

UNIVERSITY CENTRE SOMERSET HIGHER EDUCATION WORK BASED LEARNING POLICY

Relevant to students studying on a programme validated by University Centre Somerset, a Higher National Certificates (HNC), Higher National Diplomas (HND) with Pearson or an Open University validated award

Students enrolled with any other partner university should refer to that university's policy.

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INTRODUCTION

UCS recognises and understands the importance and value of work-based learning in enhancing academic standards and the learning opportunities for students. Students benefit from increased employability prospects, or if already in employment it equips them with and develops their professional skills. Government policy resulting from the Leitch report is clear in its targets for equipping graduates with the higher-level skills needed to ensure the economic prosperity of the country. At a more regional level UCS works hard to ensure the employability of its graduates, particularly supporting the growing demand for highly skilled labour in the region.

It is essential that all those involved with work-based learning activities (UCS staff, students, employers) work within the scope of clear guidelines. This policy document seeks to provide the core guidance from UCS to facilitate this and should be implemented in accordance with programme requirements and those of the validating institution.

1. CONTEXT

UCS's Strategic Plan outlines the overarching context in which this policy sits.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- UCS HE Work Based Learning Work Placement Provider Guidance
- UCS HE Work Based Learning Student Guidance
- 7-Ways Evaluation of Teaching, Learning & Assessment
- UCS HE Quality Framework
- UCS College Group Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy

2. DEFINITIONS

It is important that the terms used to describe work-based learning activities are properly understood by the staff involved in managing, delivering and administering these activities.

Definition of Work Based Learning (WBL) at UCS:

UCS, working with multiple university partners, encounters a wide range of differing definitions and interpretations of Work Based or Placement Learning. For this document, and in line with the most used and understood terminology within UCS all variations on the theme fall under the title of Work Based Learning. Most commonly this includes all learning taking place within a working environment, that is of a pre-planned nature and that forms a credit bearing module or unit.

The Foundation Degree characteristic state (February 2020) helpfully states:

'Foundation degree graduates are able to demonstrate the ability to apply their knowledge and skills to new situations, including in the workplace'

It is therefore integral that those undertaking Foundation Degrees demonstrate their abilities to apply theory to practice within an authentic and innovative setting and that the placement meets the Intended Learning Outcome and/or entire module/unit, for the Foundation Degree on which the student is registered.

3. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy is intended to act as a clear statement of UCS's position regarding all Higher Education Work Based Learning activities undertaken at Level 4 or 5, as approved by its university partners. It aims to compliment UCS strategy, existing practice and partner university policy to provide a framework of guidance for those involved in the design, delivery, management and assessment of Work Based Learning. This policy and associated supporting documents are produced by UCS and are applicable for all Foundation Degree programmes and Honours Degrees with embedded Foundation Degree, unless the university partner (if applicable) requires or specifies the use of their own documentation.

4. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

This policy relies on the following principles:

- a) In addition to validating it's our awards, UCS has a contractual relationship with its university partners via respective partnership agreements to deliver, assess and review approved programmes, including work-based elements, in accordance with associated policy and guidelines.
- b) UCS has a duty of care for all its students. As such UCS will take all steps, which are reasonably practicable, to ensure the welfare of its students who are undertaking work-based learning activities.
- c) Students undertaking work-based learning placements are over the age of 18 at time of commencement.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All those involved in work-based learning activities have responsibilities before, during and after the placement period. The following statements provide some general guidance on what these responsibilities are. However, for some programmes there may be specific expectations and such guidance from the relevant university partner should be consulted.

5.1. University partners/Award Bodies

The validating organisation, whether that it UCS or a university partner is ultimately responsible for ensuring the approved (whether validated or franchised) programme,

including the work-based element, will prepare students for life-long learning. UCS is responsible and in some cases in conjunction with the university partner at the time of approval and as part of the on-going review and quality improvement processes to ensure the programme is fit-for-purpose. Thus, meeting student and employer needs and expectations as well as preparing students for employment within the related sector.

University partners do not deem themselves as being responsible for students' health and safety during work-based learning, in line with current legislation. For UCS validated awards and on the behalf of the university partner (where applicable), should take all reasonable steps as part of their duty of care to prepare the student prior to the work-based learning.

The awarding institution, where that be UCS or university partner is ultimately responsible for agreeing final accreditation of work-based learning through its Assessment Board processes.

5.2. University Centre Somerset and its' staff

UCS has a responsibility to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the appropriateness of employers providing Work Based Learning to ensure that students undertaking placements are able to meet their required learning outcomes. Staff should be aware of the learning requirements of the placement and should assist the student to create an action plan or list of required learning outcomes for their work placement. Further information can be found in the supporting guidance notes.

The expectations and responsibilities of students undertaking Work Based Learning should be clearly and coherently communicated to them by UCS on behalf of the awarding institution.

