

WORK EXPERIENCE

EMPLOYER INFORMATION

Work experience enables students to gain important insights into their career interests and values; and can help them with their future decision making. With fewer students experiencing the world of work through part-time jobs, work experience gives students the opportunity to understand the work environment, develop and practice employability skills and prepare for employment or future training, in a safe and supported way.

On work experience a student spends time on employer's premises and carries out set tasks, as would an employee, with an emphasis on the learning aspects. Students can go on work experience from the beginning of year 10, when students are aged 14/15 years old.

The aim of work experience is to give students an insight into the world of work, and to help them develop career ideas and plans for the future.

TASKS

Students can carry out most tasks on work experience, with suitable training, instruction and supervision and managed risk. The placement will be more fruitful for all if they are doing something useful. High-quality placements are marked by the inclusion of a range of work-related processes (e.g. induction, company briefing, assignment of mentor) and activities for example a chance to observe or speak to different employees about their roles, customer interaction, developing a specific project.

Give guidance about time allowed for tasks and when the student should ask for help. Give them regular feedback, not just at the end of the placement.

The emphasis during the placement should be on "doing" rather than watching, and the more varied the work the better. Discussing what skills, the student already has when they make contact or at interview, will give you a better idea of what they are already capable of.

PROCESS

The process will start with either the school or student contacting you as an employer to ask for a placement. Often this includes completing a form with contact details, placement details (tasks, hours, dress etc), insurance details and signing an employer agreement.

Employers will receive Employer Information from school. This outlines employer responsibilities for health & safety, insurance and safeguarding and general information about work experience you as an employer should read.

Once a student is assigned to a placement, the school will need to assess each employer has the appropriate insurance and health & safety standards in place. This will most likely be by telephone, or, could be a visit where an employer is new to work experience and is a high-risk environment. Once an employer has been assessed, it is unlikely another check will be needed, although schools may request up to date insurance details each year.

Employers will receive a confirmation communication nearer to the placement date which will include student details, such as in case of emergency contact information and health/behavioural information the employer should use for risk assessment.

Employers should share information about risks assessment directly with parents.

The student should make contact before the placement. This may be a telephone call or an informal/formal interview. This contact is useful to clarify details and understand the student's strengths to organise a high quality placement.

On day 1 of the placement the student should be given an induction. Students may have a logbook to complete so you can ask at induction if this is the case.

During the placement the school will be in contact to check the student has arrived and all is well. A school staff member may also visit.

Last day of the placement the student should have a feedback session. You may also have an evaluation form to complete. If the student has been very good you may offer to be a referee for future training/job applications.

Following the placement, you may wish to share the success of work experience in newsletters or on your website. Please remember to get student consent for any photos etc.

The school should be in contact after the placement to thank you. Often schools will also ask employers if they are happy to participate the following year at this time

HEALTH, SAFETY & INSURANCE

Key Points

It's most likely you will already have everything you need in place for health & safety and insurance to accommodate a work experience student.

The key points are:

- you must meet current legal standards for health & safety at work
- you as the employer have primary responsibility for the health and safety of the student on placement and should be managing any significant risks
- Employer Liability Insurance must be in place
- you will be given student medical information to be considered for risks assessments
- you must share risk assessment information directly with parents

Insurance -Employer Liability Insurance:

Under health and safety law, work experience students are your employees. You treat them no differently to other young people you employ. Your existing employers' liability insurance (ELI) policy will cover work placements provided your insurer is a member of the Association of British Insurers, so there is no need for you to obtain any additional employer's liability insurance if you take on work experience students.

If you are a family business or sole trader, you may not have ELI. If a family business takes on an employee who is not closely related to the employer, or if a sole trader takes on an employee, then there is a requirement to have ELI in place for work experience.

Risk assessment:

If you already employ young people or have taken work experience students before, simply use your existing arrangements for risk assessments and management of risks to young people.

If you do not currently employ a young person, have not done so in the last few years, or are taking on a work experience student for the first time, review/update your risk assessment before the student starts.

The school will provide you with student details. If a new student is of a broadly similar level of maturity and understanding, and, has no specific or additional needs, then repeating your assessment of the risks is unnecessary and your current risk assessment for young people

will apply. In all cases, you must remember to take account of what you are told of the student's physical and psychological capacity and of any specific needs, when reviewing your assessment.

An employer should be aware of the substances a young person might come into contact within their business and will need to consider exposure levels and ensure legal limits are met through risk assessment

Remember, you need to explain to parents/carers of students what the significant risks are and what has been done to control them. This can be done in whatever way is simplest and most suitable, including verbally.

For more information you can visit the Health and safety executive website: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/placeprovide.htm>

Induction, instruction, supervision:

A simple way to explain the risks to young people and how they are controlled is through an **induction**. This is an opportunity for their named supervisor to go through risk assessment and other general health and safety information, including fire safety, first aid procedures and welfare facilities. It's a good opportunity to check that the student understands what they have been told; to assess a young person's physical capability for the tasks you have planned; and let them know how to raise health and safety concerns.

The induction can also inform students of other policies you may have around more general issues such as mobile phone use or confidentiality issues. Personal protective equipment can also be given to the student at induction.

Instruction is a key element of work experience as students are likely to be new to the role. Students should receive clear instruction and should be supervised by a competent named person, taking account of the age and lack of knowledge and experience of the student. The student should not operate machinery/carry out tasks unless adequate instruction and competent **supervision** can be provided, for it to be used/done safely.

