

8. Work Experience Learning Guide for Host Employers

Privacy notice - for all parties

Any information provided by students, parents/caregivers or host employers is obtained for the purpose of coordinating a workplace learning opportunity for the school student. The school will use the information to meet student health, duty of care and child protection responsibilities and to support the information needs of the student, host employer and the parent/caregiver.

Providing this information is voluntary; however, if you do not provide any of the information requested then the student may not be able to undertake the planned workplace learning.

The information you provide will be stored securely and kept for a minimum of seven years where there is no further action relating to the placement. The information will only be disclosed for purposes directly related to the purpose for which it is collected.

You may correct any personal information by contacting our school.

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Why incorporate work experience?

Work experience can:

- Provide a 'taste' of the world of work, usually in a workplace or career area of choice
- Involve the student in being part of a workplace, observing tasks and carrying out duties under supervision
- Help students learn about what employers expect from their work members
- Help students to learn about what work and attributes employers are looking for
- Help Students learn how businesses work
- Provide students with a chance to experience organising life around work
- Help toward building a healthy resume

How does workplace experience benefit students?

Workplace learning helps students to:

- Test job and career choices
- Find out what they like and don't like
- Engage with the wider community
- Enable learning of what is required from a manager in the workforce
- Build general work skills, like good communication, team work and critical thinking
- Develop specific industry skills, and competencies
- Build confidence, maturity and self-management skills through participation in an adult work environment
- Grow the ability to make informed decisions when planning the transition through school and on to further education, training and work
- Demonstrate reliability, motivation, work ethic and good personal presentation.

What work can students do?

There are plenty of options available for work experience:

- Students can only complete work experience during school terms.
- Weekend work will only be approved if it is essential in the industry and has the Principal's approval.
- All Students aged 14 years and over are eligible to participate, however students under the age of 15 years cannot participate in a workplace learning activity before 7:00am or after 6:00pm.
- See Appendix One for Hazardous Activities which are prohibited for students undertaking work experience.

How will the young person find a work experience position?

In the case of work experience, students will need to locate their own positions and may seek support from the school, their parents or caregivers. Once found, these positions need to be submitted to the school for approval.

The host employer's role

In order to demonstrate career-building competencies, students apply for work experience by contacting host employers directly for the designated week.

If you wish to engage the work experience student, please complete the following forms for the student – to be returned to the school:

- *4. Host Employer Consent and Risk Assessment Form*
- *5. Work Experience Host Employer Acknowledgement Form*

This documentation allows the school to reasonably assess the suitability of the work experience placement.

When the placement is confirmed

Once approval is given, the host employer will receive a *Letter of Approval* from the school confirming the work experience placement details.

The host employer will also receive a copy of the:

- *9. Host Employer Student Induction Checklist*
- *10. Host Employer Work Experience Appraisal Form*

Before students commence their placement

- Ensure that employees, including union representatives, understand the purpose of the work experience placement.
- Ensure that employees understand that students undertaking approved workplace learning programs, must not be used in place of regular paid employees. In particular, emphasise the benefits that other employees can make to the program's success. It is essential that all staff who will have contact with students support the organisation's approach to workplace learning and understand the special responsibilities of working with young people enrolled in school.
- Appoint a staff member who has good communication skills and the ability to give clear instructions to be the supervisor for the student. This staff member must undertake a pre-placement interview with the student to provide the following:
 - Complete workplace orientations including safety regulations and a WHS orientation.
 - Develop a schedule of activities that will give the student an understanding of the nature of the industry and the opportunity to learn and practise skills and course competencies.
 - Make arrangements for their first day, tasks to be performed, acceptable workplace behaviour, hours of work and breaks, special requirements, changes in work sites and associated travel.

During the placement

- Students attend the workplace every day of the workplace program.

- The appointed supervisor supervises the student in the workplace, providing appropriate tasks.
- Please do not assume previous experience with vehicles, machinery etc. unless this has been demonstrated under close supervision. In their eagerness to please, students undertaking workplace learning may be reluctant to acknowledge their lack of experience.
- Where a student is expected to operate equipment or machinery, the student must be trained and very closely supervised. The supervisor has to watch the student using the equipment.
- Students should work the normal hours of the industry (except where there are age restrictions) and be actively involved as much as possible. Where this is not appropriate, provide opportunities for observation and discussion.
- If the workplace learning program is affected by industrial action, students should return to their school. Students participating in workplace learning programs are not to be used in place of striking workers.
- We expect only the highest standards of behaviour and participation from our students; so if you are at all concerned about any aspect of the student's performance please do not hesitate to contact the school.

