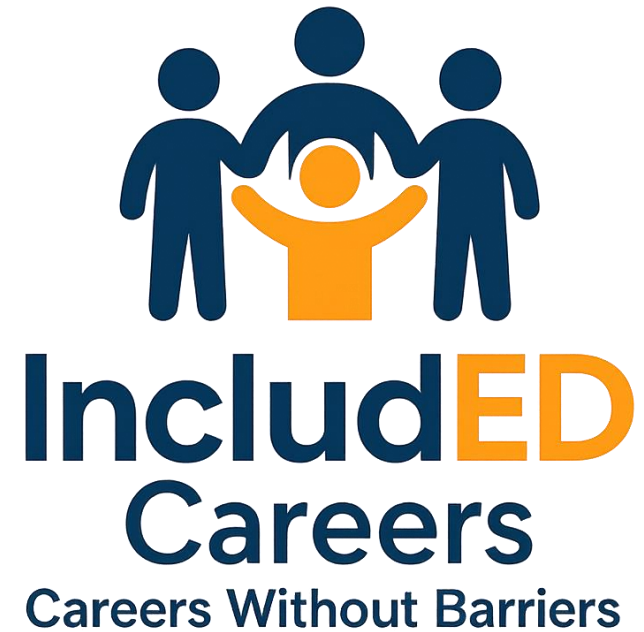




A Future That Includes Everyone

Free SEND Equalex Resources

<https://includedcareers.co.uk/equalex/>



Equalex Special Schools PowerPoint

A SEND-friendly careers tool that breaks down the Equalex framework into simple explanations, linked to EHCP Preparing for Adulthood outcomes. Helps staff plan and evidence meaningful provision in special schools.



Equalex Employers' Guide

A practical guide for businesses on how to engage with SEND learners. Explains Equalex outcomes in plain language and gives examples of adapted activities — from talks and visits to inclusive work experience.



Equalex SEND Planning Grid – Lite Version

A free starter tool for schools and colleges. Includes one example activity per Equalex outcome, mapped across all three core themes. SEND-friendly, symbol-supported, and ideal for trialling Equalex before moving to the full grid.

<https://resources.careersandenterprise.co.uk/resources/equalex-send-resources-included-careers>

Why Work Experience Often Fails SEND Learners

Why do traditional work experience models often fail many SEND learners?

One-size-fits-all placements

Anxiety/travel/sensory barriers

Too much too soon

No preparation beforehand

Poor matching

Lack of reflection/support

Introducing EqualEx

EqualEx is built around three clear, progressive themes that reflect the journey of SEND learners as they move from awareness to action: It focuses on three core themes:

- **Introduce & Inspire** – Builds curiosity and confidence through exposure to the world of work. Activities include employer talks, workplace visits, role-play, and classroom-based introductions to job roles. **Focus:** Awareness, aspiration, and motivation.
- **Investigate & Explore** – experience and understand workplaces, Learners begin linking their personal interests, skills, and strengths to real-world pathways. Activities include work experience , vocational tasters,, and enterprise projects
- **Apply & Demonstrate** – practise and reflect on real skills. Learners apply skills in authentic settings such as work experience, internships, or enterprise activities. Activities include skills assessments and mock interviews. Evidence is captured through observation, reflection