Support for students finding work placements should be holistic in nature. It is not normally the responsibility of the programme team to secure placements for students, but they should be prepared to assist, occasionally persistently encourage and in exceptional and rare instances (where a student has mitigating circumstances or has encountered insurmountable difficulties) to take the lead in finding a suitable placement. Students studying in higher education are expected to develop not only cognitive and intellectual skills but also employability skills, including personal responsibility. Students should be supported to contact employers, in areas such as CV and cover letter writing, development of online profiles and portfolios as well as more contemporary application material. Students should be encouraged to employ a professional approach to

placement applications. Tutors should seek to develop not only the student's perception of work and conduct during it, but of their own self-awareness, team working, and professionalism within the working environment.

Through the process of Work Based Learning it is expected that students will have to become more responsible for their own learning and as such, structured and supportive measures should be introduced to enable this to happen. Allowing the student to secure their own placement is just one example of this.

UCS as the awarding organisation, or on behalf of the university partner, is responsible for communicating relevant information to the employer in an appropriate and timely manner. This information can be found in the Provider Guidance.

- the role the employer is expected to play in the Work Based Learning of the student,
- the objectives the student needs to achieve as part of the placement,
- benefits of engaging placement students and the methods through which they can communicate with UCS at any given point or if they have concerns about the way the student is conducting the placement.

5.3. Students

Students should be made aware of their responsibility for finding and confirming work placement arrangements and tutors should support and guide them in this process. Students have a responsibility to secure a work-based opportunity that meets the requirements of their programme (e.g. meets the learning outcomes and is for a sufficient period) and, where appropriate or possible, personal or career interests. Students are responsible for keeping UCS informed about the employer they will be working for, including providing accurate contact details and information as outlined in the Learner Agreement.

Students have responsibilities to fulfil the obligations of their Work Based Learning as detailed in the Learner Agreement. They are expected to always act in a professional manner during the placement and conduct themselves as appropriate to the work place setting. This is very important for UCS and/or our university partners as students are effectively representing either one or both institutions through their work and conduct. It is important, however, that these expectations are clearly communicated to students prior to undertaking the activity, see student guidance, section 5. This communication

can be both from UCS in terms of briefing prior to the placement and the employer, for example, in terms of a formal contract of employment.

Students are also expected to use their own initiative and to maximise the appropriate benefits of their work placement. For example, students can use the placement as a networking opportunity to build future career paths, gain transferable skills as well as maximising their overall achievement on programme.

5.4. Work Based Learning placement providers

Employers have a responsibility to ensure that the student they are recruiting is suitable for the post they have in mind, that they can provide appropriate support and guidance at the start of and during the placement, and that the job will progress in terms of the tasks the student is expected to complete.

Students should be treated as any other employee in terms of the way in which they are valued by the company, for example being given an appraisal or performance updates. This process is intended to be beneficial for both students and employers. At the end of the placement employers should be asked to complete the 'employer survey' and provide feedback on student's achievements. Placement providers are asked to provide this feedback in a timely manner and ensure feedback is sufficient for UCS to assess the students' progress in reference to their learning outcomes or individual action plan. Through working with UCS and its students, employers can potentially gain new interest in their sector, build further contacts through the awarding institutions and students and update their own skills and understanding of the programmes being undertaken by students.

Placement providers should be clear about the extent of their roles and responsibilities and what they can expect from both the student and UCS. They should have in place clear guidelines for the student to follow whilst on placement and take all legislative and reasonable steps to ensure the safety of the student during the placement. For more information, please refer to the guidance documents.

UCS and where appropriate, our university partners deem the Work Based Learning provider as being responsible for the health and safety of students during work placement in line with current legislation. As such, employers have full legal liability for the students within their workplace. Employers are responsible for liaising with the student regarding the arrangements for the placement, and with UCS in regard to any issues during placement.

6. SUPPORTING HE LEARNERS WITH ECHPS AND SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)

University Centre Somerset is committed to ensuring that all Higher Education learners, including those with Education, Health and Care Plans (ECHPs) or identified Special Educational Needs (SEN), are fully supported in accessing and succeeding in work-based learning (WBL) opportunities.

- **Concessions and Support:** Learners with ECHPs or SEN will be offered reasonable adjustments and tailored support, in line with statutory requirements and best practice. This may include, but is not limited to, assistive technology, flexible placement arrangements, additional mentoring, or other appropriate measures to ensure equitable access to WBL.
- **Placement Support Mechanisms:** Prior to confirming any placement, the Course Leader, in collaboration with the learner and employer, will ensure that adequate support mechanisms are in place. This includes a review of the placement environment, clear communication of any additional needs, and ongoing liaison with the Additional Learning Support (ALS) team where required.
- **Alternative Approaches to WBL:** Where a conventional placement is not feasible due to the nature of a learner's needs, an alternative approach to work-based learning, centred around work readiness, will be organised by the Course Leader. This may involve simulated work environments, campus-based projects, or employer-led workshops designed to develop employability skills and meet programme learning outcomes.
- **Ongoing Review:** The support needs of learners with ECHPs or SEN will be reviewed regularly throughout the WBL experience to ensure that adjustments remain appropriate and effective.

