

Workplace Learning Procedures

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS/CARERS

Version 2.0 July 2024

To be issued to parents and carers without alteration.

When signing the *Workplace Learning Agreement Form*, parents and carers certify that they have read and understood this document.

Referenced against the *Workplace Learning Procedures* (2024) Published date: July 2024.

WORKPLACE LEARNING

Workplace learning is the term which encompasses activities prior to, during and after work placements, reflecting the benefits of the diverse environments in which students learn.

Workplace learning includes work placement and helps students to learn in a workplace without the direct supervision of a teacher, where they will have opportunities to observe a variety of work as well as undertake supervised work appropriate to their age, maturity, capability and skill level.

Workplace learning provides students with valuable opportunities to develop employability skills, knowledge and attitudes in the context of real work environments. It is also a chance for them to learn outside of the classroom.

Work placements can help young people to learn about what employers expect, what responsibilities workers have and help them to make decisions about their future career options.

There are two types of workplace learning:

- Structured Workplace Learning (SWL)
- Work Experience

FOUR WAYS STUDENTS MAY BE INVOLVED

Workplace learning undertaken by students must be linked to their school curriculum and is governed by the Workplace Learning Procedures (2024).

Structured workplace learning (SWL)

This is linked to a Vocational Education and Training (VET) program being undertaken by the student. This program may be provided on the job, by a teacher or trainer in a school, or by a registered training organisation.

SWL will often require additional assessment to meet VET qualification needs.

Work experience

Involves the student taking part in a short-term industry placement, which will enhance their understanding of a work environment and may help them investigate a career.

Virtual work experience

Involves students undertaking online simulated work tasks, where students engage directly with an employer. Activities that do not directly engage with an employer are not covered by the Workplace Learning Procedures (2024).

Work trial leading to apprenticeships and traineeships for school students

Involves students undertaking placement with an employer who is offering either a school-based or full-time apprenticeship /traineeship. Work trials for the purposes of employment that are not linked to an apprenticeship or traineeship, are not covered by the Workplace Learning Procedures (2024) and cannot be endorsed by the school.

EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

The safety and wellbeing of students undertaking workplace learning is our highest priority. Work placements differ from other activities and must be ultimately approved by the school. To make the time spent on a work site a valuable learning experience students are required to:

- negotiate their work placement with their school

- arrange the completion of the *Workplace Learning Agreement Form* and promptly return it to the school
- complete the school's program of workplace preparation
- participate in a work-site specific induction when commencing their placement
- follow all workplace rules and instructions from their workplace supervisor and ask questions/clarification when unsure
- remember that while on work placement students are representing their school, therefore school policies and codes of conduct apply
- complete activities set by the school before, during and following the placement
- understand that the work placement may involve confidential and sensitive information that must be kept private
- wear appropriate clothing and/or footwear, protective clothing, uniform as instructed by the work placement provider
- ask for feedback from the work placement provider at the end of the placement and thank them.

YOUR ROLE AS A PARENT/CARERS

You can help with your student's understanding of workplace safety rights and responsibilities before and during their work placement by asking them about their learning at school, their induction into the workplace, by talking about health and safety and by sharing your own workplace health and safety experiences. The school is required to assess each individual student's suitability for their chosen workplace and the level of risk associated with it prior to approving a placement.

As a parent/carers the below points should be considered before giving your permission. Young workers are more likely to be injured at work than any other age group because they:

- don't have the experience, knowledge and skills to fully understand the risks involved in new tasks
- are still developing physically and emotionally and may be confronted by tasks beyond their current capabilities
- may be in an environment where the level of supervision and guidance they receive is less than they are used to at school
- may be asked to do work for which they are not properly trained
- may not be fully aware of their rights and responsibilities in terms of workplace health and safety and may also lack confidence in asserting their rights.

If you have any concerns about the placement, please discuss these immediately with the school.

Once you are satisfied with arrangements, please give your permission by completing Section 3.3 of the *Workplace Learning Agreement Form* promptly.

PREPARATION BEFORE A WORK PLACEMENT

Before young people start their work placement, the school will make sure the student has completed an appropriate program of workplace preparation that covers relevant key aspects of the:

- *Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA)*
- *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 (SA)*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA)*
- *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 (SA)*
- *Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)*

These Acts may be amended from time to time.

This preparation includes:

- the student's right to undertake their work placement in a safe environment
- the student's roles, responsibilities and rights related to work health and safety in the workplace
- insurance arrangements for the work placement
- the procedure to be followed if they experience illness, injury, unsafe workplace practices, bullying, teasing, violence, sexual harassment, or any other issue that makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable
- the purpose and goals of the work placement
- their particular requirements when working with children and vulnerable people
- any other specific requirements of the work placement provider.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What will the hours of work be?

