

Exploring Career Pathways

Entry Level 1 – Level 2

**Skills for Life and Work
Unit Specification**

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Unit Aim

This unit is part of the Skills for Life, Skills for Work, and Skills for Life and Work qualifications, available at Entry Level 1–3, Level 1 and Level 2 to support the 14-16 Curriculum for Wales.

The 'Exploring Career Pathways' suite of units has been designed to develop understanding of different occupational and career pathways, i.e. being able to locate, organise, evaluate and present information when considering the range of opportunities available.

Units from Other Awarding Organisations

Only units that form part of the approved Open Awards Skills for Life, Skills for Work, and Skills for Life and Work qualifications may contribute towards achievement of this qualification.

Units certificated by other Awarding Organisations, or units taken from other Open Awards qualifications, cannot contribute to the achievement of this qualification. This requirement applies across all levels and qualification sizes.

Qualification Documentation

This Unit Specification is a mandatory document and must be read and applied alongside the relevant Qualification Guide (level-specific) and the Open Awards Provider Handbook.

Progression Across Levels

This suite of units has been designed for learners ranging from Entry Level 1 – Level 2. Learners may progress through the levels throughout their education journey or start at a higher level as appropriate to their level of learning, education targets and aspirations.

The table below summarises the areas of learning included within the units and how these are treated at each level.

Concept	Entry 1	Entry 2	Entry 3	Level 1	Level 2
Awareness of jobs	Recognise different jobs	Identify and group jobs	Describe jobs	Explain job roles and pathways	Analyse different career options
Understanding pathways	Know jobs exist	Know jobs differ	Identify simple routes into jobs	Explain routes into careers	Compare and analyse pathways
Information skills	Recognise job information	Find simple information	Find and organise information	Use and organise multiple sources	Evaluate and compare sources
Skills and requirements	Recognise simple job tasks	Identify skills linked to jobs	Describe skills and basic requirements	Explain skills and qualifications	Analyse requirements and progression
Self-awareness	Identify likes	Identify skills/interests	Describe strengths and interests	Assess strengths and development needs	Evaluate suitability and readiness
Decision making	State preference	Make simple links to jobs	Give reasons for choices	Select appropriate pathway	Justify and evaluate pathway decisions
Communication of ideas	Indicate choice	State simple ideas	Present simple information	Present structured information	Present and justify a plan

Cognitive demand	Recognise / indicate	Identify / state	Describe / organise	Explain / apply	Analyse / evaluate / justify
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Delivery Requirements

Before delivery, providers must have an approved Delivery and Assessment Plan that maps teaching, learning and assessment to all (level-specific) assessment criteria in this Unit Specification.

Providers are expected to plan and deliver learning and assessment activities within standard school/college/training provider facilities. This unit should be accessible and deliverable without requiring specialist infrastructure, high-cost resources or restrictive entry conditions.

Staffing Resources

Providers must ensure suitably qualified and experienced teachers are available to deliver and assess this unit.

Delivery staff must:

- Have appropriate occupational experience with evidence of competence in education or training
- have experience in delivering careers education, personal development, or employability-related learning
- be able to support learners to:
 - explore different career pathways
 - locate and organise information about jobs and routes
 - understand skills, qualifications, and progression opportunities

Staff must be able to:

- facilitate research, discussion, and reflective activities
- support learners to make links between personal interests, skills, and career pathways
- adapt learning activities to meet different learner needs and levels of independence

Delivery staff should hold, or be working towards, a recognised teaching or training qualification where this is a requirement of the provider.

Physical Resources

Providers must ensure suitable and sufficient resources are available to deliver and assess this unit. As a minimum this should include:

Learning Space

A classroom or flexible learning space suitable for:

- discussion
- group work
- independent tasks

Information Resources

Materials providing information about:

- different jobs and career pathways
- skills and qualifications required
- progression routes (e.g., education, training, apprenticeships)

Access to sources of information such as:

- careers websites
- digital resources
- videos or presentations

Where digital access is not available, equivalent printed resources must be provided.

Learning and Recording Materials

Templates or structured formats to support:

- information gathering
- organising findings
- planning and reflection

Examples:

- job profile templates
- comparison tables
- planning sheets

Presentation Resources

Materials or tools to support learners in presenting information, such as:

- paper, pens, card
- presentation software (where available)

Optional Resources

Access to:

- visiting speakers
- employer or training provider input
- real-life case studies

Entry Requirements

Learners do not require any prior learning or qualifications for any of the units within this suite. However, as the level of complexity of language increased through the levels, the provider must complete robust initial assessments to ensure the learner is able to access the content at the level they are starting.

