

WorldSkills UK Case Study template

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If you are taking part in a filmed case study, we will also ask you to sign a consent form.

	For you to complete	Assistance
Title of the Case Study	Integrating Virtual Reality to Elevate Global Skills and Standards in Education	<i>Guide- 64 characters max (including spaces)</i>
Your name, job title, organisation	Dr Blanka Hilton, Lecturer in Applied Bioscience (level 4-7), Programme Lead for Level 7 Research Scientist / MSc in Applied Drug Discovery and Development	<i>eg Joe Bloggs, Head of Marketing at Bloggs land</i>
Date/time to be published	TBC- All International Exchange Visit Case Studies will be reviewed	<i>eg Tuesday 26 September at noon</i>
Text	Involvement with WorldSkills UK and WorldSkills France As a relatively new member of WorldSkills UK, I was fortunate to participate in an international exchange with WorldSkills France in Lyon. This exchange provided a unique opportunity to engage with educational leaders from both countries and gain insight into how technical skills are fostered globally. The WorldSkills international competition, which I was able to observe over two days, was an eye-opening experience. Often called the "Olympics of Skills," the event featured 64 different skills, ranging from traditional trades to emerging technologies. The chance to observe these skills being demonstrated at an elite level, as well as participate in 51 "Try-a-Skill" stations, provided a comprehensive view of the global standards for technical expertise. A key insight from this experience was the importance of international benchmarking in technical education. The way WorldSkills France approached skills development closely mirrored the framework we use in apprenticeship programs. Each skill had clear assessment criteria and emphasized not only technical proficiency but also key behaviours such as adaptability, problem-solving, and self-management. This reinforced my belief that technical education needs to prepare students not just for national standards, but for a global workforce. Integrating lessons from WorldSkills France could significantly elevate our	<i>Guide 200 -1000 words. We encourage the use of sub headings.</i>

	approach to teaching and assessment in the UK, particularly by promoting greater collaboration between institutions. Gaining Insight and Learning from WorldSkills France The exchange with WorldSkills France provided a wealth of new ideas for improving technical education and training. Observing the international competition highlighted the importance of adaptability and innovation, particularly in response to the fast-paced developments in technology and artificial intelligence (AI). One major takeaway for me was the value of integrating cutting-edge technologies, such as virtual reality (VR), into both teaching and assessment and sharing my innovative practise with WorldSkills France. WorldSkills France demonstrated how flexibility and responsiveness can be embedded into training programs, and I realised that these qualities are increasingly critical for students in today's workforce. As the global workplace becomes more technologically driven, the ability to adapt to new tools and environments will be crucial for success. For example, observing how technical skills were tested at the competition made me reflect on our own science apprenticeship program. We have already started integrating VR into our training, and this exchange validated our efforts. Moving forward, we aim to expand VR usage to include new types of assessments, helping students gain hands-on experience in simulated environments that mirror the rapidly changing nature of real-world workplaces. WorldSkills France also placed a strong emphasis on sustainability, both in terms of the technologies used and the approaches to training. This focus on sustainability aligned closely with our own goals at the University of Kent, particularly in relation to offer more flexible approaches in pedagogy and laboratory training. Both international exchange and competitions highlighted the need of developing virtual and remote learning technologies, that could play a role in delivering high-quality training without the need for physical resources, which is an area I am eager to explore further. Career and Professional Development My participation in the WorldSkills UK and WorldSkills France exchange has had a significant impact on my professional development. The exposure to global standards of technical skills provided a fresh perspective on how we can innovate our teaching methods, particularly by integrating technologies like VR into the curriculum. Observing the skill 52: chemical laboratory technology competition, where the UK was represented, was especially inspiring.	
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	The competition highlighted how important it is to develop not just technical skills, but also adaptability and organizational abilities, all of which are vital for success in the scientific field. This experience has encouraged me to look for ways to expand the training opportunities available to our apprentices at the University of Kent. For instance, I plan to develop a VR-based laboratory safety and training program in collaboration with Dr Stephen Hilton, offering apprentices the flexibility to simulate laboratory environments without the need for physical space. This approach mirrors the adaptability and organizational skills I witnessed during the competition in Lyon and can prepare our students for the challenges they will face in global scientific careers. Additionally, this exchange opened my eyes to the potential of integrating international collaborations into our apprenticeship programs. Partnering with institutions like WorldSkills France could provide our students with invaluable exposure to different approaches to skills development, making them more adaptable and well-rounded professionals. It's an exciting prospect that could strengthen both our curriculum and our students' employability. Impact on Teaching and Training My involvement with WorldSkills UK and the insights gained from WorldSkills France have already led to improvements in our teaching and training programs. The competition showcased how a blend of technical knowledge, soft skills, and behavioural competencies is essential for success in today's global job market. This has prompted us to reevaluate how we assess our apprentices, moving beyond traditional methods to incorporate more dynamic, real-world scenarios. One major change has been the integration of VR into our science apprenticeships. Inspired by the technological innovation I observed in Lyon, we are currently developing VR simulations for key laboratory techniques, such as high-performance liquid chromatography (HPLC). These simulations will allow students to practice their skills in a virtual setting, reducing the environmental impact of traditional laboratory training while also making the learning experience more engaging and interactive. Additionally, WorldSkills France's emphasis on adaptability has influenced how we design our training programs. We are now focusing more on preparing our students for the unexpected, helping them build the resilience and problem-solving skills necessary to thrive in an evolving	
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workplace. This includes introducing more real-time assessments and challenges that require students to think on their feet, mirroring the high-pressure environment of international competitions.

Future Integration with WorldSkills France

Looking ahead, the collaboration between WorldSkills UK and WorldSkills France presents numerous opportunities for further integration. One of the most exciting possibilities is the potential for cross-border exchanges and partnerships that could benefit both our staff and students. By working together, we can share best practices, develop joint training programs, and even create international competitions or challenges that allow students from both countries to showcase their skills.

One area of particular interest is the development of VR-based training modules that can be accessed internationally. By collaborating with WorldSkills France, we can create shared resources that provide students with access to high-quality, flexible training solutions, regardless of their physical location. This would not only enhance the accessibility of technical education but also reduce the environmental impact associated with traditional training methods.

Additionally, we could explore the possibility of sending our students to participate in international competitions hosted by WorldSkills. This would provide them with valuable experience, exposing them to different training environments and giving them the chance to benchmark their skills against global standards. It would also strengthen the international dimension of our apprenticeship programs, making our graduates more competitive in the global job market.

Sustainable Impact of Participation

The sustainable impact of my involvement with WorldSkills UK and France will be long-lasting. By integrating the lessons learned during the exchange into our teaching and training programs, we are creating a more flexible, innovative, and accessible learning environment for our students. The use of VR and other emerging technologies will allow us to reduce the environmental impact of traditional training methods while also providing students with the skills they need to succeed in a rapidly changing world.

Setting up a phone call/Teams call	Following your initial submission, where it would be useful, we can collect content for your case study talking to you over a phone or Teams call.	
Social media tag		<i>Eg if you're willing to help us share your case study please include your social media tag</i>
Imagery/Videos	Link to the video has been provided via separate e-mail. Please submit suitable images/video clips of yourself/organisation. It would be helpful if the images/videos relate to the case study. Please note that we may create visuals to accompany the text using the images/videos you provide.	

Please note that WorldSkills UK have editorial oversight of our website so may edit your case study before publishing.

Case Study criteria:

- We will allow for three edits of the case study
- the case study must be topical

- the case study must be relevant/connected to us and linked to communications objectives
- the case study cannot reveal any internal/sensitive information.

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