This approach reflects UCS's commitment to widening participation, promoting inclusion, and ensuring that all learners can achieve their full potential through meaningful work-based learning experiences.

7. PROGRAMME DESIGN AND DELIVERY

7.1. Integrating Work Based Learning

In 2020 the QAA updated the Characteristics Statement for Foundation Degrees. The Characteristic Statement highlights throughout, the importance of the relationship between colleges and employers. Partnerships between employers, degree-awarding bodies or other HE providers, FE Colleges and Sector Skills Councils are central to the concept of

foundation degrees, and vital in providing programmes that are relevant, valid and responsive to the needs of learners and employers.

Section 2.1 states:

'When designing foundation degrees consideration is given to the ways in which the work-based learning is appropriate to the particular needs of the relevant employment sector or type of employer and how the programme helps to provide the knowledge and transferable skills needed for employment.'

Additionally, the *Characteristic Statement* emphasises the importance of accessibility, in Section 2.3 it states:

'Foundation degrees increase access and widen participation into higher education, as learners can access foundation degrees from a range of starting points and with different entry qualifications, for example: apprenticeships, access courses, NVQs, and professional certificates and diplomas (and relevant work experience).'

The *Characteristic Statement* also requires foundation degrees:

'To provide clear routes that facilitate opportunities for successful progression from the foundation degree towards another qualification and encourage the HE provider to be flexible in the approach, for example, to the needs of learner from a variety of backgrounds, and to the progressive and changing demands of employment.'

When developing Foundation Degrees, the [Characteristics Statement for Foundation Degrees](#) published by the QAA can be used as a point of reference.

UCS is bound by the following principles in the development of its work-based learning:

- a) Intended learning outcomes and assessment of Work Based Learning are an integral part of programme design, the content of which is ultimately the responsibility of the of UCS or where appropriate our university partners to agree.
- b) UCS, in designing proposals for programmes including Work Based Learning should consider relevant external reference points (see appendices).
- c) In designing Work Based Learning opportunities consideration should be given to the diversity of students, flexible delivery models and any specific sector requirements.
- d) Work Based Learning outcomes must enhance the future employability of graduates.

- e) Work Based Learning may or may not be linked to a distinct credit bearing unit/module but in either case it is essential that it is an integral part of the overall programme.
- f) Work Based Learning must be formally assessed and verified.

7.2. Assessing Work Based Learning

Work Based Learning must be assessed in accordance with the validated programme specifications. Assessments should be designed appropriately to ensure all the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) have been tested and to ensure that they are fair and accurate in allowing students to demonstrate achievement of the ILOs through a variety of means and work settings. Assessment should be designed in line with UCS's Higher Education Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy and with reference to that of the UCS HE Quality Framework or that of our partner universities.

While most work-placements will be assessed formally by UCS's academic teams, where it is agreed that employers have a specified role in the formal assessment of student work or performance (normally in agreement with the partner university) it is vital that the employer has been properly briefed and fully understands the importance of their responsibility. This is crucial as it is likely the employer will assess the student's performance at the job, as opposed to assessing the learning outcomes of the programme which may include far more generic or transferable skills sets. (NB. Only UCS academic staff appointed/approved to do so, can assess learning outcomes, however employer feedback may well contribute to the information used to inform this academic judgement). There is an implication with the timeliness of receiving feedback that counts towards assessed work from an employer and deadlines that impact on student achievement must be clearly communicated from the outset of the placement.

Where UCS is the validating organisation UCS is responsible for monitoring standards of the programme and the monitoring of the quality of the assessment and the decision-making process for the final mark awarded using External Examiners and Programme Tutors. Where an award is validated by a university partner they hold this latter responsibility.

Occasions may occur where the student is unable to complete practical elements of their Work Based Learning. Reasonable adjustments are normally made within UCS's or the university partner's assessment regulations in case of such situations. Where the outcome of the final award may be impacted upon because of missed work-based

elements, either the UCS or partner university protocol on assessment practices and regulations should always be adhered to.

7.3. Staff new to Work Based Learning

Staff who are new to delivering/managing Work Based Learning for HE programmes should complete the actions noted in the checklist (an appendix to this document) before commencing delivery/support/management of any Work Based Learning. This is to ensure that both the member of staff and UCS can be confident that all necessary guidelines are being followed, especially in relation to the welfare of students involved. The Course Leader is responsible for supporting new staff to accomplish these actions and to provide development support and guidance.

8. WORK BASED LEARNING IN PRACTICE

8.1. Agreeing work placements

While it is the student's responsibility to find a work placement, the programme team is responsible for advising the student on the suitability of a placement in terms of meeting the learning outcomes of their Foundation Degree or full degree with embedded work-based learning. Equally it is the programme teams' responsibility to advise students looking to enter a placement deemed to be high risk. While UCS does not require or expect staff to inspect or approve individual work placements, placements deemed to be higher risk will require suitable evidence to demonstrate how those risks have been mitigated, and teams may choose to carry out a site inspection should they deem the risk high enough to warrant such a visit. While programme teams are not able to prevent a student accepting a placement they can advise against the placement if they deem it unfit to meet the learning outcomes required to meet the learning outcomes of the element/unit or module.