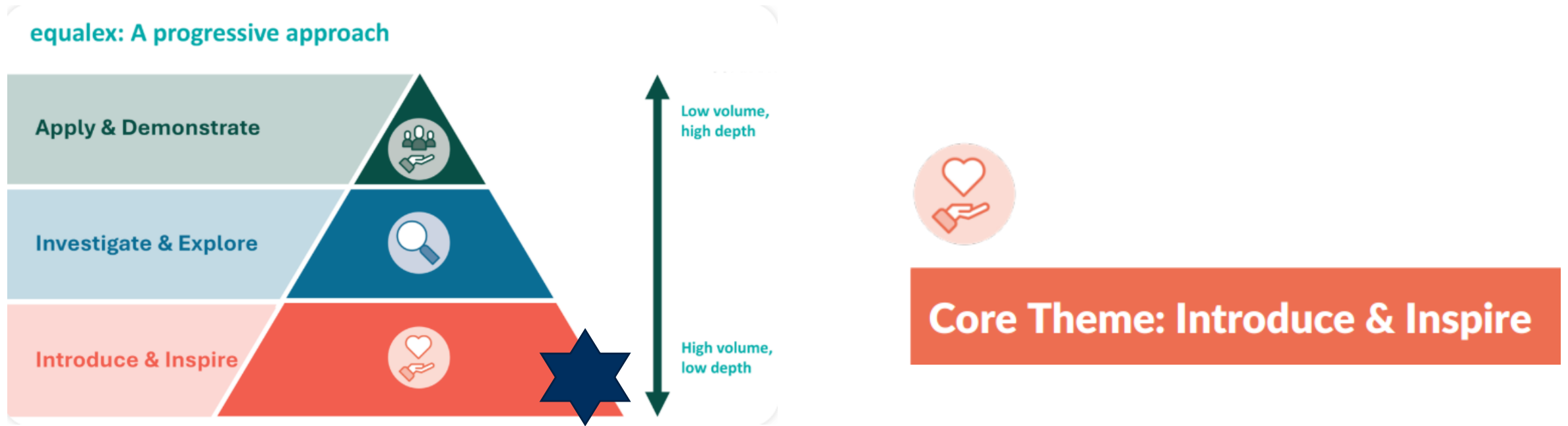
EqualEx moves beyond a single placement to a **journey model** of employer engagement.

Which theme do you think your provision currently focuses on most?
Introduce & Inspire | Investigate & Explore | Apply & Demonstrate



Lets do a quick audit

Employer Actions by EqualEx Core Theme



Goal: Spark curiosity, build awareness, and help learners make connections between themselves and the world of work.

Quick Self-Assessment: Rate Your Provision

Opportunity Awareness

Do learners understand the world of work?

Jobs, sectors, workplaces
Different ways of working

Self Awareness

Do learners understand themselves?

Strengths & interests
Skills linked to jobs

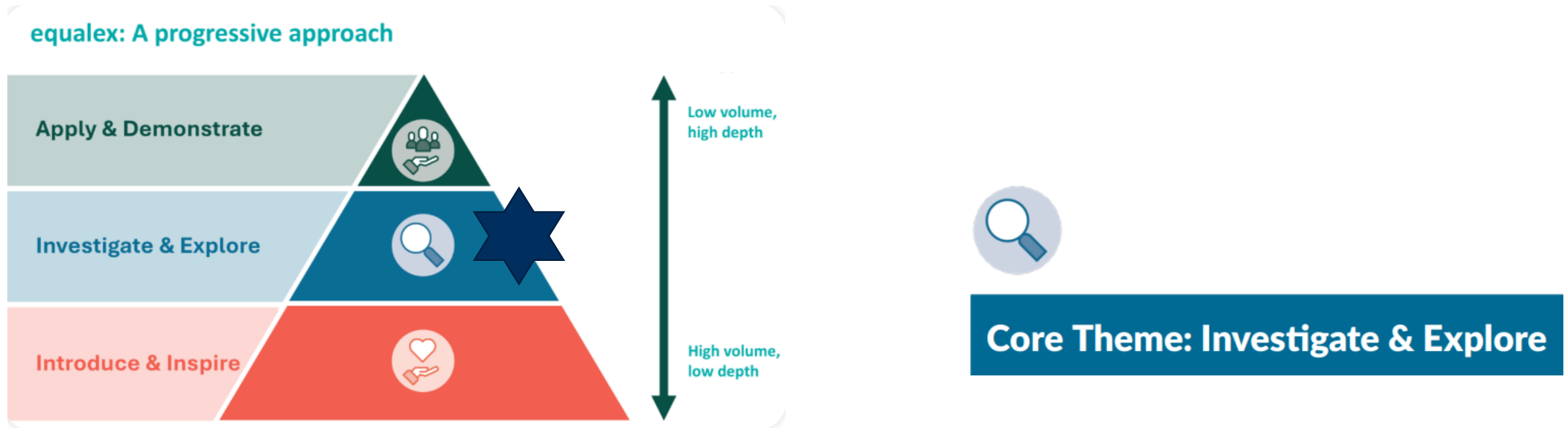
Inspiration

Do learners believe it's possible?