Assessment Approach

This suite of units has been designed to be assessed through assessment tasks and activities designed by the provider.

Providers must undertake pre-course verification prior to assessment taking place to confirm tasks cover all assessment criteria and are appropriate to the level.

All assessment criteria must be met in full for the learner to be awarded a 'pass'. No partial award can be made if any assessment criteria is not met.

Learners are required to collate evidence in a portfolio. This can be presented digitally (e.g., through an e-portfolio system) or as paper-based as appropriate to the individual learner. Wherever possible, e-portfolios are encouraged.

Assessors must assess the evidence collated by the learner against the assessment criteria within the unit to determine whether each has been met in full or not. All assessment decisions are subject to internal quality assurance (IQA) by the provider and external quality assurance (EQA) by Open Awards before the result is confirmed.

The following types of assessment tasks have been determined to be suitable for this unit at each level.

Entry Level 1

Assessment of Exploring Career Pathways at Entry Level 1 should include:

Assessment Type	Examples of Tasks
Matching	Match job images to job names (e.g., teacher, builder)
Picture Selection	Select which image shows a named job
Identification / Pointing	Point to a job when named
Simple Sorting	Sort jobs into "like" / "don't like"
Supported Discussion	State a job they like
Simple Reflection	State one thing they like doing

Entry Level 2

Assessment of Exploring Career Pathways at Entry Level 2 should include:

Assessment Type	Examples of Tasks
Identification Tasks	Identify different jobs and simple categories
Matching Tasks	Match skills to jobs
Information Tasks	Use a simple worksheet or video to find one fact about a job
Sorting / Grouping	Group jobs by type (e.g., indoor/outdoor)
Basic Verbal/Written Responses	State one thing about a job
Supported Reflection	Identify own skill or interest and link to a job

Entry Level 3

Assessment of Exploring Career Pathways at Entry Level 3 should include:

Assessment Type	Examples of Tasks
Structured Information Tasks	Complete a simple job profile template
Short Descriptions	Describe tasks and skills for a job
Research Tasks (Supported)	Find information from a given source
Organisation Tasks	Present information in a poster or table
Matching Tasks	Match qualifications or skills to jobs
Reflection Tasks	Describe own interests and a suitable job

Level 1

Assessment of Exploring Career Pathways at Level 1 should include:

Assessment Type	Examples of Tasks
Research Tasks	Use at least two sources to gather career information
Structured Written Tasks	Describe pathways into a job
Organisation Tasks	Present findings in a structured format (table/report)
Skills Analysis Tasks	Identify and describe skills and qualifications
Presentation Tasks	Present a chosen career pathway
Reflection Tasks	Explain why a pathway is suitable

Level 2

Assessment of Exploring Career Pathways at Level 2 should include:

Assessment Type	Examples of Tasks
Research Tasks	Use multiple sources to investigate career pathways
Comparative Tasks	Compare two career pathways
Analytical Tasks	Analyse requirements and progression routes
Evaluation Tasks	Evaluate suitability of a pathway and sources used
Structured Report / Presentation	Produce a career pathway plan
Justification Tasks	Justify choices using evidence from research and self-assessment
Reflective Evaluation	Evaluate own strengths and development needs

Unit Content

Entry Level 1

Unit Title: Exploring Career Pathways

Unit Reference Number: CBM176

Level: Entry Level One

Credit Value: Two (2)

Guided Learning Hours: 20

Unit Aim: To develop Learners' understanding of different occupational and career pathways, i.e. being able to locate, organise, evaluate and present information when considering the range of opportunities available. Reflect on their own interests, skills and aspirations.

Principles of Progression

Progression step 1 - I can, through play, explore, discover and begin to ask simple questions and offer possible answers based on previous experiences.

Learning Outcome (The Learner will):	Assessment Criterion (The Learner can):
1. Know that people do different jobs	1.1 Identify different jobs
	1.2 State what a person does in a job
2. Be able to explore different jobs	2.1 Identify a job from an image or description
	2.2 Select a job they like
3. Know own interests in relation to jobs	3.1 Identify one thing they like doing
	3.2 Identify a job linked to that interest

Indicative Content

LO1 AC 1.1 Learners must identify at least two different jobs e.g.,

- teacher
- builder
- nurse
- retail worker.