UCS cannot stop students from undertaking any work placements, even if the risk is deemed to be high, but must take all reasonable actions to ensure both student and employer have all necessary information to make an informed decision. Reasonable actions by UCS are defined as the completion of a risk assessment and communication of the risks associated with the student(s) (provided as part of the Guidance). Should the student still wish to proceed you must ensure the student and the employer sign the completed risk assessment form and that the Course Leader has a copy on file.

Where students have agreed to undertake a work placement but subsequently decide against it, they should give at least one week's notice to the employer of their decision to withdraw, unless in exceptional circumstances. This notice should be formally given

and UCS should also be made aware of this decision so it can further support the student to find an alternative placement or make other arrangements depending on the circumstances.

8.2. Health and Safety

All employees, employers and students have a legal duty to take reasonable care of their own health, safety and welfare as well as those who may be affected by their activities or omissions.

In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and as supported by the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1992) employers are required to ensure the health and safety of their employees or equivalent at work, so far as is reasonably practicable.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1992) and other subsidiary legislation expands on these provisions by requiring employers to:

- undertake risk assessments of any hazards associated with the student's workplace and work activities
- provide relevant information, instructions and supervision to the student
- co-operate and co-ordinate health and safety matters with other employers sharing the workplace.

8.3. Risk management

The HSE states that it is a legal requirement for every employer and self-employed person to assess the health and safety risks arising out of their work. The purpose of the assessment is to identify what needs to be done to control health and safety risks. *Regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.*

Risk is defined by the UCEA (2009) as 'the likelihood or uncertainty of harm occurring'. A lack of information on placements may require a higher risk rating until more information justifies lowering the risk.

The Employer has a duty of care to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to minimise risk prior to the placement commencing.

Equally UCS has a responsibility to ensure that students preparing for work placement are adequately informed about risk to ensure they have the skills to assess the suitability

of their placement. Any concerns or uncertainties about an Employers ability to mitigate risks should be communicated to the tutor before commencing the placement, during placement concerns should initially be reported to the placement supervisor and further information is detailed in the supporting guidance documents.

UCS has a risk assessment process which should be followed by the student and the programme team prior to commencing the placement. Further details on this process can be found in the supporting student guidance documentation on Work Based Learning.

8.4. Insurance

UCS has Public Liability Insurance which covers its legal liabilities to its students and placement provider within the UK, it includes indemnity to students which means the student and the placement provider can be assured that UCS will have the resources to meet a legal claim from anyone who suffers because of something that is ultimately the fault of the institution. It therefore covers students if there is an accident in the workplace that was the fault of UCS but only if it is proven that the student did not act irresponsibly.

Students should be reminded that they have a legal responsibility to follow instructions and act sensibly to protect their own health and safety and that of others. (as set out in sections 7 and 8 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974).

The placement provider must have appropriate insurance(s) in place and this must be confirmed prior to the student commencing their placement. This insurance is normally either Employers' Liability or Workers' Compensation Insurance that will provide cover for the placement provider's liabilities to the student. In the unlikely event of a claim arising, it is the responsibility of the student to identify the liable party and provide evidence to substantiate such a claim. Students should consider taking out their own personal accident insurance as detailed in their guidance document, particularly if they are on placement outside of the UK.

8.5. Complaints

Should the Placement Provider or the Student experience issues during the placement and cannot resolve these issues simply with UCS they can submit a formal complaint to the UCS College Group. The complaint once received in writing should follow the formal complaints procedure (via email to complaints@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk).

Should the student or UCS have a complaint against the Placement Provider they should initially contact their tutor who will contact the work-based supervisor to try and resolve the issue. If the issue cannot be resolved then the placement may be suspended pending further investigation and the issue escalated to a senior colleague and/or HE Team.

Should the Placement Provider wish to raise issues about the student they should be directed to the tutor. If the issue cannot be resolved then a complaint may be raised by the Placement Provider, following UCS's complaints procedure.

Where a complaint may impact on a student's assessed work, the Deputy Head of Department and HE Team must be notified, to inform the Examination Board process as applicable.

8.6. Emergency procedures

All those involved with Work Based Learning placements must be aware of emergency procedures should something go wrong and as a minimum the following guidance should be adhered to for every placement:

- The placement provider and student must have the contact details of at least one key contact from UCS that can be contacted in case of emergency.
- UCS must hold details of the student's home address and next of kin (as requested at enrolment).
- UCS must hold details of the placement provider's contact information and designated contact for the placement as detailed in the Learner Agreement
- Procedures must be in place to ensure UCS is informed immediately of any serious problems.
- The placement may be terminated immediately should the student's safety or that of the organisation be deemed at risk and the student withdrawn from the workplace.
- UCS procedures for complaints, appeals and disciplinaries should be followed as necessary.

