

## 1A WEX Week 2023 FAQs

### 1. What is WEX?

It is a college requirement that every student should have first-hand experience of the workplace through work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities and expand their employment networks. Experiences of a workplace should be in addition to any part-time jobs pupils may have.

Examples of work experience include:

- Work shadowing in which a student accompanies an employee through their working week.
- Virtual WEX run by a VWEX company and advertising as work experience with an employer online.
- Extended college/subject visits to workplaces over a fixed period of time.
- Episodic work experience over a longer period of time, e.g., every Wednesday afternoon in a local Primary School.
- **WEX is NOT the your part time paid job**

### 2. Is WEX compulsory?

Yes, the 1A WEX Week is an expectation for all 1<sup>st</sup> year students and is a condition of your progression into year 2. Students who do not take part in WEX will need to prove that they have completed work experience in their own time during the summer holidays before enrolling in 2<sup>nd</sup> year studies at Collyer's.

### 3. Why do students need to do WEX?

- WEX will help you to discover the career that's right for you and realise what you do and don't like about specific job roles. It's a valuable insight into the careers you're interested in.
- WEX will enable you to develop existing skills and gain new ones (transferable and specific) that can help you be effective in future careers.
- Being able to draw to experiences you've had will help you to stand out from the competition when applying for jobs. You can reference work experience on your CV, personal statement, and LinkedIn profile to look attract potential employers and universities.
- WEX is not just relevant to students who are progressing straight into employment or an apprenticeship. Universities will expect personal statements to include enrichment activities that you have taken part in, including work experience as part of your personal development.

### 4. Does WEX have to take place in 1A WEX Week?

All lessons are suspended for the week beginning 5<sup>th</sup> June to enable 1<sup>st</sup> year students to take part in WEX without it impacting on their subject delivery. If your WEX plan fall outside of that week it will only be permitted on the following conditions:

- The WEX takes place during half term (29<sup>th</sup> May – 2<sup>nd</sup> June) the week before WEX Week.
- **Or** it is virtual 'On demand' WEX which you can take part in outside of college lesson times. Virtual 'on demand' WEX must start before or during WEX Week.

***Students will not be permitted to miss lessons during the remainder of the summer term to take part in WEX.***

## **5. What if I have exams (GCSE, A Level, BTEC) that week?**

If a student has an exam during WEX Week or the following week (as recorded on My Progress Exams tab) they will need to defer their WEX until the summer holidays. This provision is **ONLY for students on a 1A/2A mixed programme or those who are taking GCSEs** during WEX Week or the following week (5<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> June).

Students with exams will still need to complete WEX and record their plans on Unifrog placement tool with amended dates.

Completion of WEX is compulsory and a condition of students' progression into year 2.

## **6. Can I use my part time job as WEX?**

No, WEX is not your part time paid job. WEX is an opportunity for you to explore different career opportunities and expand your future employment networks. Even if your part time job is your ideal career, you should still have opportunities to explore alternative pathways and extend your experiences. WEX enables you to develop transferable employment skills which you can use in any careers path. Future employers will look for a breadth of work experiences beyond your part time work.

## **7. Can the college find me some 'in person' WEX?**

With over 1,000 1A students it is not possible for Collyer's to find 'in person' WEX for students. It is also a valuable aspect of the work experience process for students to actively seek out opportunities, as you would do when looking and applying for jobs.

The [WEX Week page](#) on our Careers SharePoint site has top tips to consider when looking for WEX, as well as guidance & templates for approaching workplaces, making applications and writing cover letters/emails. Take time to look through all of the guidance documents to support your employer searches and requests.

## **8. I don't know what I want to do or where to start looking – can someone help me?**

Our WEX Co-ordinator, Sarah Tillier, and Careers Advisor, Julie Crysell, are both available to support any student with careers and WEX related questions. They can signpost you to internal and external sources of help, as well as discuss your personal preferences and provide suggestions of suitable WEX. Sarah and Julie run a Careers Drop-in Workshop every Tuesday at 1:20 – 2:00 in G002. Please just pop in to speak to them about your WEX queries.

