

Health and Safety Office



Topic:	Work Experience Guidance Note
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Scope:	Guidance Note
Legislation:	Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 The Health and Safety (Training for Employment) Regulations 1990
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1) Introduction

Scope:

Work experience introduces young people to the work environment and can be a valuable part of their education. A well organised and structured placement will also give the young person a good grounding in working safely.

This guidance note gives advice to departments providing work experience placements for young persons at the University. Work experience placements may be arranged either via the young person's school or college, or directly with the University (e.g. through a friend or family member). The guidance has been written mainly for young persons; however the principles are the same for all work experience placements including those departments who provide work experience opportunities to adults.

Under health and safety legislation, the individual completing their work experience placement is considered to be an employee (even if the placement is unpaid). Departments are therefore required to provide them with the same health and safety protection as existing staff. Young persons on work experience are however considered to be at greater risk than University employees because of their possible lack of awareness of existing or potential risks, immaturity and inexperience. This guidance note provides information on what additional controls may need to be put in place before and during a work experience placement.

Definitions (for the purposes of this guide):

Work Experience: a placement on university premises where an individual carries out a particular task or duty, or a range of tasks or duties, more or less as an employee would, but with an emphasis on the learning aspects of the experience.

Young person: person under the age of 18.

MSLA: minimum school leaving age (just before or after their 16th birthday).

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2) Responsibilities:

Head of Department:

The Head of Department is responsible for ensuring that arrangements are in place to effectively manage work experience placements and that these arrangements are communicated to all staff in the department's local rules document. The Head of Department may appoint one or more Work Experience Supervisors who are competent and have an understanding of health and safety legislative requirements to manage the process. Supervisors need to be aware of any additional controls that may need to be instigated due to the possible immaturity and inexperience of participants, make informed decisions and know where to access further advice if required.

Work Experience Supervisor:

The work experience supervisor is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the work and tasks the young person is to carry out on their placement are well planned and that risk assessments have been produced for these activities. The Work Experience Supervisor may need to coordinate with the other members of staff that the individual will be spending time with during their placement,
- Ensuring that a risk assessment has been completed before the young person starts the work experience placement (taking into consideration the factors listed in [section 3](#) of this guide),
- Making the findings of the risk assessment (e.g. the level of risk, any prohibited tasks and control measures) available to the young person and the parents/guardian if under the MSLA. This process may be coordinated through the school,
- Providing information relating to health and safety of the young person to third parties such as the young person's school or an agency carrying out safety checks on behalf of the school or college,
- Arranging the day to day supervision of the young person,
- Ensuring the young person has received induction training and that it has been fully understood,
- Considering if there are any areas in the workplace that the young person should not have access to and ensuring these areas are inaccessible,
- Ensuring that any necessary child protection requirements are met (see [section 7](#) of this guidance note for more information),

- Reporting any accidents or near misses involving the young person as per the department rules. The school/college or the parent of the young person will also need to be informed of any accident,
- Reporting any problems during the placement immediately to the school/college and being involved in any decision on whether the work experience placement should continue, and
- Liaising with the Department Safety Advisor (DSA) and / or the Health and Safety Office as necessary.

School or college responsibilities (where applicable):

The school or college where the young person is studying retains a general duty of care towards the work experience student whilst at the University and therefore must ensure as far as possible that the workplace their student is attending has suitable safety management systems in place. Prior to the placement starting, the department may receive a visit or a questionnaire asking for details of health and safety arrangements. If you have any queries regarding completion of questionnaires, please contact your Departmental Safety Advisor or the Health and Safety Office for guidance.

Young person:

The young person on a work experience placement has responsibilities that must be outlined to them on induction. The responsibilities of the young person include:

- Following the rules and procedures outlined in their induction training,
- Not to do anything that would endanger their own or other's safety (e.g. use equipment that the student has not been trained to use, or access unauthorised areas),
- Immediately reporting accidents and near misses to their supervisor, and
- To ask their supervisor for help if there is anything they are unsure of or do not understand

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3) Risk assessment

The risk assessment for a work activity involving a young person may not be any different to that for an adult employee carrying out the same task. However in some cases extra controls may be required.

