



Mission statement: Inspiring learning, developing character, building futures

Learning resources and careers policies and procedures

Work placement policy

Aim: To support the creation of new placements working alongside students to ensure they receive quality work placement during their time at college.

To inform staff of the requirements necessary to effectively manage quality student placements and the potential health and safety risks.

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1. Introduction

The aim of this guidance is to inform staff of the requirements necessary to effectively manage quality student placements and the potential health and safety risks.

For the purposes of this document Blackpool Sixth's definition of 'work placement':

- is related to a student's career intention (where appropriate);
- is working without direct college supervision for an employer, adhering to the organisations rules;
- must have college involvement. It must be 'arranged' through college and includes risk assessments, health and safety checks, confirmation of employer liability and communication between the employer and college;
- is not a part-time job unless it directly links with their career aim or course;
- can be paid providing it is a short, fixed term arrangement and not a part time job;
- includes work shadowing, educational visits (for example humanities field trips and uniformed protective service's residentials to an army camp etc), live performances within the community, employability programmes, coaching, supporting in schools and social action.

2. Scope of the policy

This policy is applicable to all staff and students at the college and employers/adults working with our students on placement.

Additional requirements for T Level Industry Placements are outlined in Appendix A and will be applied in addition to, or where appropriate, instead of, the points within the main policy.

3. General principles of the policy

This guidance is aimed at supporting the creation of placements, working alongside students, to ensure they have opportunity to attend a quality work placement during their time at college. It is advised by the Department of Education that:

"While work experience, which may include training in a simulated work environment or social action, can help students develop 'softer' skills, providers are expected to offer, wherever possible, a work placement with an external employer... [this] enables students to experience the real demands of the working environment, independent from their peers and their tutors, and put into practice the transferable and sector-specific skills they have learned."

(Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) 16 to 19 study programmes guidance, July 2021)

Quality work placements benefit the student, giving an insight into what the world of work for their particular career choice is like, and by developing skills that are necessary for the world of work.

This guidance also sets out reasonably practicable actions which if adhered to will help to ensure that Blackpool Sixth fulfils its legal duties under section 3 of the Health and Safety

at Work Act 1974 to look after those not in its employment and to ensure they are not exposed to risks to their health and safety. The Education Act 2011, Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Working Time Regulations 1998 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 have all been considered when developing this policy.

The policy recognises that the statutory liability for the health and safety of a student on placement primarily lies with the placement provider. However, this guidance places duties on staff involved in organising a placement to ensure as far as is possible that the student is sufficiently informed, enabling them to raise a query with the college in respect of health and safety provision in the provider's premises and also to be an integral part of the health and safety monitoring process.

4. Records and monitoring

The college will retain records of all work placement and volunteering arrangements and any associated risk assessments for three years.

Recorded work placements and volunteering placements will be monitored by the careers team and in some cases by subject teachers (eg Health and Social).

The operation of this policy will be reviewed by the Head of Learning Resources & Careers and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

5. Review

The content and operation of this policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Head of LR&C.

6. Rights and responsibilities of Blackpool Sixth students

Each student of Blackpool Sixth who undertakes a placement should expect:

- o to have access to appropriate and relevant information and support with which to plan, organise and execute their placement
- o to receive effective supervision from the placement provider for the duration of the work placement
- o to be placed in a safe environment
- o to report all accidents/safety concerns to the work placement officer and ensure they are using the appropriate college procedure
- o to act with increased self-responsibility whilst preparing for and undertaking their placement, especially when they are being physically hosted by the placement provider; to be mindful of their role as a representative of Blackpool Sixth
- o to maintain professional boundaries with staff and clients at the work placement, the same as in college
- o to attend advertised briefing sessions/meetings and to have accessed all information which has been brought to their attention
- o to inform the college of any personal factors (e.g. health, disability, linguistic or cultural) that may affect the level of risk associated with undertaking the placement or may require adjustment on the part of the placement provider;

- o to inform the placement provider of any access or support needs that may require adjustments (a college representative can do this on behalf of the student with the student's written consent)
- o to read the appropriate work placement information document in accordance with their placement type
- o to follow, with due care, all requirements made of them by the placement provider, especially with reference to health and safety
- o to inform the college and seek guidance immediately of any concerns that may arise whilst on placement, for example, in relation to safeguarding themselves or others.

