

Work Experience

HANDBOOK FOR EMPLOYERS 2025/2026

Thank you for providing our students with the opportunity to experience the world of work. We hope that the following information and guidance will be of use to you.

Benefits of Work Experience

Employers

- **Access to talented students:** offering work placements can be a way to access the local labour market and explore a pool of talent that you may not otherwise have considered.
- **Development of staff:** supervising and coaching students on work experience can develop the capabilities of staff, especially those who do not normally have any line management responsibilities.
- **Engagement with your local community:** investors, the media and consumers tend to favour ethical employers who have a positive public image. Work experience placements can enhance your image in the community, by addressing some of the social issues related to youth unemployment.

Students

- **Breaking the vicious cycle that students can find themselves in** - many students find they can't get a job due to a lack of experience and can't get experience because they can't find a job. The offer of a structured work placement programme that reflects working life is crucial if students are to secure meaningful employment.
- **Access to constructive feedback and coaching and mentoring from employers** which will help students to develop job-specific and sector-specific skills.
- **Allowing students to experience different job roles and organisational cultures**, will help them make better informed choices about their futures. Working alongside experienced staff helps to improve the communication skills of students and encourages professional behaviour.
- **Receiving a positive experience of the world of work** will build the students confidence and motivation.
- **Helping to strengthen their CVs and develop a network of useful contacts**

Work Experience Planning/Induction

For most students, a work placement with you will be a new experience. At the start of the placement, it is useful for the student to receive an induction to your organisation and information about the workplace requirements. This could cover topics like its history, products and services, culture and values, and organisation structure. In addition, the names of staff that the student may need to contact.

When you induct students, explain the risks and how they are controlled, checking that they understand what they have been told. A tour of your facilities – including work areas, letting the student know where they can get food and refreshments from (within the building or locally), the location of toilets, first aid facilities and fire exits, and evacuation procedures in case of a fire. Please give the student a brief overview of what the day-to-day duties that they will be responsible for (including any projects to be worked on).

If work experience is to be mutually beneficial, it is important that the student is given as much of an insight into the world of work as possible. We would ask employers to prepare a plan for the work placement and what they expect of the student. Often employers tell us students have been useful to them when they work on specific projects. It is important that the student has a positive and encouraging experience, so please be prepared to be non-judgemental and demonstrate patience and understanding - you are helping a student take a significant step towards employment.

Good management and supervision will help the student to develop more quickly. As their confidence increases, they will be able to play a positive role within the organisation.

Mentoring

Usually organisations allocate a member of staff to supervise the student. This member of staff often acts as their mentor and helps them to adjust and respond to the needs of the workplace. The member of staff can provide advice and further objective feedback. Alternatively, it could be a junior member of the team (keen to develop their skills) who can offer valuable support to the student.

Progress Reviews

We recommend having regular conversations with the student reflecting on their progress. There may well be areas identified for development during the placement, or issues that arise for a student who may not have prior experience of the workplace. It is important to discuss and address any issues to maximise the student's learning from the placement.

At the end of the placement, it is good practice to arrange a final review with the student. During the review, example questions could include:

- What have you learned and how have you developed during this work experience?
- How well have you met your objectives for the work placement?
- What do you see as your strengths and are there any areas for improvement or further development?
- What have been your biggest/ proudest achievements during the work placement?
- What specific projects have you contributed to?
- In what ways are you better prepared for the jobs market after completing this work experience?

There are several things that you can relay back to the student as part of this discussion:

- How well do you think they have performed (in general and/or on specific projects)?
- What areas of development do you suggest that they concentrate on in future jobs?
- We also recommend asking them what feedback they have for your organisation in terms of how well the work experience was run and how this could be improved in future.

Recruitment

We want all our students to have the best opportunities to find employment on completion of their courses. We are happy for employers to invite the students to apply for vacancies which might arise but would ask employers to find out when the students are due to complete their qualifications.

Insurance

Employers' Liability Insurance covers all employees, including students on temporary work placements. Employers won't need to pay additional premiums for providing work experience placements to students and there are no additional forms to complete.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks

Employers do not have to carry out a DBS check on anyone they are taking for a work placement. From September 2013 employers no longer need to carry out a DBS check for staff supervising student aged 16 or 17 on work experience. WQE can organise for a DBS check if the employer or student requires it.

Welfare and Safeguarding

WQE are committed to the welfare and safeguarding of our students.

Your 'welcome email' will include the following documents and information

- Keeping Children Safe In Education

We ask you to read, understand and accept the information in this document.

If students have any existing medical conditions or other concerns that could affect the placement, WQE in partnership with Leicestershire Education Business Company (LEBC) will undertake an individual assessment for the student. We will communicate the outcomes of this process to employers if required.