AC 1.2 Learners must state what a person does in one of the identified jobs e.g.,

- teacher – helps children learn
- builder – makes things (houses, walls)
- nurse – helps people when they're not well
- retail worker - serves customers.

LO2 AC 2.1 Learners must be able to identify at least two different jobs from given images or descriptions.

AC 2.2 Learners must select one job that they like or are interested in.

LO3 AC 3.1 Learners must identify at least one thing they enjoy doing e.g.,

- helping
- making
- using computers
- talking
- reading.

AC 3.2 Learners must match the thing they identified in AC 3.1 to a job e.g.,

- I like helping → nurse
- I like making → artist
- I like using computers → administrator/office worker
- I like talking → customer service.

Area of Learning Experience	Humanities
Statement of What Matters	Enquiry, exploration and investigation inspire curiosity about the world, its past, present and future.
Links to the Four Purposes	Purpose 1 - Ambitious, capable learners who are ready to learn throughout their lives.
Cross-curricular Skills	Literacy / Digital
Integral Skills	Creativity and innovation
Understanding of sustainability in the world of work and/or everyday work	Enables learners to consider future sustainable career options.

Relevant Cross-Cutting Themes	
Theme	Rationale
Local, national and international contexts	Enables learners to consider where future careers may take them locally, nationally and internationally and inspire their thoughts for the future.

Entry Level 2

Unit Title: Exploring Career Pathways

Unit Reference Number: CBM177

Level: Entry Level Two

Credit Value: Two (2)

Guided Learning Hours: 20

Unit Aim: To develop Learners' understanding of different occupational and career pathways, i.e. being able to locate, organise, evaluate and present information when considering the range of opportunities available. Reflect on their own interests, skills and aspirations.

Principles of Progression

Progression step 2 - I have been curious and made suggestions for possible enquiries and have asked and responded to a range of questions during an enquiry.

Learning Outcome (The Learner will):	Assessment Criterion (The Learner can):
1. Know different types of jobs and pathways	1.1 Identify jobs and group into simple categories
	1.2 Use a source to find information about a job
	1.3 State one thing about the job
2. Know skills used in jobs	2.1 Identify a skill used in a job
	2.2 Match a skill to a job
3. Know own interests and strengths	3.1 Identify own interests and personality strengths
	3.2 Identify a job linked to own skills or interests

Indicative Content

LO1 AC 1.1 Learners must identify at least five jobs and group them into categories e.g.,

- Indoor/ outdoor
- Helping
- Practical.

AC 1.2 Learners must use given sources to find information about one selected job e.g., videos, worksheets, pictures, simplified job adverts.

AC 1.3 Learners must state at least one piece of information they've found about the job.

LO2 AC 2.1 Learners must identify at least one skill used in a given job e.g.,

- Builder → practical skills
- Nurse → caring skills
- Retail assistant → communication skills
- Administrator → reading skills.

AC 2.2 Learners must match a job to a given skill e.g.,

- Digital skills → administrator
- Cooking → chef.

LO3 AC 3.1 Learners must identify at least one interest and one personal strength.

AC 3.2 Learners must identify at least one job they would like to do linked to their identified skill.

Area of Learning Experience	Humanities
Statement of What Matters	Enquiry, exploration and investigation inspire curiosity about the world, its past, present and future.
Links to the Four Purposes	Purpose 1 - Ambitious, capable learners who are ready to learn throughout their lives.
Cross-curricular Skills	Literacy / Digital
Integral Skills	Creativity and innovation
Understanding of sustainability in the world of work and/or everyday work	Enables learners to consider future sustainable career options.

Relevant Cross-Cutting Themes

Theme	Rationale
Local, national and international contexts	Enables learners to consider where future careers may take them locally, nationally and internationally and inspire their thoughts for the future.

Entry Level 3

Unit Title: Exploring Career Pathways

Unit Reference Number: CBM178

Level: Entry Level Three (3)

Credit Value: Two (2)

Guided Learning Hours: 20

Unit Aim: To develop Learners' understanding of different occupational and career pathways, i.e. being able to locate, organise, evaluate and present information when considering the range of opportunities available. Reflect on their own interests, skills and aspirations.

Principles of Progression

Progression step 3 - I can use my experiences, knowledge and beliefs to generate ideas and frame enquiries.