When agreeing to host a student of Blackpool Sixth, the placement provider will be confirming that:

- o the placement provider will observe the relevant legislation appropriate to the workplace, for example the **Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Working Time regulations 2024, the Data Protection Act 2018 and Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance Sept 2024**
- o the placement provider has read, understands and upholds the college's safeguarding procedures as are outlined in the **safeguarding and child protection policy** available on the Blackpool Sixth website
- o they have read and understand the Partnership Agreement provided by the college
- o the student will either carry out meaningful work, planned by a responsible person, or work shadow an appointed employee. The student will receive appropriate instruction and will be appropriately supervised during the full period of the work placement
- o the placement provider will ensure that the student receives health & safety information appropriate to the role, and see that the student does not operate any hazardous machinery, or carry out work of an unsuitable nature unless fully supervised by a trained person. The placement provider will supply any personal protective clothing/equipment necessary for the role
- o the Work Placement Officer (or appropriate college representative) will advise the employer of any known details concerning the student, with consent, that may require special attention to ensure a successful placement
- o the placement provider will be supportive of and take into account any additional needs, physical, neuro diverse or otherwise and will aim to support the student where possible with these in their work placement in accordance with the Equality Act 2010
- o they will arrange for employers' liability insurance to cover against accident or injury caused to the student by negligence of the employer or another employee
- o they will accept or insure against liability for loss, damage or injury caused by the student, whilst on work placement with the organisation, to the employer's property, other employees or third party, in the same way as paid employees
- o should the student have an accident whilst on placement or a safety concern be raised, the placement provider will notify the college immediately on 01253 307094 (Work Placement Officer) or 01253 394911 (college reception). If out of college hours placement providers should notify the student's parents/carers.
- o full-time offers of employment should only be offered to students upon full completion of their 2 or 3 year course at the college
- o placement providers will notify college when a student is absent by 10am on the same day as the absence by contacting 01253 307094 (Work Placement Officer) or

01253 394911 (college reception). This will allow the college to follow up the student's absence the same day

- o should the placement organiser, the Work Placement Officer or any other member of Blackpool Sixth staff, want to visit the students on work placement premises then the placement provider will give access to do so.

7. Applying for work placement

To register interest in sourcing a work placement, students should contact the Futures Team or Work Placement Officer stating placement requests. From here the student will be given an agreement form that they should sign to confirm their responsibilities regarding the placement. Parents/carers of students under 18 should also sign the form to confirm they are happy for students to undertake a placement and for the student to declare any special circumstances that may affect the placement.

Hard copies of the work placement request forms should be stored in the Futures area and then passed to MIS for storage in the student's file in the summer after their final studies. Electric copies will be stored in Google Drive and deleted after 3 years.

8. Before work placement

To establish placement expectations such as times and dates, tasks likely to be undertaken, staff names and contact details, students will sign to say they understand the partnership agreement after a discussion with the Work Placement Officer, teacher or Progress Mentor before a placement commences. Students will also be asked to read the 'Information for students on work placement' document. This is available from the Work Placement Officer directly. In this, students are advised to work through and complete a work placement booklet.

This booklet will give students useful questions to ask throughout their placement and goals to set themselves and evaluate. This is also available on Google Drive in the student area or from the Work Placement Officer.

A signed student and parent agreement form will be sent via a Google form and permissions saved within Google Drive. A risk assessment will also be kept on file for the premises, along with any risk assessments to be completed that are associated with the job role and/or student. A risk assessment must be completed for all placements that have been arranged by the college.

9. Risks & key staff

It is the role of the college to assess the placement and consider whether there are any risks and also whether suitable controls have been identified to minimise those risks. A standard risk assessment form will be sent to the organisation via email, post or in person. From this the college will assess the risks and the appropriate member of staff will swiftly follow up any queries as necessary. The identification of risks and verification of appropriate controls should be done prior to taking up the placement.

Any organisations deemed to pose a high-risk working environment should be visited for further inspection and clarification of the proposed working environment and practice.