5 steps to carrying out a work experience risk assessment:

- 1. Identify the hazards** in the workplace. The hazards will be as per your employee risk assessment however, the risks may be greater for young persons due to their immaturity and inexperience. For example from work involving manual handling and ionising radiation. Young persons also may find using equipment designed for adults more difficult due to their physical size and strength. Prohibited activities for young persons are detailed in [section 4](#) of this guidance.
- 2. Decide who might be harmed and how.** Consider not only the work experience student, but other employees, visitors and the public (if appropriate). Consider

whether there are any students that require special arrangements including those with disabilities or medical conditions such as colour blindness or epilepsy.

3. **Consider the risks.** Are the precautions already in place adequate to control with the risks? If not, consider what additional/alternative control measure can be put in place. These could include:
 - Induction training and task specific training
 - Issuing the work experience student with protective equipment
 - Prohibiting certain tasks or activities if the risk cannot be adequately controlled
 - Ensuring the work experience student is adequately supervised.
4. **Record the findings.** Record your risk assessment findings for any significant risks identified. Have a procedure in place that ensures that the young person and if necessary, their parent(s) or guardian(s) are made aware of the findings of the risk assessment.
5. **Review the risk assessment.** Review the risk assessment regularly for example if any significant changes take place, following an accident / incident or any concerns being raised. Any review should make sure existing control measures are adequate and check if any additional controls are needed.

If your department offers work experience placements regularly to young persons, you may wish to have a generic risk assessment for this area. There is no need for you to carry out a new risk assessment each time you employ a young person, as long as your current risk assessment takes account of the characteristics of young people and activities which present significant risks to their health and safety.

For more information, and an example risk assessment please see [Appendix A](#). Please note that this is not a full risk assessment and **you must add to, and alter the information in the example to reflect your event and the hazards involved.**

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4) Prohibited activities:

Generally, a young person should not carry out any work which:

- Is beyond their physical or psychological capacity
- Exposes them to substances that are toxic, carcinogenic or chronically harmful to human health
- Exposes them to radiation likely to exceed the occupational dose limit set for members of the public
- Involves a risk of accidents which they are unlikely to recognise for example due to their lack of experience, training or attention to safety
- Involves a risk to their health from extreme heat, noise or vibration

Further detail on the risks to young persons and the requirements of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations are available at;

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/risks/index.htm#ywd>

Young people who are **over** the MSLA can do this work under very special circumstances, which are:

- the work is necessary for their training
- the work is properly supervised by a competent person; and
- the risks are reduced to the lowest level, so far as is reasonably practicable

There are risks associated with specific processes including the use of wood working machines, power presses and mechanical lifting operations. Further details are available at; (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/law/prohibitions/index.htm>).

Work experience placements involving catering should give careful consideration to the tasks the young person is permitted to carry out. A young person under the MSLA should not be allowed to use or clean dangerous machinery (e.g. food mixers, slicers, potato chippers, fat fryers, waste compactors or food processors). Young persons aged 16 years or over may do so, provided they have been trained or are supervised by a competent person. For more information see the Health and Safety Executive's guidance on safety for young person's working in catering (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/cais21.pdf>).

5) Monitoring and supervision

Young persons on work experience will require a high level of supervision. The actual level of supervision needed will depend on the hazards identified by the risk assessment, the work being carried out and the individual's capabilities. The young person should not be lone working in the department at any time.

Certain tasks may only be carried out under supervision whilst other tasks may be so hazardous that after risk assessment, it is decided a young person can not undertake this kind of work. It is worth noting that each individual is different and maturity levels can vary greatly between young persons of the same age.

The University's insurance policy covers young persons whilst on work experience. Please contact the Insurance Office if there are any specific questions regarding the University's insurance policy.

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6) Induction Training

An induction of a young person on work experience should include the following information:

- Supervisory arrangements for the placement including contact details of the supervisor(s)
- Familiarisation with the workplace including a building and precinct map if needed
- Emergency procedures (including fire alarms, fire safety procedures and first aid and accident reporting arrangements)
- Local safety rules (e.g. areas where access is not allowed or restricted)
- Significant findings from the risk assessment
- Any prohibited activities
- Any personal protective equipment that must be worn (including how to use and look after it)
- Security arrangements and any confidentiality requirements of the work
- Working hours (a maximum of an 8 hour working day is recommended)

- Any other information required to ensure the health and safety of the individual undertaking work experience

The work experience student should be informed that any problems during the placement will be reported immediately to the school and a joint decision will be made on whether the work experience placement should continue.

