

Introduction

The site visit is the first experience the students will have as part of this Challenge. It is also the point at which they receive the briefing about the Challenge. We suggest to schools that this is delivered by one of the company's staff to give the Challenge more 'look and feel' of a construction project than of a school Challenge. Setting the tone of a project is crucial to the way students perceive it, and to placing it in their priorities. For the site visit, the students receive a 'Site Visit Worksheet' which they will need to complete during and after the site visit. This is designed to ensure they take away the key messages, which will prepare them for the Challenge they will receive at the start/end of the site visit.

There are two possible versions of the site visit – one to a sustainable housing development, the other to a sustainable construction project.

A site visit to a housing development should highlight:

- The overall site plan and mix of the dwellings (number of bedrooms, overall size, price range) being built on site
- The way the development is laid out (and the thought that goes into this)
- How critical path analysis / Gantt charts are used, without getting into the technicalities of particular techniques (we are providing a simplified version of critical path analysis for the students to use) – if you can show them / give them a real example from your own company, that is very helpful. Alternatively a generic version is available for the students to use
- How sustainable technologies are used on site and incorporated into the homes – this should include:
 - The way incorporating these techniques affects the order of construction activities
 - Sourcing of more sustainably produced materials
 - Using different construction techniques
 - Using more insulating / heat retaining / water efficient materials and devices within the homes

A site visit to a sustainable non-housing development should highlight:

- How critical path analysis / Gantt charts are used, without getting into the technicalities of particular techniques (we are providing a simplified version of critical path analysis for the students to use) – if you can show them / give them a real example from your own company, that is very helpful. Alternatively a generic version is available.
- The way the development is laid out (and the thought that goes into this)
- How sustainable technologies are used on site and incorporated into the building(s) – this should include:
 - The way incorporating these techniques affects the order of construction activities
 - Sourcing of more sustainably produced materials
 - Using different construction techniques
 - Using more insulating / heat retaining / water efficient materials and devices within the building(s)
- In discussion at the end of the visit, the following areas should be highlighted:
 - The practical issues of planning a housing development
 - The parallels with the site being visited, and the differences



As the students who will be taking part in this project will be largely unfamiliar with the world of work and construction, there are some basic, key skills messages we also need to deliver through the site visit. These are:

- Safety is a major priority for all construction activities
- Knowing about materials and techniques requires research, which takes time and requires patience
- For any construction project, the research before starting takes many months, even for the highly knowledgeable professionals involved
- Writing and reading are crucial in all areas of construction. Working safely on site is impossible without reading and writing. Many areas of construction require good writing skills, for different audiences. Gaining permission to build takes lots of paperwork. Selling houses requires different writing skills. Contracting requires even more writing skills.
- Construction projects involve people with a wide variety of skills

Before the Site Visit

- Talk to the teachers to find out about the students and what you can expect
- If possible, agree the level of support you can provide after the site visit so you and the teachers can plan your commitments
- Provide a risk assessment to the school
- Plan the visit (making sure students will get the information required above) and brief all the staff involved
- Ensure everyone working on site is aware that the visit will be taking place, and knows of any specific actions required to keep the site and the students safe

During the Site Visit

- Ensure all the safety protocols are clearly outlined to the students and teachers at the beginning of the visit, and followed throughout
- Ensure students and teachers pick up the knowledge required for the Challenge
- Please bear in mind that the students and teachers may have no prior knowledge of the construction industry so where possible try and use plain, simple language. If you do use technical or business terms please give the students a clear definition of what they mean.
- Deliver the presentation on site directly before or after the site tour*. It is your choice when you feel is the best time to deliver the presentation but you may want to speak to the teacher for their advice. Please see 'Employer PowerPoint Presentation' and 'Employer Guide to PowerPoint Slides' for full details. Students will receive a printed version of the Challenge instructions when they begin work in school.
- Invite and answer questions
- At the end of the visit, follow up the 'Student Site Visit Worksheet' activity about the wide variety of careers are available in the construction industry which require a range of different skills

*If this is not possible, please agree with the teachers how you or they will achieve this – as stated above, having the Challenge set outside school enriches the experience for the students enormously.

Following the site visit

- Provide the agreed support to the school
- Evaluate the visit with the teachers, and explore other ways you can work together
- Consider repeating with the same / another school

