



## Work Experience

### Guidance for Parents and Carers

#### What is work experience?

Work experience is a period of time spent by every student in an adult working environment. Students can choose where they wish to do their work experience with guidance from teachers and connexions staff.

#### Why do work experience?

Work experience is an educational activity which will increase the students' awareness of the world of work. It is an effective and practical way of giving young people an awareness of the skills and appropriate attitudes required for the working world.

#### What are the aims of Work Experience?

- To prepare students for the adult world of work.
- To help students understand and develop the skills and personal qualities which employers look for.
- To help students extend their social skills and develop self-confidence.

#### What does Work Experience consist of?

- Preparation of work experience takes place in school, for example by thinking about ideas such as personal qualities, Key Skills and Health and Safety in relation to the work place.
- Work experience normally lasts for two weeks, although GNVQ and other vocational courses often require blocks of work experience or regular work experience on a day or half day a week basis.
- In school, following the placement, students will evaluate and review their experience. Work Experience will provide the basis for work in subjects like English, PSHE, and Business Studies. The outcome of the work experience placement may be followed up in Connexions interviews.

#### How work experience helps the student?

- To develop the key skills and appropriate attitudes needed to be work ready
- To understand the world of work
- To increase their knowledge of particular jobs or careers
- To identify and improve their skills, talents and work interests
- To gain confidence in a wider setting outside school/home
- To make connections between school work and the working world

### **Will it cost anything?**

Participation in work experience will probably involve small expenditure for travel fares. The mid-day meal may also need to be paid for or provided from home. In certain circumstances the school may have a small amount of money to assist with such expenditure. Employers will provide any special protective clothing or equipment that may be required.

### **Where does work experience take place?**

The variety of placements is limited only by safety or security restrictions. Warwickshire County Council does not endorse overseas placements for under 16 students.

Requests for out of County placements should be received at school as soon as possible. Health and Safety checks for these take considerably longer to process and failure to inform us in time may mean that your child will be unable to participate in their choice of placement. The school has a work experience policy available for inspection upon request.

### **Will my son/daughter be paid for this work?**

A condition of work experience is that no payment be made for such work, as to do so would involve a contract of employment and the payment of National Insurance.

### **What about health and safety?**

Under the Health and Safety (Young Persons) Regulations 1997 it is the Employers duty to provide information about the risks included in any work experience placement to students and their parents. Employers are required to provide a Statement of Risk and Control Measures relating to all young people under 18 on Work Experience. This should be communicated to you in writing and will need your approval signature. Students should make a pre placement visit or phone the company to ensure they are aware of the risk assessment.

### **What about Insurance?**

Students on placements must be covered by insurance. Employers should have Third Party Public Liability Insurance and Employer Liability Insurance.

The County Council has arranged cover for accidents which may happen when students are taking part in organised activities as part of their education.

All employers providing Work Experience are required to confirm that they are properly insured.

### **What work experience is not...**

- a chance for employers to select young workers
- training for young people in a particular job before they leave school

### **How does Work Experience benefit the employer?**

- The quality and awareness of young people who will be employees of the future is improved.
- Employers gain an understanding of current practices and qualifications in the world of education.
- Strengthening links with educational establishments improves the community's perception of an organization.
- Recruitment can be aided in areas of work where this is difficult.
- The organisation and its services become more widely known.

### **Allocation of placement**

In the event of your son/daughter being unable to find a placement, we will endeavour to assist them to find a suitable placement. If you have any problems with allocated placements you must contact the Work Experience Co-ordinator at school as soon as possible.

### **How can parents/carers help?**

- Know where your child is going on work placement, have a contact number for them.
- Ensure they can get to/from their placement.
- Provide lunch or lunch money.
- Ensure that your child attends their placement. Try to avoid making dental/medical appointments during this period of work experience. In case of unavoidable absence, telephone the employer and the school as soon as possible.
- Check the work experience diary is being completed.
- Ensure your child is appropriately dressed.
- Discuss with your child what they have done during their placement and what they have learnt.

### **What to do if there is a problem?**

Illness/non attendance at work placement should be reported to the school immediately.

Students claim not to like their work placements for a variety of reasons, mainly because it is a break from their ordinary routine.

- They may have to travel alone
- They are working with people they do not know
- They do not like the task they are given to do. Many have very unrealistic expectations of what they will be doing. Working in the hospital may involve giving out meals and administrative tasks; it will not involve dealing with patients. Working in a solicitors office will involve typing/filing and general administration, not dealing with clients.

None of the above is a good reason for failing to attend work experience. Working life involves meeting new people and new situations. It also sometimes involves doing jobs that you do not enjoy.

Genuine problems may include:

- Concern over health and safety
- Unreasonable requests
- Concerns over working hours

Should you have any concerns please telephone the school.

**Points to keep in mind:**

Students may have on-going coursework which they are expected to continue over the time of the placement.

Parents should inform both the school and the employer of any change in their child's medical condition that may affect them at work.

If the employer has concerns about your child they will contact the school. A member of the teaching staff will contact you.

All work experience placements must be arranged through the school. Any private arrangements will not have had the necessary health and safety checks, you could be putting your child at risk and you will be asked to sign a disclaimer letter.

**Need further information?**

If you have any queries about work experience contact the teacher who coordinates work experience in the school.

**Other useful contact:**

CSWP Ltd (Work Experience support for Coventry & Warwickshire)  
First Floor, Tower Court  
Courtaulds Way  
Foleshill  
Coventry CV6 5QT

024 7670 7627  
024 7670 7609  
024 7670 7624

# **The Placement Cycle**

## **Setting up the placement**

The school will be working with your son/daughter to prepare them for the placement but you can help by making sure they know the answers to the questions below. Pupils may be requested to have a preliminary interview/visit with the employer or to contact them by telephone.

Before the placement the student will need to identify:

- Whether they are required to wear special dress/clothing
- The time they should arrive at and leave work (pupils are required to work a normal working day). Whilst they cannot be requested to work at night, it may be that they do not keep to the timings of the school day e.g. they may attend from 10.00am to 5.00pm.
- How to arrange their own transport to/from their placement (if LEA transport is currently provided then please contact school)
- Who will act as their supervisor
- Any relevant health and safety issues

## **During the placement**

Students will be involved in a variety of experiences, these may include:

- Work related tasks
- Administrative/organizational tasks
- Work shadowing
- Visits
- Observation

Students will be expected to be punctual, reliable and co-operative. They are expected to undertake any reasonable request given by the employer.

Work experience can be challenging! You can help by:

- Asking if the placement is going smoothly
- Reading and signing the work experience diary each week
- Encouraging a mature response to any difficulties
- Letting the contact teacher know if there is a real problem

A teacher will normally visit the student whilst they are on placement.

## **After the placement**

Employers are requested to provide a testimonial, which could become part of the final Progress File. The student is encouraged to obtain a testimonial.

An evaluation and review of work experience will take place in school.

The work experience placement may be followed up in the Connexions interview.