

# **EMPLOYER GUIDE**



**HOW TO IMPLEMENT SUCCESSFUL  
INDUSTRY PLACEMENTS**



# ***WELCOME TO THE INDUSTRY PLACEMENT PROGRAMME***

Thank you for your interest in offering an industry placement to a student within your workplace. Industry placements provide young people studying towards a technical qualification practical experience directly related to their course, helping prepare them for the world of work.

Employers like you are playing a key role in creating opportunities for young people in the local community at the start of their careers to develop their technical and employability skills and build confidence.

We are passionate about industry placements because they offer excellent opportunities for both employers and young people alike.

Industry placements enable learners to develop a specific sector skill whilst building confidence in learning and development, they also provide the employer with a fresh perspective and an opportunity to promote equality and diversity in the workforce.

The longer duration of industry placements, ensures students are given sufficient time to master the essentials and that employers have ample opportunity to develop the student's technical abilities.

This handbook will provide you with information about the different components which make up the programme and how you can get involved and offer an industry placement to a local student.

**The Department for Education**

# **INDUSTRY PLACEMENTS: AN OVERVIEW**

## ***What are industry placements?***

Two thirds of employer's rate work experience as being of significant or critical value for young entrants to the labour market and half of employers believe a top priority for education providers should be developing awareness of working life with support from businesses (UK Commission's Employer Perspectives Survey 2014).

That is why the Department for Education (DfE) have made a commitment that all 16 to 19 year old students following a new technical education route will be entitled to a quality industry placement to arm them with the relevant technical skills they need to give them the best possible opportunity to enter skilled employment.

Industry placements (formerly 'work placements') will be a mandatory part of new T Levels. T Levels are rigorous, classroom-based, technical study programmes at level 3, designed to support entry to skilled employment in technical occupations at level 3 and above. A substantial, high quality industry placement with an external employer will be an essential part of each T Level.

These industry placements will give students a valuable opportunity to put their learning into practice, develop their technical skills and become more employable. Students will spend a minimum of 45 days with an external employer in a role directly relevant to their course.

## **Why should my business get involved?**

### ***Immediate benefits***

- Extra resources for your projects and day-to-day operations from students, developing skills in a course relevant to your business and industry
- Give your employees the opportunity to develop management and mentorship skills
- Bring a fresh perspective into your business
- CSR impact: share with stakeholders how your business has supported local young people into industry placements, improving their employability and progression opportunities

### ***Long term benefits***

- Inspire the next generation to work in your industry
- Address current and future skills shortages in your industry
- Strengthen your recruiting pipeline and increase diversity
- Shared value: benefits for business and society are correlated – increased social inclusion leads to new business opportunities

### ***The business case for industry placements***

The industry placements programme provides equality of opportunity for young people from all segments of society to access the workplace and kick start their careers. This also presents an important opportunity for businesses to set themselves apart in the market through recognising the importance of concepts such as ‘shared value’ and ‘responsible business’. That is, to be able to move beyond the traditional realm of corporate social responsibility into a sphere where businesses not only understand but are able to demonstrate the correlation between a healthy society and their bottom line.

### ***Resolve entry-level skills shortages***

Companies in key sectors still struggle to attract the right candidates for entry-level vacancies. These include, but are not limited to: utilities, support care workers, laboratory assistants, catering, transport, storage, hospitality and communications sectors. Offering a pipeline of talent for entry-level jobs, apprenticeships, or higher-level skills training, industry placements provide an opportunity for young people to develop their job readiness and technical skills and be better placed to make decisions on the career pathway they would like to pursue.

### ***Improve recruitment cost effectiveness***

Industry placements can offer a pipeline for low cost, effective methods of recruiting from an untapped skills pool. Building partnerships with local education providers offers opportunities to advertise and raise awareness of employment opportunities to young people who are deciding on their future career paths.

Increase retention rates: Evidence shows that employees recruited through work inclusion initiatives have demonstrated lower staff turnover rates as a result of the increased value that those recruits place on having secured a job. This can result in direct cost savings to the business.

