

WORCESTER SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

WORK EXPERIENCE POLICY

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WORK EXPERIENCE POLICY

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Introduction

Worcester Sixth Form College is committed to ensuring that all of our students have opportunities to access high quality, relevant and inspirational careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG). The Gatsby Benchmarks for Good Career Guidance are used as a framework to guide all CEIAG activity and underpin our work for our students. Work experience is an integral part of our students' entitlement to CEIAG and this clearly supports Gatsby Benchmark 6, "Experiences of Workplaces" which states:

'Every pupil should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities and expand their networks.'

Work experience gives young people vital insights into the world of work, encourages them to aspire to great things, and helps them to prepare for their future. It bridges the gap between school, college and work and helps young people make decisions about their future and develop new and existing skills.

The opportunity to participate in work experience is provided to all students. Students are encouraged to find placements linked to career paths that suit their interests, skills and strengths with the absence of stereotypes, which are actively challenged. The Health and Early Years Education department manage all Industry Placements in relation to Applied and T Level Health and Education courses and have a clear process to meet the requirements for funding and achieve positive outcomes for students. This policy can be found in Appendix 2 on p.11.

Students with Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND), or any other additional needs, will be supported appropriately through liaison with parents and relevant staff, ie the Learning Support Manager and the placement provider.

Additionally, all students have access to our annual Careers Fair, providing the opportunity for them to meet employers and employees from a wide variety of sectors.

Our aims

Work experience should give students the opportunity to:

- Enhance students' knowledge of the world of work
- Develop students' employability skills
- Provide an insight into the skills, qualities and attitudes required by particular sectors and employers
- Provide opportunities for personal and social development – including self-confidence, time-management, personal organisation and resilience
- Help prepare students for the world of work
- Enable students to make cross-curricular links
- Support the College's CEIAG provision
- Provide students with an opportunity for self-evaluation.

Provision

It is our intention for the majority of the students at Worcester Sixth Form College to complete a period of work experience by the end of Year 2. To help enable placements to take place, a dedicated week (Impact Week) will be allocated within the College calendar during each academic year.

Organisation of work experience

With guidance and support from College staff, all students are encouraged to proactively search and apply for their own placements. Using our network of employers, Worcester Sixth Form College will maintain a database of placement opportunities (Unifrog) to students, who may or may not choose to apply for them. Once suitable placements have been found, we work with students to prepare for preplacement interviews if these are requested by the employer. Other students may need more support, if this is the case then they can make an appointment with one of our Work Experience Officers who will support the student throughout the whole process.

The College believes the above arrangements benefit students by providing them with a realistic experience of applying for work and a chance to assess the suitability of a placement prior to starting. The process empowers students to make their own decisions about which offer to select, encouraging proactivity and independence. It also aids development of communication skills through encouraging formal, professional communication with employers – all vital skills for later life.

Worcester Sixth Form College reserves the right to withdraw students prior to or during a placement if there are significant concerns relating to the suitability of the placement.

Management and co-ordination

Students, employers and parent(s)/carer(s) will each complete relevant section on the Unifrog platform to ensure placements are secured and compliant. This will be overseen by the Work Experience Officers who will ensure Compliance by all parties.

The Unifrog placement tool enables important information to be obtained and necessary checks to be completed prior to a placement taking place. This includes, assessing that appropriate insurance is in place, risk assessments have been carried out and that all parties have agreed to the conditions and aims of the experience.

If a placement is deemed to be of higher risk or the student classed as vulnerable, then additional health and safety checks may be required and completed on a case by case basis.

The Unifrog forms needs to be completed at least six weeks prior to the start of the placement.

The process for work experience

An overview of the College's desired work experience process, leading up to the placement is outlined below.

- a) Students will be informed during their first few weeks of College of the expectation of them to participate in work experience during Impact Week or during the College holidays.
- b) Work Experience Officers will deliver a presentation during Year 1 Impact sessions outlining the importance of work experience and its benefits. This session will also be used to explain about health and safety in the workplace and confirms the procedure for raising any health and safety, as well as safeguarding, concerns. An in-person evening for parents/carers will be held in the Autumn Term to explain the Work Experience process.
- c) Students discuss intended future destinations with their tutor. Students approach employers and request work experience opportunity.
- d) Work Experience Officers will support students who need assistance finding suitable placements.
- e) When the placement has been confirmed the student completes the 'Student Initial Form' on the Unifrog Placement tool. The employer is then contacted and they have to complete the 'Employer Initial Form'. Once this is completed the parents or carers give their consent of the proposed placement. Finally, the Work Experience Officer gives permission for the placement to go ahead. This entire process is followed on Unifrog.
- f) Where a student has special educational needs, a disability, a safeguarding concern, an illness or any other condition that might affect his/her wellbeing on work experience, the student will inform the employer of this condition through Unifrog. The Work Experience Officer will inform the Safeguarding Officer if the student on placement has any of these characteristics and will then contact the employer if necessary. In each case, permission to disclose this information to the employer will be sought from the parents/carers of the student concerned and the Safeguarding Officer.

