

# **An Employer's Guide Work Experience**

**June 2019**



# 1. Introduction – “You, the Employer”

This guide has been developed to help you plan and deliver quality work experience placements for students in your company. The main aim is to help students and employers gain the most from work placements/experience, and to help students have a positive experience to ensure future employment in industry.

The guide aims to promote and share best practice in the provision of work experience placements.



This employer’s pack includes:

**The Employer’s Guide** – this is a crucial element of the actual placement, as it can help to ensure a positive experience of working in the industry for all those involved. The guide is to help you, “the employer”, structure the placement. The guide provides you, “the employer” with various activities, projects and tasks for the student to undertake during their placement. The guide also includes templates that provide the student within their Work Experience Record to give structure before, during and after the placement. It is important that you, “the employer”, have a copy of the students’ templates for reference purposes and to know exactly what is expected of the student from a school prospective.

## Safeguarding of Students on Work Experience

*The Marches School has a duty to the safeguarding of students on work based learning placements; we do this by subscribing to the Education Business Link. The EBL ensures that all placements for our students are appropriate in terms of Health and Safety, Types of Business and Insurance.*

*CRB checks are requested by the EBL if a placement is extended (more than 15 days) or if the employer is going to be in a ‘one to one’ situation with a student.*

*The EBL provides the workplace with guidance regarding health and safety and child protection protocols.*

*Similar checks are in place for Young Apprenticeships, Extended Work Placements and all pre 16 Provision.*

*All employers who come into contact with children in their everyday work have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.*

*If you have any concerns about a child you should refer to the member of staff who is the designated school contact for Child Protection, Mrs Alison Pearson, Mrs Boyes or Mrs Wyatt on 01691 664400.*

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## **2. Work Experience/Extended Work Placements**

**Duration** – Work Experience placements last for one week, however, an extended work placement can vary from one term up to two years during term time on a one-day-a week basis.

**Student Selection Process** – as a recommendation some employers use an interview to incorporate a process to involve the student with their organisation before the undertaking of any work experience/extended work placement; and importantly to determine the suitability of the candidate wishing to join their company for any proposed work experience/extended work placement activity. This may involve various aspects of the following as part of the interview process:

- ✓ Brief tour of the facilities
- ✓ Outline of the business
- ✓ The 'interview'
- ✓ Outline of their role and responsibilities
- ✓ Opportunity for any questions

**Areas Of Work** - some employers arrange work experience in different departments, while others specify one department for the duration of the placement. There are no specific guidelines as to what is the correct method to adopt, as it relates more to the practical constraints of you, "the employer", as the placement provider, and the areas of interest for the student undertaking the placement.

**Identifying Activities** - it is advisable to identify in advance or, at induction stage, what activities a student may be able to do during the placement such as filing, shadowing a manager, serving customers, research, or specific projects relating to the business.

Some employers may be unsure of how to best structure the work experience placement and how to support a student's placement plan, especially if you are new to it all. However, in the following pages of this guide, it sets out how to provide a quality work experience/extended work placement to ensure a productive time for your company and a challenging and rewarding time for the student.

**Support From School** - to aid you, "the employer", as the provider of any kind work experience/extended work placement activity the school is available to support both you and the student, at any time. Therefore, it is vital that you have the contact names and numbers of the work experience coordinator at the school, should any support be required.

**Work Experience Coordinator**

Mrs Anita Wyatt – 01691 664 476 [wyatt.a@mmat.co.uk](mailto:wyatt.a@mmat.co.uk)

**Routine Tasks/Day-to-Day Jobs** - as part of the practical experience that students will gain from their time with an employer, it may be of benefit for you to identify routine tasks or jobs that a work placement student can carry out on a daily basis with little or no supervision. A few ideas are listed below:

- \* General Housekeeping such as emptying waste bins, cleaning, etc.
- \* General Administration such as filing, post, photocopying, etc.
- \* General Duties, these may be specific to your company.

Having once been supervised carrying out these routine tasks, you can encourage the student to do this on a daily basis and see whether they can continue to do so under their own initiative, and thus encouraging the development of 'soft skills' within the individual.

**Activity Resources-** in addition to this short guide, resources have been devised for you the employer to use with the student to help make the placement as varied and interesting as possible. These resources are shown in the guide for your use and duplication as required.