### ***Demonstrate a commitment to diversity and better understand customers***

Equality of opportunity is essential for a productive workforce. Through industry placements, there is an opportunity to achieve greater diversity amongst employees recruited from excluded groups than the existing workforce. This demonstrates not only a strong corporate commitment to diversity but has important business benefits such as enabling your organisation to understand the customers it serves; greater innovation and creativity and better performing teams.

### ***Increase opportunities for employees to build skills and experience creating greater employee satisfaction***

Delivering industry placements provides the opportunity for nominated individuals in your existing workforce to act as buddies, coaches or line managers to the new recruits. These roles can deliver returns to the business with staff experiencing satisfaction as well as developing their own professional skills through their engagement and participation in training.

### ***Help companies meet tender requirements***

Commitment to supporting excluded groups can strengthen bids for public sector contracts. It is likely that successful bids for public sector contracts could include the provision of a social or community benefit, e.g. through a Section 106 agreement.

### ***Build brand value and corporate reputation***

Being seen as an employer that is not only helping address some of society's most critical issues but who is also enabling employees to play a role is of real importance to many businesses. Providing opportunities to local young people raises the profile gains public exposure among customers and clients.

Shape the direction of the company not only within its local community, but also nationally as the initiative technical education within your industry:  
Develop partnerships with local education providers and influence the learning pathway for young people entering your industry.

### ***What do I need to do?***

- Provide an industry placement of a minimum of 45 days for a student on a course directly relevant to your industry. The structure will be based on your needs as well as those of the local education provider and could be a block of 8-10 weeks, 1-3 days a week, or a mix of both, for 12-24 weeks during term.
- You will agree relevant learning objectives for the placement with the education provider and the student. The learning objectives should be occupationally specific to your industry and you will be expected to set quality tasks that enable the student to work towards those learning objectives.
- Ensure there is a safe work environment and opportunities for the student to develop their technical skills within your industry.
- Provide a line manager to support, supervise and mentor the student and who will have regular contact with the provider to discuss progress of the student.
- At the end of the placement, provide a reference reflecting whether the student has demonstrated commitment to the learning objectives set for the industry placement.

### ***Frequently Asked Questions***

#### ***Do I need to pay the student?***

Industry placements are about providing students with high quality, meaningful training, not work. Therefore, students are not entitled to a salary as the placement is forming part of a course of further education. There is no legal requirement or expectation that students will be paid. However, you can pay the student should you wish to or support the student with their travel and subsistence costs.

#### ***How are industry placements different to work experience?***

Work experience typically involves a student shadowing you for 1 or 2 weeks, having not necessarily studied a course relevant to your industry. They are mostly there to observe and experience a first taster for the world of work. However, industry placements will be for a minimum of 45 days, with students studying a related course meaning they will have relevant skills and knowledge that enable them, after a period of induction, to add value to your business.

#### ***Will there be lots of paperwork?***

No. All legal, health & safety, insurance and other documents will be given as templates, pre-filled where possible, to minimise your workload and the amount of paperwork required, in addition to any internal processes you will need to complete as a business.

### ***How can I balance this with core business activities?***

Students will undergo preparation by their education providers before coming to you, and clear responsibilities, working hours and other workplace expectations should be set out in the industry placement agreement which is signed by you, the student and their education provider prior to the placement. You should agree with your student what their goals and responsibilities are for the placement at the start and monitor their progress towards these. Given the opportunity, they should be able to add value! Education providers will also be on hand to support if challenges arise, to ensure both parties get the most from the placement.

### ***What support will I receive?***

Education providers will support you to set up the placements, from dealing with administration to helping you find the right student. Once a placement begins, education providers will continue to provide support to both the student and line manager, where necessary, and will seek to learn and improve the process over the course of the placement.

### ***How can I make sure I get suitable students?***

You can work with the education providers to find the best student for your organisation. Be transparent about your requirements so that the education provider can support you. If you would like, this can involve you holding a CV screening and/or interview process. Note that all students will be studying a technical course that should be relevant to the industry placement being offered.

