



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 guidance aims to inform staff of the requirements necessary to effectively manage quality student placements and mitigate 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 organisation's 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;
- can be paid, provided it is a short, fixed-term arrangement such as an internship, but not as a part-time job.
- includes work shadowing, educational visits (for example, humanities field trips and uniformed protective services' residential to an army camp etc), live performances within the community, employability programmes, coaching, supporting in schools and social action.

This definition ensures compliance with reporting, insurance coverage and the validation of student learning hours.

Work placements are different from work experience. While simulated environments (such as a college-based mock hospital ward, for example) provide 'work experience', they do not qualify as 'work placement hours' for core aim funding purposes, as per the 16 to 19 study programmes guidance.

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

Blackpool Sixth Form values quality work placements for the benefits it provides for students, 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.

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.”

(16 to 19 study programmes guidance, 2025-2026 academic year)

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

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, Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022, Children’s Wellbeing and Schools Act 2022 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 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 year by the Head of LR&C.

6. Rights and responsibilities of Blackpool Sixth students

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

- o have access to appropriate and relevant information and support with which to plan, organise and execute their placement
- o receive effective supervision from the placement provider for the duration of the work placement
- o be placed in a safe environment
- o report all accidents/safety concerns to the Employability and Work Placement Officer and ensure they are using the appropriate college procedure

- o 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 maintain professional boundaries with staff and clients at the work placement, as they would in college
- o attend advertised briefing sessions/meetings and have accessed all information which has been brought to their attention
- o 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 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 read the appropriate work placement information document in accordance with their placement type
- o follow, with due care, all requirements made of them by the placement provider, especially with reference to health and safety
- o 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

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

- o they 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 2025**
- o they have read, understand and will uphold the college's safeguarding procedures as 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. That the student will receive appropriate instruction and will be appropriately supervised during the full period of the work placement
- o they will ensure that the student receives health & safety information appropriate to the role, will ensure that the student does not operate any hazardous machinery, or carry out work of an unsuitable nature unless fully supervised by a trained person. They will supply any personal protective clothing/equipment necessary for the role
- o they will ensure that students are treated as employees for the purposes of Employer's Liability Compulsory Insurance
- o They understand that the Employability and Work Placement Officer (or appropriate college representative) will, with the consent of the student, advise the employer of any known details concerning the student that may require special attention to ensure a successful placement
- o they will be supportive of and take into account any additional needs, physical, neurodiverse 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 They will ensure that should the student have an accident whilst on placement or a safety concern be raised, they will notify the college immediately on 01253 307094 (Employability and 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 will only be offered to students upon full completion of their 2 or 3 year course at the college
- o they will notify college when a student is absent by 10am on the same day as the absence by contacting 01253 209192 (Employability and 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 Employability and 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.

6.3 The careers team will:

- prioritise placement providers with the Disability Confidence accreditation to ensure a supportive and compliant environment
- promote the Access to Work Grant as a primary financial tool for students with disabilities to overcome specific work placement barriers
- ensure a tripartite 'tailored support' discussion is facilitated involving the students, the employer, and the college, before, during and after the placement

6.4 Safeguarding

Safeguarding remains a priority and is the responsibility of all.

If any safeguarding concerns arise, including if there is a concern about a student at risk of significant harm, or an adult who may pose a risk or who may be unsuitable to work with children, the college DSL must be informed immediately.

Students must be appropriately prepared for placements before participating in them, including expectations, rights and responsibilities, channels of communication and the support that the college will provide. This is the responsibility of teachers, where relevant, and the Employability and Work Placement Officer.

Employers must be made aware of their responsibility to inform the college DSL should any issues arise in relation to safeguarding.

7. Applying for work placement

To register interest in sourcing a work placement, students should contact the Futures Team or the Employability and Work Placement Officer via futures@blackpoolsixth.ac.uk, stating placement requests. Both the student and their parent/carer must sign their respective documents. The student will be issued an agreement form to sign regarding their responsibilities while on placement. Additionally, parents or carers of students under 18 must sign a separate consent form to approve their son/daughter/ward's placement

and declare any special circumstances that may impact the student's experience.

Hard copies of the work placement request forms will 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. Electronic copies will be stored in Google Drive and deleted after 3 years.

To ensure the successful delivery and quality of work placements, clear deadlines will be set for sourcing placements and completing any DBS forms. These deadlines will allow the Employability and Work Placement Officer to finalise arrangements and confirm details with all relevant parties.

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 confirm that they understand the partnership agreement after a discussion with the Employability and 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. Students are advised to work through and complete the work placement booklet, which provides students with useful questions to ask throughout their placement, goals to set themselves and against which to evaluate their experience. These are available on Google Drive in the student area or from the Employability and Work Placement Officer.

A signed student and parent agreement form will be sent via a Google Form and permissions will be saved within Google Drive.

A risk assessment must be completed for all placements that have been arranged by the college. The 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.

9. Risks & key staff

To ensure the safety and suitability of a placement, the college operates a proportionate approach to risk management. While the employer holds primary responsibility for health and safety, the college must verify that risks are identified and minimised through appropriate controls before the placement begins.

For most low-risk environments, this process is handled via an electronic risk assessment form (Google Form) sent directly to the organisation. Once submitted, the appropriate college staff will assess the information and swiftly follow up on any queries to ensure all regulatory requirements are met prior to the start date.

Any organisations deemed to pose a high-risk working environment will 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 understands 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 Employability and 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 should:

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

Progress Mentors should:

- o encourage students to value and participate in work placement opportunities
- o encourage students to seek placements independently, sharing employer information with the Employability and Work Placement Officer to enable them to ensure the placement provider is safe and any identified risks are minimised
- o read and understand the work placement policy and procedures
- o monitor students’ progress through the college’s online registration and tracking system and one to ones, encouraging students to self assess their individual learning and progression plan

11. Monitoring of work placement

Periodic monitoring of placements should take place by the Employability and 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 Employability and 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 they 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 requirements. This is particularly the case for those students for whom work placement is integrated into the course. Current examples include BTEC Health & Social Care, BTEC Sport, and T Level Health. This, in turn, allows the Employability and 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 Employability and 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 is 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 all relevant parties of any necessary provisions and adjustments
- o auditing of emergency procedures and access points

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 Employability and 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 a 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 placements are therefore compliant with the points below:

- The Employability and 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 Employability and 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 them an 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 in health or childcare.

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 it to the Employability and Work Placement Officer. This encourages feedback to help improve the work placement programme and will also include the following:

- the skills the student has developed during their time at the placement
- how the student intends to use this placement experience 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, however, prefer to complete a paper form, which will be made available on request.

15. Students undertaking self-placed work placement

Students may sometimes undertake a placement that they have organised themselves, often without the intention 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 will still be recorded to track engagement of organisations 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. As due diligence, once the college does become aware of any such work placements, they will proactively communicate with all parties to ensure the placements progress.

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 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.

In the event of any government-mandated restrictions on in-person activity, virtual or simulated workplace experiences will be implemented in lieu of traditional placements. 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 Pastoral Curriculum and social media.

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 undertaken by students on other courses. 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, which must include safeguarding, 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 instructions about how to deal with any concerns, including the importance of communicating with the 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) outlined in the Data Protection Policy (updated Jan 2026).
- 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.