Factors taken into account when determining the safety of the placement include:

- o safeguarding (ensuring that each student and employer understand professional boundaries and how to report a concern)
- o work factors (these relate to the placement provider and to the work that the student will be carrying out)
- o travel and transportation (travel and driving whilst on business can involve risk as well as any associated travel to and from the placement and students will be advised that they may need “light business use” insurance if they are driving themselves to the placement and should check with their insurers)
- o location and/or region (especially in an unfamiliar area)
- o general/environmental health (lighting/wc/food facilities etc)
- o individual student (each student is an individual and will have a variety of knowledge, skills, experience and their personality will impact on health and safety)
- o in addition to the risk assessment to be held on file for each employer (to be renewed every 3 years), employers should also complete the partnership agreement documentation. This outlines employers’ responsibilities and expectations during the placement.

10. Expectations

Work placement, volunteering and social action is a whole college responsibility. It is expected that both students and staff work together to ensure placements are meaningful, safe and provide positive experiences. Particular attention should be paid to the Blackpool Sixth expects document and positive behaviour policy and disciplinary procedures to ensure students understand how to conduct themselves while on placement . As well as the Work Placement Officer’s role in ensuring work placement and volunteering is organised appropriately, there are also key responsibilities for curriculum/curriculum-facing staff to ensure engagement with and the smooth running of the programme. These are set out as follows:

Teachers:

- o to discuss the benefits of placements with students
- o to create wider employer and industry links and to share these with the Work Placement Officer
- o to encourage students to participate by distributing work placement booklets, promotion of work placement in lesson plans and effective use of employer links during the year
- o to read and understand the work placement policy and processes
- o to use students’ learning from work placement in the curriculum, making it relevant

Progress Mentors:

- o to encourage students to value and participate in work placement opportunities
- o to encourage students to seek placements independently, sharing employer information with the Work Placement Officer in order to ensure the placement provider is safe and any identified risks are minimised
- o to read and understand the work placement policy and procedures
- o to monitor students’ progress through the college’s online registration and tracking

system and one to ones, encouraging students to self assess on their individual learning and progression plan

11. Monitoring of work placement

Periodic monitoring of placements should take place by the Work Placement Officer, when possible, and can take the form of:

- o feedback from the student via discussion, one-to-one or through email
- o feedback from staff at the organisation
- o observations and discussions during any visits from teachers
- o online placement evaluation forms

Negative feedback received during the placement must receive the appropriate level of investigation by the Work Placement Officer. This will involve discussions with both the student and the placement provider, and could include seeking advice from the college's Head of Learning Resources and Careers or Senior Leadership Team link.

The placement organiser or appropriate teacher/s, will visit the student during their time on work placement, where possible. A risk-based approach must be used to determine whether a visit is required during the placement and the frequency of such visits.

Account should also be taken of factors including the nature of the work, the experience of the student, any special vulnerabilities of the student, the duration of the placement, the nature of the employer and feedback received from previous students or other sources.

The visiting staff member is not expected to be an expert in health and safety but should be aware of, and understand their health and safety monitoring role. Staff visiting students on work placement have a duty of care to observe the health and safety practices and take any action that they consider to be necessary. Higher risk placements may warrant more specialist placement visitors.

Training for visiting staff on risk assessments or the health and safety aspects of a placement can be arranged via the Head of Estates.

12. Students with additional needs

Any student with additional needs will be encouraged to disclose these during an initial work placement meeting in order for the employer to best understand the student's individual needs. This in turn allows the Work Placement Officer to carefully match available placements:

“A thorough understanding of the student’s potential, abilities, interests and areas they want to develop should inform honest conversations with potential employers. This is more likely to result in a positive experience for the student and the employer.”

Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years (updated April 2020)

The Work Placement Officer will work in conjunction with the Additional Learning Support (ALS) team to make provisions to support any students with additional needs, as necessary. This could be but not limited to:

- o a visit with an ALS staff member to assess the working environment and risk assess where appropriate
- o a conversation between the placement provider and an ALS team member to better inform of any necessary provisions
- o auditing of emergency procedures and access points

Students are encouraged to disclose any additional needs to ensure they receive any support that is required. This is particularly the case for those students where work placement is integrated into the course. Current examples include BTEC Health & Social Care, BTEC sport and travel & tourism courses, and T Level Health.

Students with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan

Where a student has an EHC plan and/or has support from the local authority's high needs funding, the college will cooperate fully with the local authority to ensure the correct support is given to enable the student to access work placement. This will be reviewed regularly.