### ***Key responsibilities of all parties.***

For placements to run smoothly and work well for you, your student and the education provider, all parties need to play their part. This section brings together valuable learnings from the pilot and identifies clearly what each party needs to be responsible for (as set out fully in the industry placement agreement).

***“I find this new work placement idea so much better than the standard work experience because you actually have ownership of a [project] to show for it at the end, as well as great skills learned. These skills will be transferable, and in fact invaluable, to my future career.”***

## ***Responsibilities of the employer.***

In order to best support the student on the industry placement and help them develop their skills, confidence and knowledge in the world of work, you should (as a minimum):

### ***Job description***

- Put together a clearly worded description of the organisation, the role being offered and what you are looking for in a student to follow
- Be honest and realistic about what industry placements you are able to offer, and what you are not, to manage expectations and avoid disappointment.
- If practical, consider giving the student a project as part of their work to encourage them to take ownership, use their initiative and bring in their own ideas.

### ***Selection/matching***

Inform and discuss with the education provider what input you would like to have in the selection process of your student. This might include an interview, group assessment etc. to enable the student to best demonstrate their talent and interest.

### ***Preparation***

Prior to their first day of work, provide the student with joining information, including how to get to the place of work, working hours, lunch arrangements and other workplace expectations such as dress code, acceptable language and mobile phone usage. This should be included in the industry placement agreement.

### ***Induction***

Provide the student with a full induction in situ, including a tour of the workplace; introductions to relevant staff; any necessary training; health & safety arrangements; fire precautions and emergency evacuation arrangements; and how to report accidents, incidents and unsafe conditions.

### ***Compliance***

- Agree and sign a three-party industry placement agreement with the student and education provider.
- Comply with health & safety legislation and maintain adequate and up-to-date Employer's Liability [and Public Liability] insurance to cover the student and any potential loss or liability caused by or to the student in relation to the placement.
- Ensure that any confidential information provided to you by the student or education provider about the student will not be disclosed to any third parties.

- Similarly, ensure that the student is clear about keeping your commercial information confidential and allowing acceptable use of any of your IP for academic, non-commercial purposes.

### ***Line manager***

- Nominate a suitably qualified person to be the day-to-day line manager for the student and provide relevant introductions and contact details to the student.

### ***The line manager should:***

- Hold an initial meeting with the student 1-2 weeks prior to their start date to discuss and decide on their objectives/ learning aims which should be confirmed once they start with you.
- Hold regular weekly check-ins to track and review the student's progress.
- Remind the student to complete their logbook.
- Identify and deal with any issues (e.g. relating to colleagues, work content, workload etc.) at an early stage.
- Provide regular, constructive feedback to the student and encourage the student to think and problem-solve for themselves where possible.
- Meet (via phone or in person) with the education provider regularly to review progress and escalate any concerns you have with the student's performance on the placement.
- Attend a midpoint review meeting in person between you, the student, and their education provider to discuss the student's progress, review their learning objectives and make any changes to improve the second half of the placement.
- Complete written feedback forms for the education provider at designated points during the placement.
- Conduct or make arrangements for day-to-day supervision of the student.
- In cases of serious accident or incidents involving the student or breaches of discipline by the student:
- Advise and consult with the education provider; and co-operate with the education provider in the event of a complaint or concern from the student about their placement and/or the employer.
- Allow the student to submit all required reports and documents to the education provider in connection with the placement for the purposes of examination.
- Communicate any serious issues relating to the student's performance on the industry placement to the student and/or education provider as necessary.
- Attend a final review session in person between you, the student and the education provider at the end of the placement to review the student's progress.

### ***After the industry placement***

- Provide a reference upon the student's completion of their industry placement that gives a view on whether the student had demonstrated commitment to the learning objectives set at the start of the placement.
- You and the education provider should discuss feedback on the student as well as the quality of the placement itself and opportunities for further industry placement students.
- If you wish to employ a student after their industry placement, they will not be able to start with you until they have completed their studies. We suggest that you initiate a conversation with the student as early as possible to work out together how to maximise the student's development, when they will be able to start employment and contact the education provider for any guidance or support with this.

