

# Placement Learning (Non-Training) Policy

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UNIVERSITY OF  
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<b>Indicate whether the document is for public access or internal access only Indicate whether the document applies to collaborative provision? (Strikethrough text, as appropriate)</b>	<b>Public Access</b> <del>Internal Access Only</del> <del>Applies to Collaborative Provision</del>
<b>Summary/Description:</b>	This policy offers a re-write of the previous Work Based Learning policy to a new standard which will cover the University ambition to expand placements across the University. This top-level policy does not provide guidance on training placements such as teacher training, nursing and social work.

## **Background and context**

1. This document aims to help all stakeholders understand and manage the placement experience for students and to ensure all are fully aware of the legal, insurance, and health and safety requirements of a placement.
2. Please note that this policy complements the information supplied to students, staff and employers including their roles and responsibilities through the supplementary guides available on the intranet and external website.
3. This policy sets out expectations of placement provision and operations for all non-training undergraduate and postgraduate taught degrees.
4. If a reader of this policy has any queries or if they are interested in providing a student a placement, they should contact the University of Winchester Placement Team on: [workplacements@winchester.ac.uk](mailto:workplacements@winchester.ac.uk) or [volunteering@winchester.ac.uk](mailto:volunteering@winchester.ac.uk) for the Volunteering Module Coordinator.
5. This policy will be supported by student, employer and staff facing guidance documents which communicate the below information for implementation.

## **Introduction**

6. The University of Winchester recognises the importance of work-based and placement learning including volunteering as part of a module and its contribution to students' employability. Work based and placement learning is integral to the University's strategic direction to develop graduate outcomes and employability.
7. Where work-based or placement learning/volunteering is part of a module, its learning outcomes must be clearly identified, contribute to the overall and coherent aims of the programme and be assessed appropriately. These outcomes will be tested through the University's standard processes at validation.

## **Why does the University care about placements?**

8. Placements give students the opportunity to gain skills specific to their subject or industry of choice as well as the employability skills required for the graduate workplace. Placements also increase student knowledge of an industry or sector, allowing them to make better informed decisions about future career choices. Volunteering enables students to practice active citizenship as well as build valuable graduate employment skills.

## **Ethical placement practice**

9. The University of Winchester supports ethical placements which align with the University's values, mission and strategic priorities to work towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The University endorses work-based learning and placements with organisations which follow similar ethical practices however, the student taking the placement has the final decision provided it meets the learning outcomes.

## **Definition of terms used at University of Winchester to describe various types of work or experience are confirmed as**

10. **Placement** – A placement is a period of assessed learning in a workplace included in a module and approved by the University which carries a requirement to complete. It should satisfy the module requirements appropriate to the course and is usually in a field relevant to a student's subject. A placement aims to bridge the gap between academic study and vocational experience through practical and professional work experience and is an opportunity to gain valuable practical experience in a real working environment. Placement learning is when the learner might be considered as student first, employee second, i.e. they came to the placement experience by virtue of their assessed learning.
11. **Internship** – An internship is an extra-curricular contract of work for a fixed period, offered by employers. Internships are advertised for both students and graduates to give them experience of a piece of work or project within a specific industry. They can be as short as a week, but also as long as 12 months.
12. **Volunteering** – Volunteering is any activity that involves spending unpaid time within charities, voluntary or non-profit organisations, or with a local authority. It involves doing something that aims to benefit the environment, the community or an individual. Volunteering can be extra-curricular or as part of the curriculum through the Volunteering Module.

### **Implementation of placements**

13. Faculties and the Department of Student Engagement and Employability are responsible for ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place to prepare and support students through the process of finding and undertaking their placement, as well as any subsequent support they may need on their return to the University of Winchester.
14. Programmes aspiring to embed credit bearing placements should consult with the University Placements Team to identify the appropriate placement model (module-based placement, sandwich year etc) and follow appropriate quality processes to embed placements into the curriculum set out by Academic Quality and Development.

