

Student placement risk assessment – guidance

I. Introduction

I.1 In light of the increasing number of compensation claims highlighted in the Media relating to accidents, near misses and student deaths which have occurred as part of placement learning programmes across the UK and the continuing need for the University to strive to protect the students in its care, the UQC Placement Learning Forum (PLF) requested that the Department of Risk, Safety and Health review the University's guidance on the following issues relating to placements undertaken in the UK and abroad:

- Insurance arrangements;
- Pertinent Health and Safety issues; and
- Risk assessment.

I.2 A progress to date paper was submitted to the Placement Learning Forum on the 20th December, and the following areas were highlighted as warranting further investigation:

- When, how and by whom risk assessments should be undertaken;
- Risk assessment training and student empowerment;
- Issues relative to overseas placements;
- Accessibility of information to students; and
- Availability of the information regarded as good practice.

I.3 In addition, to the work already undertaken to produce the progress update paper, the Department of Risk Safety and Health have held further discussions with placement related staff on the feasibility of the guidance and sought to collate student feedback on their placement experience. As only 10 students responded it was not therefore possible to determine any supportable trends from this information.

I.4 Issues identified requiring input from other departments i.e. CRB check and other reporting issues, have been passed onto the relevant staff for consideration. It is not the intention of the Department of Risk, Safety and Health to pursue these issues further.

I.5 What follows is guidance relevant for the completion of appropriate risk assessments for placement activities, as defined in 2.1 below. Additional guidance on field trips can be found on the Department of Risk, Safety and Health WebPages. This guidance is intended to work in conjunction with the previously approved UQC Placement Guidelines.

I.6 The index for this guidance is as follows:

- What is a placement?
- What are the risks?
- Who should undertake risk assessments?

- Contact details
- Insurance
- Appendix A Mentor form
- Appendix B Workplace Hazard Identification Checklist
- Appendix C Contact details form
- Appendix D Placement agreement form (Insurance)

2. What is a placement?

2.1 A student placement is defined, for the purposes of this guidance, as a period of vocational experience, paid or unpaid where:

- there is the transfer of direct supervision of a student to a third party regardless of duration;
- the placement is integral to the individual student's course or is a validated option within the course of study; and
- the student is enrolled at the University during the period of the placement.

2.2 Such placements would include organisations associated with healthcare, education and social work, exchange schemes, EU student mobility schemes, and students studying at another university.

2.3 This guidance does not cover:

- One off observational visits. For these activities the University must demonstrate that sufficient guidance on the likely risks of the activity and/or location has been provided and students should be advised to undertake personal assessments of the activity and location as part of the observation. The University should also be in receipt of a basic notification from the student of the intended location of their placement prior to the start date; and
- Work based learning students enrolled onto part time University courses and undertaking the placement at their current place of employment. In these cases the employer is responsible for both the risk assessment and insurance arrangements.

3. What are the risks?

3.1 The risks associated with student placements can be separated into two categories:

- Foreseeable injury or ill-health arising out of the undertaking of the placement provider i.e. failure to provide appropriate safety equipment; and
- Foreseeable injury, ill-health or loss to the placement student not arising out of the undertaking of the placement provider but as a consequence of the placement, i.e. negligent working practices on the part of or in relation to the student placement.

- 3.2 In order to counter, as far as is reasonably practicable, these risks a risk assessment of each placement provider should be undertaken prior to the commencement of any placement activity. The type of risk assessment to be undertaken will vary depending on the level of risk associated with each activity. These are determined at a local level and are typically defined as:
- 3.3 **High level risk activities.** These would include:
- Work in a high risk environment such as construction, factory, chemical production work, activity undertaken with the Police or emergency services;
 - Work in high risk locations e.g. those countries listed on the Foreign & Commonwealth Office web page under ' advises against all travel to ' and 'advises against travel to unless on essential business ', and locations within the UK with known high social unrest;
 - At small or medium size enterprises where risk control may be inadequate, e.g. small wood workshop, small engineering workshop, garage or automotive paint spraying workshops; and
 - Social or public services areas, e.g. hospitals, or where the work involves visits to private residences, or self employed small business operators i.e. solicitors.
- 3.4 It is anticipated that these placements would be for an extended period, i.e. full academic year, although they can be of any length.
- 3.5 Assessment would comprise 3 stages:
- Detailed risk assessment;
 - Workplace Hazard Identification Checklist (Appendix B); and
 - Student feedback and assessment during and at the end of the placement.
- 3.6 **Medium Level Risk Activity.** This would normally apply to:
- Organisations which have areas of high risk associated with their activity but placement student not expected work in those areas e.g. production lines; and
 - Organisations which have undertaken Governmental type risk assessments prior to use by the University i.e. Schools/Colleges registered through the British Council, BUNAC and licensed Outward Bound Centres.
- 3.7 These placements would be expected to vary in duration and would encompass a significant number of the placements that the University would undertake usually within specific disciplines.

