



Education Business Partnership **Kent**

Helping young people
experience the world of work

WORK EXPERIENCE **EMPLOYERS** GUIDE

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WHAT IS YOUR ROLE?

Work Experience is a fantastic experience for all students, but it only works with the valuable support of employers.

This booklet aims to help you offer students a quality Work Experience placement, which we hope will benefit their learning and understanding of the world of work whilst at the same time benefitting you and your organisation.

AS AN EMPLOYER WE WOULD ASK THAT:

- You designate an employee to act as a supervisor or guide for the student.
- You prepare staff, so that the student can observe and take part in appropriate areas of work, ask questions and seek out information.
- You carry out a suitable induction with the student.
- You complete a short report on the performance of the student.

INDUCTION FOR A WORK EXPERIENCE STUDENT SHOULD OCCUR AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE AND SHOULD COVER:

- An overview of the organisation
- Risks applicable to the job they are doing and the appropriate control measures
- Which areas, machines, substances or processes are prohibited
- Who to talk to about any unsafe conditions
- How to use / wear any special protective equipment / clothing
- How to report an accident
- Who to report an accident to
- Where / how an accident is recorded
- Discussion around student's workbook requirements
- Timing and punctuality issues
- How to get first aid treatment
- How to raise the alarm in case of an emergency
- Where the emergency exits are located and how to operate them
- Where to assemble if they have to leave the building
- Student's personal responsibilities as outlined in the company Health and Safety policy
- Where appropriate, how to lift correctly and the reasons for this
- The importance of housekeeping, e.g. keeping cupboard doors and filing cabinets closed, ensuring wires are not trailing etc.



HEALTH & SAFETY

Students on Work Experience should be thought of as an employee for the purposes of Health and Safety, and consequently all appropriate regulations covered by Health and Safety legislation must be adhered to. You are asked to give clear information about Health and Safety to the student as part of their induction. Your offer of Work Experience will only be confirmed once the placement has been assessed for risk and an understanding has been obtained that Health, Safety, Insurance, Legal and other requirements will be met.

The placement will be given a risk banding in line with current Government guidance. Re-appraisal of risk banding will occur at annual, bi-annual or four yearly intervals depending on initial assessment.

INSURANCE

The guidance on insurance for Work Experience students typically involves ensuring that both the student and the employer are adequately covered during the placement. Here are the key points:

- 1. Employer's Liability Insurance:**
The employer must have valid **Employer's Liability Insurance**, which covers any injuries or accidents that may occur to a student during their work experience. This is a legal requirement.
- 2. Public Liability Insurance:**
The employer should also have **Public Liability Insurance**, which covers any damage or injury caused by the student to third parties or their property while at the workplace.
- 3. Travel Insurance:**
If the student needs to travel to and from the work placement, the student or the school may arrange **travel insurance** to cover transportation accidents.
- 4. Check with the school:**
It's important to verify with the school or educational provider whether they have specific insurance policies in place for students during work experience, as these can vary by region or institution.
- 5. Workplace-specific insurance:**
The employer may also need to ensure that their insurance policy covers the student in the specific work environment, especially if the student is engaging in tasks that involve machinery, hazardous substances, or other potential risks.

Both the employer and the student should confirm insurance coverage before the placement begins to ensure the student is fully protected.

WELFARE / SAFEGUARDING

When a student is on a Work Experience placement, **welfare and safeguarding** are crucial to ensure the student's safety, well-being, and protection. Employers must follow certain guidelines and best practices to ensure that they are fulfilling their responsibilities. Here is an overview of what employers should consider:

1. Safeguarding Responsibilities

Employers must take steps to ensure that the student is safe and treated with respect during their placement. This includes:

- **Creating a Safe Environment:** The workplace should be free from any risks to the student's health and safety. This involves maintaining a clean, hazard-free environment and ensuring that safety measures are in place (e.g., fire exits, emergency procedures).
- **Ensuring Suitable Supervision:** Employers should assign a **supervisor** or a **mentor** to the student. This person is responsible for providing guidance and support, ensuring the student's work is appropriate for their age, and monitoring their well-being throughout the placement.
- **Clear Reporting Procedures:** Employers must have clear procedures in place for the student to report any concerns about bullying, harassment, or unsafe working conditions. Students should feel comfortable approaching their supervisor or another trusted adult if they feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

2. Risk Assessments

Employers should conduct a **risk assessment** to evaluate the workplace environment and identify any potential hazards that could affect the student's safety. This is particularly important if the work involves machinery, chemicals, or other potentially dangerous equipment. The employer must ensure that:

- The student is not asked to perform tasks that are beyond their level of competence or maturity.
- The student is given appropriate training or instruction on how to stay safe in the workplace.

