



# Work Placements

## Policy and Procedure

Updated 6/10/21



## **Scope of this document**

These are the categories of work experience supported by the College:

1. Where work experience is undertaken by students as an essential element of a course i.e. the student would not be able to gain the qualification aim if the work experience was not undertaken (e.g. Childcare, Health & Social Care).
2. Where work experience is undertaken by students as a valuable part of a course experience (e.g. Sport).
3. Where the work experience is undertaken by an individual student in addition to studies, either to help further career aspirations, or to develop personal skills.
4. Work experience undertaken during the College's Projects & Placements week when all lower sixth students get involved with either a work-based project or a work placement. (delayed until June/July 2023)

Where the College organises and manages work experience in any of these categories on behalf of a student then this will be referred to as a "work placement". The policy and procedures for management of work placements is the purpose of this document.

Additionally students will often have arrangements outside of College for part-time jobs, or voluntary work, arranged by themselves. Such experiences are the responsibility of the student and lie outside the scope of this document.

Sometimes a member of College staff provides information or advice to assist a student in arranging his or her own career-related visit, or work experience. Information or advice do not constitute "organising and managing" a placement. Such visits or experiences which are organised by individual students also lie outside the scope of this document.

However, on occasion, a student may provide the initial contact and arrangements for work experience, which are then used as the basis for a work placement, organised and managed by the College.

## **Policy Statement**

The College recognises the value of work placements as part of the educational experience of students. It therefore will support students who either need or wish to have such experience by organising and managing work placements in accordance with defined College procedures.

The ability of the College to organise work placement will be subject to availability, and to resources; where necessary, limited work placements will be allocated according to priority of need.

The College will put measures in place to provide assurance that all placements:

- Are risk assessed and safeguarded.
- Are of at least satisfactory quality.
- Support the College's reputation in the community and with placement providers.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Principal	The Principal has overall executive responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy and procedures.
Vice Principal	The VP is responsible for authorising placements in exceptional circumstances (e.g. if the placement is not in the local area and so cannot be visited for risk assessment).
Curriculum Head of Department	For course-based work placements, the Head of Department is responsible for ensuring appropriate placements are organised and undertaken by students to fit the needs of the course. The HoD is also responsible for monitoring the attendance of students on the placement, ensuring students are visited while on placement, the quality of the placement experience, and the progress made by students on the placement. The Head of Department role can be delegated, all or in part, to others in the department, though the overall responsibility for assurance of the placement arrangements and experiences remains with the Head of Department.
Careers	Careers is responsible for ensuring all elements of the procedure take place and are logged. Co-ordinating the necessary risk assessments, and for determining if there is reasonable assurance of the placement safety in the light of these assessments.
Students	Students who undertake a work placement are required to conform to College expectations with respect to attendance, behaviour and following procedures.

## **Procedure**

There are four stages to the work placement procedure:

- a. Placement application
- b. Placement allocation
- c. Placement confirmation
- d. Placement monitoring

### **A. Placement Application**

Where the placements are organised as part of a course or college requirement, the initial information about the nature and timing of the placements will originate from the HoD or placement organiser. The process is initiated by a discussion between the Curriculum HoD and Careers.

For placements additional to studies or college requirements, students can sign-up at any points throughout the year because these placements are not restricted to certain dates.

Once signed-up, it is the responsibility of the student to choose a placement and liaise with the Careers & Work Experience Officer to complete the necessary paperwork if needed. The standard work placement procedure applies, i.e. Agreement Form and Risk Assessment.

#### B. Placement Allocation

It is the responsibility of the Careers & Work Experience Officer to co-ordinate the arrangements for determining when and where the student placement will be.

- Where the placement is part of the course experience it is likely that the Careers & Work Experience Officer will liaise closely with the Head of Department (or delegate) who will also make the Co-ordinator aware of the purpose of the placement and relevant assessment criteria.
- In the case of individual placements, the Careers & Work Experience Officer may sometimes act on a contact, or arrangement, provided by the student. However, the placement will thereafter be managed by the College in accordance with its policies and procedures.

The Careers & Work Experience Officer will be responsible for maintaining a database that will enable the College to know, at any given time, of placements which have been set up, or have been confirmed, or are being currently undertaken.

For each placement, Careers will record appropriate placement details. Minimally this must include:

- Name and location of the placement provider.
- Responsible person (and contact, if different) at the placement provider.
- Nature of the placement role.
- Dates (and times) of the placement.
- Any special circumstances (e.g. student needs, or specific risks of the role).
- Contact details.

Before a college-organised placement can be confirmed, it must be risk assessed, and the College be assured that it meets safeguarding requirements. In some circumstances, placement providers expect places to be agreed quickly: in this case it is appropriate for the Careers & Work Experience Officer to 'confirm' places *subject to satisfactory risk assessment*.

#### C. Placement Confirmation

Once details of the placement are known, and risk assessment complete or planned, the placements can be confirmed.

In exceptional circumstances the VP will be asked to authorise a placement. This can occur when the placement is a great opportunity but is outside the local area so cannot be visited for Risk Assessment.