See people like them in work
Challenge stereotypes

- 👉 Rate each area:
- 1 = Not in place
 - 2 = Developing
 - 3 = Strong
 - 4 = Embedded

EqualEx Core Theme



Goal: Deepen understanding through hands-on experiences, projects, and workplace exploration.

Quick Self-Assessment: How strong is your provision?

Career Readiness

Are learners practising real work skills?

Teamwork,
communication etc
Applying skills in
lessons

Exploring Roles and responsibilities

Do learners understand jobs and pathways?

Roles in
organisations
Routes
(apprenticeships,
college, work)

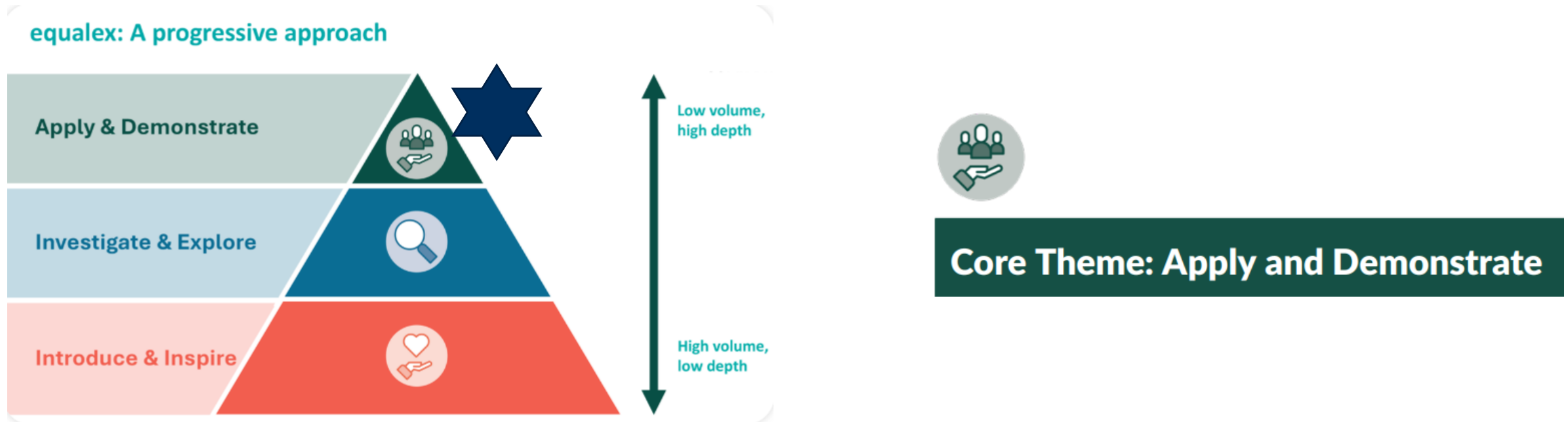
Growth Sectors and Changing Economy

Are learners aware of future opportunities?

Changing
industries
New/emerging
jobs

- 👉 Rate each area:
- 1 = Not in place
 - 2 = Developing
 - 3 = Strong
 - 4 = Embedded

Employer Actions by EqualEx Core Theme



Goal: Enable learners to *apply* their skills, gain feedback, and reflect on experiences to inform next steps.

Quick Self-Assessment: Are learners progressing?

Applying
knowledge
and skills

*Are learners
using skills in
real or realistic
contexts?*

Real tasks /
practical
application
Safe, supported
environments

Reflection
and
evaluation

*Do learners
understand
what they've
learned?*

What went well /
what to improve
Feeling confident
and supported

Raising
Aspirations

*Do learners see
a future
pathway?*

Celebrate progress
Link to next steps /
employment

- 👉 Rate each area:
- 1 = Not in place
 - 2 = Developing
 - 3 = Strong
 - 4 = Embedded

Reflection

What stood out to you from your scores?

Where are your strongest equal areas?

Where are learners missing out?