### **Length of placements**

15. Placements can be taken by students on a part-time (a number of hours or days per week) or full-time basis depending on the pre-approved Placement module available on their programme of study.
16. All credit bearing placements on programmes must be approved via the appropriate Academic Quality Assurance processes, such as validation, revalidation and programme amendments.
17. "Year in Industry", "Sandwich Year" or "Placement Year" pathways or modules at the University of Winchester should consist of full-time employment conducted between two levels of study, lasting at least 30 weeks. These placements should be full-time employment for the student, with at least 35 hours worked per week and **conformance with minimum wage regulations and employment legislation where applicable.**
18. "Part Time Placements" are normally taken during the academic year, for example one day a week or intensively during the vacation periods near to the semester where the module is assessed.

19. Example placement modules (with a variety of time commitment) which have been approved by the University are available from the Placement Team to be adopted into courses.
20. The Volunteering Module is taken across the semester with students undertaking a minimum of 24 volunteering hours.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

#### **21. University of Winchester**

To ensure success of placement provision the University of Winchester will:

- A. Provide information to the student on general health and safety prior to their placement.
- B. Provide specialist advice and guidance for students with additional support needs.
- C. Check that university placement procedures are being followed.
- D. Appoint an “academic supervisor(s)” and establish dates of contact / visits as appropriate.
- E. Ensure the appointed tutor will provide support to the student when out on placement through a placement visit, offer formative feedback opportunities and grade students work from accredited placement modules.
- F. Encourage all staff to disseminate placement opportunities to the Placement Team to promote to students

#### **22. Students**

To ensure the student attains a meaningful experience, the student should:

- A. Attend placement workshops at the University and familiarise themselves with all the relevant resources and health and safety information provided.
- B. Abide by organisation guidelines regarding health and safety requirements, and other practices and procedures of the placement provider.
- C. Report any concerns about health and safety to the employers, including personal or health concerns or disabilities that may require adjustments.
- D. Report any accidents or near misses in the workplace to their employer.
- E. Consult with the University prior to seeking any changes in the terms and duration of the placement.
- F. Notify the University if their placement ends early for whatever reasons.
- G. Ensure they represent the University in a professional manner as an ambassador of Winchester.

#### **23. Employers**

To enable the employer to fulfil the requirements of the placement and meet the needs of the role, the employer is required to (as checked by the placement team):

- A. Plan the work or study programme and associated health and safety training to be undertaken by the student, including a full and clear induction to the organisation and its working practices.
- B. Undertake a risk assessment to identify any potential risks/ hazards associated with the student’s placement and to ensure that adequate controls will be put in place to address these risks.
- C. Nominate a supervisor who will conduct or make arrangements for day-to-day supervision of the student.

- D. Comply with the appropriate country's health and safety legislation.
- E. Facilitate access to the student for up to two contacts by the visiting tutor / placement coordinator as appropriate.
- F. Ensure that appropriate employer and public liability insurance are in place.
- G. Promptly inform the University of Winchester of any serious accidents which involve medical treatment that goes beyond first aid or advise the University of incidents relating to breaches of discipline by the student.
- H. Advise the University promptly of any unexplained periods of non-attendance or any other workplace concerns.
- I. Support the student with objective setting and completion of tasks.
- J. Ensure placement students are treated with the same workers' rights as other staff in the organisation.

If the above requirements are not met, the placement may not be approved.

### **Approval of placement providers and managing risk**

As part of their due diligence checks, the placement or volunteering team should satisfy themselves that each placement provider, whether allocated by the University of Winchester or independently found by the student, is suitable. Procedures for securing, approving and allocating placements should be transparent to all and the following should be considered:

- A. The ability of the placement provider to allow students to successfully meet the learning outcomes of the placement;
- B. Health and safety requirements including any requirement for DBS checks;
- C. Any relevant professional, statutory or regulatory body (PSRB) requirements governing the suitability of placements.
- D. Student support on placements, including the mechanisms for dealing with any problems or complaints;
- E. Any reasonable and anticipatory adjustments for students with a disability or learning difference.
- F. A health and safety risk assessment should be carried out following the University's policies and procedures in place at the time, following the advice of the University's Health and Safety Manager.
- G. Valid Employers' Liability and Public Liability Certificates should be obtained together with confirmation from each employer that students will be covered whilst under their supervision/control.
- H. The placement team may visit the placement provider, to assess their suitability.