### ***Responsibilities of the student***

In order for students to be ready for their placement, they will be prepared for “working life” by their education providers. During their placement, students will be expected to:

#### ***Set clear objectives***

- Agree with you and the education provider a set of objectives / learning aims to be worked towards on the industry placement.
- Agree and sign a three-party industry placement agreement with the employer and your education provider.

#### ***Track progress***

- Fill in their logbook regularly (at least weekly) to track their industry placement activities, learnings, highlights and progression.
- Attend regular one-to-ones with their Line Manager and education provider to review progress and communicate any issues.
- Attend a midpoint review meeting in person between you, the student and their education provider to check in on their progress, review their learning objectives and make any changes to improve the second half of the placement.
- Attend a final review session in person between you, the student and their education provider at the end of the placement to reflect on your student's progress.

## ***Professional standards and etiquette***

- Make suitable arrangements to attend the industry placement punctually on the days and at the times agreed with you in advance (including lunch and break timings).
- Maintain professional standards of behaviour including being courteous and respectful to other staff, students and members of the public.
- Be reliable. If unable to attend work due to illness or another reason, contact their Line Manager promptly.
- Dress appropriately for the employer's work environment (in accordance with guidelines provided prior to joining).
- Maintain a positive attitude, be open to learning and feedback and make the most of the opportunity.
- Maintain quality in their work and use their initiative and fresh perspective.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding any of your information and not do anything which may bring you and/or the education provider into disrepute.
- Abide by all rules regarding health & safety, appropriate IT use and other policies and procedures of the employer.
- Complete all assessments and attend any briefing sessions that are required as part of the placement.
- Restrict use of personal mobile phones equipment to lunchtimes and breaks.

***“The student is dedicated and conscientious and has proved herself to be a real asset to my research team. She has spent time learning about epigenetics and has assisted with a ground-breaking experiment in the lab. The results from this are very exciting and we hope to publish them in a scientific journal, with the student as one of the co-authors. Overall I have been very impressed with the student and she is a great ambassador for the T-Level programme as a whole.”***

## ***Responsibilities of the education provider***

In order to support the student on the placement, and to ensure they bring value to the employer, you can expect the following from the education provider:

### ***Pre-placement checks***

- It is the responsibility of the education provider to ensure the industry placement is good quality, safe, meets the students' learning aims, and that any necessary checks are carried out on the employer before the student goes on their industry placement.
- These checks may include a site visit and a questionnaire to check basic adherence to health and safety, the existence of appropriate policies on insurance and safeguarding etc., a suitable induction process, supervision and provision for students with SEND or LLDD.
- Agree and sign a three-party industry placement agreement with the employer and the student.

The idea is to keep this process as simple as possible and ensure that it is proportionate for both employers and education providers. Those employers who have already undergone checks as part of previous or existing education and training provision such as apprenticeships and work experience may require lighter touch checks and monitoring.

### ***Matching***

- Ensure that the industry placement provides the opportunity for the student to apply and develop technical skills that are related to their occupational field of study.
- Communicate any special requirements of the student to the employer.
- Agree with the student and the employer a set of objectives/ learning aims to be achieved on the industry placement.

### ***Prepare the student***

- Train students on professional etiquette and expectations before they go on the work placement.
- Provide information to the student on general health and safety issues prior to their placement.
- Provide any specialist guidance and information to students with any additional needs, e.g. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) / Learners with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities (LLDD) and provide specialist guidance and information to employers hosting any such students.
- Liaise with the employer to ensure the student is equipped with any materials and support required for the performance of the placement such as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Provide students with a logbook to track their industry placement activities and progress.

### ***During the placement***

- Maintain regular contact with the employer and the student during the placement to monitor and evaluate the placement in terms of the student's progress as well as health, safety and welfare. Agree frequency of contact with the employer. Contact with the student should be fortnightly as a minimum.
- Organise a midpoint review between you, the student and your contact at the education provider. This should be held in person and is an opportunity to check in with the student's progress, review their learning objectives and make any changes to improve the second half of the placement.
- A staff member from the education provider should also conduct visits to the employer and student as necessary.
- Carry out ongoing safeguarding checks as are necessary to ensure the safety of the student whilst working with the employer. Education providers will use reasonable discretion in considering the track record and experience of employers to determine the level of monitoring they may need.
- If any serious issues arise relating to the student's performance on the industry placement, take these up with the student.
- Raise any issues promptly with the employer and handle them appropriately.

