

Work Experience

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

What is a Work Experience?

A placement with an employer in which a young person carries out a range of tasks in much the same way as an employee, with the emphasis on learning from the experience. Work experience provides opportunities for learning about the skills, behaviours, careers, roles and structures that exist within a workplace.

How do students benefit from a Work Experience placement?

Work experience supports young people to make career decisions, develop employability skills and support successful transition into further education, higher education, apprenticeships and the workplace. It helps with

- Confidence
- Improved self esteem
- Ability to communicate with adults
- Improved timekeeping
- Additional practical work skills
- Team working
- Problem Solving skills
- Time management and organisation
- Clarifies job roles within industry
- Broadens horizons in relation to career routes and job roles available

What type of work can students do?

There is 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 work which students can do, these restrictions are designed to protect students from occupations 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 much are students paid whilst on Work Placements?

Students must not be paid whilst on Work Experience, as it is an educational experience not employment. However, employers may wish to make a contribution to expenses; e.g. fares and meals.

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

Students should not work for more than five days in any consecutive seven-day period and it is a requirement that students should not work more than a standard eight-hour day or forty hours in a week. They should not work excessively long hours or unnecessarily unsocial hours.

The number of hours worked together with the pattern of work is normally a matter of agreement by the employer, school and student. Some industries work on shift basis or work evenings, please discuss this with employer and ensure travel arrangements suit later working. Students can work up until 10pm in these cases.

Are there particular Health & Safety considerations?

All placements will be vetted by the ESCC work experience team prior to the student attending their work placement to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the student during the experience. The school will be provided with a copy of the placement assessment for the placement.

Parents and Carers are reminded of the necessity to notify the school of any medical condition that might influence the type of placement that a student may choose. Failure to do so could contribute to injury of a student or other party at the workplace. Information should be provided on the **MEDICAL FORM** that the school will provide you. This practice further contributes to the safeguarding of students whilst they are on placement.

What Insurance Cover is required?

Students on a work experience placement are treated as employees for the purposes of insurance against bodily injury. Therefore, the employer must have 'Employers Liability Insurance' in place.

How can Parents/Carers help?

Young people need to be motivated and determined in order to make the most of the opportunity that a work placement presents. Parents/carers should encourage their son/daughter to think of the type of placement that they believe they would like to have. Discuss your son's/daughter's interests, career prospects or hobbies when deciding what type of placement would be more beneficial to them.

On a practical level, parents/carers can help by making sure of the following:

- Knowing where your child will be going and what they will be doing
- What will your child's working hours be?
- What the contact details are for your child's employer and also for the school
- That your child contacts the employer before Work Experience is due to begin in order to confirm arrangements:
 - Exactly where to go on the first day
 - Lunch arrangements
 - Working times
 - Dress code
- That your child is prepared for the first day:
 - Bus fares
 - Appropriate clothing
 - Packed lunch/lunch money
 - How to get to the placement in plenty of time

In the run up to Work Experience your child should be reminded that the provision of work experience placements is entirely due to the goodwill and to the generosity of employers.

**The success of Work Experience depends upon;
Punctuality, Reliability, Courtesy, Respect, Interest and Enthusiasm**