3.8 Assessment would also comprise three stages:

- Verification of any detailed risk assessment undertaken, confirmation of date undertaken and assurance that it was undertaken by an appropriately qualified mentor, trainer, coach (a form for this purpose is shown as Appendix A), licence arrangements for Outward Bound Centres would also need to be assessed at this stage;
- Workplace Hazard Identification Checklist; and
- Student feedback and assessment during and at the end of the placement.

3.9 **Low Level Risk Activity.** Low-level risk activity placements would be office, or similar, based and would involve controlled contact with either high-risk equipment, or chemicals. These activities would account for the majority of placements undertaken by the University and these can vary in duration.

3.10 Assessment would comprise of 2 stages:

- Workplace Hazard Identification Checklist; and
- Student feedback and assessment during and at the end of the placement.

4. Who should undertake risk assessments?

4.1 Assessment of high and medium level risk activities can be undertaken using the general risk assessment form and guidance to be found on the Department of Risk, Safety and Health WebPages. Undertaking this level of assessment will require specific risk assessment training, which is provided by the Department of Risk, Safety and Health and staff can book to attend these sessions via the Corporate Staff Development training programme. Should further guidance/assistance be required in the case of more lengthy, complicated or compliance with risk assessments then this can be sought from the Department of Risk, Safety and Health, who can be contacted on extension 1265.

4.2 For low level risk activities, and in conjunction with the more detailed risk assessments for high and medium level risk activities, the hazard identification checklist appended to this report as Appendix B, should be used.

4.3 This checklist covers the key aspects of a Health and Safety risk assessment and gives a reasonable assurance that the environment being assessed is a safe one, and can therefore be completed by anyone with a general level of understanding of Health and Safety issues. For high and medium level risk activities this should be a competent member of School (academic or administrative) staff, but for low level risk activities students themselves can complete the checklist, once they have undertaken some form of School based training.

4.4 In many cases empowering the students to undertake the risk assessment of their placement area can enhance the learning experience, and services students with an additional life long skill. There are several methods, which may be adapted to enable the provision of sufficient Health and Safety guidance to students to enable them to undertake appropriate levels of assessment, and each School should assess locally the most effective means by which this can be undertaken. Options which could be considered are:

- Links from E:vision to a supported site incorporating relevant information and documentation;
- Folder access on WOLF incorporating relevant information and documentation; and
- Inclusion of relevant information and documentation in Induction packs, placement packs other student documentation.

4.7 The hazard identification checklist includes information on insurance and a general view of DDA requirements however more detailed guidance on these issues should be sought, respectively, from the University Insurance Officer, refer to section 6 for contact details, and from the Student Enabling Centre, who have already drafted guidance on this subject (Draft Good Practice Guidance relating to Placements for Disabled Students).

5. Emergency arrangements and contact details

5.1 Prior to any placement being undertaken the University must ensure that the information it holds in respect of the details listed below is accurate:

- Home address and telephone number for the student;
- Next of kin address and telephone number;
- Destination, duration and nature of the placement; and
- Placement primary contact details.

5.2 An example of the kind of form which could be completed, in order to gather this information prior to placement taking place is shown in Appendix C.

5.3 Student personal information (address, telephone and next of kin details) should already be held on the Student Management System (SITS), and students should therefore be requested to check that the personal information held is correct prior to the commencement of their placement activity. Where discrepancies are identified the student should be requested to update their details on SITS via E:vision.

5.4 Students also be advised to share any medical conditions or concerns with the duty first aider at the placement location and/ or wear a medi-alert tag. The University cannot however force students to undertake either of these actions nor can it insist that medical conditions are declared at any stage of the student cycle. In most cases students with serious conditions are fully aware of the corrective actions required should their condition(s) be triggered or worsen and are fully prepared for dealing with their own emergencies.

- 5.5 Contingency arrangements should be developed, in order to ensure, that in the event that students have to be brought back home (if the placement is abroad) or they have to terminate the placement in the event of a reportable incident, i.e. major injuries or incidents leading to serious illness, hospitalisation, or death, this could be affected swiftly.

6. Insurance

- 6.1 Placement students should be covered under the placement provider's Employers Liability Insurance in the same manner as the provider would cover their own employees. In this regard the student should be classed as an employee.
- 6.2 The University's own Public Liability Insurance would come in to force if the:
- UK based placement provider is a company with less than 5 employees, and is therefore exempt from the requirement to hold its own Employers Liability Insurance, where this is the case a full risk assessment will need to be undertaken by the University prior to any placements taking place; or
 - student on placement, within the UK, does damage to third party property or persons in the course of that placement, and the 3rd party wishes to pursue the University for compensation, i.e. the placement student uses the wrong acetate in a photocopier and causes damage, the placement provider may then wish to pursue the University for compensation in respect of the damaged photocopier.
- 6.3 Each placement provider should be requested to submit details of their Employers and Public Liability Insurance policies and confirm the inclusion of the placement students on it. This should be done on the Student Placement Agreement (Insurance) Form (Ref: FNC/TECH/1369), which is available to download from the Finance Department web site. This form should be issued before the student takes up their placement. A copy is attached for reference as Appendix D.
- 6.4 In the event that a returned form indicates that there is no insurance cover, please contact the Insurance Officer to discuss the matter prior to placement taking place. Contact details for the University Insurance Officer, Martyn Jones, are as follows:
- Telephone extension: 1301 or Email M.A.Jones@wlv.ac.uk
- 6.5 Where students are expected to drive as part of their placement then their own vehicle insurance should be amended to reflect the requirement. The University is not liable for cover in this area. Similarly where students are taken out in Company vehicles, the provider is liable for insurance cover not the University.