Pregnant students

A risk assessment will be completed by the Work Placement Officer in partnership with a colleague from the Additional Learning Support team for those students who are pregnant and wish to go on work placement. Once this has been completed the employer will be informed so they can conduct their own risk assessments for the workplace. Placements that carry high risks will not be used in these circumstances. Examples of high risk are those associated with long bouts of physical activity or exposure to some chemicals, radiation and biological agents.

13. Adults who supervise young people/students on work placement

It is essential that the Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance is adhered to and all staff involved in providing work placement are therefore compliant with the points below:

- The Work Placement Officer organising work placements, should ensure that the placement provider has policies and procedures that protect children from harm.
- As a college, Blackpool Sixth is not able to request any enhanced DBS checks with barred list information for staff supervising students aged 16 to 17 on work experience.
- If the person working with the student on work placement is unsupervised and the same person is in frequent contact with the student, the work is likely to be regulated activity. If so, the Work Placement Officer must ask the employer providing the work experience to ensure that the person providing the instruction or training is not a

barred person. The college will receive written confirmation of this from the employer.

- If a student is taking their placement in a 'specified place' such as a nursery or school, giving opportunity for contact with children, this could be classed as regulated activity. Therefore, any student who wishes to commence a placement at any establishment that deals with vulnerable persons, will need to provide a DBS enhanced check before starting their placement. This is especially important for those students studying subjects such as BTEC Health and Social Care and T Level Health.

14. Post work placement

When a work placement comes to an end or when a student has completed 3 months or more in placement (whichever is sooner) students are required to complete an evaluation form and return this to the Work Placement Officer. A link to this Google Form is available in the work placement booklet given to the student by the Work Placement Officer. This encourages feedback to help improve the work placement programme and will also include the following:

- what skills the student has developed during their time at the placement
- how the student intends to use this placement in the future

Employers will also be encouraged to complete feedback forms. A standard feedback form will be provided to them by way of an online questionnaire. They may prefer, however, to complete a paper form and will be given this option.

15. Students undertaking self-placed work placement

Students may sometimes undertake a placement that they have organised themselves, often without the intent to involve the college at all.

This happens most often with organisations that rely on volunteers to operate such as charity shops, public health groups and scout and guiding clubs. The college may become aware of the volunteering for example by a student adding it to their personal statement or an employer mentioning it during a separate enquiry.

These placements may still be recorded to track which types of organisations are accommodating Blackpool Sixth students. However, the responsibility does not lie with the college for the welfare of the student whilst they are working in this organisation, although communication with the student or the organisation is still recommended.

16. Work placement abroad

Work placements will take place within the UK. Only in very rare cases would a placement abroad be approved by SLT. Should a placement abroad be approved this policy will be adhered to, alongside the visits and residentials policy, and additional measures, as required, will be implemented, informed by a thorough risk assessment to ensure student safety.

17. Addendum - pandemic

In the event of a pandemic, as a matter of our students' health and safety, all government's guidance will be followed.

Risk assessments will reflect the guidance to minimise the risk of infection to ensure the safety and health of students with regards to work placement and work experience.

Additional experiences of the workplace will be developed and promoted. These include, but are not limited to, a careers fortnight, remote work experience and employer talks through video conferencing and pre-recorded videos.

Additional risk assessments will be completed to establish the reliability and safety of any remote services or websites that are promoted to students. In addition, information on keeping safe online is shared with students through the curriculum.

Appendix A: T-level Industry Placement Policy

High-quality Industry Placements are a compulsory element of T Levels. There are specific requirements for these placements beyond what is expected of other work placements that students on other courses undertake. Whilst the main policy provides an appropriate framework for organising and managing industry placements, the specific requirements and guidance provided for the T Level Industry Placements will be taken into account in planning these placements.

1. Purpose and Objectives

- **Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to define the principles and procedures for industry placements as part of the T-Level qualifications to ensure students gain valuable work experience, develop industry skills, and enhance employability.
- **Objectives:**
 - Provide T-Level students with practical, real-world experiences in their chosen industry.
 - Ensure placements meet the specific learning outcomes and assessment criteria of the T-Level course.
 - Establish a framework for employers, students, and educational institutions to collaborate effectively.

2. Scope

- This policy applies to all T-Level students enrolled in Blackpool Sixth Form College and their industry placements.
- The policy covers all aspects of industry placements, including preparation, supervision, support, and assessment.

