

## EMPLOYERS' GUIDE TO WORK EXPERIENCE

The Health and Safety Executive provide clear guidance for employers about students on work experience you can download a FREE pdf here  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg364.htm>

### ? WHAT IS WORK EXPERIENCE?

Work experience is primarily an educational activity, which enables students to make the transition from school to employment. By providing them with the opportunity to become familiar with a genuine working situation they gain an insight into the world of work and experience its disciplines and relationships.

### ? IS WORK EXPERIENCE OF BENEFIT TO EMPLOYERS?

Participation in work experience offers development opportunities to your staff. Acting as a mentor, role model or supervisor will broaden their experience of people outside the organisation. In addition, it enables the employer to develop recruitment channels through links with education, and raises the profile of the organisation within the local community.

### ? HOW DO STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM WORK EXPERIENCE?

Following a period of work experience it is hoped that students may approach their own entry to employment with more confidence and understanding. Students develop realistic, positive and challenging aspirations. They quickly learn the relevance and significance in the workplace of subject content and skills being taught at school. Additionally, they grow in awareness of economic and industrial society; experience the skills of working with adults and appreciate the importance of teamwork, individuality and appropriate workplace behaviour.

### ? HOW LONG IS A WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME?

Most students will spend one or two weeks with an employer, though on occasions, employers may assist with a placement for 1 or 2 days over a longer period of time, perhaps even a school term or more.

### ? WHEN CAN STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN WORK EXPERIENCE?

Students can participate in Work Experience from Year 10 onwards.

### ? WHAT TYPE OF WORK CAN STUDENTS DO?

Students clearly cannot perform tasks that require months or years of training. However, it is important that they are involved in real tasks accompanied by real responsibility, with practical activities. In all cases the emphasis should be on participation rather than observation.

In general, students are able to undertake any work that they would be able to had they left school. If there is any doubt about the suitability of an occupation, reference should be made to either the school or the Health and Safety Executive ([www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)) or RoSPA ([www.rospace.com](http://www.rospace.com)) where information can be found. However, you must take into consideration the student's physical and psychological capacity and of any particular needs, for example due to any health conditions, special educational needs and disabilities.

### ? HOW MUCH ARE STUDENTS PAID WHILST ON WORK EXPERIENCE?

Students must not be paid whilst on Work Experience, as it is an educational experience and payment may invalidate insurance arrangements. However, employers may wish to make a contribution to expenses; e.g. fares and meals.

### ? WHAT HOURS CAN A STUDENT WORK WHILST ON WORK EXPERIENCE?

Students can work the same hours as other young employees for the duration of their placement. The student's hours should not exceed 40 in any one-week, with 2 days free. Weekend working is permitted but only with the student's / parents / carers agreement, and should not include a Saturday and Sunday in the same week. The hours should comply with the Working Time Regulations ([www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) for more information).

### ? ARE THERE PARTICULAR HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS?

In the workplace, the primary duty relating to the **Health & Safety at Work Act (1974)** rests with the employer. The **Health & Safety (Training for Employment) Regulations 1990** extended the meaning of the term '**employee**' to include students on Work Experience. Therefore, it is the duty of students to take reasonable care for their Health & Safety and anyone else who may be affected by their actions or omissions.

In addition, the **Health & Safety (Young Persons) Regulations 1999** require the employer to undertake a risk assessment before Students start the placement. The employer should take account of the students' inexperience and lack of awareness of the hazards associated with the workplace and ensures that measures are in place and implemented to safeguard them. This risk assessment will be made available to school / student / parent / guardian.

If you are not already aware of the

Whilst on placement, it is essential that there should be an **Induction** to the workplace. This should include an explanation of the safety precautions observed in the particular industry, including procedures relating to accidents, first aid, fire and emergencies, and the reasons for them.

The students will be under the supervision and care of individual employees, who will need to know the purpose of Work Experience and to be aware of their responsibilities towards the students. Students must not be left unsupervised at any point during the placement.