Please note that whilst the above provides an illustration of our desired work experience process, the College reserves the right to operate flexibly and deviate from this process, as appropriate, to ensure we do everything we can to ensure high quality work placements take place for all students.

During and post-placement processes:

- Any problems that arise during the placement on the part of either the student or the provider should immediately be referred to the Work Experience Officers or the Senior Lead for Progression.
- If students are ill during their placement they are required to ring both the College and the employer to notify them of their absence.
- The employer is expected to contact the College if the student does not turn up for their placement.
- Employers will be asked to complete an end of placement review on Unifrog that enables both constructive feedback to be given to students.
- Students will be expected to complete the Student Reflection Form on Unifrog to evaluate the placement and reflect on the benefits of the opportunity.

Expectations of students

- To explore and secure their own good quality placements
- Students need to obtain relevant details prior to starting their placement, i.e. dress code, working hours, break/lunch time arrangements and main point of contact.
- Students are expected to behave at all times in a way that reflects the College's high expectations
- Students need to follow directions from the employer
- Students have a legal responsibility to take care of themselves and others whilst on work experience placements as they are considered employees of the placement provider
- Students must not interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interest of health and safety, and must follow instructions relating to health and safety guidance
- Students need to inform the College and employer if they feel ill or become ill or if they will not be attending their placement for any reason, as they would if they were employed and as a matter of courtesy.
- Students need to inform the employer (and the College if necessary) if they have any concerns regarding their placement. If, for whatever reason, they feel unable to talk to the employer directly they must advise College staff (via parents if necessary) as soon as possible.
- Students need to complete the relevant sections on the Unifrog placement tool.
- Students should email the employer to thank them for the opportunity.

Expectations of parents/carers

- Travel to and from the placement is the responsibility of the parent/carer.
- Parental consent on Unifrog must be obtained before any student undertakes any work experience.

Expectations of the employer providing work experience placements

- Employers have a legal duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the student and any others who may be affected by the work experience placement. Students are considered to be employees whilst on work experience placements.
- Employers must be legally compliant and have suitable insurance in place. Their existing employers' liability insurance policy will cover work placements provided the insurer is a member of the Association of British Insurers, or Lloyds, so there is no need to obtain any additional employer's liability insurance if they take on work experience students.
- The employer must ensure that students on work experience are supervised by a competent person, and that they receive all necessary information and training, specifically in relation to health and safety. H&S induction on the first day may include a tour of the premises, setting of objectives and confirming the itinerary, discussing terms of engagement, duties, responsibilities, dress code, conduct, health and safety procedures, points of contact, emergency procedure for fire and first aid, reporting requirements, break and lunch arrangements, hours of work etc.
- Further guidance around assessing the risks involved in offering work experience placements to students can be found in Appendix 1: Assessing the risk (placement providers/employers)

- The supervisor is responsible for informing the College if the student fails to attend or leaves the placement early.
- Whilst on work experience students can start work no earlier than 7am and finish no later than 10pm, working no more than 8 hours in a day. They are not permitted to work more than 40 hours a week five days out of every seven days. Young people are entitled to a rest break of 30 minutes if their working time is more than 4.5 hours.

Work Experience Safeguarding Guidance and Procedure

During the work experience, the employer acts in a mentor capacity and therefore needs to act as an appropriate positive role model with due regard for appropriate conduct with students. It is therefore important to:

- act as an appropriate role model;
- value the student's contributions and opinions;
- encourage them to reach their desired goal;
- listen to the student and discuss relevant topics.

It is also important that work experience supervisors are not put in a vulnerable position, so it is suggested that where possible liaison with students should:

- take place in an open space with other people present where possible;
- be within appropriate working hours;
- consider if questions asked about personal or family life are of an appropriate nature.