3. Placement Requirements

- **Duration:** T-Level students must complete a minimum of 315 hours of industry placement, typically spread over 13 weeks, or as per the qualification specifications.
- **Industry Sector:** Placements should align with the T-Level student's field of study, ensuring relevance to the course (e.g., Digital, Health, Education & Childcare). T Level course teachers alongside the work placement team will ensure appropriate placements are secured and undertaken.
- **Placement Tasks:** Tasks will be designed to support students in achieving the intended learning outcomes of the qualification, with an emphasis on industry-relevant skills, teamwork, problem-solving, and innovation.
- **Supervision:** Industry placements must be supervised by a qualified industry professional who can guide the student and ensure they meet their learning objectives. College will ensure this forms part of the placement planning.

4. Responsibilities

- **College Responsibilities:**
 - Provide guidance and support for students in securing appropriate placements.
 - Offer pre-placement training and orientation for students (e.g., workplace conduct, safety, expectations).
 - Monitor and evaluate the progress of placements through regular check-ins with both students and employers.
 - Ensure placements comply with health and safety regulations, including safeguarding.
 - Collect and assess feedback from students and employers after the completion of the placement.
- **Employer Responsibilities:**
 - Provide a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for students.
 - Assign a mentor or supervisor to the student.
 - Outline the scope of work and learning objectives for the placement.
 - Offer regular feedback and opportunities for the student to reflect on their learning and performance.
 - Report any issues or concerns regarding the student's performance or conduct to the college.

College will ensure clarity around expectations and gain confirmation of commitment to deliver these standards and expectations from employers prior to placements beginning, and will monitor this throughout the placement.

- **Student Responsibilities:**
 - Attend and actively participate in the placement as per the agreed schedule.
 - Adhere to the policies and procedures of the host employer, including health and safety protocols.
 - Complete all tasks and assignments as per the placement learning plan.
 - Reflect on their experience, identifying areas of growth and learning outcomes.

College will ensure clarity around expectations and gain confirmation of commitment to adhere to these standards and expectations from students prior to placements beginning, and will monitor this throughout the placement.

5. Placement Matching Process

- **Initial Consultation:** Students will have an initial meeting with placement coordinators to discuss placement preferences, career goals, and any specific requirements.
- **Placement Search and Securing:** The college will work with employers to identify appropriate placement opportunities based on student preferences and course requirements. Students may also apply to placements independently, subject to the provider's approval.
- **Matching:** Efforts will be made to match students with placements that align with their course content, skills, and career interests.

6. Health and Safety, and Safeguarding

- All placements must comply with relevant health and safety legislation and regulations, including safeguarding.
- The college will give students the necessary training and resources regarding workplace safety and safeguarding.
- Employers are required to conduct risk assessments and ensure appropriate supervision to minimise risks.
- In case of any injury or safety concern, the college, employer, and student will work together to address the issue.
- Students will be provided with clear instruction about how to deal with any concerns, including the importance of communicating with college and employers.

7. Assessment and Monitoring

- **Placement Monitoring:** The college will maintain regular contact with both the student and the employer throughout the placement period.
- **Student Assessment:** Placement performance will be assessed based on a combination of direct feedback from the employer, student self-reflection, and evidence of learning (e.g., portfolio or report).
- **Feedback:** Both students and employers will provide feedback at the end of the placement, allowing for continuous improvement of the placement programme.

8. Support for Students

- **Pre-Placement:** Students will receive training on workplace expectations, health and safety, communication skills, and professional conduct.
- **During Placement:** Regular check-ins will be conducted by placement coordinators to offer support and address any issues.
- **Post-Placement:** Career advice, guidance on further training, and support with employability skills will be provided.

9. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

- The college is committed to ensuring that all students have equal access to industry placement opportunities.
- Employers are encouraged to provide inclusive environments and ensure that placements are open to students from all backgrounds, including those with disabilities or other support needs. We will work with employers to ensure that they have a full understanding of this expectation and the needs of the student/s.
- The college will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made where necessary to support students in completing their placements.

10. Data Protection and Confidentiality

- The college will ensure that all personal data related to the placement process is handled in compliance with data protection regulations (e.g., GDPR).
- All parties must respect the confidentiality of any sensitive information encountered during the placement.

11. Review and Evaluation

- This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it remains relevant, effective, and in compliance with any changes to T-Level qualification requirements or regulations.
- Feedback from students, employers, and staff will be collected and analysed to inform policy improvements.