Where possible the work placement should occur during the normal working hours for the industry in which the student is placed. If these working hours are unusual when compared with normal school hours, this will need to be negotiated between the work placement provider, the school and the student. This is particularly so if students are asked to work on weekends or during school holidays because the school still has a duty of care for their safety and wellbeing.

Travel

It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements in consultation with their parent/carer, for getting to and from the workplace.

Where travel in a work vehicle during work placement is required this will be noted on the *Workplace Learning Agreement Form* in Section 2.4 and permission needs to be provided in the parents/carer declaration in Section 3.3.

What about insurance?

All insurance, legal and industrial arrangements in relation to work placements exist on the understanding that an employment relationship is not established.

What about accommodation away from home during the work placement?

Students attending work placement who need accommodation away from home need to confirm the arrangements made by their parents/carer on the *Workplace Learning Agreement Form* before the placement. These circumstances must be noted by the student's principal, who will ensure that attention has been given to all aspects of the arrangements including travel and accommodation.

Are workplaces safe for students?

All students have the right to feel safe and free from harm at all times during workplace learning. Work placement providers are required to provide safe workplace learning sites for students. This includes responsibilities for work health and safety, and an environment free of harassment and bullying. Parents/carers should only sign the *Workplace Learning Agreement form*, if they consent to the arrangements outlined by the employer in the form. Parents/carers should contact their school if they have any concerns.

Can my child work with family?

Direct supervision by family is not recommended.

Working With Children Checks (WWCC)

Students undertaking work placements may be required to have a relevant Working with Children Check.

However, the school will provide information on how to apply for a WWCC if one is required.

Does my child need a relevant history screening?

Students need a Working with Children Check if they are in a 'prescribed position'. This includes students who are in paid or volunteering roles where it is reasonably foreseeable that they will work with children.

Students over the age of 14 may be required to obtain a Working with Children Check if the placement involves working with children.

Other relevant history screening checks may be required by employers eg in the Aged Care or Disability sectors.

Screening checks and other requirements for students undertaking placement

Workplace providers may require your student to undertake a screening check if placement involves working with children, elderly people, or other vulnerable people. Workplace providers may have other industry requirements (eg. vaccinations, white card training, Responding to Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care (RRHAN-EC) training), which must be undertaken prior to commencing the placement. Students should speak with their school to seek advice about screening checks and other requirements relevant to their work placement.

What about WWCC for work placement providers?

There is no legal obligation for personnel within workplaces to undergo WWCC when they host a student for work placement. Schools, however, are required to thoroughly prepare students undertaking work placements to recognise and manage potential risks.

What about work health and safety laws?

Students have the right to a safe and healthy workplace. Under the *Work Health & Safety Act 2012* employers must make sure the workplace is as safe as possible. This includes the provision of a site-specific induction for the student, safe use of machinery and equipment, training students as workers on safe work practices and providing personal protective equipment.

As part of the *Work Health & Safety Act 2012*, students as workers are also responsible for safety. They must take care of their own and other's safety by following health and safety instructions, using protective equipment as required, reporting workplace hazards and cooperating with the workplace provider on health and safety issues.

What if my child is involved in an accident or is injured at the site?

Students must report any accident or injury to their workplace provider as soon as possible, even if they think it is minor at the time. Schools must also be notified by the student and/or parent/carer as soon as possible.

If students are hurt at work they are covered by insurance as long as the *Workplace Learning Agreement Form* has been signed by all parties before they start in the workplace.

Students may not be covered if the injury or damage was the result of their negligence or failure to follow clear and reasonable instructions.

What if students are feeling uncomfortable about the work placement?

If students feel able, they should talk about their concern with the work placement supervisor. If the problem still continues or they do not feel comfortable talking with the work placement supervisor they should make contact with the teacher nominated by their school. Their contact details are listed on the *Workplace Learning Agreement Form*.

Does my child receive payment during work placement?

Workplace Learning has a clearly defined purpose and should not be confused with paid employment. Employers are not required to pay students any entitlements under the Fair Work Act. Schools need to be satisfied that its purpose is to support the student to gain skills and work towards their learning goals.

Students should not be undertaking the role of a paid employee, nor should they be exceeding the prescribed maximum number of work placement days.

Students should not be paid or receive any other reward as this may impact the school insurance arrangements.

For further information contact your school