Learning Outcome (The Learner will):	Assessment Criterion (The Learner can):
1. Understand different career pathways	1.1 Describe different jobs
	1.2 Identify a simple pathway into a job
2. Be able to find and organise information about jobs	2.1 Find information about a job from a given source
	2.2 Present information in a simple format
3. Reflect on own interests and aspirations	3.1 Describe own interests or strengths
	3.2 Explain a job they are interested in
4. Understand skills and requirements for jobs	4.1 Describe skills needed for a job
	4.2 Identify one requirement (e.g. training, qualification)

Indicative Content

LO1 AC 1.1 Learners must describe at least two different jobs including, as a minimum, what the job does and where they work.

AC 1.2 Learners must identify a pathway into one job e.g.,

- College/ qualifications
- Training
- Work experience.

LO2 AC 2.1 Learners must use at least one given source to find information about a chosen job e.g.,

- Structure template
- Simplified job descriptions.

AC 2.2 Learners must present the information found in a simple format and must include at least three key pieces of information.

Example:

- Poster
- Worksheet
- Verbal presentation.

LO3 AC 3.1 Learners must describe at least two of their own strengths that relate to employability. This could include subject-specific skills (e.g., vocational areas) or soft skills.

AC 3.2 Learners must identify at least one job they are interested in and explain why. The explanation must link to their skills.

LO4 AC 4.1 Learners must describe at least two skills needed for the job they're interested in. This could be skills they have or skills they need to develop.

AC 4.2 Learners must identify at least one requirement of the job they have identified e.g., training, qualification, work experience.

Area of Learning Experience	Humanities
Statement of What Matters	Enquiry, exploration and investigation inspire curiosity about the world, its past, present and future.
Links to the Four Purposes	Purpose 1 - Ambitious, capable learners who are ready to learn throughout their lives.
Cross-curricular Skills	Literacy / Digital
Integral Skills	Creativity and innovation
Understanding of sustainability in the world of work and/or everyday work	Enables learners to consider future sustainable career options.

Relevant Cross-Cutting Themes	
Theme	Rationale
Local, national and international contexts	Enables learners to consider where future careers may take them locally, nationally and internationally and inspire their thoughts for the future.

Level 1

Unit Title: Exploring Career Pathways

Unit Reference Number: CBM179

Level: One (1)

Credit Value: Two (2)

Guided Learning Hours: 20

Unit Aim: To develop Learners' understanding of different occupational and career pathways, i.e. being able to locate, organise, evaluate and present information when considering the range of opportunities available. Reflect on their own interests, skills and aspirations.

Principles of Progression

Progression step 4 - I can use my experiences, knowledge and beliefs to generate ideas independently and frame enquiries, using a range of research approaches when required.

Learning Outcome (The Learner will):	Assessment Criterion (The Learner can):
1. Understand a range of career pathways	1.1 Describe different types of career pathways
	1.2 Explain how someone can enter a job role
2. Be able to locate and organise information about careers	2.1 Use different sources to find career information
	2.2 Explore at least two different career options
3. Understand skills and qualifications for career pathways	3.1 Describe skills needed for a chosen pathway
	3.2 Describe qualifications or experience required for a chosen career pathway
4. Be able to reflect on own skills and career interests	4.1 Describe own strengths and areas for development
	4.2 Identify a suitable career pathway

Learning Outcome (The Learner will):	Assessment Criterion (The Learner can):
5. Be able to present career pathway information	5.1 Present information about a chosen career pathway
	5.2 Describe why the chosen career pathway is suitable for them

Indicative Content	
LO1	AC 1.1 Learners must describe at least three different types of career pathways e.g., • Apprenticeships • Higher education qualifications (university) • Entry level jobs – training on the job. AC 1.2 Learners must explain the entry route for at least one job role.
LO2	AC 2.1 Learners must use at least three sources of information to find career information e.g., • Websites • Career materials • Job adverts • Networks of contacts • Talking to people doing the job. AC 2.2 Learners must explore at least two different career options within these criteria. Learners must present the information they find in a structured and clear way e.g., tables, notes, presentation, discussion.
LO3	AC 3.1 Learners must describe the skills needed for a chosen career pathway. This could be a career identified under AC 2.1 or a different one. AC 3.2 Learners must describe the qualifications or experience needed for the same chosen career pathway. In AC 3.1 and 3.2, learners must show a clear link between job/skills/entry requirements.
LO4	AC 4.1 Learners must describe their own strengths and areas for development. These must be realistic and linked to employability. Learners could focus on vocational skills or broader employability skills.