3. Age-appropriate Tasks

Employers must ensure that the tasks assigned to the student are appropriate for their age, skills, and experience. For example:

- Avoid assigning tasks that involve high levels of responsibility or dangerous activities (e.g., operating heavy machinery, handling toxic substances).
- Tasks should be chosen based on what the student can reasonably do, considering their developmental stage and the nature of the work experience.

4. Confidentiality and Respect

Employers should respect the student's **confidentiality** and not disclose any personal information about the student to others in the workplace unless necessary for the placement. Similarly, employers should:

- Treat the student with dignity and respect.
- Foster an inclusive, non-discriminatory environment, free from harassment or bullying.

5. Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults

If the student is under the age of 18, they may be considered a **child** or a **vulnerable individual**. In these cases, employers must comply with **child protection** policies and ensure that:

- They follow the **Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults** guidelines.
- There is no inappropriate contact or behaviour that could compromise the student's well-being.
- All staff involved with students on work placements are trained on safeguarding practices, including recognising signs of abuse or neglect.

7. Health and Well-being Support

Employers should be aware of any specific health needs, learning difficulties or special requirements the student may have (e.g., allergies, medications, mental health concerns). It is essential to:

- Ensure that any **medical conditions** are communicated and that proper accommodations are made. EBP Kent will inform employers of any health conditions / needs.
- Keep an **emergency contact** list for the student in case of illness or accidents.

8. Training and Induction

Before the student starts their placement, employers should provide an **induction** that includes:

- Health and safety training (fire procedures, first aid, etc.).
- Explanation of workplace rules and expectations.
- Information on how to report any concerns, accidents, or unsafe conditions.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

Throughout the placement, employers should monitor the student's welfare and progress, making sure that:

- The student is adjusting well to the workplace environment.
- The student's performance is regularly assessed and supported.
- Any issues related to the student's safety or well-being are addressed promptly.

10. Safeguarding Training for Staff

It's important that staff who will have direct contact with the student have appropriate **safeguarding training**. This training helps staff:

- Recognise signs of distress or potential abuse.
- Know how to respond to disclosures of abuse or bullying.
- Understand the boundaries between professional conduct and personal relationships in the workplace.

WHAT IS EBP KENT'S ROLE?

Before and during a student's placement, participating employers will have the full support of EBP Kent, who provide information on what students are expected to do and guidelines offering advice and help in the event of any problems arising during the placement.

Should you need any help in planning activities for the student on Work Experience please contact the Work Experience Team at EBP Kent.

As an Education Business Partnership, we aim to ensure that students are offered a period of Work Experience and that this:

- Is co-ordinated efficiently and effectively
- Adds value to their education and meets individual needs
- Continues to raise the awareness and importance of education business links
- Promotes equal opportunities and challenges gender and racial stereotypes within workplace environments
- EBP Kent always needs to consider the Health, Safety and Welfare issues of students undertaking a placement
- Act as a mediator to assist with any problems or enquiries for employers

THE EFFECT YOUR ORGANISATION CAN HAVE ON STUDENTS:

- Gain experience of the world of work
- Be able to practice and gain employability skills such as communication, teamwork, problem solving, IT, numeracy, creativity, confidence and customer service etc.
- Strengthens their CV and personal statement when applying for College, University or employment
- Understand pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships when applicable
- Gives student a better understanding of areas of work they could enter after their studies
- Enables student to explore their interests or future career plans
- Develops maturity and attitude
- Students gain confidence and become better at managing their own learning

There are several types of Work Experience. The most usual can be through block placements which consists of a one or two week period, or through extended placements which can be spread throughout the year alongside a specialist area of study.

STUDENT PLACEMENTS

There are two ways in which students can be placed:

1) Through an **OWN PLACEMENT FORM**

OWN PLACEMENT FORM

If a student approaches you with an own placement form and you are happy to take them on, please complete the form and include your Employers Liability Insurance details.

Please return it to the student so that they are able to give this back to their School Work Experience coordinator.

This then gets passed to EBP Kent.

The form is then processed by the Work Experience team at EBP Kent. The form may indicate that further checks are required. If so, a member of the team will be in touch to arrange a convenient time to visit.

A job description will be produced with the details provided / collected and copies will be sent to the school / student.

The student will then contact the employer to arrange an interview if this has been requested.