After the placement

- Please complete the following forms and return to the school.
 - *9. Host Employer Student Induction Checklist*
 - *10. Host Employer Work Experience Appraisal Form*

What else do host employers need to know?

Payments to Students

Workplace learning is part of the total education program of our school. Students are volunteer workers and therefore should not be paid. Payment of students will affect the indemnity and insurance arrangements for Host Employers.

Student travel arrangements

All travel to and from the workplace is at the student's own expense and is to be organised by the student with safety in mind.

Times of operation

- As work experience placement is an integral part of the curriculum, workplace learning activities are conducted during term time as part of an ongoing educational program.
- Workplace learning activities on weekends are usually not permitted for school students and are subject to approval by the school principal. This only applies if weekend participation is an essential requirement of the industry.

Accidents and accident reports

- In the case of an accident the following steps apply:
 - Seek medical help immediately – in an emergency please go to the Emergency Department of your nearest Public Hospital.
 - Contact the student's emergency contact and the school.
 - Obtain a medical certificate from the treating doctor.
 - Complete a written report of the accident and forward it to the school.
 - Where a student is injured during a work experience placement, including travel to and from the place of work, an Accident Report must be completed. The report will include a full statement from the student, the host employer and relevant witnesses, and should be completed as soon as possible and forwarded to the school.

Insurance

- Coffs Coast Community College Inc. and Allegra School Coffs Harbour are covered under a current Insurance Policy with Ansvar Insurance.
- These insurance arrangements cover students injured while participating in approved workplace learning. This also includes students injured while travelling directly to or from their placement.
- Parents and caregivers are initially responsible for any expenses incurred by a student as a result of accident or injury, prior to a claim being submitted under these insurance provisions.

Supervision of Students

- In all educational activities, teachers have a responsibility for the safety and welfare of students, commonly referred to as 'duty of care'. Work experience placement is no exception. Because of the nature of workplace learning, supervision by the school cannot be as detailed, close and constant as during most school approved activities and the host employer shares some of the responsibility.
- It is expected that the host employer will act in accordance with workplace responsibilities as set out in the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. Where practicable, students will be visited or phoned by a teacher at least once during the placement.

Protecting children and young people

- The role of the school in child protection is to promote safety, welfare and well-being of children and young people. School staff are required to report any suspicion on reasonable grounds that a child or young person or a class of children or young people are at risk of harm.
- Work experience placement programs are no exception. Therefore, host employers need to ensure that all staff are aware of the special responsibilities associated with working with children and young people. There needs to be ongoing, close cooperation and communication between host employers and schools both before and during workplace learning programs.
 - Unacceptable conduct by host employers and their employees includes: inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature; suggestive remarks; actions including showing of publications, electronic media or illustrations which are sexually suggestive;

- Jokes of a sexual nature; unwarranted and/or inappropriate touching; and personal correspondence with students in respect of the host employer's or employee's sexual feelings for the student.
- For more information on working with children, contact the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian on (02) 9286 7219 or email check@kidsguardian.gov.au

Child protection – your responsibilities

- Working with children and young people is very rewarding. However, to ensure the safety and welfare of young people in your workplace, you and your staff must comply with a few simple rules.
- It is your responsibility as the host employer to ensure that your staff know how to conduct themselves with children and young people. They must avoid any conduct that could make a young person feel threatened or coerced or belittled. This could include initiation activities or horseplay involving the student; physical or verbal abuse such as swearing at students; physical assault; inappropriate conversations, remarks or jokes of a sexual nature; the showing of sexually suggestive publications, electronic media or illustrations and any unwarranted and/or inappropriate touching or personal communication with students regarding their sexual feelings. This includes texting or using social media.
- As a host employer, you will be asked to indicate on the Student Placement Declaration that, to your knowledge, there is nothing in the background of any staff member or person in close contact with the student that would make them unsuitable for working with children.
- Host employers must report any allegations against an employee in the area of child protection to the principal of our school.
- Child protection legislation requires that allegations about employee conduct be reported to the Office of the Children's Guardian.
- Allegations involving suspected abuse, harm or risk of significant harm to the student must also be reported to the Community Services Child Protection Hotline 13 36 27 and, in some cases, to the NSW police.

