



STUDENT'S/PARENT'S GUIDE TO WORKPLACE LEARNING

STUDENT INFORMATION

Welcome to the Workplace Learning Program. Your work-based learning will focus on linking your knowledge and skills with situations in the workplace. It will provide you with the opportunity to put theory into practice and make you more ready for work.

This booklet contains important information about your rights and responsibilities and the skills to be learned and how they will be assessed. You should read it carefully, as it will help you get the most out of your placement or experience.

You should also give your parents or carers an opportunity to read this information booklet so that you have a chance to discuss this information with them and address any concerns or questions you may have.

WHAT IS WORK EXPERIENCE ABOUT?

Work Experience is a workplace learning program that prepares you for the workforce. Students are generally restricted to observing various aspects of the workplace and assisting in undertaking tasks nominated by their supervisor.

Work Experience:

- involves students 14 years of age or over
- provides an orientation to the world of work in a general field but **without** a planned program of industry accredited skill development. It may include learning related to, for example, career planning or enterprise education
- may or may not be part of a course
- provides no formal recognition towards an accredited vocational qualification
- generally involves students in the Year 10 School Certificate year

WHAT IS WORK PLACEMENT ABOUT?

Work placement is structured workplace learning that prepares you for the workforce. The experience in the workplace will help you to better understand theory learnt off the job by putting it into practice in the workplace.

It is different from work experience in that instead of just observing what goes on, you will be given the opportunity to undertake tasks that enable you to develop competencies related to your vocational course.

Work placement:

- involves Year 11 and/or Year 12 students undertaking Industry Framework courses as part of a HSC study program

- is a **mandatory** component of Industry Curriculum Framework courses that are accredited by the Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board (VETAB)
- involves the integration of off-the-job and on-the-job learning
- involves competency-based assessment of industry-recognised skills and knowledge which is reported through a student log book

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF WORKPLACE LEARNING PROGRAMS?

By participating in work experience or work placement, you have the opportunity to:

- Learn, develop and apply knowledge and skills relevant to the workplace;
- Achieve skills that are recognised by industry;
- Achieve skills that will assist you in seeking employment and assist with credit transfer to further education and training;
- Gain knowledge of employers' expectations;
- Make contacts with employers;
- Be assisted in career planning.

How do I prepare for my Workplace Learning Program?

It is important that you are familiar with any workplace learning program requirements that have been specified by the employer and also that you understand your responsibilities.

- Carefully read the placement Details form that has been provided by the employer.
- Ensure that you contact the employer **NO LATER THAN** one week prior to the (or as otherwise indicated by the employer) to introduce yourself and confirm details.
- Use the checklist included in Attachment 2 of this package to help you in your preparation.

What are my responsibilities?

Whilst in the workplace, you will be expected to behave like a new employee as much as possible by following the rules of the workplace and the directions of the workplace supervisor and other employees.

The right attitude

You will need to:

- Show enthusiasm and initiative;
- Accept and complete duties planned by the workplace supervisor;
- Be willing to learn;
- Listen to instructions and ask questions when unsure because it is better to ask a silly question than to make a silly mistake;

- Assist in the planning of your program;
- Accept and act on advice given by workplace supervisors;
- Ask for jobs when you have nothing to do;
- Be polite, courteous and well-mannered throughout the placement with all staff members;
- Avoid distracting other employees unnecessarily from their work;
- Dress appropriately to industry standards and the workplace.

Attendance and punctuality

You will be expected to:

- Be prepared to start your placement on time each day;
- Take only the allocated time for morning, afternoon tea and lunch breaks and return promptly to your work;
- Contact your workplace supervisor and the supervising teacher immediately if you are unable to attend your placement;
- Account for any absences to the workplace supervisor and the supervising teacher because you may be required to make up the lost hours at another time;
- Attend your placement for the normal hours of work for that job, unless prior arrangements have been negotiated by your school.

Travel Arrangements

Prior to the placement, check travel arrangements to ensure that you arrive on time.

A student's free school travel pass cannot be used for travel to and from work placement. Ensure you have a current Travel Concession Pass for travel on public transport.