Records must be kept of the induction training provided and also any additional training that may also be required to carry out certain tasks and activities. The University general induction form can be used or adapted for work experience, and can be found on the staff development website

(<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/staffdevelopment/documents/induction-template.doc>).

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7) Child protection

Depending on the duration and frequency that your department offers work experience placements to young persons, the placement may need to meet the requirements of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. Please refer to University Secretary's Office guide on safeguarding (<http://www.bris.ac.uk/secretary/legal/cppolicy.html>) for further information.

8) Useful information

Bristol University links:

- Health and Safety Office website: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/safety/policy/responsibilities/managers/>
- University Safeguarding policy: <http://www.bris.ac.uk/secretary/legal/cppolicy.html>
- Personnel Services and Staff development information on work experience: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/personnel/policies/WorkExp.html>
- General risk assessment guidance: <https://www.bris.ac.uk/safety/policy/cop/riskassessmentcop.pdf>
- Lone working: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/safety/guidance/gn97-3.html>
- Insurance: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/insurance/>

Department for Education and Skills guidance:

- Work Experience: a Guide for Employers: <http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/1471-2005PDF-EN-01.pdf>

Independent Safeguarding Authority information:


- ISA and child protection information: <http://www.isa.gov.org.uk/Default.aspx?page=0>

Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website:

- <http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/index.htm>
- <http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/risks/index.htm#ywd>

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10) Appendix A: Example of a work experience risk assessment: This example risk assessment is based on a work experience placement in an office environment. You can use this as the basis for your own risk assessment, and add or modify to suit your department and the work being undertaken.

		University of Bristol Risk Assessment : Work Experience Placements				
		Department: Health and Safety Office	Risk Assessment Completed by: Jessica Vance	Date: 18 th Feb 2010		
Hazard location and Description	Who might be harmed	Existing Control Measures	A. Likely severity of injury (1 to 3)	B. Likely Occurrence (1 to 3)	Risk Rating (A) x (B)	Comments / Actions
Injury from manual handling (lifting / carrying heavy items)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work experience student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Induction training covers manual handling risks and controls that are in place including the location of the trolley Instruction given that the student must use manual handling equipment (trolley) to move heavy items Supervision of work experience student whilst handling loads 	2	1	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure induction is completed on 1st day
Fire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work experience student University staff Visitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student has received induction training covering fire safety measures in the building, fire exits and the assembly point Student carefully supervised to ensure work does not pose any additional fire hazards. Student will be closely monitored and will not be left alone in the building Work experience supervisor takes the responsibility of checking that the student has left the building in an emergency School work experience teachers will be supervised whilst on a monitoring visit Any disabilities discussed with the student prior to attending for work experience any necessary arrangements put in place. Induction explained non smoking rules of the University 	3	1	3	
Access / entry to unauthorised / hazardous areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work experience student University staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Induction training covers hazards within the department and areas with restricted access Signage in hazardous / restricted areas Hazardous / restricted areas locked to prevent unauthorised access Supervision of work experience student 	3	1	3	
SIGNED						

Score	3	2	1
Column A: Severity of Injury:	Major Injury or death	Injury requiring medical treatment	Minor or no injury
Column B: Likely Occurrence:	Regular exposure of several employees to hazard.	Occasional exposure of few employees.	Exposure to hazard very rare.

Risk = Hazard Severity (A) x Likelihood of Occurrence (B)

Risk Score	Response Times	Risk Score	Response Times
9	Immediate cessation of activity until interim controls are agreed and implemented	3-5	Provide additional training, supervision and monitoring. Review on change of process or if circumstances change and an annual review.
6-8	Critically examine the areas of exposure in the process and agree timetable for completion of all agreed actions	<3	12 months review (date of next audit). No real changes in procedure required to reduce risk further