Guidance from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and the Department for Education in the document ["Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory guidance for Colleges and colleges"](#) indicates:

- Colleges are not able to request that an employer obtains an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information for staff supervising children aged 16 to 17 on work experience.
- Colleges organising work experience placements should ensure that the placement provider has policies and procedures in place to protect children from harm
- Children's barred list checks via the DBS might be required on some people who supervise a child under the age of 16 on a work experience placement.
- The College should consider the specific circumstances of the work experience.
- Consideration must be given in particular to the nature of the supervision and the frequency of the activity being supervised, to determine what, if any, checks are necessary.

These considerations would include whether the person providing the teaching/training/instruction/supervision to the child on work experience will be:

- unsupervised themselves; and
- providing the teaching/training/instruction frequently (more than three days in a 30 day period, or overnight).
- If the person working with the child is unsupervised and the same person is in frequent contact with the child, the work is likely to be regulated activity relating to children. If so, the College could ask the employer providing the work experience to ensure that the person providing the instruction or training is not a barred person.
- If the activity undertaken by the child on work experience takes place in a 'specified place', such as a College or sixth form college, and gives the opportunity for contact with

children, this may itself be considered to be regulated activity relating to children. In these cases, and where the child doing the work experience is 16 years of age or over, the work experience provider e.g. College or sixth form college should consider whether a DBS enhanced check should be requested for the child in question.

In order to minimise risk, students working off-site with children/vulnerable groups must be supervised at all times. It is at the employer's discretion whether they require students have a DBS check or not, but when requested by an employer, a character reference and/or a DBS check for a student will be provided or alternative arrangements made.

Disclosure from a student

If you have concerns about the protection of a young person you are working with (for example something the student has said) then immediately contact the College and speak to either the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Graham Williams or the Safeguarding Officer, Heather Anderson-Stevens. The College telephone number is 01905 362600.

<https://www.wsfc.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Safeguarding-Policy-2024-25-1.pdf>

Appendix 1: Assessing the risks - guidance for placement providers/employers

1. Simply use your existing arrangements for assessments and management of risks to young people.
2. If you have fewer than five employees you are not required to have a written risk assessment but it is considered best practice to provide one.
3. Avoid repeating your assessment of the risks if a new student is of a broadly similar level of maturity and understanding, and has no particular or additional needs
4. 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, or one with particular needs, review your risk assessment before they start.
5. Discuss the placement in advance with the College and take account of what they and the parents or carers tell you about the student's physical and psychological capacity and of any particular needs, for example due to any health conditions or learning difficulties.
6. Keep any additional work in proportion to the environment:
 - for placements in low-risk environments, such as offices or shops, with everyday risks that will mostly be familiar to the student, your existing arrangements for other employees should suffice
 - for environments with risks less familiar to the student (eg in light assembly or packing facilities), you will need to make arrangements to manage the risks. This will need to include induction, supervision, site familiarisation, and any protective equipment needed
 - for a placement in a higher-risk environment such as construction, agriculture and manufacturing you will need to:
 - a. consider what work the student will be doing or observing, the risks involved and how these are managed
 - b. satisfy yourself that the instruction, training and supervisory arrangements have been properly thought through and that they work in practice
7. You may, in particular for higher-risk environments, need to consider specific factors that must be managed for young people, including exposure to radiation, noise and vibration, toxic substances, or extreme temperatures. Where these specific factors exist in your workplace, you should already have control measures in place. This will also apply to legally required age limits on the use of some equipment and machinery (eg forklift trucks and some woodworking machinery). Consider whether you need to do anything further to control the risks to young people.
8. Explain to parents/carers of children what the significant risks are and what has been done to control them. This can be done in whatever way is simplest and suitable, including verbally, and is very often done via the College
9. When you induct students, explain the risks and how they are controlled, checking that they understand what they have been told.
10. Check that students know how to raise health and safety concerns.

Appendix 2: Industry Placement Policy- Health and Early Years Education

1. Introduction

Worcester Sixth Form College aims to prepare our students for meaningful careers through the promotion and provision of quality work experience opportunities and ensuring student entitlement to employer and community links within the curriculum. The Work Experience activity is industry relevant to the students main learning aim, and wherever possible, create added value to their course. Participation in Industry Placement provides essential employability skills and enhances the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for young people to progress successfully in their chosen career. The College has a passion to prepare its students for the world of work, and engaging students in employer facing activities is key to achieving this.