If you have any concerns or are worried about a student, please contact a member of staff at WQE as soon as possible (details are in the 'contact' section below)

Incidents

Occasionally, during a student's placement issues can arise. If you require any support or guidance, please do not hesitate to contact us. The following table for is for guidance only:

Incident	Proposed Action	Report Procedure
Attendance • Student does not attend • Issues re: punctuality	If the student does not attend, please contact the college. Discuss with the student (if possible) any issues that you have. Explain the reasons for this and how the student can improve. If the student does not improve, please contact the Work Experience Co-ordinator for guidance.	Notify the Work Experience Team via phone/email.
Behaviour		
Child Protection/safeguarding	See guidelines above	
Medical/Sickness whilst on placement	Contact First Aider/call for emergency assistance. Action as appropriate. Contact the students' parent/carers if required. Contact the Work Experience Co-ordinator.	Notify the Work Experience Team via phone/email.
On-site Accident	Follow your usual on-site procedure which should include the following: • Log incident in accident book • Notify RIDDOR	Notify the Work Experience Team ASAP. Forward a copy of all documents/ reports to

	WQE's Health & Safety Officer/Health and Safety consultants will attend the site of the incident as appropriate.	the Work Experience Co-ordinator.
Other Incidents	Follow as above	Follow as above
Travel	As appropriate	Notify the Work Experience Team via phone/email.

Contact

In the first Instance, please contact

Rebecca Hough 0116 2471147 workexperience@wqe.ac.uk
Work Experience Coordinator

Jeevan Chhokar 0116 2471147 workexperience@wqe.ac.uk
Work Experience Assistant

Kate O'Farrell 0116 2472982 kate.ofarrell@wqe.ac.uk
Careers Manager

Donna Trusler 0116 2471147 safeguarding@wqe.ac.uk
Associate Principal (Students & Welfare)

FOR SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS ONLY 0800 0614222

Please note this number is staffed Monday-Friday during College opening times (8.30 – 4.30 pm Monday – Thursday, 8.30 – 4pm Friday)

If you need to contact the college after 4.30pm, please use the out of hours contact details below which identify the member of staff , their mobile number and the weeks that they are covering.

TRIPS, VISITS AND WORK EXPERIENCE EMERGENCY CONTACT ROTA 2025/26

w/c 24/11/2025 Andrew Jackson 0788 047 3738

WQE commitment to Work Experience

Our aim is to make work experience rewarding for employers and meaningful and enjoyable for our students.

In partnership with employers, WQE will:

- Strive to meet the needs of individuals and businesses
- Effectively, manage, monitor and review all aspects of the work placement
- Monitor attendance, punctuality, commitment and quality of work the student produces whilst on their work placement
- Make contact with you and the students whilst they are on their work placement
- Provide a dedicated member of staff who will be the main contact point for the placement

Students will be expected to:

- Prepare well for the work placement and make contact with the employer as appropriate
- Be clear with their work placement about specific learning and skills requirements and agree these in advance with the employer
- Arrive every day on time. Students must phone the employer, the college and email the work experience team if they are unable to attend the placement or are going to be late
- Adhere to dress codes, working hours and conduct themselves in a professional manner
- Carry out the duties agreed by their manager at the organisation to the best of their ability
- Uphold WQE College's good reputation by presenting themselves always in a mature, professional and respectful manner
- Maintain the confidentiality of the employer at all times and will not divulge or exploit any private or confidential information
- Not use the employer's internet or email for private use, unless permission is given
- Adhere to the organisation's Equality Policy and treat colleagues and customers with dignity and respect, regardless of background
- Ask for advice, guidance and support when required and discuss any problems or issues with the appropriate member of staff

Employer Commitment to Work Experience:

- Agree the hours of work required and the duration prior to the placement
- Advise the student of the dress code required, expectations and guidance on professional conduct
- Provide a Health and Safety induction, full training on any software or equipment to be used
- Provide the student with a risk-assessed, safe, healthy and inclusive learning environment where all are treated with dignity and respect regardless of background
- Ensure the work placement is tailored to the student's needs and circumstances
- Ensure there is clarity about the role that the student plays in the organisation and provide information to WQE regarding the student's progress
- Introduce the student to the structure of working life; help them to learn and to develop a range of transferable skills, personal qualities and competencies which will contribute towards their employability
- Ensure success is celebrated and the student has an enjoyable and positive work experience that encourages them to become more confident in their abilities
- Encourage the student to relate their experiences and skills to the workplace and support them in making a more informed decision about their future. Provide them with open, honest and constructive feedback about what went well and what areas need to be improved and, if possible, advice on how to do this.