



## Safety Services Guidance



### Guidance on accepting school children and young people for work experience placements

Key word(s) : Children, young people, work experience, placement,

Target audience : HOS, staff, placement supervisors, safety advisors,

#### Contents

Introduction .....	2
Lines of communication .....	2
Exchange of Information .....	3
Work Experience Process.....	3
Prior to work experience taking place. ....	3
During Work Experience / Placement .....	4
After Placement .....	4
Accidents .....	4
Security .....	5
References .....	5

Management cycle	Useful paragraphs
Plan	6 - 9
Do	10 - 11
Monitor	11
Review	9, 11

## Introduction

1. This guidance is for staff involved in work experience schemes and supervising children and young people on work experience on University premises. It should be read in conjunction with the Health and Safety Executive publication "Managing Health and Safety on Work Experience: A Guide for Organisers" (HSG 199). Further information is available at [www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/index.htm)
2. A "child" is defined as a person who has not yet reached the official age at which they may leave school, just before their 16th birthday.
3. A "young person" is defined as a person who has not reached the age of 18.
4. Work experience is an important link between employers and secondary schools and colleges and provides young people with their first exposure to the working environment. It also provides an opportunity to foster an early understanding of the importance of health and safety and to influence the attitudes of the future workforce.
5. Under the Health and Safety (Training for Employment) Regulations 1990 children / young people participating in work experience should be regarded as University employees for the purpose of health and safety for the duration of the placement. The University has various duties and responsibilities for anyone who comes onto campus for the purpose of work experience and the University must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable their health, safety and welfare whilst at work.
6. As a placement provider the University has a duty to: -
  - Assess the risks to which those on work experience are exposed to whilst on the placement.
  - Introduce and maintain appropriate measures to eliminate or control the risks.
  - Provide adequate training and supervision, which are particularly important for temporary employees.
  - Define and plan the nature of the work the child / young person will carry out and provide any necessary personal protective equipment.
  - Make any necessary arrangements for child / young person with special needs such as disabilities or learning difficulties if required.

## Lines of communication

7. Clear lines of communication with identified contacts on both sides should be agreed in advance of the work experience taking place.

## Exchange of Information

8. Prior to the placement commencing there should be an exchange of signed agreements from all parties with a defined work programme including the nature of the work and any associated hazards, risk assessments and control measures. Before the child / young person takes up the placement the parents / guardian of any child must be informed of the key findings of the risk assessment and the control measures required to minimise the risks.
9. As part of the work experience process the University may be visited by the work experience organiser to check the safety arrangements that are in place.

## Work Experience Process

10. Children / young people on work experience should be protected from any risks to their health and safety which are associated with their lack of experience, lack of awareness of existing risks, or immaturity. In addition, work experience children / young people may not be employed where the work: -
  - Is beyond their physical or psychological capacity.
  - Involves exposure to toxic or carcinogenic substances, or substances which cause heritable genetic damage, harm to unborn children, or cause any other chronic health effect.
  - Involves harmful exposure to radiation
  - Involves a risk of accidents which a child / young person may not reasonably recognise due to their insufficient attention to safety.
  - Involves a risk to health from extreme temperatures (hot or cold), noise or vibration.
11. Anyone agreeing to a work placement should: -

### **Prior to work experience taking place.**

- Check with the University Insurance Office that the University's Employers Liability Insurance covers the children / young people on work experience.
- Identify the tasks the child / young person will be undertaking and the areas / environment they will be working in.
- Assess the risks associated with the tasks to be undertaken and in particular consider the following:
  - How the workplace is fitted and laid out and whether this could cause any problems to the work experience child / young person.
  - What type of work equipment will be used, how it is handled and whether any training is needed.

- How the work is to be organised.
- Any information, instruction or training required.
- The nature of any physical, biological and chemical agents they may be exposed to, for how long and to what extent.
- Their inexperience, immaturity (physical and mental) and vulnerability.
- Their lack of awareness of risks to their health and safety
- Any work / areas from which they should be prohibited.
- Make arrangements for the child / person to be appropriately supervised at all times whilst in the workplace.
- Arrange for the safety induction on arrival in the workplace which covers health and safety issues, fire safety arrangements for the buildings / locations they will be working in and accident and emergency arrangements.
- Inspect the areas where the child / young person will be working to ensure that they are generally safe and do not present any specific risks to children and young people.

### **During Work Experience / Placement**

- On their first day the work experience child / young person must receive a safety induction covering the aspects of the work they will be undertaking as well as the emergency arrangements for the building they will be working in.
- They should also receive some simple explanation of the hazards and risks associated with the workplace and the control measures put in place to protect their health and safety.
- Ensure that supervision arrangements are in place and provided by competent persons. The supervisor should provide appropriate instruction before and supervision during the use of any work equipment, machinery or activity  
Good supervision is the key to ensuring that placement proceeds successfully and without risk to the student on work experience.

### **After Placement**

- Following the placement a de-briefing session should be held between the Supervisor and the placement Organisers to feedback how the successful the placement was and whether any improvements can be made.

### **Accidents**

12. Should an accident occur an accident report must be completed and a full investigation undertaken. The placement organisers must be kept informed and supplied with a copy of any accident reports and investigation findings.

13. It is prudent to keep a record of the placement including all relevant risk assessments, standard operating procedures, accident reports etc. for 10 years.

## Security

14. All children / young people on work experience should be made aware of the security implications of being at work. Children / young people should not be given unrestricted access to the establishment and their attendance should be limited to normal working hours. The issuing of keys or electronic passes should not be necessary. Children / young people should not be allowed to work in (and see or visit) sensitive areas.

## References

HSG199 Managing Health and Safety on Work Experience: A guide for organisers

HSG165 Young People at Work: A guide for employers

INDG364 The Right Start: Work Experience for Young People

Other useful links

[www.youngworker.co.uk](http://www.youngworker.co.uk)

[www.wiseup2work.co.uk](http://www.wiseup2work.co.uk)

[www.worksmart.org.uk/rights/viewsubsection.php?sun=20](http://www.worksmart.org.uk/rights/viewsubsection.php?sun=20)

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