8.7. Visits to students during Work Based Learning

UCS is not obliged to undertake visits to students whilst they are on placement. It is at the discretion of the Programme Team as to whether they consider there is a need to visit placements, and the following reasons may contribute to this decision:

- Duration of the placement (if longer than the normal 4–6-week placement)
- Risk Assessment (i.e. it is showing many high-risk elements)

- Predominantly lone working by the student
- Remote working required where the student may not be easily contactable for periods of time

8.8. Monitoring and evaluating Work Based Learning

Work Based Learning can provide UCS, the student and employer with a variety of experiences. It is important for the development of the Work Based Learning provision at UCS and the University partner that these experiences are recorded and built on for future placements via a work-placement database.

Throughout the placement students should complete the required paperwork to help them evidence the necessary tasks that have been undertaken and therefore the learning outcomes met. Time should be taken by the student to formally reflect on their experiences to enhance their learning experience and their Personal and/or Professional Development Plan/Action Plan. Employers are asked to provide any necessary evidence or documentation to support this process in a timely manner.

Work Based Learning is not reviewed formally as a separate element but will be included as part of programme reviews and updates through UCS's Quality Improvement Cycle. The Work Based element will normally be reviewed periodically through the programme review processes as governed by each partner university's policies.

8.9. RPL

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment [leading to the award of credit] that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit [or module] through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning.

Where students already possess experience and/or knowledge that is comparable to the experience of the Work Based Learning they would undertake as part of the programme of study, Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) may be considered as an option.

8.10. Key Documentation for Consultation

Each programme is required to have specific documentation in place to aid effective management of work placements undertaken by its students.

Please see appendices for full guidance on the documentation required for your programme.

Key documents should be shared with all those involved in work-based learning

- Supporting Guidance notes for Work based learning
- Health & Safety information for student and provider
- Contemporary and online application support, e.g. template letters, CV writing guidance
- Complaints procedure
- Appeals procedure
- Learner Agreement between student and provider
- Personal Development Planning (PDP) documentation/reflective journal/log for student
- Assessment regulations/guidance for Work Based Learning (as per Validating Partner)
- Associated Learning outcomes
- Assignment brief/Action Plan
- Employer Survey

8.11. Mandatory Documentation

Those undertaking work-based learning have a duty to meet the data capture requirements for Work Based Learning, as such, we recommend using the documents provided within the appendices of this policy. We appreciate some academic areas may wish to use bespoke templates; this is acceptable provided they capture the same information outlined within the approved policy data capture documentation.

Students are responsible to share the completed information:

- Learner Agreement
- Risk Assessment
- Daily Timesheet
- Copy of Work Placement Provider Public Liability Insurance

Work Based Learning Tutors are responsible for storing these documents securely in accordance with data protection legislation.

9. REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF THE POLICY

This policy and associated guidance documentation is all subject to regular review and scrutiny through UCS's Senate with sign off by the Policy Review Group. The content and relevance of the policy and associated documents is also subject to scrutiny from UCS's partner universities and other stakeholders as appropriate.

Points of Reference

- ASET: *A Good Practice Guide for Placement and Other Work-Based Learning Opportunities in Higher Education*, Vol. 2, March 2009
- ASET: *Health and Safety for Student Placements*, Vol. 3, 2010
- UCS College Group – Health and Safety Policy Statement
- Department for Universities, Innovation & Skills (DIUS), *Higher Education at Work* http://www.dius.gov.uk/consultations/documents/Higher_Education_at_Work.pdf
- DFES, *Providing Work Placements for Disabled Students – A good practice guide for further and higher education institutions* (2002)
- National Occupational Standards
- QAA: Characteristics Statement, Foundation Degree, September 2015
- <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Foundation-Degree-Characteristics-15.pdf>
- QAA: *Foundation degree qualification benchmark*, 2010
- <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/Foundation-Degree-qualification-benchmark-May-2010.aspx>
- QAA Scotland: *Making it work a guidebook exploring work based learning*, July 2010
- QAA – *UK Quality Code for Higher Education, advice and guidance, work based learning*
- <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/work-based-learning>
- Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 (RRAA)
- Special Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA)
- The UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA)
- UCEA: *Health and Safety Guidance for the Placement of Higher Education Students*, 2009
- <http://www.ucea.ac.uk/en/publications/index.cfm/HSplace>
- University and Colleges Employers Association (1999), *Health and Safety Guidance for the Placement of HE Students*
- Universities UK (UUK)

WORK BASED LEARNING FORMS FOR STAFF TO COMPLETE

For University Centre Somerset Staff

The following pages contain information specific to work placements your students will be involved in. There are also some forms which you are required to complete to facilitate your students' placements and comply with the wider UCS College Group policies on health and safety in work placements.

