

Work-Based Learning & Instructional Time

“Work-based learning hours should not occur during instructional time and should otherwise not overlap or interfere with teacher-led activities.” What does this mean?

In the delivery of career-technical education courses, time spent on direct instruction and teacher-led activities should be distinct from time spent completing work tasks associated with a work-based learning experience. A work-based learning experience must be co-supervised and co-evaluated by an employer or external business mentor, with a learning agreement that defines the work tasks of the experience and connects them to the professional, academic and technical standards aligned to the student’s program of study. It is not necessary for students to be scheduled in a separate course in order to participate in work-based learning. For example:

1. Student A is scheduled in a career-technical education course. Student A spends some time receiving direct instruction from their teacher; halfway through their scheduled time, Student A transitions from instruction to operate a school-based enterprise. Time spent completing work for the school-based enterprise is distinct and routine; the student completes work tasks independently or with peers as defined in an established learning agreement, and an external business mentor routinely supervises this work to provide feedback, in addition to scheduled evaluations of work. **Time spent by Student A operating the school-based enterprise qualifies as work-based learning.**
2. Student B is scheduled in a career-technical education course. Student B spends some time receiving direct instruction from their teacher, and then completes some independent work based on information that was covered in the lesson. The teacher routinely comes around to provide additional feedback as students are working. No learning agreement is in place for this time, there is no supervision or evaluation from an external employer or business mentor and the student is only semi-independent. **This time does not qualify as work-based learning.**
3. Student C is scheduled in a career-technical education course for the last period of the day. Student C leaves school during this time to go to an internship experience aligned to their program of study, with a learning agreement in place. Student C is earning credit in their scheduled course by participating in this experience and demonstrating competency as outlined by the local credit flexibility policy. **This time qualifies as work-based learning.**

Remember, all requirements of work-based learning are intended to provide authentic, real-world experiences to students in their chosen career field. Flexibility in the design and delivery of the experience is intended to create equitable access for each student to participate in high-quality work-based learning.

For more information on work-based learning, please contact Brenna Bartlett at Brenna.Bartlett@education.ohio.gov.