

WORK EXPERIENCE GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

HOW TO FIND, SECURE AND EXCEL IN YOUR FIRST PLACEMENT.

WHAT IS WORK EXPERIENCE?

A placement with an employer where you carry out a range of tasks in much the same way as an employee, with the emphasis on learning from the experience. Work experience provides opportunities to learn about the skills, behaviours, careers, roles and structures that exist within a workplace.

HOW DO YOU BENEFIT FROM WORK EXPERIENCE?

Work experience supports you to make career decisions, develop employability skills and supports successful transition into college, university, apprenticeships and the workplace. Taking part in work experience can help you:

- Build your confidence by trying new tasks and responsibilities.
- Develop your communication skills by working with professionals.
- Improve time management and organisational skills.
- Gain new skills such as problem solving, team working and practical workplace skills.
- Learn about different job roles and how businesses operate.

HOW DO YOU FIND A WORK EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT?

If your school is working with EBP South, You will:

- Have access to our database to help search for employers.
- Have an own placement form, if you want to find your own.

You will have a work experience co-ordinator in school who can help you.

Before you start your placement.

- You SHOULD ALWAYS contact your placement as soon as you have confirmation.
- It is also good practice to contract your placement again nearer the start date.
- We recommend that you do a little research on the employer beforehand.



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Questions you could ask the employer:

- What are your start times and finish times?
- Who do you report to on the first day?
- What is the dress code? Do you need to bring a change of clothing?
- Do you need to provide your own Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as safety boots?
- Do you need to take anything extra with you?
- What are your lunch arrangements (packed lunch, drinks, money to buy lunch)?

WHAT YOUR TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS?

It is your responsibility to get to and from the placement.

You should:

- Be aware of how you are getting to your placement.
- Ensure you know and understand any timetables for public transport and the costs.
- Consider any potential problems with travel i.e. roadworks, public transport strikes.
- Have a backup plan for your method of travel in case of an unexpected scenario i.e. bicycle has a flat tyre.

WHAT ABOUT HEALTH AND SAFETY?

At the start of the placement, you should receive an induction, which as a minimum, should include:

- Tour of the workplace area/premises.
- Fire procedures.
- First aid arrangements.
- Prohibited tasks and/or areas.
- Requirements for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).



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WHAT ABOUT HEALTH AND SAFETY?

While on placement you must take responsibility for your own health and safety and help keep those around you safe. Always follow workplace rules and instructions, use equipment correctly, and tell your supervisor about any accidents, hazards, or concerns.

WHAT IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN ON A PLACEMENT?

If something happens during your placement that makes you feel unsafe, uncomfortable, or worried, speak to your supervisor.

You should also contact your school work experience co-ordinator as soon as possible. Never keep concerns to yourself. There will always be someone available to help and support you.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE GOING TO BE LATE OR ABSENT?

If you are going to be late or cannot attend your placement:

- Contact your workplace as soon as possible and explain the reasons why.
- Tell them your expected arrival time or return date.
- Inform your school on the same day.

WHAT IS THE MOBILE PHONE AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY?

Your placement provider will explain their rules on mobile phone and social media use. Some may allow phone use during breaks, while others may not allow mobile phones during working hours. You must follow the rules of your placement.

Please note that mobile phones are not permitted in some settings, such as schools and childcare environments, due to safeguarding requirements. Inappropriate use of mobile phones or social media, including posting about your placement without permission, may result in your placement being ended.



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WHAT ARE THE WORKING HOURS AND WHAT DO I GET PAID?

You should not work for more than 5 days in any consecutive seven-day period, and it is a requirement that students should not work more than a standard eight-hour day or forty hours in a week. This will include appropriate breaks. You will be informed of the exact times of the placement by your employer.

You will not be paid whilst on placement, as it is an educational experience, not employment.

WHAT SHOULD BE MY PLACEMENT EXPECTATIONS?

Be open-minded. Your placement may be different from what you imagined, but remember every experience provides valuable skills and learning opportunities.

In some workplaces, especially higher-risk environments, you may spend more time observing and learning rather than carrying out tasks yourself.

Most placements follow normal workplace hours, which may be longer than a school day.

WHAT EXPECTATIONS DO THE EMPLOYERS HAVE?

You should:

- Have a positive attitude and show enthusiasm.
- Be polite and friendly.
- Follow instructions provided.
- Be punctual and reliable
- Be appropriately dressed for the placement.
- Ask questions if you are unsure about anything.
- Be willing to learn and try new tasks where appropriate.



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Positive Body Language:

- Making eye contact.
- Sitting up straight.
- Listening and paying attention.
- Keep hands out of pockets.
- Smiling and being approachable.

Negative Body Language

- Staring.
- Slouching in chair.
- Yawning and looking at the time.
- Crossed arms and legs.
- Leaning against wall.

HOW SHOULD I REFLECT ON MY PLACEMENT?

During your placement, it can be helpful to keep a diary of your experiences, the tasks you have completed, the skills you have developed, and any feedback you receive from your employer. This information will be useful when applying for college courses, apprenticeships, jobs, or preparing for interviews.

Remember, even if the placement was not what you expected or you did not enjoy it, this is still valuable. It can help you understand what careers may or may not be right for you and support you in making informed decisions about your future.

A positive attitude and good work ethic during your placement may also lead to a good reference from your employer in the future.

WHAT ARE THE TOP TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PLACEMENT?

- Arrive on time every day.
- Be polite and professional.
- Ask questions and show interest.
- Follow health and safety instructions.
- Take opportunities to learn new skills.
- Thank your employer at the end of the placement.
- Enjoy your work placement experience.

