

Families guide to work experience for students

What is a Work Experience Placement?

This guide is intended to cover the main aspects relating to the work experience opportunity that your child will be undertaking. It provides information on the wider aspects of and benefits to students undertaking placements as well as a brief resume of the legal aspects in relation to working hours, health and safety and employer's insurance requirements. It is not designed to be a definitive guide. A Work Experience Placement is primarily an educational activity which gives students an insight into the world of work from Year 10 onwards.



How do students benefit from a Work Experience Placement?

Following a period of Work Experience it is hoped that they may have developed:

- More confidence
- Improved self-esteem
- Ability to communicate with adults
- Improved timekeeping
- Additional practical work skills
- Team working
- Problem solving skills



What type of work can students do?

There are a wide variety of placements available and there are very few occupational placements that are prohibited to a student. In some cases legislation imposes restrictions on the type of activities which students can do on Work Experience. These restrictions are designed to protect students from work unsuitable for them. Due to a student's inexperience and age some tasks may only be completed under strict supervision or may, in exceptional circumstances, be observation only. The emphasis, however, is always on trying to provide an interesting and well balanced placement.

How are Work Experience Placements organised?

Students and their families should contact employers and reach out to their network of family and friends to find suitable placements.

The employer should be asked to complete the relevant section of the Work Experience application form on Unifrog, with a description of duties, times, and days of working etc which the student will be undertaking. Applications will not be accepted without signatures and details of the company's Employer Liability Insurance. All of this takes place via Unifrog our online careers platform in school.

The school will request the health and safety check on that employer to ensure they meet the standards specified by government. As additional time is needed for this applications must be returned by the deadline provided.

Please be aware that it can be difficult to assess placements beyond the immediate region. Should you have any questions regarding this, please contact the Futures Co-ordinator to discuss.

When can students participate in a Work Experience Placement?

The planning and organisation of Work Experience programmes is strictly determined by the Education (Work Experience) Act 1973/1996 Education Act, amended by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. In effect, students may take part in work experience placements from the first day of the autumn term in Year 10.



Are students paid whilst on Work Experience Placements?

Students must not be paid whilst on Work Experience Placements as it is part of their education curriculum and payment may invalidate insurance arrangements.

What hours can a student work whilst on a Work Experience Placement?

It is recommended that students should not work for more than 5 days in any consecutive seven day period. The number of hours worked together with the pattern of work is normally a matter of agreement by the placement provider, school and students. They should not work excessively long hours or unnecessarily unsocial hours and should not work more than 40 hours per week. For guidance on the Working Time Directive please look at the www.direct.gov.uk website.



Are there particular Health & Safety considerations?

Young people in years 10 and 11 on work placements are regarded in health and safety law (Health & Safety at Work Act (1974) and The Health & Safety (Training for Employment) Regulations 1990 as employees and must be provided with the same health, safety and welfare protection given to other employees. Students are required to comply with the safety regulations of the organisation where they are working. It is their duty to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and anyone else who may be

affected by their actions or omissions. In addition, the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999, require the employer to undertake an assessment of the risks to students before they start the placement. Information on this risk assessment and appropriate control measures can be made available to families prior to the commencement of the period of Work Experience.

Families are reminded that they should ensure there is a full disclosure of all existing medical conditions in the health declaration section of the student self-placement form. This may influence the type of placement that a student may choose. The information will also be passed to the employer so that they can take this into account when allocating tasks to the student. Failure to do so could contribute to the injury of a student or other party at the workplace. This practice further contributes to the safeguarding of students while they are on placement.

What Insurance Cover is required?

It is a requirement that all employers hold a current Employer Liability Insurance, and that this insurance covers a student whilst on placement. It is also recommended that valid Public Liability Insurance is held by the employer. Guidance can be found on the HSE www.hse.gov.uk. Employers insurance requirements are checked as part of the work experience placement checks. If insurance cannot be confirmed then the placement will not be authorised and will not be able to go ahead.

How can families help?

Young people need to be motivated and determined if they are to benefit from the opportunities that a Work Experience Placement presents. Families should encourage their child to think of the type of placement that they believe they would like to have. For example, they might picture themselves in different industries such as catering, engineering, agriculture, community care, administration or hairdressing. Personal preferences might also be considered such as working for large or small companies, working indoors or outdoors, dealing with members of the public or being part of an office team, using equipment like computers, photocopying machines or manufacturing equipment. If for any reason your child is unable to continue with their placement then you should notify the school immediately.

Students use of social media while on placement

Families should remind students 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 once the placement has finished. Phones should only be used on break and lunchtime and never during working hours.

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 families 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.

It is a good idea for students to:

- Spend time preparing for the placement through discussion and research. To help them with this, students will take part in a Work Experience Preparation day in school approximately one month before the date of their placement. They will be asked to make contact with their employer two weeks before the start of the placement so they can confirm arrangements.
- Record their learning during their placement in a work experience diary, which will be provided by the school
- Share their knowledge and experience with fellow students during a debrief tutorial session on returning to school
- Ask the employer to complete the feedback on Unifrog at the end of their placement

The school's role

School staff have a monitoring role and employers can normally expect a member of staff to contact the student, either by visit or telephone call, at least once during the placement so they can discuss the student's progress with the employer and deal with problems and emergencies.

Finally

If you have any queries, please contact the Futures Co-ordinator at the school m.mylrea@stowhigh.com