Student Placement - Mentor Form

**For completion prior to the commencement of any work based learning activity
requiring the student to undertake professional training/coaching**

Name of
student;.....

Student
number.....

Location of
placement:.....

Duration of placement (with start and end dates).....

Mentor name and telephone number.....

.....

.....

Mentor experience – years experience.....

Mentor experience – relevant qualifications.....

.....

Student home address and telephone number:

.....

.....

.....

Signed
(Mentor).....

Date.....

Workplace Hazard Identification Checklist

Working Conditions

1. Are the lighting, heating and ventilation arrangements compliant with Workplace Regulations?
.....
2. How frequently are the toilet facilities and hand wash areas cleaned?
.....
3. Are the rest and refectory areas regularly cleaned?
.....
4. Are gangways and stair ways kept clear of obstruction?
.....
5. Are out of reach storage areas safely managed?
.....
6. Are outside areas cleaned and maintained?
.....
7. What is the smoking policy and is it enforced?
.....
8. Is a lone working policy in operation, if so what is it?
.....
9. Are there adequate access arrangements in place as required under DDA (this question is to be answered by and for students with mobility impairment only)?
.....
10. Are there any other personal issues which need to be highlighted at this stage?
.....

3 Fire Precautions

11. Has a fire risk assessment been carried out? If yes, when?

.....

12. Is there a fire certificate, if so what is the date of issue?

.....

13. Was training given on the emergency evacuation procedure in operation?

.....

14. Where are the fire assembly points?

.....

15. Where are the fire extinguishers located and what type are they (foam, powder) and how many of them are there?

.....

16. Have you received training on the use of fire extinguishers, if so please record the date?

.....

4 First Aid

17. Is there a qualified first aider in post?

.....

18. Is their certificate up to date, what is the expiry date?

.....

19. What is the location of the nearest first aid box?

.....

5 Accident Procedures

20. How are accidents/ near misses reported?

.....

21. How are RIDDOR incidents routinely reported to HSE?

.....

22. Are designated staff on hand to investigate accidents and take remedial action where required?

.....

6 Management and Supervision

23. How will the placement student be supervised/managed?

.....

24. Which parts of the premises are out of bounds to the student placement?

.....

25. How will the student be advised of these?

.....

Health and Safety Policy

26. Is there a written Health and Safety policy?

.....

27. Has the student received a copy?

.....

28. Is a Safety Law poster completed and displayed?

.....

7 Personal Protective Equipment

29. Is PPE likely to be required during this placement?

.....

30. What type and how is it issued and managed?

.....

8 Insurance

31. Indicate the type of insurance held:

- Public Liability;
- Employers Liability; or

- Combined Liability.

32. Name of the Insurance Company

.....

33. Policy Number and expiry date:

.....

34. Does the insurance cover visitors/ non employees?

.....

35. Is an Employers Liability certificate displayed, if yes where?

.....

Signed

(student).....

Date.....

Signed

(employer).....

Date.....



Student Placement - Personal Data Record

For completion prior to the commencement of any work based learning activity

Name of student;.....

Student number.....

Location of placement:.....

Duration of placement (with start and end dates).....

Placement contact: name and telephone number.....

Student home address and telephone number:

.....
.....
.....

This section is for use in an emergency only:

Next of kin home address and telephone number:

.....
.....
.....

Signed
(student).....

Date.....

STUDENT PLACEMENT AGREEMENT (INSURANCE)



Name of Student: _____

Duration of Placement: From _____ To _____

Organisation Providing Placement

Name: _____

Address: _____

Insurance Details

Employers Liability

Insurer: _____

Policy Number: _____

Expiry Date: _____

Indemnity Limit: _____

Public Liability

Insurer: _____

Policy Number: _____

Expiry Date: _____

Indemnity Limit: _____

Contact Personnel

Who is your nominated contact for compliance with the requirements of health and safety legislation?

Name and position: _____

Declaration

1. We confirm that we have a written Health and Safety Policy.
2. We confirm that we have a policy regarding health and safety training for people working in our undertaking, including use of vehicles, plant and equipment, and will provide all necessary health and safety training for the placement student.
3. We confirm that we have undertaken risk assessments of our work practices to identify possible risks, whether to our own employees or to others within our undertaking.
4. We confirm that our insurers have been advised of the proposed placement.

Signed on behalf of Placement Provider

Signature: _____ Position: _____

Name (Capitals): _____ Date: _____

Thank you for completing this form. Please return it as soon as possible to the Course Tutor, or alternatively the Insurance Officer, University of Wolverhampton, Finance Department, Molineux Street, Wolverhampton WV1 1SB