

## Introduction

Work experience contributes to a student's personal, social, and general adult development through work related activities such as shadowing or live on-site experience. It teaches the student about the world of work in a unique learning environment that couldn't be replicated in formal education.

By providing a direct experience of work, an employer helps the student gain self-confidence, develop their skills, and acquire the knowledge needed in modern working life. Helping students acquire this experience and influence their career choices cannot be understated and the opportunity provided may be the first steps on a lifelong journey for each student.

It is also a vital way of introducing an individual to the opportunities in the construction sector.

The aim of this document is to provide essential information that an employer will need when undertaking work experience.

This pack will cover:

- An introduction to work experience
- Insurance
- Health and safety, and any other requirements
- Induction guidance
- Relevant documents to complete pre & post work experience

## What constitutes work experience?

The primary objective of work experience is to allow the student an opportunity to take part in and experience work outside the classroom; to establish relationships with other employees, travel to a work site, and develop their skills practically.

In recent years we have seen a gradual increase in the number of employers opening their doors to students and providing great learning experiences that can't be gotten in the classroom. Work experience serves as a conduit between student and employer, giving future employees an introduction to the world of work.

**Work shadowing** is a common technique used throughout a student's work experience and is to be used at the employer's discretion. Shadowing an experienced mentor allows the student to gain a broader understanding of a difficult task or set of activities that is unsuitable for a student. If the mentor considers a piece of work unsafe or too complex for the student to undertake, properly explaining the reasons behind the decision and the work in question will give the student new knowledge and a better understanding of their profession.

**Work related activities** could include:

- Students should always be supervised throughout the work experience, ensuring they always follow correct procedures and have the necessary PPE for each task.
- All members of staff involved with the work experience and relevant parties on site should be informed and briefed to properly safeguard the student.
- Employers should ensure the students are given appropriate tasks to complete and adequate instruction so that the tasks can be carried out safely to company regulations.

# Employers' Work Experience Guidance

- No hazardous machinery should be operated by the student, the student should not be placed in any hazardous environments or undertake any tasks which may be unrelated to the students chosen occupation.

The School or College should strive to give the student proper instruction and preparation before any work experience takes place. It is important for the student and the employer too to fully understand their responsibilities when participating in work experience. Under health and safety regulations, a student participating in work experience is regarded as an employers' employee. An employer offering work experience to a student means adhering them to the same standard of health and safety as the rest of their workforce. The employer should endeavour to make the learning experience as productive as possible.

## Insurance arrangements

Insurance for a student's work experience is typically covered by the policy already in place. The Association of British Insurers, Lloyd's of London, and the Investment Brokers Association have all agreed that a student on a work experience placement is treated as a regular employee in the instance that any personal injury occurs. This means the Employers' Liability Insurance policy **will** cover a student on work experience in case of an accident.

In addition to this, the Education Work Experience Act 1973 allows students on work experience to be treated as an employee for the purpose of any insurance query. With this being supported by the government and the above-mentioned insurance policies, sufficient coverage for any potential accident involving a student will be provided by the Employers' Liability Insurance; the same as any other employee.

Any injury to a student on site not related to the work taking place is covered by the employers' Public Liability policy; the same as any other site visitor. Any injury caused to an employee by a student will also be covered by the Employers' Liability policy.

It is the responsibility of the employer to make sure that such cover is in place and although not a requirement for work experience, FIS recommends the employer informs their insurer that work experience will be taking place. If there is an accident on site involving a student while on work experience, the employer should immediately notify the students' college work coach or the school and the emergency contact.

## Site supervision

To prevent any issues occurring on site, students on work experience must always supervised by a suitable member of staff. The supervisor responsible for the students work experience will have a large contribution to the learning value of the work experience and also to the safety of the student and employees they interact with. Good supervision with a keen mentor will greatly improve the effectiveness of the students training and greatly reduce the risk of any incident occurring.

## CSCS Cards

It is **not a requirement for any student on Work Experience to own a CSCS Card**, as stated by the [CSCS in February 2019](#)

Many organisations have taken a “Fully carded on site” approach to CSCS to ensure compliance with Health & Safety regulations which is understandable, however this is not a legal requirement for students as they will only be accompanying by an individual holding the relevant cards, not working independently in a trained operatives role.

## Health and Safety

It is the employer’s responsibility to ensure that health, safety, and welfare standards are adhered to at work by their employees and students on work experience.

Under health and safety law an employer must assess the risks to any young people working on their site, work experience is covered by the same risk assessments and it’s the employers’ responsibility to inform the student of these risks. It should also be noted that a student is less likely to have prior experience with health and safety standards and extra care should be taken to explain each risk. It is our recommendation to revisit your current risk assessment and determine whether it sufficiently identifies all the risks a young person may encounter on your site to avoid being exposed under health and safety law.

The college will need to be provided with a copy of your risk assessment before any work experience takes place, and a site visit from a member of staff should confirm that the risk assessment provided is acceptable.

Students will be informed that they are adhering to the same health and safety duties as other employees and instructed to:

- Be responsible and take reasonable care of their own health and safety on site, and to be aware of how their actions may affect other people.
- Co-operate and abide by the employers’ instructions and any legal requirements regarding health and safety, **including PPE**.

## Training and instruction

An employer is not expected to provide on the job training to a student on work experience, however if the supervisor deems it suitable any instruction and learning provided can be very beneficial and improve the overall quality of the placement.

## Hours of work

A work experience placement cannot be more than 5 days in any consecutive 7-day period. A working day must not exceed more than 8 hours and a 12-hour rest period between working time must be given. A minimum 30 minutes rest break must be given to the students after 4.5 hours of work.

## Induction

When the student arrives on site for their first day of work experience, we highly recommend a thorough site induction covering training, safety, and general onsite advice.

- The significant risks identified in the risk assessment
- The health and safety policies and arrangements
- Emergency and fire protocols
- Onsite rules to follow
- Employer's legal responsibilities
- Student's legal responsibilities
- Accident, health, and incident report protocols
- First aid arrangements
- PPE provisions and their usage (where relevant)
- Supervision arrangements and mentor introduction
- Manual handling protective measures and hazards.
- A site tour and introduction to key staff
- Onsite facilities e.g. toilets, break room, briefing room, etc
- Site security arrangements
- Expectations from the students – behaviour and appropriate dress code

The student will be provided with a workbook by their college which should be completed daily with the assistance of their mentor. If the college do not supply the student with a workbook, the FIS will provide one. The feedback gained from this workbook should be reviewed and considered for future working practices or work experience opportunities.

## Student payment or travel reimbursement

Payment for a student undertaking work experience is not expected or required in any way. Work experience is typically unpaid; and any discussion of payment to the student is at the discretion of the employer. A middle ground that has seen an upward trend in recent years is providing the student with the national apprenticeship wage (£3.90 per hour).

Colleges will typically fund students travel expenses; however, this is not the case for all colleges and must be taken into consideration. FIS will establish this fact with the relevant college to ensure the student can afford travel costs throughout their work experience. If the college will not provide any funding, we ask that the employer considers reimbursing the student their travel expenses in lieu of payment.

FIS would like to restate that any payment or reimbursement for work experience is not expected. As the employer you are in no way obligated to offer financial incentive on top of the great learning opportunity already being provided.

This document is supported by the [FIS BuildMe Work Experience Toolkit](#)