“Spot the Theme”

Students take part in mock interviews with employers

Apply & Demonstrate

Learners rotate through different roles during a workplace visit and reflect on skills

Investigate & Explore

Students take part in a mini-enterprise challenge to design a new product.

Investigate & Explore

A learner completes a supported work placement and gets feedback from their mentor.

Apply & Demonstrate

An employer creates a short “Day in the Life” video explaining what happens in their workplace

Introduce & Inspire

The company runs a myth-busting Q&A to challenge job stereotypes.

Introduce & Inspire

An employer hosts job shadowing days so students can observe real tasks.

Investigate & Explore

Staff visit a school to run a teamwork challenge using Skills

Investigate & Explore

Sit Down – Introduce and Inspire

Stand up – Investigate and Explore

Stand Up arms in air – Apply and demonstrate



Core Theme: Introduce & Inspire



Core Theme: Investigate & Explore



Core Theme: Apply and Demonstrate

Lets go deeper.. Activity Bank

You've just rated your provision — you know where your strengths are and where the gaps are.

The question now is... *what does better actually look like in practice?*

That's where the activity audit comes in — this isn't theory... this is what equalex for SEND could look like in real settings.

As you go through this, I want you to focus on your **lowest scoring area** — that's your priority.

Menu of practical actions — not everything needs to be done, but it shows what strong provision looks like.

Lets Audit

EQUALEX AUDIT			
Equalex - Introduce & Inspire	✓	✗	Notes
Coordinate short, SEND-friendly workplace talks or tours (in person or virtual) that are structured, visual, and accessible for learners with SEND.			
Plan encounters that showcase a wide range of job roles, helping learners understand that organisations include many behind-the-scenes and support roles, not just front-line jobs.			
Use visuals, props, and photos to help learners understand different workplace environments before or after encounters.			
Integrate "Day in the Life" video clips or photo stories into lessons to prepare learners for employer encounters or to reinforce learning afterwards.			
Organise 'Meet the Team' style sessions to help learners explore how different departments work together within one organisation.			
Use video walkthroughs of workplaces (warehouse, office, shop floor) to reduce anxiety and build familiarity ahead of visits.			
Create simple matching activities (tools → job roles) to help learners link tasks and equipment to real jobs.			

EQUALEX AUDIT			
Equalex - Investigate & Explore	✓	✗	Date:
Use employer case studies or "Day in the Life" resources within lessons to explore roles, tasks, and progression.			
Run interactive 'Team Roles' activities, where learners identify who does what within an organisation and how roles work together.			
Support the use of short staff interviews or videos, focusing on daily tasks, skills used, and workplace routines.			
Embed discussions about future skills needs within different sectors to help learners understand changing job demands.			
Link employer engagement to curriculum projects in growth industries such as green energy, logistics, or digital roles.			
Share local Labour Market Information (LMI) in accessible formats, using visuals and examples to highlight jobs and sectors growing in the local area.			
Skills Evidence Capture - Support learners to record or evidence the skills they used during activities (e.g. photos, short reflections, skills checklists).			

EQUALEX AUDIT			
Equalex - Apply and Demonstrate	✓	✗	Date:
Coordinate supported work placements, internships, or job sampling, ensuring appropriate preparation, support, and reasonable adjustments are in place.			
Build in structured feedback opportunities so learners receive clear, accessible feedback on their workplace skills and behaviours.			
Support learners to reflect on placements and identify next steps, linking experiences to aspirations, skills development, and progression pathways.			
Organise mock recruitment activities such as interviews or assessment centre tasks to build confidence and understanding of recruitment processes.			
Facilitate review meetings or feedback sessions with learners, employers, and key staff to reinforce learning and address support needs.			
Recognise participation and achievement through certificates or accreditation aligned to skills or employability frameworks.			

Reflection

- Which of these could you actually implement in the next Term?
- Which one would make the biggest difference to learners?