### ***Completion of placement***

- Ensure a final review session is held in person between you, the student and the education provider at the end of the placement to reflect on the student's progress.
- Ensure that you provide the student with a reference using a standardised template after completion of their placement.

***“During my time on the placement I got to speak to lots of construction professionals and get advice about my career plans. I feel that I now have more confidence to talk to people in a work setting and I also have greater confidence in my technical knowledge and am not afraid to point out mistakes when I see them. This placement has inspired me to apply for a degree apprenticeship with the employer which I hope to start in September.”***

## ***Guidelines for an industry placement job description***

In order to attract the most suitable student for the role, with skills, strengths and interests that are aligned with your organisation, it is recommended that you consider including the following points in the job description for the industry placement.

### ***About the organisation***

Write a short description about your business, highlight what your core activities are as well as your mission and values. Additional information on the company environment and workplace culture might also help bring to life what it means to work with you and inspire more students to apply.

### ***About the role & key responsibilities***

Try to be as detailed as possible on what the key responsibilities of the role will be. This could be a bullet point list, outlining all core tasks and activities that the student will be involved in or a short description of what the role will entail. Extra information is valuable. You may wish to describe a typical working day for your student and include the key responsible person they will be working with the most.

### ***Student specification***

List the key characteristics of your ideal candidate. You can use bullet points or write a short description of the skills, attributes and/or characteristics you are looking for.

### ***Supporting students with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LLDD)***

We know that many employers have considerable experience in supporting employees with additional needs. This section shares some feedback and learnings from the pilot to help you support SEND and/or LLDD students to take part in quality, supported industry placements at your workplace.

### ***What is the business case for offering industry placements to students with SEND/LLDD?***

The social enterprise Plus which supports people with disabilities into employment sets out a business case for the value of offering industry placements to students with SEND/LLDD.

Some of their reasons include:

- Improved morale, performance and bottom line results;
- Accessing new markets; and
- Going beyond corporate social responsibility by demonstrating commitment to social inclusion and improving the life chances of local young people.

### ***What support will the education provider offer?***

Education providers will be primarily responsible for helping you arrange additional support as needed to fully facilitate an industry placement for students with SEND or LLDD.

This could include:

- Assistance with travelling to and from the industry placement;
- Advising special equipment or adaptations; and
- Organising the services of an independent workplace mentor or, where students have more complex needs, a job coach providing full-time supervision.

Students with SEND/LLDD are assessed ahead of starting the course and their industry placements with a profile of information covering medical conditions, additional learning needs, ability to travel independently etc. Education providers will typically have an industry placement coordinator who sources appropriate placements, carries out risk assessments and health and safety checks with the student's profile and needs in mind. They will be the person for you to liaise with prior to and throughout the placement.

### ***What would workplace support look like day to day?***

Students with SEND/LLDD will need different levels and types of support depending on their individual needs. Some students, particularly those with complex needs, may need the education provider to organise a job coach in order to benefit fully from the placement. A job coach will work with a student on a day-to-day, individual basis within the workplace. Job coaches are trained in systematic instruction meaning they learn specific tasks/ activities in the workplace and then break them down into ways in which their student can then learn the tasks. This support will be tapered down, and eventually withdrawn, once the student is comfortable with the tasks.

The majority of students with SEND/LLDD do not have complex needs, but they are still likely to need additional support during their industry placement and education providers will consider carefully what help they will need, such as learning aids or a workplace mentor and advise you accordingly. A workplace mentor would be an existing member of your staff who should be appropriately trained to look at how to support students with SEND/LLDD in the workplace.

You will receive all necessary support from the education provider before and during the placement. The level of support will be at such a level as to maximise the success of the student's experience and be manageable and reasonable for you and your workforce. Some education providers have offered to give employers SEND/LLDD training to help both students on industry placements and the employer more generally. The designated contact at the education provider will check in regularly with you, the student, mentor and/or coach and parent/ guardian during the placement to track the student's performance and progress. This regular contact will allow you and the education provider to assess collaboratively whether the level of support is adequate and to take prompt action where necessary.