AC 4.2 Learners must identify a suitable career pathway based on their own strengths and interests.

LO5 AC 5.1 Learners must present information about their chosen career pathway, including key details such as:

- What the career involves
- Training/ education requirements
- Entry requirements
- Types of work e.g., indoor/outdoor, remote working
- Skills required.

AC 5.2 Learners must justify their choice of career pathway linking it to examples of their skills and knowledge.

Area of Learning Experience	Humanities
Statement of What Matters	Enquiry, exploration and investigation inspire curiosity about the world, its past, present and future.
Links to the Four Purposes	Purpose 1 - Ambitious, capable learners who are ready to learn throughout their lives.
Cross-curricular Skills	Literacy / Digital
Integral Skills	Creativity and innovation
Understanding of sustainability in the world of work and/or everyday work	Enables learners to consider future sustainable career options.

Relevant Cross-Cutting Themes

Theme	Rationale
Local, national and international contexts	Enables learners to consider where future careers may take them locally, nationally and internationally and inspire their thoughts for the future.

Level 2

Unit Title: Exploring Career Pathways

Unit Reference Number: CBM180

Level: Two (2)

Credit Value: Two (2)

Guided Learning Hours: 20

Unit Aim: To develop Learners' understanding of different occupational and career pathways, i.e. being able to locate, organise, evaluate and present information when considering the range of opportunities available. Reflect on their own interests, skills and aspirations.

Principles of Progression

Progression step 5 - I can independently undertake a range of full and thorough enquiries, selecting the most effective approach and justifying my methodologies.

Learning Outcome (The Learner will):	Assessment Criterion (The Learner can):
1. Understand different career pathways and opportunities	1.1 Compare different career pathways
2. Be able to research and evaluate career information	2.1 Use a range of sources to research careers
	2.2 Evaluate the usefulness of information sources
3. Be able to evaluate own suitability for career pathways	3.1 Assess own strengths and development needs to identify a suitable career pathway
4. Be able to analyse skills, qualifications and progression routes	4.1 Analyse skills and qualifications required
	4.2 Explain progression opportunities within a pathway
5. Be able to present and justify a career pathway plan	5.1 Present a structured career pathway plan

Indicative Content

LO1 AC 1.1 Learners must compare at least three different career pathways, including the advantages and limitations. This could include e.g., university vs. apprenticeship, junior/entry roles in the workplace and must include consideration of progression and requirements.

LO2 AC 2.1 Learners must use at least three sources of information to research at least two different careers.

AC 2.2 Learners must evaluate the usefulness of the information sources they used including:

- Reliability
- Relevance
- Appropriateness of sources
- Types of information
- Accessibility of information.

LO3 AC 3.1 Learners must assess own strengths and development needs. This must include:

- Using feedback from others
- Reflecting on own skills/abilities
- Identifying examples of when they've displayed the strength.

LO4 AC 4.1 Learners must use their assessment in AC 3.1 to evaluate their own suitability for a chosen career pathway. Learners must analyse the skills and qualifications required of their chosen career pathway. This can include skills/qualifications they already have and those they don't have.

AC 4.2 Learners must explain the progression opportunities within the pathway (entry → development). This explanation must include what they would need to do to progress e.g., additional learning/qualifications, work experience, new skills/knowledge.

LO5 AC 5.1 Learners must collate the information about their chosen career pathway into a structured career plan. This must include their own self-assessment, actions required to progress through the pathway and key information about the pathway. Learners must justify their choices using evidence e.g., examples of when they've displayed the skills/knowledge.

Area of Learning Experience	Humanities
Statement of What Matters	Enquiry, exploration and investigation inspire curiosity about the world, its past, present and future.
Links to the Four Purposes	Purpose 1 - Ambitious, capable learners who are ready to learn throughout their lives.
Cross-curricular Skills	Literacy / Digital
Integral Skills	Creativity and innovation
Understanding of sustainability in the world of work and/or everyday work	Enables learners to consider future sustainable career options.

Relevant Cross-Cutting Themes	
Theme	Rationale
Local, national and international contexts	Enables learners to consider where future careers may take them locally, nationally and internationally and inspire their thoughts for the future.