Responsibilities

For many students this may be their first time in a work environment and there are a number of important obligations that the host employer and student need to be aware of when in the workplace.

Responsibilities of the Host Employer

In the workplace a company employee will supervise students. However, the level of supervision may be less than students are accustomed to and it is important that students follow directions from their immediate workplace supervisor or another representative of the host employer.

Duty of Care

The school has a common law duty of care to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of its students.

The school requires that all host employers complete the necessary documentation and returns it to the college before the work experience placement commences.

The school may not conduct a work place visit to each host employer and relies on the student, parents or host employer to advise the school if there are any problems during the work experience placement.

Work Health & Safety

The host employer has obligations under WHS to ensure that its employees and all other persons are not exposed to health and safety risks while at the host employer's place of work - this includes work experience students.

The host employer should conduct an WHS induction on the student's first day and during this induction should explain the following to the student:

- The Host Employer's WHS policy.
- What to do if they need first aid and the location of the first aid facilities.
- Security and emergency evacuation procedures.
- Any restricted work areas, risks or hazards in the workplace.
- The tasks, equipment and material the Student will be expected to use and who they should see for assistance.
- To whom the Student should report any incidents or accidents.

Anti-discrimination

The host employer must comply with applicable anti-discrimination legislation.

The student should immediately report any concern about discrimination, harassment or bullying directly to the Host Employer Supervisor or the School.

Responsibilities of the Student

In addition to keeping communication lines always open with the school, the student will also have responsibilities in the workplace.

These responsibilities include:

- Listen carefully and follow any instructions given in regarding the performance of work.
- Comply with all safety instructions, policies and procedures including the wearing of protective clothing if required.
- Work normal industry hours for the work place.
- Inform the school and host employer of expected absences from work, or late arrivals or if any unexpected absences or lateness occurs.

- Report all accidents in the workplace to the host employer and the school.
- Report any concerns in relation to discrimination, harassment, bullying or any grievances to the school.
- Undertake the activities set by the host employer in the workplace.
- Keep contact numbers of their parents, school and host employer supervisor with them at all times during their work experience placement.
- The school is not able to directly supervise the student during the work experience placement. It is therefore vital that a student contact the school if they:
- Feel uncomfortable with an instruction given to them.
- Feel unsafe in the workplace.
- Are being harassed or bullied or are uncomfortable with how a particular person is treating them.
- Students need to advise the School and their Parents as soon as possible of their concerns. If the Student is concerned about a particular activity, the Student should refuse politely to undertake the activity.

Important Contacts

Thank you for taking the time to read the information in this guide. We hope that you feel confident and well prepared to support a student as they take up these valuable workplace learning opportunities.

If you have any further enquiries, please contact our office and speak with our Deputy Principal or Student Support Officer.

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66-90 Harbour Drive, Coffs Harbour NSW 2450
02 6651 6898
school@allegraschool.nsw.edu.au
allegraschool.nsw.edu.au

For further assistance, advice and information:

- <http://www.bit.ly/WorkLearnPolicy>
- See the Parents and Caregivers section for additional information.
- <http://myfuture.edu.au>
- Support and encourage your child in their career making decisions.
- <http://www.talkingsafety.org>
- Information, tips and resources to help improve young worker safety and ensure compliance with NSW WHS legislation.
- <http://www.bit.ly/Parents and CaregiversandCommunity>
- Parents and Caregivers /Caregivers and community can play an important role in Students' career decision making.
- www.pssfw.myskills.gov.au/the-framework
- Preparing Secondary Students for Work-a framework for vocational learning and VET delivered to secondary Students.

Activities that are Prohibited or Need Special Consideration

What activities for students in workplace learning programs are either prohibited or need special consideration given to addressing risks?

Young workers can lack the experience, knowledge and skills to identify and deal with potential hazards. Inexperience and a lack of awareness can increase the likelihood of a young worker being injured. There are some activities that are not suitable for students in an approved workplace learning program and there are others where special consideration needs to be given to addressing risks.

