems work correctly is very important, yet dedicating time to checking these things is not always possible. A work experience student can thoroughly test things for you – whether testing the quality of products from a production line, the behaviour of samples in a laboratory, the functionality of new apps or software and more.

How can the work experience student benefit from this task?
This task will help the student contribute directly to the company’s work and ensure their reputation is maintained. It is a great way to develop an eye for detail, a thorough work ethic and to take responsibility for a vital process.

Instructions for Staff:
Identify a process or system that the young person can test or check. If you already have a testing checklist, give this to the student, or else you might consider writing one.

Desired Output:
The process or system is thoroughly checked.

Maximum Time to Be Given:
Depending on the nature of the work, this might be a regular task or a one-off session.

Materials Needed:
• Access to the process/system to be checked
• A checklist

Hint:
It may be useful to the business and the student to extend this task by asking them to collate statistics. E.g. out of a sample of 100, 2 items were faulty.

See also:
Office Equipment Training
Carry Out Part Of A Process
Customer Satisfaction Survey

**How can the company benefit from this task?**
Collecting evidence of customer satisfaction is vital for PR, to boost staff morale and in some cases, to rethink or adjust a service. The task could relate to internal or external customers. This is a key area where a young person can contribute to the work of the company.

**How can the work experience student benefit from this task?**
Helping a business check that its customers are satisfied can help a young person develop customer service skills and communication skills. If they analyse the results afterwards, they can develop their IT, maths and analytical skills too.

**Instructions for Staff:**
Decide on an appropriate format for customer satisfaction surveys. This might be by email, over the phone, or in person. It might involve a paper form or could involve designing an online survey (e.g. using Survey Monkey [http://www.surveymonkey.com/](http://www.surveymonkey.com/)). You should set targets for the young person, such as to collect 100 responses. You may also ask them to analyse the data.

**Desired Output:**
Collection of an appropriate number of responses. This may be raw data or collated in a report.

**Maximum Time to Be Given:**
Dependant on size of survey.

**Materials Needed:**
- Survey questions – on paper or web-based
- Access to customers (and their contact details if appropriate)
- Access to analytic tools – e.g. Microsoft Excel

**Hint:**
Make sure that you are confident in the young person making a good impression on your customers. Done well, surveys can show that you are a caring and adaptable company. Done badly, it can annoy your customers.

**See also:**
What Is Good Customer Service?
Telephone Training
Handling & Presenting Data