## ***Health & Safety guidance***

As an employer, it is your responsibility to stay up to date with Health and Safety legislation. If you have any questions regarding current laws or best practice, please consult the Health & Safety Executive government website and more specifically their guidance for young people in the workplace.

You and the education provider have a shared duty of care for the student. With respect to health and safety in the workplace, the duty of care rests primarily with the employer although checks will be made by the education provider as part of their safeguarding duties. You will need to adhere to your legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 (as you would anyway) including not using language or behaviour in a manner which is discriminatory and providing reasonable adjustments for disabilities (see above).

By law, you are responsible for ensuring a safe working environment, completing an adequate risk assessment, providing appropriate training and ensuring that the student receives an adequate induction to the Health & Safety aspects of your workplace.

### ***Risk assessment***

Not all companies will need to complete a new risk assessment when a student joins the organisation. Consult the flowchart below if you are unsure about what to do.

### ***Induction***

A standard workplace health and safety induction might include the following:

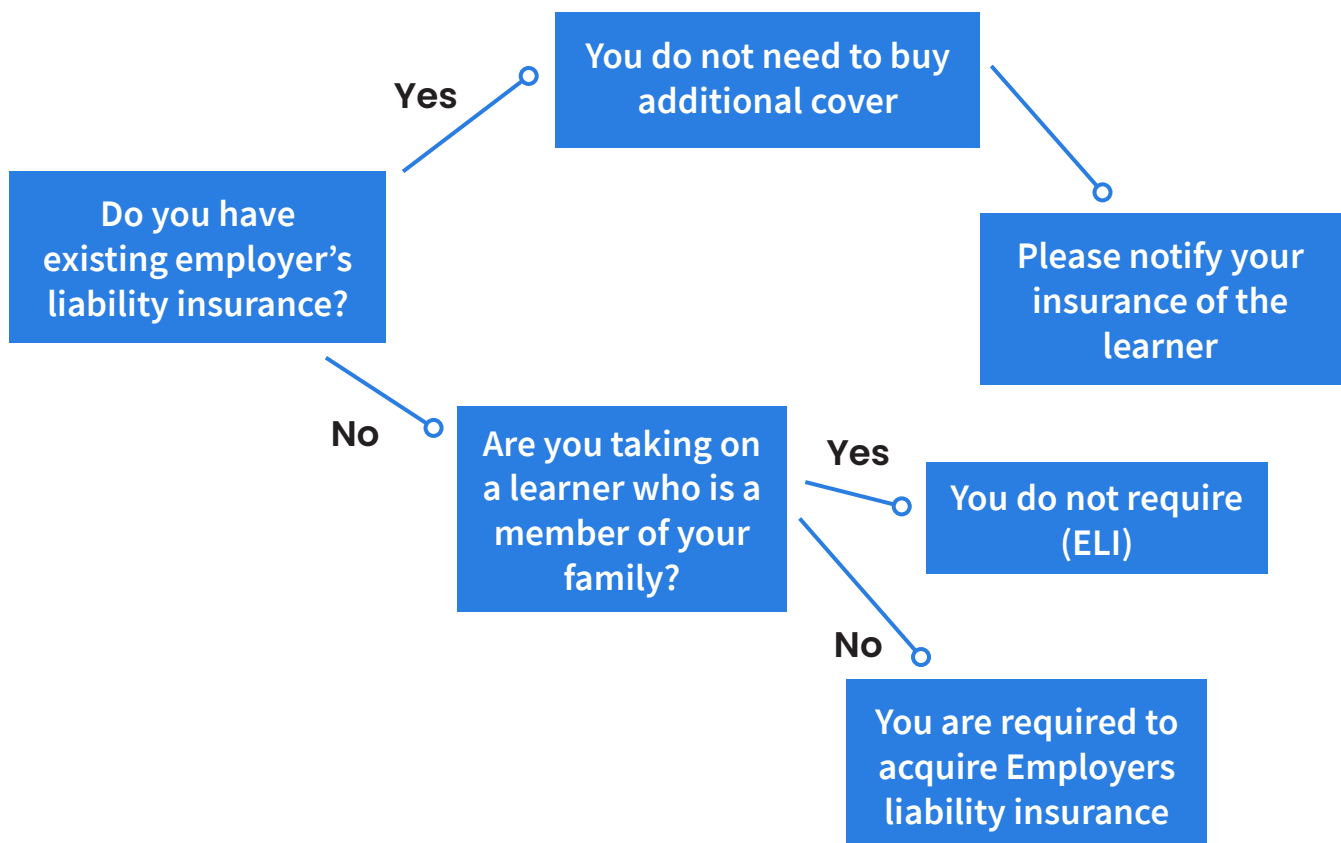
- Name and location of person responsible for health and safety
- Name and location of person responsible for first aid
- Location of first aid box and accident book
- Correct and safe use of any new equipment relevant to placement
- Explanation of student's responsibilities in case of emergency
- Location of fire exits and fire procedures
- Explanation of particular work-based hazards
- Consequences of breaching health and safety regulations
- Procedure for reporting accidents
- Procedure for reporting hazards