If you have any queries about completing these forms please contact the HE Team by email:
he@ucscollegegroup.ac.uk

1 – Partner University specific guidance

The table below gives guidance on the documentation available for each partner university:

Partner University	Documentation	Location
University of Plymouth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ University Centre Somerset Work Based Learning Policy and supporting Guidance Documentation for Tutors, Students and Providers 	SharePoint HE Info Hub
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student Programme Handbook 	HE Info Hub SharePoint
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comprehensive staff guidance on the Plymouth Portal available under the Placements Community 	Plymouth Portal, Placements Community
The Open University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student programme Handbook 	HE Info Hub SharePoint
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ University Centre Somerset Work Based Learning Policy and supporting Guidance Documentation for Tutors, Students and Providers 	SharePoint HE Info Hub
Oxford Brookes University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student programme Handbook 	HE Info Hub SharePoint
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ University Centre Somerset Work Based Learning Policy and supporting Guidance Documentation for Tutors, Students and Providers 	SharePoint HE Info Hub
UWE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student programme Handbook 	HE Info Hub SharePoint
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ University Centre Somerset Work Based Learning Policy and supporting Guidance Documentation for Tutors, Students and Providers 	SharePoint HE Info Hub

2 – Work Based Learning in Practice

PRE-ENROLMENT

University Centre Somerset Staff:

- Programme design – any updates to specifications or units?
- WBL Staff induction checklist
- Preparation of course material
- Preparation of WBL specific materials

Partner University:

- Programme design – academic standards are maintained
- Ensure WBL guidance materials are available
- Update UCS with any changes to existing information or agreements.

Student:

- What undertaking a work placement will involve.
- The type of placement
- Opportunities a work based unit can provide
- Location, timing and availability
- Special requirements for placement (eg for sight impairment etc)

PRE-PLACEMENT

Activities:

- PDP activities
 - Career orientation
 - CV writing
 - Reflective diary/log
- WBL is delivered as a unit/module.

Partner University:

- Monitor academic standards through Link Tutor arrangements and meetings

Student:

- To arrange their work placement:
- Correspond with employer(s)
 - Agree terms of placement
 - Confirm aims of placement
 - Prepare a diary/log
 - Conduct Risk Assessment
 - Brief employer
 - Provide college staff with all information about their placement

University Centre Somerset Staff:

- Support student
- Record employer information
- Review risk assessment
- Confirm requirements of WBL
- Distribute supporting information to students

ON PLACEMENT

Student:

- Attend placement
- Maintain diary/log
- Conduct themselves professionally
- Ensure aims are fulfilled
- Notify the employer/UCS of any change in circumstance
- Abide by health and safety instructions

Employers:

- Health & Safety briefing
- Set appropriate tasks
- Provide performance review(s)
- Hold contact details for UCS
- Provide formal feedback to contribute to assessment

University Centre Somerset Staff:

- Point of contact for employer and student

POST-PLACEMENT

Student:

- Ensure feedback from employer is received
- Complete diary/log/journal
- Complete and submit assignment
- Report any extenuating/mitigating circumstances by deadline

Employer:

- Provide feedback
- Confirm future placement opportunities

University Centre Somerset Staff:

- De-brief students
- Mark assignments
- Update employer record
- Keep in touch with employers
- Record any circumstances
- Attend exam board to confirm marks

Partner University

- Exam Board to confirm marks
- Provide support as required

3 – University Centre Somerset HE Work Based Learning Staff Checklist

This checklist is for all staff involved in the delivery, management and supporting of Work Based Learning activities for HE at UCS. It should be used as a guide for ensuring all staff new to Work Based Learning at HE are inducted thoroughly and as a refresher as needed for all involved.

No.		Notes	Complete?
1	You are aware of and have read the UCS HE Work Based Learning UCS policy and guidance document		
2	You know which partner university (if any) you work with and are aware of their particular requirements for Work Based Learning	See appendix 1 for full details	
3	You understand the cycle and requirements of Work Based Learning activities		
4	You understand the importance and processes for ensuring risk assessments are carried out	See student Work Based Learning guidance pack	
5	You understand the legal aspects of health & safety for students and employers involved in Work Based Learning, including insurance arrangements. This may need to include arrangements for the partner university also.	See the UCS policy document and for further information refer to ASET www.asetonline.org	
6	You understand who is responsible for what roles and responsibilities for Work Based Learning and are clear what your role is.	See UCS policy and refer to your manager for guidance.	
7	You understand what action to take should an emergency arise with a student on work placement.		
8	You are aware of where to find additional support and information relating to HE and Work Based Learning	See UCS policy for sources of information. Refer to HE Team with any queries.	

4 – Higher Education Work Placement Risk Assessment Tool

Risk Profiling and Specific Actions Necessary

For this risk assessment a hazardous activity is defined as: one where a student is at risk of short or long term ill health, injury or death or risks that a students' action or inaction could cause to others or a business.

