



DORSET CAREERS HUB

WORK EXPERIENCE TOOLKIT FOR PARENTS

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- Guidelines & Benefits of Work Experience
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FORMS & CHECKLIST

- Verify company has current Employers' Liability Insurance in place
- Employer H&S Declaration
- Parent Consent Form
- Evaluation Form



INTRODUCTION

This toolkit helps to resolve concerns and remove question marks around work experience, including finding placements, safeguarding and the law. The process is simpler than you think, and we aim to reassure you that the risks are negligible. The benefits and impact of work experience clearly outweigh the perceived barriers. With this resource, support from the school/college, and your input, you can help your young person to find their next best step.



GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES

Government Statutory Guidance to schools and colleges notes that schools 'should' deliver seven meaningful experiences of the workplace with employers during the 11-18 phases of education.

There is usually no cost to the student, although some schools may ask for a token amount to cover administration.

BENEFITS OF WORK EXPERIENCE

Introducing students to the workplace can help them in many ways:

- Choose future careers
- Understand the work environment
- Prepare for employment
- Raise aspirations
- Increase self-confidence

The many benefits of work placements outweigh any concerns.



CHALLENGES

- Work placement arrangements are too often seen as complicated and time consuming.
- H&S and safeguarding compliance is often mis-interpreted, causing a major, but removable barrier.
- The pandemic has brought fresh challenges with many companies and industry sectors reducing the number of placements they used to offer due to economic and logistical factors.
- The 'work from home' movement will continue to have a negative impact on the volume of in-person work placements available.
- Some parents and carers are anxious about their young person being in unfamiliar surroundings.



STUDENT SAFETY

In June 2013, the government simplified the rules regarding health and safety guidance for those taking part in work experience. The insurance industry now treats students as employees, who are therefore covered by existing Employers' Liability Compulsory Insurance policies, as long as the insurer is a member of the Association of British Insurers.



The Facts

- You/the school does not need to assess every workplace.
- A Health & Safety consultant is only needed for high-risk environments.
- You/the school must see and verify the company's current employers' liability certificate.
- For a low-risk environment, such as an office or shop, with everyday risks that are familiar to the student, simply speaking with an employer to confirm details should be enough.
- For environments with less familiar, or obvious higher risks - e.g. in manufacturing, construction, near water etc - you/the school should talk to the employer to find out what the student will be doing and ask for a risk assessment document that confirms the employer has arrangements for managing risks. This will need to include induction, training, supervision, site familiarisation, and any protective equipment that might be needed.
- Understand that checks will be in made proportion to the environment.
- Although the placement might be in a higher-risk environment, the work the student is doing and the surroundings they are working in may not be, for example it could be in a separate office area.
- Do not seek additional paperwork for assurance purposes, this could deter an employer.



FINDING PLACEMENTS

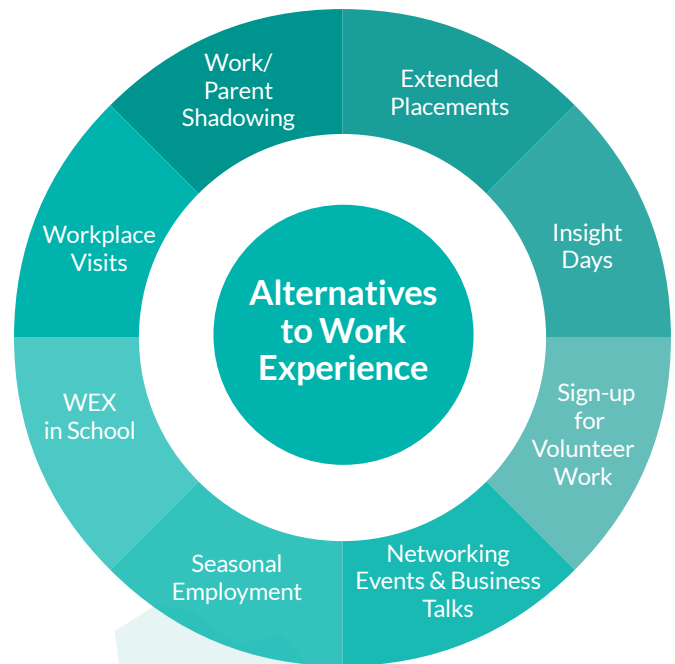
- Talk to your child and help them identify ideal jobs and companies.
- Encourage your child to find a placement that matches their interests and aspirations and can help them to develop the skills they need.
- Start looking early, it can take time to secure a placement.
- The best approach is email for an office or private company; you could visit a shop or hospitality setting.
- Prepare together what to say or write. Present the benefits to the company, highlight some skills or personality traits, and interests, in line with the industry you are applying to.
- Ensure a professional approach, first impressions count.
- Approach multiple employers to maximise your chances.
- Be brave, ask personal contacts who can hold the key.
- Take advantage of support and contacts the school can provide.
- Be flexible on dates, consider working in school holidays.
- Follow-up a few days after the first contact.
- Keep an open mind to any opportunity offered.



PREPARATION & EXPECTATIONS

Your child should:

- Identify what they want to get from the placement.
- Make contact before the start date to agree dates/times.
- Make transport arrangements and check timings.
- Dress appropriately and behave professionally.
- Listen clearly to the induction and follow instructions.
- Be enthusiastic and get involved when in the workplace.
- Thank the employer at the end of the work experience period, to ensure they get a reference and repeat offers for future students.
- Make your child aware of safeguarding rules from the school and how to report it in the unlikely event of anything that might seem inappropriate or harmful occurring.
- Complete a diary and work experience questionnaire if requested from school.



CONCLUSIONS

- Work experience is a government requirement and can have a positive impact on young peoples' futures.
- Health & Safety is everyone's top priority. Employers' liability insurance covers students on placement.
- Be proactive and target businesses, friends, family, and neighbours.
- Be open minded and flexible in terms of offers and dates to maximise opportunities.
- Make good use of time in the workplace and ask questions.
- Experience in the workplace raises aspirations, increases confidence, and improves prospects.



If you would like any more information please get in touch

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