Child Protection Legislation

Under legislation enacted in July 2000, students must not be asked by a child related employer to have any unsupervised contact with children or young people 18 years old or younger. This means that if you are undertaking your Workplace Learning Program with any of the 17 types of employers listed below, you must **never** carry out a task that requires you to have **unsupervised contact** with **children**. If your employer does ask you to do such a task, you need to politely decline and contact your school immediately.

The legislation covers work

- involving the provision of child protection services

- in pre-schools, kindergartens and child care centres (including residential child care centres)
- in schools or other educational institutions (not including universities)
- in detention centres (within the meaning of the Children (Detention Centres) Act 1987)
- in refuges used by children
- in wards of public or private hospitals in which children are patients
- in clubs, associations or movements (including of a cultural, recreational or sporting nature) having a significant child membership
- in any religious organisation
- in any entertainment venues where the clientele is primarily children
- as a babysitter or childminder that is arranged by a commercial agency
- involving fostering or other child care
- involving regular provision of taxi services for the transport of children with a disability
- involving the private tuition of children
- involving the direct provision of health services
- involving the provision of counselling or other support services for children
- on school buses
- at overnight camps for children

In these and all other work places, the legislation is also designed to protect you from any form of physical, psychological or sexual abuse. Your responsibility is to ensure that you do not allow the employer to place you in a situation where you have unsupervised contact with just one employee. Supervision from at least one other employee can be simply visual or where that person is working in a group with you. If you feel uncomfortable about anything you are asked to do in the workplace, you should politely decline to do that task and contact your school immediately.

Your employer will have been asked to sign a statement declaring that he/she understands the need to comply with this, and other legislation that affects workplaces, before you commence your workplace learning program.

Remember these points:

- You have the right to feel safe and secure within the workplace
- You have the right to refuse to undertake tasks that involve one-on-one contact with employees or clients, particularly if this is to be done in confined spaces.

- If you yourself are undertaking child-related work in an area listed above, you must sign a Prohibited Employment Declaration if requested to do so by the employer. Your teacher can give you an example of what this would involve.
- If you feel that you are being harassed or in any way abused in the workplace you must immediately report the matter to your school coordinator. Make sure you have your school's phone number before you commence your placement.

Safety

Host organisations have a "duty of care" obligation to ensure you do not work in unsafe conditions or carry out work that could endanger the health or safety of yourself or other staff members.

You should be aware of the Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) requirements of the industry before doing your vocational placement. It is expected that your college/school will give you information about OH&S legislation and workplace practices. In addition, some host organisations have a structured "induction program" which include OH&S issues.

If you feel you are unable to use equipment or carry out a task in a safe manner you must ask your host organisation for advice or assistance.

You must NEVER carry out a task that may be dangerous to equipment, yourself, other workers or members of the public. If you are asked to work in an unsafe environment you must contact your teacher or work placement coordinator immediately.

Remember, most workplace accidents can be prevented if you:

- Obey reasonable instruction;
- Work safely and wear protective equipment if it is needed;
- Not put other workers or the public at risk and
- Report accidents or near misses

Confidentiality

You may be exposed to information about the business and clients that will be confidential. You will be expected to maintain privacy by not repeating any of this information. In some cases, employers may want you to sign a confidentiality contract.

Find out from your workplace supervisor what is considered confidential.

Police clearance

Some employers may require you to obtain a police clearance, particularly if some of your tasks include handling cash or valuables. Enquiries for a police clearance may be made at any police station.

Medical conditions

Let your supervising teacher and workplace supervisor know if you suffer from any medical condition or disability that may affect your work performance.

In some cases the host employer may wish to have a medical examination before you can start your work placement.

Insurance

As a student on work placement, you are covered by insurance while you are in the workplace. Your supervising teacher will provide you with details.

1) What if there is a misunderstanding?

If there is a misunderstanding during your work placement you should discuss it with your host employer or workplace supervisor first and then inform your supervising teacher. If you find it difficult to discuss the misunderstanding with the host employer or workplace supervisor, speak to your supervising teacher. Misunderstanding may include the following:

- Unsafe occupational health and safety practices;
- Inadequate supervision or learning opportunities provided in the workplace;
- Unreasonable work requests by the host employer or workplace supervisor;
- Problems regarding assessment.

