

To Safety Co-ordinators (for onward transmission to Heads of School/Directorates,
School Safety Advisors, Safety Representatives)

From Dr Melanie Taylor, University Safety Advisor

Date 22nd February 2006

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Reference Circular 5/2006

Interim guidance on student placements

Health and Safety Services has been asked to issue some interim guidance on the subject of student placements, pending final publication of HE sector guidance from the Universities & Colleges Employers Association (UCEA).

Clearly, there are many different ways in which students obtain placements, and this circular relates only to placements which are an essential part of the academic course / qualification. This includes industrial sandwich placements, work overseas as part of a language course, elective placements in medical and related courses, and comparable circumstances. The essential characteristics of these placements are that the student is assessed and marks contribute to a final degree award, and the University is directly involved in finding and facilitating suitable places of work.

Until formal UCEA guidance is revised and reissued, faculties and schools are advised to continue with current arrangements, bearing in mind the legal duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of those affected, and the following key points:

- planning of placement activities should include an assessment of all health & safety risks, carried out by a competent member of staff, recorded and made available to the student;
- the assessment will require effective communication between the University and the placement provider, and should take into account any feedback from students previously placed with the same (or similar) provider, and
- previously prepared risk assessments will need to be kept under review and updated should circumstances change or on receipt of feedback from the students about health and safety concerns.

Your University Safety Co-ordinator will be happy to provide more specific guidance and advice.

Dr Melanie Taylor
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