Student will attend the interview and should there be any concerns, then the employer should contact EBP Kent regarding this.

2) Through an **EBP Kent Placement**

If you are an employer that has worked with EBP Kent before or would prefer to work directly with more than one school, then we will send you an email / letter at the beginning of the academic year with a calendar of all the Work Experience dates of the schools (who are partnered with EBP Kent) in your area.

Employers should indicate which education institution they would like to receive a student(s) from and specify how many student(s) they would like to take on at any one time.

The Work Experience calendars can either be posted back to EBP Kent or emailed to the email address on the form.

EBP Kent will then match suitable students to your company. These students will have chosen the particular sector on their application form.

EBP Kent will send names of student(s) and confirm the dates by email.

Health and Safety checks will be carried out by a qualified Health and Safety consultant. For low risk placements, forms will be emailed to you by the Work Experience Coordinator. For high risk placements a visit will be arranged by our consultant.

Students are given their confirmation sheets 6 weeks prior to their start date. They are given Work Experience Preparation in school and asked to make contact with their employer at least 2 weeks prior to their start date to introduce themselves, arrange an interview (if required) and finalise placement details.

Student(s) should be given a Health and Safety induction on their first day and be introduced to their colleagues and supervisor. Student(s) will feel nervous on their first day and showing them around the premises and making them feel welcome always helps because this can be their first experience of a workplace.

Student(s) will begin their placement with the employer, where they will bring with them a workbook that should be completed throughout their placement.



The school will telephone the employer to confirm how the student is getting on, and possible arrange a visit at a convenient time.



At the end of the placement, the employer should complete the evaluation form in the workbook.



Schools can then request a certificate for each student who has completed Work Experience. Students who have hit certain criteria can apply for the Excellence certificate.

FAQ'S

What do I do if a student has not arrived?

Please contact EBP Kent if the student has not arrived by the arranged time. We will then contact the school who will make contact with the student's parent / guardian.

If the student has contacted you directly to let you know they will not be attending, please also contact EBP Kent to inform us.

What if I do not have Employers Liability Insurance?

Employers need Employers Liability Insurance (ELI) for Work Experience students because, legally, these students are treated as employees, making the employer responsible for their health and safety; this insurance covers the significant costs of compensation and legal fees if a student gets injured or ill due to their work, protecting the business from potentially crippling financial losses and fines for being uninsured.

Unfortunately, if this is not in place then the placement will not be approved on EBP Kent record.

What if we are not happy with the student?

If you have concerns about the student, or if the student has a poor attitude whereby it affects the working environment, we recommend that you firstly speak to the student and explain to them, that the placement will be withdrawn if they do not make a change. If this continues, then please contact EBP Kent and the student will be sent back to his / her school for the remaining duration of the placement.

What hours can the student work?

For Work Experience in the UK, students (aged 14-16) generally work up to 8 hours daily and 40 hours weekly. Hours must be agreed upon by the student, school, and employer.

They should not work excessively long hours or unnecessarily unsocial hours.

Students must be given relevant breaks throughout the day.

What if I want to take the student out to a site visit / meeting?

A student on Work Experience *can* travel in a staff member's car **only if the correct health, safety and insurance arrangements are in place.**

Check insurance: Confirm the driver's insurance policy includes business use and allows carrying passengers for work-related travel.

Confirm consent: Obtain written consent from the student's parent/guardian before travel.

Safeguard the student: Ensure there is appropriate supervision, risk assessment and safeguarding policy in place.

Agree travel arrangements up front: Clearly record in the placement plan what travel is expected and how it will be managed.

What happens if there is an incident or an accident on the premises?

If an emergency happens, then the student should be treated as any other member of staff, whereby this should be recorded in an accident record book or file.

Please contact EBP Kent and we will fill in an incident report for our records and will also inform the school. If an incident happens that involves further investigation, please contact EBP Kent who will be able to help you with the matter. Student(s) will be withdrawn from the placement and sent back to their school if necessary. For student(s) that have been given time off because of an injury due to an accident, then this should be reported to RIDDOR. Please check the HSE website for further information – <https://www.hse.gov.uk>

How does Work Experience benefit my organisation?

In addition to making a meaningful difference to a young person's working life, offering Work Experience provides employers with a range of benefits. These include recruitment opportunities by identifying potential future employees; staff development for experienced employees who gain skills in training and mentoring; a more engaged workforce through improved employee experience; stronger links with the local community by supporting schools or colleges; and a contribution to local economic development by helping young people progress in their career development.