### **What Employers Should Provide-**

1. An induction within the first 2 days covering introductions to members of staff, policies and procedures etc.
2. A work based mentor to provide support and advice.
3. Health & Safety awareness within the first 2 days.
4. A plan for the student's work experience/extended work placement to show the student when and where they will be working.
5. A uniform where appropriate.
6. A review at the end of the placement.
7. A work reference.

**At The End Of The Work Experience/Placement** - it is important that time is set aside at the end of the work experience/placement to review and evaluate the progress and overall performance of the student. This type of meeting can provide a focus from the point of view of both the student and you the employer in order to maintain a level of quality of the experience. The Personal Learning and Thinking Skills questionnaire could be used as a starting point to review the Work Experience .

### **The 'Student Guide' prompts the student to ask the employer for:**

- General information about the organisation, this could be company literature and or photographs where appropriate
- Witness statements from the student's supervisor, line manager or work based mentor relating to their Work Skills qualification. Please see Supervision Record
- A letter of reference relating to their work within the organisation.
- Any further information or comments from other members of staff, customers, suppliers, etc., that may provide further evidence of the work and interaction with different people during the placement.
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The above may act as a further guide for the final evaluation session with the student. Many work experience/extended work placement providers even use the opportunity to discuss with the student further work with the company, subject to availability and the suitability of the candidate.

### 3. Induction

Work experience students need to have an identified member of staff who can act as a support or mentor throughout their placement. This person may be a manager, a section leader or another person in the team who has a caring attitude and can relate well to the student when they start and throughout the placement.

The first activity when a student starts their work experience/extended work placement should be an Induction. In addition to the general information about the organisation, its work and its staff, the Induction should cover details such as Health & Safety and rules and regulations. If a company brochure, organisation chart or procedures are available you may wish to provide a pack of information for the student.

Below is an example of an Induction Checklist that the manager and student can work through together:

<b>General:</b>			
New employee welcomed		Codes of conduct	
Introduction to line managers/mentor		Sickness/lateness procedures	
Confirm placement schedule		All relevant paperwork completed	
Standard of work expected		Aspects of customer service	
Timekeeping, reporting procedures		Aspects of client confidentiality	
<b>Tour of the organisation:</b>			
Staff room and toilets		Staff canteen/ meal breaks	
Storage of personal belongings		Telephone facilities	
Staff entrances and exits		Guest areas	
<b>The Business:</b>			
Brief history of the business		Current business, products and services	
Organisational structure, departments, job roles and key staff names		Career & job opportunities	
<b>Health, Safety, Hygiene, Fire:</b>			
Safety hazards (general and particular departments)		Fire – prevention, exits, evacuation procedures	
Health risks – dangerous substances, equipment		Safety rules (uniform, protective clothing)	
First aid – boxes, procedures, accident reports		Dangers of loose clothing/ hair etc.	
General housekeeping		Safety representatives	

## 4. Work Shadowing

Work shadowing is where a student 'shadows' an individual employee going about his or her normal activities and provides the student with an insight into the role of an employee, allowing them to witness the member of staff within an occupational setting.

It is important that shadowing is utilised effectively, so that the member of staff is able to work with as little disruption as possible and that the student is able to oversee the role of the employee in a stimulating way.

Shadowing can also relate to matters of company business and the student being present at meetings and training (where possible and appropriate). Some meetings will be confidential and sensitive in nature. Therefore, it would be ideal to explain to the student why they cannot attend at these times, although their inclusion at any other times would add to their experience and aid their understanding of the world of work.

## 5. Working Conditions

Different workplaces have different things that can harm people called hazards. Some examples are listed below:

- Chemical substances
- Dust and fumes
- Excessive noise
- Moving vehicles
- Moving parts in machinery
- Electricity
- Extremes of heat/cold
- Work at height
- Animals
- Biological substances, e.g. waste products from animals and plant poisons
- Repetitive movements
- Uneven floors
- Stress/harassment/bullying

### **STUDENT ACTIVITY:**

- Are any aspects of the work dangerous? If so what are they, and how is safety maintained?
- Who is qualified to carry out first aid? Write down their name(s) and where they can be found below.
- Complete a plan of your workplace on a separate piece of paper (or a computer) and produce a hazard map showing which hazards are present in different areas.
- Create a symbol for each hazard and draw them on the plan, with a key to explain what each symbol means.
- The plan should show all safety equipment, e.g. fire extinguishers, fire exits, escape routes, first aid boxes, signs, etc.