Supervisors will be asked by schools to give feedback on the student at the end of the experience, but if you have any concerns about the student's safety or behaviour, you must contact the school immediately.

GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS

Employers will be given personal and sensitive student data. It is important employers follow GDPR guidelines when receiving, storing and managing student data. Schools will send the minimum information required by employers for contacting parents in case of emergency and medical information for health & safety purposes only.

This data must be held securely and only shared with/made accessible to specific employees who need to know it for supervision. Employers will need to keep a log of students who have been on placement for insurance purposes and will need to keep any accident/incident reports; but you may consider deleting any additional data at the end of the placement. Employers should delete all student data after 6 years.

HOURS OF WORK

Students are treated as young workers when on work experience, so it is expected that:

- There is a maximum of an 8-hour day (not including breaks/travel)
- Students should not usually work before 7am or after 7pm
- Students are entitled to a rest break (of at least 30 mins) after 4.5 hours worked
- Students should have a rest period of not less than 12 consecutive hours in each 24-hour period

We suggest that working hours are clearly defined and communicated to the student in advance of the placement. Students are advised to contact employers prior to placement to confirm working times.

PAYMENT

Work experience is part of the school curriculum and employers should make no payment for work to students, however, employers may offer expenses for lunch &/or travel at their discretion.

LUNCH ARRANGEMENTS

Please ensure students know when their lunch break is, and the length of time they are allocated. We encourage employers to allow students to act as an employee at lunchtime and leave site where appropriate.

STUDENT ABSENCE

Parents are instructed to notify employers within 30 mins of usual start time if a student is to be absent. If a student fails to appear after this time, please contact the school immediately.

REPORTING OF INCIDENTS/ACCIDENTS

Employers must contact the school/college contact immediately if a student is involved in an incident, and also the student's emergency contact if involved in an accident. Accidents must also be recorded in line with HSE guidance and a school accident report form completed.

CONFIDENTIALITY

It should be made clear to students that they must hold in confidence any information about the employing organisation that they may obtain during work experience and such information may not be disclosed without your permission as the employer.

COMPLAINTS & ISSUES

If you have any concerns or complaints, please contact Claire Christiansen – Careers Lead on 01235 520141 or c.christiansen@larkmead.oxon.sch.uk

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION

For adults working with young people, particularly those still of compulsory school age, it is important to be aware of potentially difficult situations. By following the simple guidance outlined below, it should be possible to ensure that the placement is a secure and productive environment for both the provider and the student.

Touch

There may be occasions when you need to touch a young person (for example, when guiding them in carrying out a technical operation) but these should be kept to a minimum Behaviour

While it is important to reassure a young person, who may be nervous in a new placement and reliant on your guidance, you should avoid being over-familiar. Never permit 'horseplay' which may cause embarrassment or fear.

Environment

Where possible avoid being on your own in an isolated or closed environment with a young person.

Travel

Ensure that there is a known destination and check-in times with a third party in situations where a young person will be travelling alone with an adult during the placement. It is also a good idea to make available a mobile phone or equivalent in such situations.

Mentor

Those placed immediately in charge of young people should be competent in their work roles, mature in their attitudes and yet, at the same time, be at ease with them.

Disclosure

Occasionally young people may disclose confidential information to a work colleague that gives rise to concern for their physical or emotional safety. In such situations you should speak to your line manager and share your concern with an appropriate representative of the education provider (usually this will be the school's Work Experience Coordinator or head teacher) or the Central Work Experience Organiser.

Disqualification

You are reminded that you are required under law to protect children from harm and that any employees are required, under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, to declare that they are disqualified from working with children.

Expectations of employers offering work experience placements

- Employers should recognise that because of their regular contact with young people, all adults in the organisation have an individual and collective responsibility to ensure the health, safety and welfare of children and young people always.
- If employers are aware of any employees who have been disqualified from working with children, they **MUST** declare this to the school.
- Employers should establish a safe environment in which young people can develop, thrive and reach their potential.
- All staff supervising students are expected to provide an equal and professional service that is non-judgemental and without favour or bias, regardless of the pupils age, culture, race, caste, disability, gender or sexuality, in line with the company's equal opportunities procedures.
- Supervisory staff should be aware that as they build good relationships with the students, that the young people may talk about themselves. If a student tells a supervisor anything that is of a delicate, sensitive or worrying nature, particularly something that leads to the belief that the child is or may be suffering from any form of abuse, the Manager should be informed, and the school should be contacted immediately.
- If a young person appears to have a problem but will not discuss it, supervisors should refer to their manager who may, in turn, discuss the issue with the schools contact person.
- Employers should seek advice in confidence from the school about any problems with which they feel uncomfortable.
- Supervisory staff should not interview individual students on a one-to-one basis in an enclosed office that is out of eyesight or earshot of other adults.
- When instructing students on a one-to-one basis, supervisory staff should be aware of the need to consider carefully their proximity to these young people and should not stand too close to, nor touch, them.
- Employees should not allow themselves to be placed in any situation that may be misconstrued or leave them open to possible misinterpretation.
- In the event of an accident to a student, the company's First Aid procedures should be followed and only a qualified First Aider should attend to the young person. The school should also be informed. Written records of all accidents and incidents should be kept.