Factor	Rating profile	Indications for Risk profiling	Actions necessary
Work Factors	High	<p>Work with hazards that have potential to cause permanent injury or fatalities, including: Construction site with work at height or below ground, dusts, moving machinery, electrical systems. Operation of machinery with mechanical hazards such as high speed rotating parts, crushing or entanglement risks. Laboratory work with toxic/hazardous materials.</p> <p>Community work with known high risk groups of clients or locations (e.g. drug abusers)</p> <p>Work with animal bedding or large or dangerous animals</p> <p>Activities requiring specific licences or qualification</p> <p>Work involving significant hazards in small companies that do not have professional health and safety advice.</p>	<p>Brief the student about the risks of this placement in detail. If the student still wishes to proceed you can mitigate the assessed risk by:</p> <p>Seeking confirmation from Placement Provider about expectations of student's prior competency in high risk activities, and ensure student meets these.</p> <p>Confirm that training and supervision will be provided by the Placement Provider throughout the placement</p> <p>Details can be found on the risk assessment form</p>
	Medium	<p>Working in proximity to high risk factors, as above, but not directly.</p>	<p>Seek confirmation from the Placement Provider that the student will not be expected to participate in high risk activities, and will be appropriately supervised if medium risk activated.</p> <p>Details can be found on the risk assessment form</p>
	Low	<p>Office work or other low hazard environments or activities</p>	<p>None</p>
Travel and transport	High	<p>Significant travel required to reach placement, prolonged or on local transport facilities known to be high risk (for example in a less developed country).</p> <p>Demanding travel during the placement that may impact on the student's alertness and/or ability to perform tasks safely.</p> <p>Student is required to drive others in own or unfamiliar vehicles.</p>	<p>Brief the student on travel arrangements, discuss implications with them. If the student still wishes to proceed you can mitigate the assessed risk by:</p> <p>Advise student to check they have the necessary driving licenses and insurance.</p> <p>If on placement overseas advise student to seek their own travel insurance (see student guidance pack for further information)</p>
	Medium	<p>Night travel.</p> <p>Long daily commute requirement.</p> <p>Student required to drive familiar vehicle in reasonable conditions.</p>	<p>No specific action required</p> <p>Brief student on travel arrangements. Confirm that these are acceptable.</p> <p>Advise student to check they have the necessary driving licenses and insurance.</p> <p>Advise student to check the provider has the appropriate vehicle insurance.</p>
	Low	<p>No significant travel, a reasonable daily commute.</p> <p>No driving associated with the placement.</p>	<p>None</p>
Location and or regional factors	High	<p>Significant risk of civil disorder, crime or similar danger – most likely in unstable areas of foreign countries.</p> <p>Unavoidable lone or remote working in proximity to significant risk</p> <p>Medical and rescue services not available quickly or locally</p> <p>Means of communication likely to be difficult or compromised</p>	<p>Brief the student about the risks of this placement in detail. If the student still wishes to proceed you can mitigate the assessed risk by:</p> <p>Checking specific risks in the region by consulting the Foreign Office's website</p> <p>Checking how risks can be reduced – e.g. appropriate clothing or behaviour particularly in highly religious or traditional societies.</p>

	Medium	Higher than normal risk or civil disorder, crime or comparable danger Delays likely in communicating with tutors and others Placements abroad in areas identified as low risk by the FCO	Check Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) restrictions and recommendations Check how risks can be reduced – e.g. appropriate clothing or behaviour particularly in highly religious or traditional societies.
	Low	Placements in the UK with no significant local risks.	None
Environmental Health	High	Regional/local health risks that require mandatory and specific health protection measures e.g. inoculations Very hot, very cold or strenuous working conditions	Brief the student about the risks of this placement in detail. If the student still wishes to proceed you can mitigate the assessed risk by: Advising the student to consult a health professional (for example immunisations) visa requirements such as HIV test. Advise students to take a medical travel kit with them.
	Medium	Regional/local conditions require some precautionary measures, e.g. optional inoculations against diseases	No specific actions but if in doubt recommend that students consult a health professional and to take a medical travel kit with them.
	Low	Placements in the UK with no significant environmental health risks	None
Individual Student	High	The student has personal health factors such as general health, pregnancy, disability, linguistic or cultural that may significantly increase the risk of illness, accident or injury to themselves or others even after appropriate adjustments have been made within the work place. The student's knowledge, understanding and skills are low for the type of work or particular activities they will be undertaking.	Brief the student about the risks of this placement in detail. If the student still wishes to proceed you can mitigate the assessed risk by: Asking students to disclose any underlying health issues that may impact on their placement. Checking the Placement Provider's insurance policy and discussing strategies to minimise perceived risks with the student and placement provider. Make sure the student knows how to get help if needed. It may also be sensible to request written confirmation from the Placement Provider that they are aware of the risks and the strategies they have in place to address them.
	Medium	The student has personal factors that may require specific adjustments or support during work or social interactions at work. Student has limited knowledge, understanding or skills in some areas they will be required to participate in during the placement.	Confirm that the employer has made reasonable adjustments. Make sure the student knows how to get help if needed.
	Low	The student has no long-term medical conditions or disability likely to cause episodes of illness or require specific support whilst on placement. Student has required level of knowledge, understanding or skills.	None
Insurance limitations	High	Locations, activities and/or circumstances that are excluded from the College's travel and other insurance cover (likely to be travel to less developed or known dangerous countries)	If locations, activities and/or circumstances are excluded from the College's travel and other insurance cover, consider alternative placements. If the placement is to proceed, additional specific insurances may be available, for example students own travel insurance. Consult the College's insurance policy and consult the Head of Area for Finance and Estates.
	Medium	Locations, activities and/or circumstances that require prior acceptance from the College's insurers before being covered.	No specific action unless you are uncertain if this is the case, in which event you must check the College's insurance policy with the Head of Finance & Estates.
	Low	Locations, activities and/or circumstances that are automatically included in the College's insurance cover UK and where the Placement Provider has Employers' and Public Liability Insurance cover.	None

5 – Risk Assessment Form

This form must be completed in advance of every agreed work placement by the student and designated Work Placement Supervisor.