Such activities include:

- Use of machinery or equipment which may be dangerous for new or young workers to operate is prohibited. A Student may operate machinery or equipment provided each of the following occurs:
 - The activity is first risk-assessed as suitable and safe for student operation by the host employer.
 - The student has been given appropriate information, instruction and training and a checklist for the safe operation and handling of the equipment.
 - The equipment is in safe working order, complete with required safety devices or guards.
 - A suitably qualified or experienced person in the workplace who has good communication skills and the ability to give clear instructions provides on-going close supervision.
- The service of alcohol where the student is under 18 is prohibited.
- Travel by helicopter is prohibited.
- Air travel on charter flights and aircraft other than those providing a regular public transport service (i.e. on a regular route with paying passengers) is prohibited.
- Travel outside the 12 nautical mile limit at sea is prohibited.
- Scuba and deep-sea diving are prohibited.
- The following 'high risk construction work' as defined in the NSW WHS Regulation 2011 Chapter 6 is prohibited: construction work in tunnels or involving the use of explosives or work in and around gas and electrical installations; near traffic or mobile plant, or demolition work other than simple stripping of walls etc.
- Any excavation work at a depth of one metre or more, at a depth under one metre without direct supervision by a competent person, or near utilities is prohibited.
 - work on permanent or temporary structures used to enable construction work in marine environments is prohibited.
 - working on a roof is prohibited.
 - any activities involving or adjacent to the repair, removal or demolition of any construction work containing asbestos or in the clean-up process following the activity are prohibited.
 - attendance at a site while chimney stacks or buildings are being demolished is prohibited.
 - scheduled work as set out in Chapter 4 of the NSW WHS Regulation 2011 is prohibited, unless there are exceptional circumstances and the student, aged 18 or over, already has achieved the necessary certification.

Any activity requiring a licence (e.g., a driver's licence), permit or certificate of competence can only be approved where:

- the student already has the relevant current licence, permit or certificate.
- the activity is directly related to the learning outcomes of the placement.
- the activity is included in the Student Placement Record prior to approval.

Note: Students cannot be expected to drive their own vehicles while undertaking activities on behalf of the Host Employer.

- No student is to drive an old or unregistered vehicle commonly known as "bush basher".
- Any work of a sexual or explicit nature is prohibited.

Placements involving the driving of golf carts, tractors or similar farm vehicles

Placements involving the student operation of golf carts, tractors or farm vehicles such as quad bikes **must be carefully considered**, even where these activities are considered to be essential to achieving the outcomes of the placement. For these placements to be approved the vehicle must be adequately risk assessed as being safe for a student to operate.

Students must have successfully completed a relevant formal training course or related course competencies or have demonstrated substantial experience in the safe operation of these vehicles. **The student still needs to be closely supervised.**

Students with **little or no experience must not operate these vehicles** unless the school is satisfied that the Host Employer can satisfactorily manage the activity for the student and can provide appropriate quality training and on-going close supervision. This must occur prior to approval of the placement.

Placements in meat processing plants

Placements in **meat processing plants** are subject to **mandatory requirements**. The information package developed with industry to support school student workplace learning in meat processing plants is available at: <https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/vetinschools/worklearn/meat.html>

Placements in the construction industry

All workplace learning in the construction industry requires as a pre requisite that the student completes Work Health and Safety induction training for construction work and holds the WorkCover NSW general construction induction training card ("white card"). Workplace supervisors must make students are aware of the risks associated with handling and operating all tools and equipment the student is to use and how to manage those risks.

Placements involving equine work

No matter how experienced or competent a student may be in riding or working with horses, there are still potentially extreme risks. Extreme caution is needed to avoid injury or disability. A risk assessment must be undertaken to ensure the activity is appropriate and safe and that the horse is fit for purpose and the age and experience of the rider. SafeWork NSW information about horse-related injuries is available on the WorkCover website.

Working in a hospital or clinical setting

All activities that involve a student working in hospital settings pose potential risks, particularly with exposure to potential infections. In accordance with NSW Health students will be required to submit copies of full vaccination records, including hepatitis B, chicken pox and undergo a tuberculosis chest screen. It is strongly recommended to have a flu shot. Mid North Coast Local Health District (MNCLHD) including Coffs Harbour, Bellingen, Macksville and Dorrigo. Do not contact Coffs Harbour Hospital wait for the EOI. Students can contact Bellingen, Macksville and Dorrigo Hospitals.

Students and driving

Students cannot be expected to drive the Employer's vehicles nor the client's vehicles whilst on work placement. Any driving of vehicles is expected to be rare, and must be detailed in the *Work experience Host Employer Consent Form* prior to placement approval.