The student must complete and sign a Work Experience Agreement form. This will include details of the placement, and also sets out expectations of the student undertaking the placement. The placement provider is also required to sign the Agreement Form. In addition,

parental consent is obtained as part of the Agreement Form. Parental consent is not required for:

- Students who live independently of their parents.
- Students aged 18 or over, although it is normal practice that parents are informed in any case.

Changes to placements once confirmed must be recorded, re-authorised, and all parties (provider, student, parents) informed.

For course-related work experience it is important that students are properly briefed by the relevant department before commencing the placement. This briefing will make clear:

- The purpose of the placement, including any assessment criteria.
- The expectations and standards of behaviour, including issues of confidentiality (for example, norms relating to discussing individuals encountered in the work setting).

A standard email will be sent to the Placement Provider before the placement is due to begin, confirming in writing all previously agreed details – including, where relevant, the purpose of the placement and any student assessment criteria.

See safeguarding section for Risk Assessment details.

#### D. Placement Monitoring

Once the placement is undertaken, for some placements Careers will check that the student has “turned up” i.e. has attended at the start, and that there are no immediate issues.

Students are expected to log their attendance during their placement - this should be monitored by the curriculum HoD. Placement providers know to contact Careers if students fail to attend, or there are any other issues or concerns which emerge during the placement. Issues are forwarded to the relevant curriculum department to follow-up.

It is expected good practice that the department will arrange to visit the students in the placement to assess progress, or identify issues. In some cases (e.g. the Childcare provision) a workplace assessor will be employed to monitor progress of students in the placement.

On completion of the placement, the Careers & Work Experience Officer and departments will gather feedback:

- From students, via a Student Placement Evaluation questionnaire.
- From placement providers, either verbally, or in writing, using a brief, standard Provider Placement Evaluation questionnaire.

**Covid Procedure:** Students must adhere to covid regulations when on placement. They must inform the placement and Assistant Principle Tania Exley-Moore if they experience covid symptoms. This is stated on the Work Placement Agreement Form.

## **Safeguarding**

All placements must be risk assessed using the same procedures and documentation, coordinated centrally by Careers.

There is a wide variety of potential placements, and while it is paramount that all placements are risk assessed and deemed to be safe, it is not necessary that this process is unduly burdensome:

- In some cases, site visits by Careers will be necessary.
- Current risk assessments can apply to a range of similar placements (e.g. primary schools) where it is to be expected that similar risks will apply, and safeguarding arrangements are likewise similar.
- Current risk assessments can last a stated number of years, provided that no significant change in operation has taken place.
- Some local or out-of-area placements can be reasonably covered by written documentation and verbal questions e.g. where the provider is well known, and has well-established safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Some out-of-area placements can be assessed by an assured agency (such as NYBEP) on behalf of the College; in this case approval must be given by the Principal for the associated costs.
- Approval from VP can be requested in certain circumstances.

***However, no placement can proceed unless Careers is able to give reasonable assurance of the placement safety in the light of assessed risk.***

The College will check that the Placement provider has Employers Liability Insurance in place, before the placement begins.

## **Travel to the Placement**

Where an individual student agrees a voluntary work placement then the student will be understood to have accepted any additional costs of travel to the placement.

For course-based work placements, the College will prefer to set up placements which do not incur significant travel costs for the student. However it is not always possible to do so. Travel to work placements will fall under the same general policies as support for travel to College (where the placement involves full days in lieu of attendance at College) and support

for travel on trips. In either case, students may apply for relevant support where this is available – for example, for those from a low family income background.

### **DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Certificates for students**

Work experience is a mandatory part of Childcare and Health & Social Care and a DBS is required in order to undertake work experience in most occupational placement settings. Therefore, the College will purchase DBS Certificates for Childcare and Health & Social Care students and will aid students with the application process for gaining the certificate.

- a. These students must consent to the College seeing identification documents and DBS certificates in order for us to be able to facilitate work placements. Students cannot attend placement until such time as the DBS has been fully processed and the certificate seen by the College. A student failing to comply with College requirements, and where this means they cannot attend the placement, will be deemed to have failed the work placement requirement.
- b. Once students receive a DBS certificate the College will require them to show the certificate for the purposes of recording the certificate number but will not take a copy of the certificate.
- c. If there are cautions or offences disclosed on the DBS certificate this will be brought to the attention of the Vice Principal (who is also the College's Designated Safeguarding Lead). The Vice Principal will do a safeguarding risk assessment decide whether a placement can go ahead, or if there is a material safeguarding risk or if a placement provider needs to be informed of any disclosure after a discussion with the student.
- d. We advise students to have early discussions with us however if they believe that there is anything that may be disclosed, so that an early assessment of risk and impact can be made.

For placements other than Childcare and Health & Social Care the College will not pay for a DBS, even if it is required by a given placement setting, since the specific placement is not an essential requirement of college.

The College would consider administering a Volunteer DBS if the placement provider will not, but the cost will be charged to the student.

#### List of relevant records

- Work Placement Agreement Form
- Placement Database (giving placement details and monitoring of process)
- Student Placement Database (detailing where and when students are on placement)
- Risk assessments