	Details	Student Number	Course Title	Work-Based Learning		
Provider Name:				Start Date	End Date	
Person in Contact:						
Location of Placement:						
Preliminary Checks			If Yes	If No	Date	
Has the Placement Provider received a copy of the UCS Provider Guidance and Work Based Learning Policy?	Yes/No		Is the Provider happy with the content laid out within the guidance. If Yes, please sign the learner agreement.	Please follow up with the Provider who may ask for clarification before signing the learner agreement		
Does the Placement Provider have a Health and Safety Advisor?	Yes/No	Provide contact details below		Identify who in the organisation is responsible for Health & Safety		
		Name:		Name:		
		Telephone:		Telephone:		
Name of Workplace Supervisor	This is a Requirement	Provide contact details below		Identify who in the organisation is responsible for Safeguarding and Wellbeing (if applicable)		
		Name:		Name:		
		Telephone:		Telephone:		
		Address:				
Has the Placement Provider been used before?	Yes/No	If Yes		If No		Date
		Research Historical Data on the Provider		Create a new Placement Provider Record		
		Were there any unresolved Health and Safety concerns?				
		If Yes		If No		
		Add these to your Health and Safety Risk Assessment for clarification.		No Further action required		

Risk Assessment	Date				
Date Induction and Risk Assessment to be completed					
Details of workplace supervisor/health and safety advisor completing assessment with you	Provide contact details below		When completing your risk assessment please refer to the UCEA - Appendix 1 - Risk Profiling and Risk Reducing Actions		
	Name:				
	Telephone:				
	E-mail:				
	Position within Organisation:				
RISK RATINGS	High/Medium/Low	Action Necessary		When action was completed	Date
Work Factors					
Travel and Transportation					
Location/Regional					
General/Environmental					
Individual Student					
Insurance Limitations					
Assurances for High Risk Placements	The provider confirms that the student engaged in Work Based Learning will not be expected to participate in any high risk work or be left unsupervised in areas deemed high risk and the student will be appropriately supervised in medium risk areas. Additionally any lone working must be notified to the student and Tutor prior to the commencement of the placement				
Public Liability Insurance	Copy Received	Action Necessary			
	Yes/No	If Yes		If No	
		No further action required		Please ask organisation	

Signature of Student: _____

Signature of Placement Provider: _____

Further Requirements		
Is there are further Health and Safety Training required?	Yes	No
	When will this take place	No further action requirement
Are there any pre-requisit requirements for the role including any professional body/practice requirements	Yes	No
	When will this take place	No further action requirement

Once all actions have been completed and all outstanding queries have been satisfied the tutor may approve the placement.

Signature of Tutor: _____

Conditions:

Induction/Start Date:

Date
Date

Date

Date

6 – Learner Agreement

As stated in Advice and Guidance for Work Based Learning, published by the QAA, all parties should sign and agree to the terms of the work-based learning placement.

UCS is very appreciative of organisations that offer work experience opportunities to students. This agreement between the student, UCS and host organisation is to ensure clarity about responsibilities and expectations to help ensure a positive outcome. If there is a query the tutor should be contacted.

Name of Student:	
Address during placement: ----- ----- -----	Placement role:
	Telephone:
	Mobile:
	Email:
Name of Placement Provider:	
Name of Workplace Supervisor:	
Provider Contact Address:	
Telephone:	Mobile:
Email:	
Name of Tutor:	
College Address:	
Tutor Contact Telephone:	
Summary of Student duties/role whilst on placement	
Dates and hours of attendance:	
Outline any work to be completed as part of the work placement. This will be supported by the Student Action Plan:	
<p>Insurance, Health and Safety and conduct</p> <p>The student agrees that they are familiar with the Health and Safety Regulations and other organisational policies and procedures and they have a legal responsibility to follow instructions and act sensibly to protect their own health and safety and that of others in the work place (as set out in sections 7 and 8 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974).</p> <p>The student will, through their conduct, attendance, punctuality and dress, comply with the standards expected by the placement provider at all times.</p> <p>The provider understands and accepts their roles and responsibilities and there are no unresolved concerns that may/may not have been highlighted at the induction.</p>	
<p>Prior Disclosure</p> <p>The Student is required to disclose any condition whether physical or mental that may impact on the placement to the Provider prior to the agreement of a placement.</p>	

Signatures:

Both parties sign and date to confirm that they have read and understand the roles outlined above:

Student:

Placement Supervisor:

Date:

