



Oatlands College Work Experience Policy

Introduction

Each year, Transition Year and LCVP students from Oatlands College go on work placements. The aim of work experience is to provide students with the opportunity to learn about the world of work, to explore possible career options and to actively develop skills for future enterprise and employability.

Schools and students rely on the willingness of employers/mentors to provide work placement opportunities and employers/mentors play a pivotal role in the success of these work experience programmes.

How Work Experience Operates in Oatlands College:

Applications

Students must find their own suitable work placement.

Placement details

The facilitating employer/mentor will be required to complete the work placement form confirming the availability, nature and dates of work experience.

Insurance

Students are insured by Willis Towers Watson Insurances Limited. Employers/mentors will be given a document by the student containing the details, which should be filed for reference. There may be exclusions for certain types of work. The work experience coordinator will inform students if their placement does not qualify for insurance.

Format

Students require a one-week placement in the spring of Transition Year. The dates for these placement weeks will vary each academic year and will be posted on the TY calendar and on the school website. Additional work experience is permitted and encouraged but must be cleared by school management. It must follow the same guidelines whereby students organise their placements and refer to the work experience coordinator to ensure required paperwork is undertaken. LCVP students are required to undertake a three-day work experience at any stage during 5th/6th Year. This is coordinated by the LCVP department.

Attendance

Attendance at work is verified via an employer/mentor form that must be presented by the student for the duration of their placement. The employer/mentor is also asked to comment on the student's overall performance at the end of the placement.

Absence from work

The student on work placement is required to notify the school and the employer/mentor of a pending absence from work experience. Medical appointments and illnesses need to be explained by way of medical certification. The employer/mentor is asked to contact the programme co-ordinator (via the school office or email) in the case of a student's absence from work experience.

Payment

The employer/mentor is not required to make any payment to the student during work experience.

Monitoring

As part of the monitoring process, a staff member may phone or visit the student at the employer's/mentor's premises during work experience.

Recording

During their work experience, the school will require each student to maintain a diary of their experiences so that they can reflect on the learning points after the placement. This should be reflected on in their portfolio.

At the end of the work experience the employer/mentor must complete a work placement evaluation.

Health and Safety

While Oatlands College continues to have responsibility for students on work experience, the employer/mentor has the same responsibilities for their health, safety and welfare whilst the student is on their premises.

As most students undertaking work experience will be under the age of 18 years and in some cases, may be under 16 years, employer/mentors facilitating work experience should review the relevant sections of the 'Protection of Young Persons (Employment) Act 1996' to ensure compliance.

In general, the Act prohibits the employment of children under the age of 16 years. However, employer/mentors can take on 14- and 15-year-olds as part of an approved work experience or education programme where the work is not harmful to their safety, health, or development.

There are also some limitations around working hours, rest breaks, night work etc. which apply to those 17 years and under.

Host employer/mentors must notify the school immediately of any accidents which occur during work placements. The school will ensure that the normal accident reporting procedures are followed and that the student's parents are made aware of the incident.

Roles and Responsibilities

School roles and responsibilities:

- Provide a work placement form to be completed and returned by the student, signed by parent(s) / guardian(s) and filed by the work experience coordinator.
- Ensure that the student is provided with a copy of the relevant insurance policy and is aware that this must be provided by him to the employer/mentor.
- Assess the suitability of students to partake in each placement.
- Students will be briefed on the aims of the work placement as well as responsibilities and acceptable standards of behaviour in advance of their placement taking place.
- Ensure that action is taken immediately if a complaint has been made by the host or the student.

Student roles and responsibilities:

- Complete the work placement form and return to coordinator by given deadline.
- Ensure all relevant forms are completed in consultation with the school and the host.
- Abide by the rules and regulations of the host employer/mentor.
- When taking up work experience, students are representing Oatlands College and will adhere to the school's Code of Behaviour for the duration of the placement.
- Take care of their own safety and health, and that of others who may be affected by their actions.
- Not partake in any activities that require specialist training without receiving that training.
- Following instruction, use any safety equipment that has been provided and take part in relevant training.
- Raise any safety and health concerns with the employer/mentor and school contact person and inform them about any accidents or illness which you think may be work related.
- Inform the employer/mentor of any medical conditions which may affect the safety and health of the student while on work placement.
- Provide the employer with emergency contact details.
- Ensure that appropriate vetting is in place for their placement.
- Complete the reflection form which includes the learning outcomes of the placement in terms of knowledge, skills, and competencies to be acquired, a daily diary and a self-evaluation section at the end of the placement.

Employer responsibilities:

- Provide a safe workplace environment and appropriate supervision for the student.
- Alert the school of any potential problems with the placement.
- Report any incidents involving the students to the school immediately.
- Complete a work placement evaluation at the end of the placement.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 29th January 2023.