The Health and Early Years Education department manage all Industry Placements in relation to Applied and T Level courses and have a clear process to meet the requirements for funding and achieve positive outcomes for students.

2. Aims

The aim of this policy and its related procedure is to:

- Ensure all staff and relevant stakeholders are aware of Industry Placement processes and procedures, supporting staff, students and, where required parents, to meet required outcomes
- Ensure compliance requirements are adhered to, especially in areas which require DBS checks ahead of placement
- Provide clear and robust tracking and monitoring criteria, creating a streamlined process for both staff and students
- To provide clear lines of communication and a standardised approach across all curriculum areas when planning and delivering the Industry Placement offer
- To outline clear expectations and responsibilities at each stage of the Industry Placement process.

3. Principles

- Industry Placement required by courses within the Health and Early Years Education Department will be arranged and managed by the HEYE placement coordinator.
- All placements must have an up to date health and safety check before placements can be approved.
- DBS checks are mandatory for all placements within the Early Years and Health Care sector in line with the placement requirements. The Health and EYE department will support all students who require this service in advance to their placement (please refer to the DBS process below)
- Industry Placements have clear requirements under DfE funding rules which need to be adhered to in order to gain positive outcomes and receive the targeted funding for this programme.

4. Work Experience Requirements

All full-time students are expected to have meaningful engagement with employers, for example, through Work Experience for every year that they are at College with opportunities identified within the College calendar.

Education and Early Years T-level

Students on Level 3 programmes are required to complete 750 hours across two years. These hours are achieved by completing placements incorporating key age ranges mapped against course requirements.

T levels

As part of the T level a core component is Industry Placement which consists of a minimum of 315 hours over a 2-year programme.

5. Industry Placement Process

In order to provide a standardised approach to Industry Placement, a clear and robust process has been created. This process is communicated to staff, students and parents at the start of the academic year to ensure all parties are aware of their responsibilities to secure a successful work experience placement.

5.1 Work Experience Requests

Specific requests for Work Experience should be made via the Work Experience team based in Student Services.

5.2 Insurance and Health and Safety Checks

All Industry Placement are secured, subject to a successful health and safety checks and evidence of relevant insurance details. The Industry Placement providers are required to have a health and safety policy and completed risk assessments.

Providers are required to:

- Have Employer's Liability Insurance
- Have Public Liability Insurance with a level of cover of at least £5,000,000
- Understand that they will adequately supervise the students and accept that accidental loss of or damage to their property will be their responsibility
- Notify their insurers that they intend to make Work Placement opportunities

5.3 Feedback

Feedback is requested by Employer and Student at the end of placement.

6. Industry Placement

Industry placement forms 20% of the T Level qualification. Students are required to undertake a minimum of 315 hours over their 2-year programme (except EYE), developing technical skills and applying knowledge to a work placement environment. These placements, where possible

should be with the same employer, however a second employer may be used where required. This placement must be relevant to the student's subject area and contains meaningful learning activity. Whilst on their industry placement the student must have three reviews across the year to capture their progression, hours and employability skills whilst on placement.

The employer is involved with reviews to give guidance where required, and to collect feedback on the learning objectives and project the student has been set at the beginning of their programme. To validate progress being made and ensure track on hours there will be a minimum of 3 progress reviews.

6.1 Health and Safety Check

Once the Industry placement has been agreed, a health and safety check is completed, as well as relevant insurance details collected.

6.2 Review form

Industry Placement reviews take place three times across the year with the employer and student to monitor student progress and record hours. The key areas that are measured during reviews focus on the student's behaviours and social skills as well as their knowledge and technical skills in the workplace.

6.3 Industry Placement Log

Students on Industry Placement must have a log of hours signed by their supervisor.

6.4 Feedback

Feedback is requested by Employer and Student at throughout the placement.

7. DBS Approval Process

All students who are looking to work with children and/or vulnerable adults need to apply for a DBS Certificate. DBS application process is managed by the Health and EYE department or Work Experience.

9. Complaints

In the event of a complaint being made either by a student or an employer about their interaction with Work Experience, concerns are raised with the Work Experience Co-ordinator. Where possible, the issue will be resolved and supported with a discussion with the student/Work Experience Co-ordinator and employer. If the issue has arisen due to negative student behaviour this is escalated to the relevant Head of Year. If the complaint is formal, this is pursued through the College Complaints Policy.

10. Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually and any changes approved by the Senior Leadership Team. Significant changes require the approval of the Curriculum and Quality Committee of the College's Local Governing Body.