

Brine Leas School

An Academy

BL6 WORK EXPERIENCE POLICY

BACKGROUND

As part of our 16-19 Programmes of Study, all students aged 16-19 are expected to follow a study programme tailored to their prior attainment and future career aspirations. Students at Brine Leas will spend most of their time studying for 3 or 4 substantial qualifications as 'qualification activity'; a significant proportion will be spent as 'non-qualification activity' that includes Work Experience. In a minority of cases Work Experience may become a more substantial element of a particular student's programme of study. This policy takes into consideration the governmental advice to deliver work experience published in March 2015.

AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

The aim of work experience is to enable students to enhance their employability skills through gaining real experiences and knowledge of the workplace'. BL6 study programmes will incorporate a range of 'non-qualification' activities designed to promote enterprise and entrepreneurial skills. Such work related experiences, counted as 'non-qualification activity', may include:-

- Work experience and/or voluntary work.
- Work place visits – for groups of students interested in particular employment sectors.
- Enterprise projects – local employers set real business briefs for students to solve and present back to the employer after a set period.
- Mentoring – employers providing one-to-one encouragement and support to students.
- Work shadowing – giving students the opportunity to observe staff in real working environments
- Careers workshops/talks – employer led discussions with students about the realities of work, and the employment and training environment

The common principles of a high quality work experience placement are that it:-

- Is purposeful, substantial, offers challenge and is relevant to the young person's study programme and career aspirations.
- Is managed under the direction of a supervisor to ensure the young person obtains a genuine learning experience suited to their needs.
- Has a structured plan for the duration of the placement which provides tangible outcomes of the student and employer.
- Focuses on the skills required for that occupational sector.
- Has clear roles, responsibilities and expectations for the student and employer
- Is followed by some form of reference or feedback from the employer based on the young person's performance.

Work experience must be purposeful and planned. It should give students the opportunity to develop vocational and employability skills in real working conditions.

This will help students to decide on future careers or study options and at 16+ years students are better placed to begin preparation for progression into employment or higher education. Therefore, it is important to assess the individual needs of students and to ensure that the opportunities to engage in work experience present appropriate level of challenge.

High quality work experience must meet the following criteria:

1. The work experience is directly relevant to the student's study programme with pre-determined outcomes. For example,
 - a. focus solely on a particular vocational area to contribute directly to a Study Programme
 - b. spread into a variety of work places to test out vocational ideas connected to future study or employment options.
2. The work experience is planned, explicit in the student's learning plan or timetable, supervised and/or organised by a member of staff; and
3. Take place normally within the Sixth Forms normal working pattern; this includes out of hours working if the sector demands it e.g. retail, hospitality, agriculture etc, although before this is implemented, a member of staff must be available to visit the student on placement.

Work experience may take place within Brine Leas School although they should progress towards external work experience at the earliest possibility. Volunteering can also provide work experience if it takes place outside of BL6 and the student is supervised by staff working for a voluntary organisation. However, it must meet the criteria outlined above.

RESPONSIBILITY OF BL6 STAFF

The overall responsibility is to oversee the planning, timetabling, and organisation/supervision of work experience by undertaking the following:-

1. Progress tutors guide students towards relevant work experience during their 1:1 progress meetings. Clear educational and training goals of the placement must be set using the forms provided. This documentation must be stored with the student's Individual Learner Record.
2. Progress tutors inform the Sixth Form administration of the planned work experience and its goals.
3. The Sixth Form administration obtain a written agreement between the student and provider the following: the timing and duration of work experience; expectations on student conduct whilst on placement; and the role of the employer in providing supervision and training to ensure work is meaningful, for example purposeful, offers challenge, structured, supervised, etc; and the need to provide a reference. This agreement could be via email or letter.
4. Prior to the work placement the Sixth Form administration obtains assurances from the provider they have assessed the risks to students on their premises and put in measures to mitigate these risks.
5. The Sixth Form administration updates timetables for the duration of each work experience or voluntary work using the appropriate coding.
6. The Sixth Form administration track the work experience/voluntary work of all students on a summary spreadsheet connected to students Individual Learner Record and Planned Learning Hours.
7. Progress tutors to ensure students have evidenced their outcomes and obtained a reference from the provider.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT

1. Pre-determine a time frame when the work experience can take place e.g. once a week for the duration of the term or a block placement.
2. Obtain external references for their performance on work experience from the place of business and/or customers.
3. Evidence the outcomes, including the assessment of their employability skills and vocational and personal effectiveness (punctuality, attendance and behaviour), obtained from their experience.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Employers who already employ young people under the age of 18 do not need to repeat risk assessments if they offer work experience placements.
- Repeat assessments are not required for each successive work experience student where an employer regularly takes them on.

RISK ASSESSMENTS

It is important to note, the Sixth Form must be satisfied that students are working in a safe environment when on work experience or whilst volunteering. However:-

- The employer is responsible for the H&S of students whilst on placement. They need to review their risk assessments to ensure the risks to students have been considered.
- The Sixth Form must be satisfied the employer has assessed the risks to students on their premises and put in measures to mitigate these risks. Assurances can be gained through conversation with the employer, forms are not needed. However, the Sixth Form must be confident the employer has put in place measures to manage the associated risks in their work place, prior to the placement as described in the HSE's guidance.

EXTERNAL INSPECTION OF WORK EXPERIENCE

1. Outcomes for students: work experience should contribute to the students' overall development through considering how well they can develop their employability and vocational skills and personal effectiveness (e.g. attendance, attitudes, punctuality, behaviour) in relation to their starting points while on work experience.
2. Teaching, learning and assessment: students should be supported to achieve in the very different learning environment of work experience, the extent to which tasks are challenging will be considered along with the frequency of detailed and accurate feedback on their progress.
3. Leadership and management: the extent to which the provision of work experience is valuable will be considered and how it fits into the other aspect of their study programmes.

CHANGES TO THE LAW

A number of changes to the law have taken place to facilitate work experience:-

1. A civil action for breach of health and safety legislation may only be brought where it has been proved that the employer has been negligent.
2. Work experience students are covered by existing Employers' Liability Compulsory Insurance policies. If an organisation only has Public Liability Insurance, they will need

to obtain temporary Employer Liability Compulsory Insurance for the duration of the work placement – this may be the case for volunteering work.

3. Providers are no longer required to carry out enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services check on employers/staff supervising 16-17 year olds on work experience.

However, for young people intending to undertake work experience in the Health Care and Early Years sector, they will need to have an enhanced DBS check before starting on their placement. It can take up to 4 weeks to complete an application.

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