

Guidelines to ensure the safety of students block work experience

These guidelines are provided to minimise the likelihood of an accident and ensure that schools exercise their duty of care to keep children and young people safe

- All block placements for KS4 students (14-16 year olds) will need to be visited, risk assessed and approved for use by an appropriately trained and competent person before they are used for the first time.

Placements will need to be visited thereafter on a cycle dependent on risk banding – every 12 months for potentially high risk placements, 24 months for potentially medium risk placements and 48 months for potentially low risk placements.

- Block placements for KS5 students should be appropriately risk assessed and any placements deemed potentially medium or high risk should be visited and approved for use by an appropriately trained and competent person before they are used for the first time.

Placements which are deemed low risk, for example a placement in an office setting that could be viewed as a comparative environment to a school could be risk assessed by the employer and a desk top review could then be undertaken by an appropriately trained and competent work experience organiser before they are used for the first time. Where a desk top review has been undertaken the placement should be visited by a member of school staff early on in the placement.

Placements will need to be visited thereafter on a cycle dependent on risk banding – every 12 months for potentially high-risk placements, 24 months for potentially medium risk placements and 48 months for potentially low risk placements.

- All employers must have Employer's and Public liability insurance in place for the period of the work experience.
- All Employers offering a block work experience placement of 10 days or longer for a KS4 student must provide a DBS check related to the appropriate supervision of this learner.
- Extended placements of longer than 10 days will require a more extensive level of pre-placement vetting and subsequent monitoring by the school. The level of school monitoring should be determined when the placement is set up.
- Placement providers must carry out a written assessment of the Safeguarding risks (both Health & Safety and Welfare risks) to which young employees, including learners on work experience will be exposed. (see Safeguarding risk assessment and consent form template).

In the case of employees under the age of 16 (including KS4 learners on work experience) the significant findings of this risk assessment must be made known to the child and their parent or carer before the start of the placement.

For students over the age of 16 this information should be shared with the young person themselves and their parent/carer.

Every work experience placement requires employers to induct the child or young person and this induction should include revisiting any Safeguarding (including Health & Safety) risks and mitigations.

- The learner on work experience is considered to be an employee of the placement provider, which puts legal responsibilities on both the provider and the learner. Given their youth and inexperience work experience participants may not always behave as a mature employee would. This point, and hence the need for effective supervision, should be made to the placement provider.
- All learners must receive Safeguarding guidance (Health & Safety and Welfare) as part of their preparation by the school for work experience.
- Provided that the school and Department have taken reasonable care in respect of their obligations, then once the placement has started the primary responsibility for Safeguarding (Health & Safety and Welfare) falls on to the employer. It is important that employers understand their responsibilities from the outset and schools should use the work experience letter of understanding to clarify the responsibilities of the employer when agreeing to host a student on a work experience placement.