

Work Experience

Manager's Guide

Supporting a Work Experience Student
through their placement

Information Guide



The Midcounties
Co-operative

Let's get started...

What is Work Experience?

Work experience offers students from Schools and Colleges the opportunity to prepare for the world of work, as well as giving them an insight into different career routes to enable them to make informed decisions around future training and job prospects. Having a great work experience helps students understand the skills, knowledge, behaviours and attitudes needed for a particular role, and helps them to be prepared for the demands of the work environment.

Work experience is defined as a placement on an employer's premises, during which the student carries out tasks and duties similar to an employee, but with the emphasis on learning, development and the experience. A work experience placement is part of a student's education or training programme and isn't a paid placement.

The success of a work experience placement relies on the partnership between the Site Manager, the School or College and the Student. Good communication, your support and the experience given to the student at your site is vital to ensure you and the student get the most from the placement.

Work experience placements provide many opportunities and benefits to both employers and students, which include:

- Influencing career choices
- Raising your profile in the local community
- Supporting the recruitment of future colleagues
- Creating your future pipeline of talent
- Providing development opportunities for colleagues through mentoring, training and coaching work experience students

A work experience placement can be for 1-2 weeks.

During their work experience, the student's working hours will be as per their school or college schedule, however they:

- Should not be asked to work more than a standard 8-hour day
- Must have regular breaks

At the end of the student's placement, they will be offered a mock interview. Although there may not be a current vacancy or the student may not be due to complete their course, conducting an interview with the student gives them great interview experience to help them with future applications. It will also give you, as the Site Manager, a good insight into whether the student has the potential to fill one of your future vacancies.

Preparing for a Student

Thorough planning and preparation will ensure that the work experience placement operates smoothly and efficiently. Prior to the student starting their placement, it is vital they are given all relevant information before their first day at your site.

There are also some key documents that need to be completed and key information that needs to be shared between the student/ school or college in advance of the student's first day.

Once a student has been offered a work placement:

- Obtain a letter of confirmation for the placement from the School or College
- Book the "Getting to know you" 30/40-minute meeting with the Student
- Assign the student a "Buddy"

During the "Getting to know you" meeting:

- Complete Health & Safety – young people at work, Merchandising document and young person risk assessment all of which can be found on Colleagues Connect under Work Experience.
- A copy of the young person risk assessment must be given to the student to be signed by their parent/guardian
- Print off the student workbook from our website and go through the first page
- Confirm with the student their start date and the start time for their first day on placement, as well as the number of hours they will be on placement each week.
- Confirm the dress code they will need to adhere to whilst on placement
- Provide the student with the name and contact details for the Manager
- Explain they will need to bring their own packed lunch with them or money to buy refreshments
- Introduce the student to their "Buddy"
- Make the student aware that on completion of their placement they will be offered a mock interview, explaining the purpose and benefits of this
- Give them the workbook to take away to read through page 2 and to complete the page 3 "Placement Objectives" which you will discuss with them on their first day.

The day before the student's first day on placement:

Telephone the student the day before their first day on placement (or on the last working day before their placement) to:

- Confirm their start and end time on their first day
- Remind them to bring the "Young Person Risk Assessment" signed by their legal parent or guardian with them Remind them to bring their Student Handbook with them
- Confirm who will be on site to greet them on their first day
- Check whether they have any questions or concerns about their placement

On Day One

On arrival:

- On the student's first day of their work experience:
- Meet and greet the student on their arrival
- Show the student where they can store their belongings and lunch
- Take them on a tour of the building, introducing them to every colleague and showing them key areas including toilets and colleague areas
- **Share the Health and Safety policy to read and discuss**
- Talk through the objections the student has put down in the Student Handbook

Note: If the student does not arrive at the site on their first day, please call the student. If there is no reply, please contact the School or College

At lunchtime:

- Make the student aware of how long they have for their lunch break.
- Arrange for their Buddy to have the same lunch break as the student.
- Ensure the Buddy spends their lunch break with the student, showing them where to eat their lunch, where the nearest shops are, etc

At the end of their first day:

- Complete a check-in with the student to:
- Review their first day, using the template in the Student Handbook
- Set focuses and objectives for the remainder of the week
- Ask whether they have any questions or concerns about their placement

Remainder of the Placement

At the end of each week:

Complete a check-in with the student to:

- Review their week, using the template in the Student Handbook
- Give feedback to the student around their performance
- Set focuses and objectives for the following week
- Check the student knows what time to arrive for the following week
- Ask whether they have any questions or concerns about their placement

At the end of the student's placement:

Complete a check-in with the student to:

- Review their placement, using the template in the Student Handbook
- Give feedback to the student around their performance
- Revisit their focuses and objectives and discuss whether these have been met
- Ask for feedback around their experiences on their placement

Complete and sign any documentation from the School or College, which may include:

- Attendance records
 - Student workbooks
 - Feedback and evaluation forms
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- Arrange and conduct a mock interview with the student, if the student is happy to do so (this is not compulsory its only if the student would like the experience)
 - Give constructive feedback to the student following their interview, high lighting what they did well and how they could develop their interview skills further

Additional notes:

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a template for writing. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.