It is a student's responsibility to actively look for WEX as part of the work experience process (as you would do when looking and applying for jobs).

The [WEX Week page](#) on our Careers SharePoint site has top tips to consider when looking for WEX, as well as guidance & templates for approaching workplaces, making applications and writing cover letters/emails.

## **9. I can't find the specific job that I want as WEX – what should I do?**

Securing WEX in the exact role you want can be extremely difficult. Many organisations will not take students on WEX in roles that involve sensitive data handling, security concerns, confidentiality or pose a risk to students' safety and wellbeing.

Some types of job are just so rare and/or extremely popular (e.g., forensic psychologist) that WEX is virtually non-existent, however hard you try.

If you are finding that your ideal job role isn't as readily available as you'd like, it's best to think 'outside of the box' and consider other roles which could eventually lead to your desired job.

Prioritise the transferable skills you need to develop for ultimate career aim and then think about alternative jobs which would also promote those skills.

A degree of flexibility is needed when approaching your WEX planning. Be open to alternatives, think about the 'wider' picture, and talk to family and friends about transferable skills which are required for most jobs e.g., teamwork, communication, reliability, resilience.

### 10. I'm thinking of signing up for the Collyer's Internship. What does it involve?

The Collyer's Internship is a 3-day programme (6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> June) provided by [8billionideas](#).

You can access a breakdown of the 3 day [itinerary here](#).

Join live online each day to take part in group activities, listen to motivational guest speakers and complete individual reflective tasks.

Develop a wide range of transferable employability skills that future employers will value.

Challenge your creativity & problem solving whilst developing entrepreneurial skills.

### 11. How and where do I sign up for the Internship?

Book and pay (£36.00) for your place My Progress Shop - Books/Items tab.

Look for '8billionideas Collyer's Internship'.

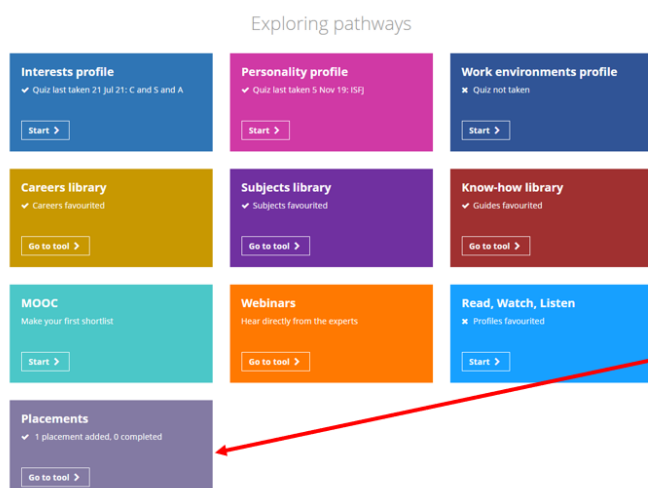
There's a promotional video to watch on the [Careers SharePoint site, WEX Week Tab](#)

### 12. I really don't know what to do about WEX. Can I leave it a bit longer before I decide?

No, your WEX plan needs to be finalised now so that Unifrog can contact the employer and your parent/carer with the relevant WEX Agreement forms. The final deadline for form completion is 5<sup>th</sup> May 2023. WEX cannot take place until the employer and your parent/carer have given their consent and agreed to the terms of the WEX. Delaying the final arrangements may result in your 'in person' WEX not being agreed by Collyer's, the employer and/or your parent/carer and may impact on your progression into year 2.

### 13. How do I record my WEX Week plans?

All details regarding your WEX Week plans must be entered correctly onto your Unifrog Placement tool. Unifrog will use the details you provide to contact the employer and your parent/carer. Carefully follow the instructions provided on the WEX Week Introductory presentation here. Students will have watched the presentation during tutorial in the week beginning 21<sup>st</sup> November. Take care when completing the form as errors will result in delays processing your WEX plans.



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- Log back into your Unifrog account.
- Click on the 'Placements' tool.