Creative Modern Work Experience

Group 1 – Short Exposure Models

Micro Placements
Workplace Safari
Family Workplace Visits

Group 2 – In-School Models

Employer Takeovers
Simulated Workplaces
Employer Co-Delivered Projects

Group 3– Applied/Real Work Models

Supported Job Sampling
Reverse Placements
Community Pop-Up Placements

Group 4 – Alternative Formats

Virtual Work Experience
Project-Based Experience
Industry Weeks

Group 5 – Readiness/Preparation Models

Mentoring
Enterprise Projects
Mock Recruitment

For each model discuss:

- What are they ?
- Which Equalex theme(s) does this fit?
- Which learners might benefit most?
- What adaptations would make it inclusive?
- Could you implement this in your setting?

Group Task

Group 1 – Short Exposure Models

Micro Placements

Workplace Safari

Family Workplace Visits

For each model discuss:

- What are they ?
- Which Equalex theme(s) does this fit?
- Which learners might benefit most?
- What adaptations would make it inclusive?
- Could you implement this in your setting?

Experience	Description	Why it works for SEND learners
Family-Inclusive Workplace Visits 	Workplace visits where parents or carers are invited to join part of the experience to support understanding and confidence around work and pathways.  Core Theme: Introduce & Inspire  Core Theme: Investigate & Explore	Builds reassurance, shared understanding, and informed decision-making, helping families support realistic next steps and aspirations.
Micro-Placements (“Taster Days”) 	Short, structured work experience opportunities (2–4 hours or one day) that give SEND learners a supported introduction to a role or workplace.  Core Theme: Introduce & Inspire  Core Theme: Investigate & Explore	Reduces anxiety, builds familiarity with work environments, allows learners to try tasks in manageable steps, and supports confidence-building before longer or more complex placements.
Workplace Safari 	A planned visit programme where SEND learners experience multiple workplaces in one day or across a short period, completing simple, supported tasks in each setting.  Core Theme: Introduce & Inspire  Core Theme: Investigate & Explore	Builds understanding of different work environments, supports comparison and choice, and helps learners identify preferences in a low-pressure, exploratory way

Group Task

Group 2 – In-School Models

Employer Takeovers

Simulated Workplaces

Employer Co-Delivered
Projects

For each model discuss:

- What are they ?
- Which Equalex theme(s) does this fit?
- Which learners might benefit most?
- What adaptations would make it inclusive?
- Could you implement this in your setting?

Experience	Description	Why it works for SEND learners
In-School Employer Takeovers 	Employers bring the workplace into school through pop-up work zones, role-play areas, or mini enterprise activities, supported by school staff.  Core Theme: Introduce & Inspire  Core Theme: Investigate & Explore	Provides a familiar, structured, and sensory-considered environment while enabling real interaction with employers and hands-on task practice.
Employer Co-Delivered Curriculum Projects 	Curriculum-linked learning projects co-delivered by schools and employers, using real workplace tasks within classroom lessons.  Core Theme: Investigate & Explore  Core Theme: Apply and Demonstrate	Makes learning meaningful and relevant, helping learners safely connect classroom learning to real work skills in structured, familiar settings.
Creative “Simulated Workplaces” in School 	Transform a classroom into a permanent/semi/temp simulated environment (hotel reception, office, mini warehouse)  Core Theme: Introduce & Inspire  Core Theme: Investigate & Explore	Allows repetition and skill rehearsal in a low-stress environment. Ideal for pre-placement readiness and anxiety reduction

Group Task

Group 3 – Applied/Real Work Models

Supported Job Sampling

Reverse Placements

Community Pop-Up Placements

For each model discuss:

- What are they ?
- Which Equalex theme(s) does this fit?
- Which learners might benefit most?
- What adaptations would make it inclusive?
- Could you implement this in your setting?

Experience	Description	Why it works for SEND learners
Community Pop-Up Placements 	Short, supported work experience activities delivered in community settings through partnerships with local organisations and employers.  Core Theme: Investigate & Explore  Core Theme: Apply and Demonstrate	Provides real-world practice in familiar local spaces, building confidence, independence, and transferable social and work skills.
Reverse Placements (“School in the Workplace”) 	A small group of SEND learners attend a real workplace where the school delivers learning on-site for a short, planned period.  Core Theme: Introduce & Inspire  Core Theme: Investigate & Explore	Builds familiarity with a real work environment while maintaining trusted routines, staff support, and a structured learning approach.  Core Theme: Apply and Demonstrate
Supported Job Sampling 	Short, repeat work experience sessions where SEND learners try a specific task or role within a real workplace, typically one session per week over time.  Core Theme: Investigate & Explore  Core Theme: Apply and Demonstrate	Predictable routines and repeated exposure build confidence, independence, and real work behaviours while maintaining consistency and manageable expectations.