2) What do I do if I need to cancel/vary my placement?

A large amount of time and effort is spent in recruiting host employers to provide placements for students.

Host employers spend time and effort preparing for students who will be attending a work placement. Canceling or withdrawing from a placement can potentially jeopardise future opportunities for other students.

Work placement or Work Experience may only be cancelled or varied under special circumstances. If you need to do so you must contact your supervising teacher. You will be required to put your request in writing and give this to your teacher who will negotiate with the employer.

3) What happens if I am in an accident at the workplace?

Make sure you are familiar with the procedures required. The following steps should be taken. Report it to the host employer or workplace supervisor and seek medical help.

Contact the supervising teacher as soon as possible.

Complete an Accident Report Form and give it to the supervising teacher.

- As a volunteer worker you are covered by insurance taken out by the Catholic Schools, **not** by Workers' Compensation. You should have your Medicare Number with you in case you need medical treatment.
- Keep all the relevant medical certificates and accounts for any insurance claims that may be made.

4) Do I need to consider any industrial relations issues?

Your supervising teacher should be able to assist you with this information. While on your work placement, you should not:

- Replace a paid employee, including employees who are on paid annual leave or sick leave, or reduce the hours which a paid employee would otherwise be paid to work;
- Replace employees engaged in industrial disputes.

5) What is a Student Workplace Learning Journal?

You will receive a workplace learning journal for use at your workplace. It is a record of skills that you have demonstrated during your workplace learning program. This information can be used to:

- Monitor your progress by the supervising teacher and the training provider;
- Contribute to advanced standing or recognition of prior learning for further training programs;
- Support your applications for employment.

It is your responsibility to maintain the workplace learning journal by recording details of activities performed on a daily basis and ensuring your workplace supervisor signs and dates skills achieved. You need to take your workplace learning journal with you everyday that you are in the workplace.

If you lose your workplace learning journal, inform your supervising teacher or training provider immediately.

6) Which skills do I learn in the workplace during Year 11/12 work placement?

The skills that you will be learning in the workplace will be negotiated between your teacher and the host employer. They will form part of your vocational course and appear in your workplace learning journal. You may wish to discuss with the workplace supervisor when these skills will be covered. If you are having trouble getting the opportunity to cover the skills agreed in your work placement journal, discuss this with your workplace supervisor.

7) How are the skills I gain for Year 11/12 work placement recorded?

Prior to the placement your teacher will give you an assessment sheet to be completed by the employer. It is your responsibility to hand it to your supervisor on the first day, collect it before you leave and ensure it is passed on to your teacher at school. The competencies recorded on this sheet will contribute to your final assessment.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in Year 11/12 VET Courses only

Students who have part-time work in an industry related to their course of study may be able to claim RPL for some or all of the work placement requirements. Students should discuss this with their teacher.

1) Do I receive any feedback?

It is important that you receive feedback on your progress from your workplace supervisor throughout the placement and not just at the end. Comments made should not be taken as personal criticism but viewed as a way to help gain the skills you require for your course. Ask your workplace supervisor to comment orally on your progress.

2) What do I do when my workplace learning program has finished?

Your supervising teacher may conduct a debriefing session with you and other students. This session will give you the opportunity to discuss:

- The benefits and problems of your placement;
- Ideas on how to negotiate learning and assessment procedures;
- Any difficulties and the successes of your placement.

A letter of thanks should be sent to your host employer for providing you with the opportunity to use their workplace for your learning. You may also like to ask the host employer/workplace supervisor for a written reference.

GLOSSARY

Local Community Partnership (LCP)

Local Community Partnerships have been established to develop links between schools and employers to assist students in their transition from school to work. The LCP Manager will work with schools to ensure that quality work placements and other workplace learning programs are arranged for students.

Child Protection Legislation

Acts of Parliament passed between May 1999 and December 2000 that require a range of protective strategies to be put in place by all who work (either in a paid or volunteer capacity) with children or young people (under the age of 18).