## Insurance guidance

If your industry placement student is doing work that sits within your normal business practice, and you already have up-to-date Employer's Liability Insurance and Public Liability Insurance, then you should not need additional cover. If you are unsure as to whether the work they are undertaking counts as 'normal business practice', then we would recommend talking to your insurance company.

Because your student will be working for you for longer than a 2-week period, you will need to notify your insurer about their employment.

If you don't already have Employer's Liability Insurance (ELI), please consult the flowchart below.



The risks of taking on an industry placement student are the same as taking on any other employee.

If you require further information or guidance on insurance, please see Health & Safety Executive guidance and talk to your own insurance company

## ***Safeguarding guidance***

Safeguarding is about protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse or neglect. The general position is that education providers are responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students on industry placements, as they form part of the study programme for which they are responsible.

As above, education providers will check the existence of your policies and procedures to ensure a safe and proper environment for their student, may carry out a site visit before the placement and will be in regular contact with you and the student throughout the placement. The principle is to keep checks and monitoring simple and proportionate for both employers and education providers.

It is important that you provide a safe and welcoming learning environment for all students, have a zero-tolerance policy of bullying and harassment, report all incidents to the education provider and are alert to the possibility of abuse. Adults working with young people (under 18) must be aware of potentially difficult situations.

### ***DBS checks***

Employers do not generally need to carry out a basic, standard or enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services check on members of staff supervising young people aged 16 or 17. This includes freelancers. However, where a student has a need for personal or health care due to a disability, the person providing that personal or health care may be required to obtain an enhanced DBS check.

An education provider may also choose to ask a line manager or supervisor to undergo a basic DBS check if they feel this is necessary, in situations such as:

- Where the student may be vulnerable (special needs, someone who has been in looked after care);
- Where the student is likely to be regularly alone with the adult as part of their work;
- Where the placement has a residential component.
- Procedure for reporting hazards

This is not a legal requirement but can be requested at the discretion of the provider. A student may need to have an enhanced DBS check before starting an industry placement in certain sectors, for example a placement in the Health Care and Early Years Sector where you would need to check that the student is not barred from regulated activity relating to children. Whilst this seems very unlikely to be the case, an individual can be automatically added to the barred list (either with or without representations) upon conviction for certain offences.

## ***Prevent duty***

This concerns the duty of education or training providers to prevent their students being drawn into terrorism and remains the education provider's responsibility during the industry placement. Education providers will expect you to assist with their duty to comply by being alive to the risk and reporting any concerns to them.

## ***Further information and guidance***

- **Disclosure and Barring Service**
- **NSPCC** provides tips on how to write or improve your internal guidance as well as downloadable model Safeguarding Policy.

**If you have any questions or concerns regarding the information provided, please do not hesitate to contact your industry placement contact at the education provider for guidance.**

**Work Placement Team**

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