

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.

What type of work can students do?

In the past, students have worked:

- With dentists, doctors, administrators, the Royal Mail, florists, engineers, solicitors, in council offices, catering, schools, the music industry, radio, retail, art galleries, beauty salons and shops plus many others.
- There are some legal restrictions designed to protect young people from unsuitable occupations involving machinery or hazardous processes.
- We encourage students to go for their dream job to start with and then work back from there.

What are the benefits of work experience?

Work experience allows students to:

- Explore their own interests, talents and skills.
- take advantage of opportunities to learn new/develop further, work related and/or personal skills
- benefit from fresh learning input and support from a new source
- understand the links between things learnt at school and skills needed in the working world.

Student's Experience

All students will be given a Work Experience Booklet. This booklet is designed for the student and not as a check up 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 go out they will set some goals for their experience, it would be useful for



you to have a read and discuss these with your child at the start. You may well wish to add, or adjust them before they start. When students learn new skills they should record it and a supervisor or fellow worker sign alongside. This gives credibility to the student's claims.

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.

When do students go on work experience?

- The Education Act (Work Experience) 1973 allows young people to undertake work experience between the first day of the summer term of year 10 and the end of their schooling. The Act states that during work experience, school students have the same employment rights and responsibilities as other employees.
- Students beginning year 10 in September will do a weeks work experience, in July of the following year, from Monday to Friday inclusive.

What about health & safety and hours of work?

- Students will have basic Health & Safety preparation in school before work experience begins.
- Students will have the same Health & Safety protection and responsibilities as other employees. They must comply with the safety regulations of the work place.
- Students should be prepared to work the same hours as those they are working with. Usually this is restricted to a maximum of 37 hours per week. This may vary as will the start and finish times. These issues should be negotiated by the student and prospective placement, prior to the start of the placement.

What about Insurance?

- Students will be covered by the employer's own insurance. Every placement is checked, either by computer or an onsite visit by Connexions. They will check for:

1. Employee liability (insurance)
2. Health & Safety Policy
3. Evidence of Risk assessments

- Generally, people who are self-employed do not carry the correct insurance.

BTEC Sport Students

As part of the BTEC Sport course, students **must** do a work experience placement that is related to the Sports/Leisure Industry. This could include local leisure centres, private gyms, primary/secondary schools and other specialist sport amenities.

During the placement, students must complete a project that can be focused on any area of sport and leisure.

BTEC Travel & Tourism Students

As part of the BTEC Travel & Tourism, students must do a work experience placement that is related to the Travel & Tourism Industry. This could include local travel agents, travel operatives, tourist information, tourist attraction, airlines and any other specialist travel or tourism occupation.

During the placement, students must complete a project that can be focused on any area of Travel & Tourism. For example, a work based project, customer service, marketing or career progression.

How parents can help

Before work experience begins, parents can:

- Help students to be efficient in making work experience arrangements and encourage them to stick to these.
- Make sure you know when, why and where work experience is taking place.
- Check that you have details of the procedures the school is following to set up the placement for your child.
- Talk to the school about any concerns you have about the placement.
- Check that you are fully aware of all the necessary details, such as travel, hours of work and how to make contact with teachers responsible for the placement.

During work experience:

- Show an interest in each day's activities and progress.
- Give encouragement and support, especially if there are problems.

After work experience:

- Discuss the work experience at home and create opportunities to use what has been learnt.