Group Task

Group 4 – Alternative Formats

Virtual Work Experience
Project-Based Experience
Industry Weeks

For each model discuss:

- What are they ?
- Which Equalex theme(s) does this fit?
- Which learners might benefit most?
- What adaptations would make it inclusive?
- Could you implement this in your setting?

Experience	Description	Why it works for SEND learners
Themed Industry Weeks 	Immersive, themed weeks co-designed by schools and employers that combine lessons, employer input, and project-based activities around a specific sector or theme.  Core Theme: Introduce & Inspire  Core Theme: Investigate & Explore	Provides structure, predictability, and motivation while allowing learners to explore a sector in manageable steps through a mix of learning styles.
Virtual Work Experience 	Structured digital work experience sessions combining live employer input, interactive challenges, and remote tasks, facilitated by schools or colleges.  Core Theme: Introduce & Inspire  Core Theme: Investigate & Explore	Removes travel and sensory barriers, supports learners who find change difficult, and builds confidence with digital communication in a familiar environment. .
Project-Based Work Experience (Hybrid or In-School) 	A real employer-set work challenge completed in school or college, supported by staff and job coaches.  Core Theme: Investigate & Explore  Core Theme: Apply and Demonstrate	Accessible and flexible while remaining authentic. Learners engage in real work tasks without travel barriers, sensory overload, or unfamiliar environments.

Group Task

Group 5 –
Readiness/Preparation Models
Mentoring
Enterprise Projects
Mock Recruitment

For each model discuss:

- What are they ?
- Which Equalex theme(s) does this fit?
- Which learners might benefit most?
- What adaptations would make it inclusive?
- Could you implement this in your setting?

Experience	Description	Why it works for SEND learners
Mock recruitment sessions 	A structured, employer-led simulation of a real recruitment process. Learners take part in a series of short activities such as: - mini interviews - application tasks - group problem-solving activities - meeting different staff - employer feedback discussions	Reduces anxiety around interviews . Supports communication development Provides structure and predictability and Builds confidence and self-identity  Core Theme: Investigate & Explore  Core Theme: Apply and Demonstrate
Inclusive Enterprise Projects 	Structured enterprise activities where SEND learners design, make, and sell products or services, supported by schools and employer input.  Core Theme: Introduce & Inspire  Core Theme: Investigate & Explore	Develops creativity, teamwork, communication, and money skills through real business tasks in a supportive, scaffolded environment  Core Theme: Apply and Demonstrate
Mentoring & Skills Workshops 	Short, skill-focused sessions delivered with employer input, designed by schools to link learning directly to real workplace skills.  Core Theme: Introduce & Inspire  Core Theme: Investigate & Explore	Builds confidence, communication, and self-awareness in a supportive setting while establishing trusted relationships with employers before placements.

What Makes Work Experience Meaningful?



Designing Meaningful & Inclusive Work Experience

Task Brief:
Choose ONE modern work experience model from today.
Your table must redesign it so that it becomes both:
Meaningful
AND
Inclusive for SEND learners

Use the checklist below to test your design:
A Meaningful Experience Should...

- Have a clear purpose shared with employer and learner
- Be underpinned by appropriate learning outcomes
- Include two-way interaction with employees
- Provide access to a range of workplace staff/roles
- Include real tasks / authentic work
- Include employer feedback
- Include structured learner reflection



To Make It Inclusive, Consider:

- Preparation before the experience
- Adjustments during delivery
- Support/scaffolding required
- Communication/access needs
- How success will be evidenced
- How reflection will be adapted



What Makes Work Experience Meaningful?

What did you change to improve quality?

What inclusion adaptations were most important?

What would have made this ineffective without those changes?

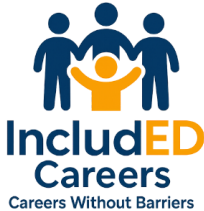
How could this work in your setting?

