



Risk Management of Student Placements

Standard

PRSG5.14 WELLBEING, SAFETY AND HEALTH MANAGEMENT SYSTEM							
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Standard on Placements

Introduction

Placements are often an essential part of the learning and development of students studying at the University; they help enable students to gain a greater understanding and experience of the work environment.

Placements are varied in nature – dependent on the discipline (e.g. office work, working in a laboratory or on a construction site); and may vary in length from a few days to a full academic year.

The University protocol on placements – including this Standard and supporting guidance are based on the University and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) guidance. They offer a generic risk based approach to managing the health and safety surrounding placements, allowing resources and control to be placed in the higher risk areas.

What are Placements?

A Placement is a period of University approved work or vocational experience that is undertaken by an undergraduate or postgraduate student whilst enrolled at the University. This could be either as part of their academic studies, or as a period of work or vocational experience that is organised or managed by the University. The placement may be paid or unpaid and either in the UK or abroad.

During the placement period direct supervision for the student (including that for health and safety) is transferred to a third party organisation and the Student is considered to be an employee of the Placement Provider for the time they are on Placement. Examples of Placement Providers include the NHS, IBM, Shell, Marks and Spencer as well as small independent organisations.

Examples of placements may include industrial placements, sandwich placements, medical electives, teaching assistantships, summer internships (e.g. through the Careers Centre), internal internships (carried out within the University) and voluntary work (e.g. through an Access and Community Engagement (ACE) programme).

What is not covered:

It does not cover:

- Periods of study at another institution either in the UK or abroad;
- Periods of specific voluntary work such as “V Volunteering” organised through ACE and the Student Union;
- Programmes such as the [Leeds for Life Foundation](#);
- [Fieldwork studies](#);
- Staff sabbaticals or staff working at another institution or;
- Anyone undertaking a placement or period of ‘work experience’ from another organisation – including School, Colleges and other Universities.

In some cases a slightly different approach is taken when an outside professional body is also involved. Speak to your Health and Safety Manager if you are dealing with teacher training, NHS, (healthcare, medical or dental) social work or counselling placements or have any specific questions.

Standard

The University takes a risk management approach to the approval process of placements and expects that:

- Roles and responsibilities of all involved in the placement are clearly defined.

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- A University approved partnership agreement e.g. the Tripartite Agreement is completed and signed by the student, a named representative of the University and a representative of the Placement Provider, and returned to the University prior to the placement beginning.
- Those who have been identified, by Deans/ Heads of Service or Heads of School, as having a role with respect to risk management of placements are trained to fulfill these roles.
- Students are effectively briefed before the placement begins, as identified in the planning of the placement e.g. by using the Risk Management Action Plan Form.
- An effective process is in place for raising and resolving any problems or concerns before, during and following the placement.
- Suitable contingency and emergency plans are developed and in place ready for implementation with identified roles and actions should the need arise.
- Any significant accidents or near misses will be reported to the University by the student and / or the Placement Provider and that these will be then recorded using Sentinel; (the University online accident reporting system).
- Information on each placement is kept on record in an appropriate manner for three years following completion of the placement.
- Each placement is reviewed following the placement including feedback from the student and the Placement Provider.

Relevant Legislation

- Health and Safety at Work etc Act (HSWA) 1974.
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 as amended. (MHSWR).

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