### ? WHAT INSURANCE COVER IS REQUIRED?

There is a legal requirement for employers to have **Employers Liability Insurance** which must cover students on Work Experience, though there are some exemptions to this. Information can be found on [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk) . Please note that without Employers' Liability (where it's required by law) we cannot authorise the placement, public liability is not sufficient.

Employers should notify their insurance company that a student will be participating in Work Experience during a given period. If the placement cannot be authorised then the placement will be withdrawn, this is an inconvenience for everyone involved. It is recommended that employers also hold Public Liability Insurance.

## STUDENT WELFARE

As well as looking after the health and safety of the young people who will be attending work experience with you, may we also ask you keep an eye on their welfare. These guidelines are not only to protect the young person, but also you and your team. There are many facets, here are some of the considerations:

### USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA WHILE ON PLACEMENT

Students have been informed about the appropriate and proportionate use of social media from their personal accounts in relation to their placement, both while they are on placement and also once the placement has finished. Individual school's IT and Social Media policies cover student's use of equipment and various social media platforms. Students should ensure that they follow the guidelines set. Employers who have concerns relating to a student's use of social media while on placement should contact the school directly.

**Environment:** Where possible, avoid being on your own with the young person, especially in an enclosed or isolated place. Never be in a room with the door locked.

**Travel:** Be cautious of travelling alone with a young person, and ensure that there is a known destination and check-in times etc. It is a good idea to carry a mobile phone in such situations. Ensure also that the method of transport is safe.

**Behaviour:** Be friendly with a young person as they will seek guidance and reassurance from you. However, avoid being over-friendly or entering into horseplay with them. Bad language or exposure to situations, adult material or conversations of an adult theme should be avoided.

**Touch:** Whilst there may be times when you need to touch a young person to show them how to do a particular task, keep these to a minimum. Even when a young person is distressed, avoid direct contact with them if possible.

**Mentors:** Those placed in charge of a young person should be competent in their role and have some insight into dealing with young people. Mentors should be able to 'look out' for the young people in their charge and create a protective environment amongst their colleagues by example.

**Disclosure:** Sometimes, young people feel more comfortable chatting about their concerns to someone neutral rather than to their school or family. In such disclosures, please seek guidance from your line manager and/or a representative from education. Do not dismiss such insights, as the young person feels they have your confidence. It is not your responsibility to investigate the situation further but you must ensure that this information is passed on to the school via your line manager.

**Disqualification:** Remember you are required by law (the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000) to protect children from harm. It is an offence for anyone barred from working with children to do so; any employees who are barred from working with children must declare this to their employer before the work experience placement begins. Be prepared for any uncomfortable scenarios this may pose to an employee in disclosing to their employer. Following a review of the situation, the company will make a decision as to whether or not the placement should go ahead, and, if so, with what additional safeguards may be required.

**Clothing/ personal presentation :** Some young people may dress in a manner that you may deem unsuitable for work. It is good practice to communicate your expectations to them prior to the work experience commencing to avoid any embarrassment on either side.

## Safeguarding

Government statutory guidance on safeguarding in relation to work experience placements was introduced in April 2014 in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'. Schools organising work experience placements are responsible for ensuring that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm. If parents/carers should have concerns or wish to raise a query they should do so with the named **Designated Safeguarding Lead for the school**.

Students will also be given clear advice and a point of contact in the school in case of any problems.

If there is a concern or an allegation made about a person who works with children and young people then Norfolk County Council's Children's Services LADO ( Local Authority Designated Officer) must be contacted **immediately** on 01603 223473.

## Finally .....

Schools must provide each pupil and the employer with emergency contact details for a member of school staff who can be contacted should an incident occur or if concerns arise.

Your contact is:

Name:	Bruce Battrick
School:	Lynn Grove Academy
Telephone number:	01493 661406