Takeaway Resource

Inclusive Education Resources

15 CREATIVE WAYS TO DELIVER MODERN WORK EXPERIENCE FOR SEND LEARNERS

Inclusive Models Beyond Traditional Placements



A Professional Resource for Educators

MODELS 1-3
SHORT EXPOSURE
MODELS

Family-Inclusive Workplace Visits

Core Theme: Introduce & Inspire

Core Theme: Investigate & Explore

Workplace visits where parents or carers are invited to join part of the experience to support understanding and confidence around work and pathways.

Builds reassurance, shared understanding, and informed decision-making, helping families support realistic next steps and aspirations.

Micro-Placements

Core Theme: Introduce & Inspire

Core Theme: Investigate & Explore

Short, structured work experience opportunities (2–4 hours or one day) that give SEND learners a supported introduction to a role or workplace.

Reduces anxiety, builds familiarity with work environments, allows learners to try tasks in manageable steps, and supports confidence-building before longer or more complex placements.

Workplace Safari

Core Theme: Introduce & Inspire

Core Theme: Investigate & Explore

A planned visit programme where SEND learners experience multiple workplaces in one day or across a short period, completing simple, supported tasks in each setting.

Builds understanding of different work environments, supports comparison and choice, and helps learners identify preferences in a low-pressure, exploratory way

MODELS 7-9
APPLIED/REAL WORK
MODELS

Community Pop-Up Placements

Core Theme: Investigate & Explore

Core Theme: Apply and Demonstrate

Short, supported work experience activities delivered in community settings through partnerships with local organisations and employers.

Provides real-world practice in familiar local spaces, building confidence, independence, and transferable social and work skills.

Reverse Placements
("School in the Workplace")

Core Theme: Introduce & Inspire

Core Theme: Investigate & Explore

Core Theme: Apply and Demonstrate

A small group of SEND learners attend a real workplace where the school delivers learning on-site for a short, planned period.

Builds familiarity with a real work environment while maintaining trusted routines, staff support, and a structured learning approach.

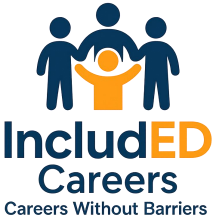
Supported Job Sampling

Core Theme: Investigate & Explore

Core Theme: Apply and Demonstrate

Short, repeat work experience sessions where SEND learners try a specific task or role within a real workplace, typically one session per week over time

Predictable routines and repeated exposure build confidence, independence, and real work behaviours while maintaining consistency and manageable expectations.



SEND Careers Leader Training



SEND Careers Leader Specialist Extension

Completed Careers Leader Training and want to strengthen your SEND careers practice?

This specialist extension supports Careers Leaders to deepen their understanding of:

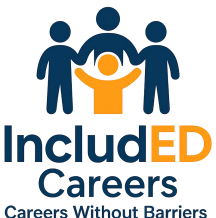
- SEND legislation and statutory duties through a careers lens
- Positive career outcomes for learners with SEND
- Multi-agency and employer engagement
- Designing inclusive careers programmes that improve progression outcomes

1 Day extension online

Fully Funded

Eligibility: Previous completion of a recognised Careers Leader training programme required.

Booking is completed through the [Careers Leader Training Portal](#).



SEND Careers Leader Training

Booking is completed through the [Careers Leader Training Portal](#).

Select Your Course

Select



Thank you for your interest in Careers Leader training. As it stands, the funding we have available for places this academic year has been allocated, due to unprecedented demand. We encourage you to continue to register where you will be added to a waiting list. As and when further places become available, we will communicate with you directly. Thank you for your patience.



Start editing your Course Information in order to add an available course.

Edit your Course Information ✕

Please select the **Provider, Course and Region and Training Delivery Type** that you wish to sign up to. Once you have completed your selection you will be emailed with the next steps.

Provider *

includedED ✕ | ▼

Course *

SEND Careers Leader Training On... ✕ | ▼

Region I want to complete training in (if in person) *

West Midlands ✕ | ▼

Training Delivery Type *

Virtual ✕ | ▼