### **Finding and approving placements**

- 24. Students will be supported to find placements through in class and extra-curricular workshops run by the Placement or Volunteering Team and/or in partnership with Faculties. Students will be responsible for securing their own placements (e.g. through successful completion of an interview) but the Placement Team will actively support with application advice, signposting to previous Placement Providers and pre-Placement training. The Placement Team will also proactively engage with organisations regionally and nationally to source new Placement Providers to signpost students to on an annual basis.

25. Registered placement providers will be listed on the University's appropriate student-facing platforms (e.g. CareerConnect by JobTeaser) to allow students to apply and contact Placement Providers.
26. To ensure a suitable staff to student ratio during placements, the University of Winchester encourages this to be normally a minimum of three full-time staff members (or charity trustees) to every student employed or volunteering per day. This is to allow appropriate support and development for the student and business contingency for the employer. In exceptional circumstances, the Student Engagement and Employability Team may be able to approve opportunities with smaller teams following an assessment.
27. Academic supervisors are responsible for approving placements once secured by the student. The placement should be relevant to the programme of study whilst ensuring any learning outcomes and assessment pertinent to the placement can be achieved and completed. Approval of placements should include, as a minimum, basic due diligence (e.g. basic company checks for new placement providers) on the placement provider and a review of the placement opportunity/relevant job description, **and conformance with minimum wage regulations and employment legislation where applicable.**
28. The University and placement provider will each agree to either a written agreement (send via email or letter) OR by approving on the University Placement Management System, confirming the necessary requirements outlined above. Such agreements are proportionate to the scale of the activity and should be maintained by the Placement Team.

#### **Confidential work on placement**

29. It is important that placement providers requesting confidentiality of students' reports on their placement activity are aware that the report must be available to a third party for scrutiny in the event of a dispute, or at an External Examiner's request. In all cases, if a project is likely to be confidential or commercially sensitive, a conversation should take place between the student, the University, and the employer, to define the acceptable perimeters of the student's project.

#### **What if the placement ends early?**

30. If any placement ends early due to a reason that is not the student's fault (e.g. placement cancellation) or the student's fault (e.g. non-attendance or poor behaviour) and the student has not completed enough days or hours to write the final assessment, then the module leader or Head of Department may initiate an amended assessment instead of the reflection, such as an essay about the organisation's place in the sector. The module leader or Head of Department will decide on whether the student needs to complete additional hours/days to meet the learning outcomes.

## Students on a Student Visa

31. Most international students will have to apply for the new **Student Visa** (2021 –22 academic year onwards) and providing they are on full time degree level courses are permitted to work in the UK using the following rules and requirements:
  - A. Up to 20 hours per week during university term time. UKVI has defined a “week” as “a seven-day period starting on a Monday and ending on a Sunday”
  - B. Full-time in vacation periods
  - C. Full-time during term time if on a work placement that is an integral and assessed part of the course – any work placement must not be longer than 50% of the total course length (unless there is a UK statutory requirement for the course to contain a specific period of work placement which exceeds this limit.)
  - D. As a student union sabbatical officer for up to two years
  - E. If the student holds a **Student Visa** for a part time course they will **not have the right to undertake any work**, paid or unpaid, in the UK.
  - F. If the student holds other immigration permissions they must be able to provide evidence that work placements are within the students immigration conditions.
32. **Student Visa** students can only work on a temporary basis - they cannot be employed on a permanent contract. They cannot be self-employed or set up a business, or employed as a professional sportsperson or as an entertainer.
33. **Please note:** if the work is not an integral and assessed part of the student’s course, this would not be regarded by the Home Office as a work placement, but would instead be regarded as work experience, which Student Visa students are not permitted to miss scheduled classes to undertake. Students undertaking work experience should ensure that they are doing so within the work conditions of their visa.
34. If you have any questions about Student Visa students and work placements, please contact the UKVI Compliance Manager via [registry.enquiries@winchester.ac.uk](mailto:registry.enquiries@winchester.ac.uk)