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2024/25

Work Experience Policy

Building foundations and providing opportunities to create confident, aspirational, and independent members of our community.

Approved by Governing Body on:	7/11/2024
Signed by Chair of Governors:	<i>P. A. Evans</i>
Head Teacher:	O M Flowers
Lead Personnel:	B Taylor
Date of Review:	7/11/2026

The Westminster School

Work Experience Policy

1. Introduction

At The Westminster School, we are committed to preparing our students for life beyond education by offering meaningful work experience opportunities. Our work experience programme is an integral part of our students' learning journey, fostering independence, confidence, and employability skills in real-world settings. We ensure that placements are inclusive, supportive, and safe, aligning with our school's values of promoting inclusion and safeguarding.

For some placements, we collaborate with [WorkNlearn](#), an organisation that takes on the responsibility of the health and safety and safeguarding checks. WorkNlearn provides additional resource to facilitate the number of work placements we undertake.

This policy outlines our procedures and responsibilities to ensure that all students, particularly those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), have a positive, safe, and enriching work experience.

2. Aims of Work Experience

Our work experience programme aims to:

- Enhance students' understanding of the workplace.
- Develop employability skills, including communication, teamwork, and problem-solving.
- Build confidence and independence in a professional setting.
- Provide an opportunity to apply skills learned in school in real-world environments.
- Support personal growth, including resilience, time management, and decision-making.
- Prepare students for future career choices and adult life.

3. Provision

Work placements are offered to all post-16 pupils, where appropriate, and can take various forms. These include internal placements within the school or with school partner organisations such as Chartwells or Mitie, independent placements arranged through WorkNlearn, independent placements organised by the school, or group placements with staff support. Placements are typically scheduled on a weekly basis, with most students attending one day per week. However, in some cases, placements may extend up to three days per week or take the form of block placements over a set period.

4. Management and Coordination

Work experience opportunities will be coordinated by the school's Careers and Futures team, in partnership with employers and WorkNlearn where appropriate. The school will:

- Liaise with employers and WorkNlearn to ensure that placements meet the needs of our students.
- Provide guidance to employers on how to support SEND students.
- Ensure all necessary documentation, including a pre-safety form is completed and copies of employer liability insurance is sourced along with safeguarding agreements signed for.
- We do capture risk assessments and other policies only where appropriate. All these checks are completed prior to the placement. National legislation from the HSE and the DfE will be followed to ensure the health, safety and safeguarding of students whilst on work experience.
- When organising placements, we source information, in proportion to the level of risk, to satisfy ourselves that those arrangements are in place. We do not second-guess employers' risk assessments or require additional paperwork. We do not need to complete extensive health and safety checks or risk assessments of our own - <https://www.hse.gov.uk/young-workers/schools-colleges.htm>

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The Futures team or WorkNLearn will source the placements that align with students interests and abilities, with additional support offered to those with more complex needs..

5. Employers – Placement provider

Under HSE guidance (the Health and Safety (Training for Employment) Regulations 1990), students on work experience are treated as employees for health and safety purposes. The placement provider has the same duty of care to the students as it does to its own employees. The provider must ensure that any young person on placement is protected from any risks which are a consequence of their lack of experience or an absence of awareness of existing or potential risks or the fact that a young person has not fully matured. Employers' existing workplace risk assessments may already cover the risks that work experience students may be exposed to. Their existing Employer's Liability Insurance will cover such placements.

6. Assessing the risk

Employers are required to have risk assessments for their employees, although small employers (with fewer than five employees) do not have to have them written down. We will ask placement providers to carry out an appropriate workplace induction, which may include undertaking the risk assessments with students, in accordance with the HSE guidance:

- For placements in low-risk environments, such as offices or shops, with everyday risks that will mostly be familiar to the student, we consider that existing arrangements for other employees should suffice.
- For environments with risks less familiar to the student (e.g. in light assembly or packing facilities), we will ask the placement provider to make arrangements to manage the risks. We consider this should include induction, supervision, site familiarisation, and any protective equipment needed.
- For a placement in a higher-risk environment such as construction, agriculture and manufacturing we will ask the provider to consider what work the student will be doing or observing, the risks involved and how these are managed and to satisfy themselves that the instruction, training and supervisory arrangements have been properly thought through and that they work in practice.

Where it is appropriate and we have had permission to do so, relevant information (such as the young person holistic and communication profiles) will be sent to the employer to allow them to consider how best to provide safe methods of working

7. Safety and Safeguarding

The safety and well-being of our students are paramount. All work experience placements will adhere to strict safeguarding protocols as outlined in the Department for Education's *Keeping Children Safe in Education* guidance. Employers will:

- Complete a pre-placement safety form, detailing health and safety policies, risk assessments, and emergency procedures where appropriate
- Assign a designated supervisor to oversee the student's work and provide support
- Be made aware of the school's safeguarding procedures, including how to report concerns
- Ensure students have a thorough induction or pre visit covering health and safety, including fire safety, first aid, and any specific risks associated with the workplace

Should any safeguarding issues arise, the employer must immediately contact the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) via the provided contact information we provide

8 Health and Safety Considerations

Before the start of any work experience placement, the employer will:

- Conduct a risk assessment that considers the specific needs of the student
- Ensure the student is aware of health and safety procedures, including the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) where necessary

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- Offer an induction or pre-visit where relevant to familiarise the student with the workplace environment
- The school will provide employers with relevant information regarding each student's needs and any adjustments required to ensure a safe and supportive placement

6. Employer Expectations

Employers hosting work experience students from The Westminster School are expected to:

- Provide a safe and supportive environment tailored to the individual needs of the student
- Assign suitable tasks and responsibilities that are appropriate to the student's ability and development
- Offer regular feedback to both the student and the school on progress, skills development, and any areas for improvement
- Participate in a review meeting during the placement to assess the student's progress

7. Student Expectations

Students participating in work experience are expected to:

- Attend the placement punctually and follow the workplace's rules and procedures
- Take responsibility for their behaviour and interactions while at the placement.
- Communicate any concerns or issues to their designated supervisor or a member of the school staff

The school will ensure students are well-prepared for their placement through pre-placement visits, which will cover expectations, safety, and safeguarding procedures and in placement monitoring visits and daily attendance checks.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

All work experience placements will be closely monitored by the school's Careers and Futures team and Worknlearn where applicable. During and upon completion of the placement, both the student and the employer will be asked to provide feedback. This feedback will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the work experience programme the development of the young person and identify areas for improvement

The work experience program is reviewed by the school's The Careers/Futures team who are responsible for ensuring that placements meet the individual needs of our students. The review process includes feedback from students, placement providers, and staff involved in the programme, and is presented to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Governors as part of the school's ongoing reporting procedures related to careers and employability.

The review will:

- Assess the extent to which the programme meets the specific needs and aims of our students with special educational needs.
- Address any health and safety issues that have arisen, including considerations related to the unique needs of our students
- Calculate the percentage of students independently travelling to their own placements
- Calculate the percentage of students completing their placement successfully.
- Explore reasons for any placements not being completed and identify strategies to overcome these challenges.
- Identify areas for improvement, which will be incorporated into the school's careers and employability development plan, with a focus on inclusivity and accessibility.

The school will regularly review and update this policy to ensure it remains in line with current legislation and best practices.