



What is work experience?

First of all "*Many Thanks*"! It is getting harder for students to get a work experience so your time and efforts are very much appreciated! Below is some information that you might find useful, if you need any more help please do not hesitate to contact us.

What is Work Experience

Work Experience can be defined as "*a placement on an employer's premises in which a student carries out a particular task or duty, or a range of tasks or duties, more or less as would an employee, but with the emphasis on the learning aspects of the experience*".

So what does that mean?

Work experience is a chance for students, usually in their last 12 months of school, in our case year 10 (14/15 years old), to experience what it will be like in the work place. It's a "Welcome to the real world" type thing! As far as possible they should be treated as employees for the time they are there. To make the experience as real as possible all our students find their own placement. They learn about letters of application, making the first contact, using the phone and researching possible placements.

Am I Insured?

(see "[A Guide for Employers](#)")

Most employers will carry insurance policies that will cover most risks arising from student visits. Under the Education Act of 1996 students on work experience are covered by your Employers' Liability policy. If you need any more information please contact us at school and/or have a look at the document "Work Experience: A Guide for Employers"

Health and Safety

As a part of the preparation for work experience, after you have agreed in principal, we will then inform Connexions. They will contact you to organize a health and safety check. This will involve making sure you have employers' liability insurance, and checking any documentation that you have. When you pass the check Connexions will issue you with a certificate.

We also ask that students go through a Health & Safety induction session so that they are familiar with risks and procedures, a checklist is provided in the student's booklet.

Student's Experience

(see "[Employers report](#)")

As far as possible we would like the students to have as realistic an experience as possible.

It is all about the learning process involved in the student moving into adulthood, becoming a member of the workforce and the all the responsibilities that that brings.

The Employer's Report sheet outlines a number of "Employability" skills. These are the same

whatever and wherever the placement. We want the students to learn the importance of such things as:

- Communication
- team work
- initiative
- following instructions
- punctuality etc

These are basic skills that will be, for the first time, placed in the context of the world of work and not just school!

So, what should the student do whilst they are with you? As far as possible they should be treated like employees and engage in the same work. Inevitably there might be times when there is little to do or work that is not appropriate, at this stage we suggest that you set them some sort of project that they can dip in and out of during slack times. This might be about marketing, designing a leaflet or advertising poster. Most students will react well to a challenge such as making, fixing or building. This will also give you time to get on with your work! If along the way students can learn some new, and possibly specific skills, then all the better!

Recording achievement

(see "[Booklet](#)")

All students will be given a Work Experience Booklet.

This booklet is designed for the student and not as a checkup for the school. If filled in it will become a very useful tool for completing Progress File, filling in application forms and going on interviews. Before the students come to you they will set some goals for their experience, it would be useful for you to have a read and discuss these with the students at the start. You may well wish to add, or adjust them before they start.

When students learn new skills, they should make a record in the section provided in their booklet and a supervisor or fellow worker sign alongside. This gives credibility to the student's claims. A copy of the booklet is available to download.

Wherever possible the school will try its best to have a member of staff visit the student at the placement, this is usually a rewarding experience for both the student and member of staff.

This year the students will be using work experience to complete 2 units of an award called CoPE (Certificate of Personal Effectiveness) therefore the information from their booklets will help them to pass this GCSE level award.



What's in it for you?

Well, there is of course the knowledge that you are providing a great experience for these students. This week always goes a long way to helping them make informed decisions for the future, be it in terms of a future career and / or motivation for when they come back to school.

You help influence the quality of future employees, build links with local schools thus improving recruitment channels, raise profile of career prospects in your organization / work area, raise the profile of your organization in the local community, gain some positive publicity and staff development has been mentioned by some.

Staff have been given the responsibility for looking after placements, devising programmes and evaluating performance, these are good management skills.

Students may provide a fresh perspective and an extra pair of hands.

If you have any feedback on how the experience can be improved then please do not hesitate to contact us at school and if you have some positive success stories we would love to hear them!