

Guidance to consider when offering work experience placements

Delivered by

Purpose of the Guide

This guide provides practical advice for employers and organizations planning to offer work experience placements to young people. It aims to ensure placements are meaningful, inclusive, and beneficial for both the host and the participant.

RISK

The Health and Safety Executive provides current guidance

[Young people at work: Overview - HSE](#)

Under health and safety law, work experience students are your employees, like any other young person you employ. There are very few work activities a student cannot do because of health and safety law.

As an employer taking on a young person for work experience, you have the main responsibility for their health and safety. Work experience and work-based learning will be the first time most young people experience the work environment.

Good preparation and organisation of placements is essential if these opportunities are to be helpful and safe introductions to work.

[Risk assessment: Template and examples - HSE](#)

INSURANCE

[Work experience students | ABI](#)

The insurance industry has agreed that students on work experience placements should be treated as employees for the purposes of insurance. Such placements must conform to the requirements of the Education Act 1996 and any other regulations in force at the time. Most Employers' Liability policies will have a definition of "employee" that covers students on work experience placements.

You should check your policy documentation to ensure that you are adequately covered. When in doubt, it is always advisable to contact your insurer or the broker who arranged the policy.

The ABI website confirms that your existing employers' [liability insurance](#) policy will cover work placements provided your insurer is a member of the [Association of British Insurers \(ABI\)](#), or [Lloyds](#).

KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE

[Keeping children safe in education 2025](#) (p88-89 Adults who supervise children on work experience)

Thought should always be given to safeguarding, especially for the young people.

Any employer who knowingly lets someone on either the DBS Adult's [Barred List](#) or DBS Children's Barred List have regular activity with the child is committing an offence. Therefore, employers should be confident of their staff's background before allowing anyone to join them on a work experience placement.

Under 16yrs

Children's barred list checks via the [DBS](#) might be required on some people who supervise a child under the age of 16 on a work experience placement. The school, college or organiser will consider the specific circumstances of the work experience. Consideration must be given in particular to the nature of the supervision and the frequency of the activity being supervised, to determine what, if any, checks are necessary

Over 16yrs

Schools and colleges are not able to request that an employer obtains an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information for staff supervising children aged 16 to 17 on work experience.

In some instances where a child is over 16 and as part of their work experience engaging in [regulated activity](#) relating to children they may need a DBS enhanced check themselves.