Host employer

The organisation, company or business (government and non-government) which opens its workplace to students to enable them to practise skills gained with their off-the-job training provider

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Refers to the skills and knowledge obtained through prior education and training, work experience and/or life experience being recognised and acknowledged. The student is given advanced standing in a particular course requiring the skills and knowledge.

Student

A person enrolled in a vocational education and training course.

Student Workplace Learning Journal

A record of the skills the student gains while in the workplace and reflections about this learning.

Training provider

The registered training provider with whom the student is enrolled to study. This can include the school, TAFE institutions, colleges or private training providers.

Supervising teacher

The training provider's employee who manages, co-ordinates and supervises students on work placement.

Workplace supervisor

A staff member appointed by the host employer to induct train and supervise the student during the work placement.

Checklist for Students

Workplace Learning Programs involve achieving specific outcomes and skills in a workplace setting. Tick the boxes when you have done each of the following:

Talked to your teacher about the:

- Purpose of your workplace learning experience
- Workplace Learning site
- Learning outcomes you are expected to achieve
- Responsibilities of students with regard to the following legislation which is relevant in the workplace: OH&S, Equal Employment Opportunity, Anti-Discrimination and Child Protection

Checked before going to the workplace learning site:

- How you get there and how long it will take you
- The time you report to the supervisor
- Who you report to when you arrive

When you arrived at your workplace learning site, asked about:

- Special clothing or equipment requirements
- The name and location of your supervisor
- How and where you sign on
- What to do in an accident or emergency
- Where you find change rooms, lunch rooms, canteens, exits, toilets
- The usual work routines, lunch and break times.

Discussed with your teacher:

- The expectations of your supervisor
- The appropriate clothing to wear
- How you address and speak to people in the workplace
- Who to contact if you have any problems.

Student Workplace Learning Journal

Name: _____

Workplace Employer: _____

Dates of Workplace Learning: _____ Total Hours Worked: _____

1. List the main activities undertaken during the workplace learning program :
2. What skills have you gained during this workplace learning program?
3. Did you learn any *new skills* during this workplace learning program?
4. Do you need additional experiences in areas relating to your course?
5. Describe the aspects of your job that gave you the most difficulty :
6. What would you do differently the next time you are on the job?

DAILY RECORD			Student's Name: _____	Location: _____	Date: _____
TIME STARTED:		TIME FINISHED:		TOTAL HOURS AT WORK	
TIME TAKEN FOR LUNCH			HOURS WORKED (TOTAL HOURS AT WORK – TIME TAKEN FOR LUNCH)		
Tools and/or Equipment Used		Activities Undertaken		Supervisor - please indicate standard and initial. U – Unsatisfactory / S – Satisfactory / G – Good	
Difficulties or new issues arising today			Things I enjoyed today / Things to follow up		
Supervisor's comments and signature: _____					

Workplace Learning Code of Conduct

This code of conduct is for you to read. Please sign it to acknowledge your acceptance and understanding of it.

Before my workplace learning program commences, I will:

- telephone my host employer at least a week before starting my work placement/work experience to find out starting and finishing times, dress code and any other relevant information OR be interviewed by my host employer before the work placement (if requested)
- be responsible for my Student Workplace Learning Log
- familiarize myself with the *Student's/Parent's Guide to Workplace Learning*
- know the competencies that could be met during work placement (for HSC VET only) and be willing to negotiate with my host employer to achieve these.

During my workplace learning program, I will:

- maintain a positive and enthusiastic attitude
- be courteous and respectful
- try to communicate effectively
- apply my skills and knowledge appropriately
- observe rules, regulations and instructions in the workplace
- meet the workplace dress standard
- notify my host employer and school of any absences
- endeavour to make the most of this training opportunity

I understand that during the workplace learning program I may have access to information which is private and confidential. I agree that I will not convey to any person outside the host employer's workplace any knowledge or information of a confidential nature which is gained in the course of my workplace learning program. I understand the seriousness of any breach of this Agreement.

If you are unsure of any of the above, please see your teacher and read the relevant section in the *Student's/Parent's Guide to Workplace Learning* before signing this form.

Student's signature

Date