



Safeguarding for Employers

Ask any teacher or school/college leadership team what their number one priority is and they will all say safeguarding. First and foremost, they must create and sustain a safe environment for learning and development for students and staff alike. Follow the best practice of the school or college you are working with, it will offer you reassurance and allow you to deliver with confidence.

Within each school and college there are rigorous safeguarding policies and procedures and there will be a number of Designated Safeguard Leads (DSLs) in each one. Whilst every member of staff in a school or college will have regular safeguarding training, the DSLs will be highly trained in safeguarding and are responsible for ensuring that both policy and procedures are followed to the letter in any learning context their students find themselves in - including work experience.

What are employers responsibilities and requirements?

When working with a school and college to arrange experiences of your workplace, you will find they are very knowledgeable and will organise most aspects of related safeguarding requirements.

To give you an idea of what their statutory requirements are, you can read the Department for Education's ['Keeping children safe in education'](#) guidance. Remember - this is not written for employers to follow, but it may be reassuring to see what the statutory guidance for schools and colleges is.

You may already be aware of or heard of DBS checks. The [Disclosure and Barring Service](#) helps

employers make safer recruitment decisions each year by processing and issuing DBS checks for England, Wales, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. DBS also maintains the adults' and children's Barred Lists and makes considered decisions as to whether an individual should be included on one or both of these lists and barred from engaging in regulated activity.'

As work experience currently uses virtual settings and you may be working with young people in virtual sessions hosted and monitored by their teachers (not in all instances), it is unlikely that you will need to have DBS checks for your employees. In the case of blended programmes where a young person is in the workplace, things may be slightly different. Talk to the school or college - they will guide you and the DSL will make the decision as to whether a check is needed or not.

According to one of several online DBS check providers, Clearcheck, the current advice is as follows, particularly for face to face work experience:

Under 16's

A company taking on a young person for work experience before they reach the age of 16 might

need to run DBS checks on the people who will be working closely with the young person. There is no law or hard and fast rule and the decision whether to DBS check or not will be made by the school or college's DSL. The school or college will take into account things like the length of the work experience, the type of work, the office or work environment and whether the young person will ever be left on their own with the other employees.

16-18 year olds

Government guidance is clearer when it comes to the issue of whether people should be DBS checked in order to supervise work experience for people aged 16 to 18 - it's not necessary. In many organisations there are likely to be other employees or apprentices who are of a similar age to a work experience student, and larger organisations may have policies regarding the treatment of young people working there.

You can find out more information and guidance for employers on the Government's ['DBS checks: guidance for employers'](#),

Employer Liability Insurance

Often an employer's existing insurance will cover students, but it is worth checking. Schools/colleges may ask for a copy for their files, even if a DBS check is not required.

Risk Assessments

As an employer, you will already be aware of risk assessments for your place of work. You will need to extend this if you are planning to have young people visit you on site. You can find out more about managing risks and assessment at work from the [Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\)](#).

You should be aware that, under health and safety law, every employer must ensure the health and safety of their employees, and have set out specific considerations when working with young people. Following HSE guidance is the law even for work experience for young people under the age of 18. Visit HSE's ['What the law says about young people at work'](#) for the requirements in the law.



Best Practice

These regulations are the bare minimum. You should enhance these requirements with practical procedures, and these need to be built into your planning. You also need to ensure the members of your team delivering the programme understand these legal requirements and follow the school's/college's own policies, which you can discuss with their staff during the planning stage.

Teachers and school/college leaders are best placed to advise and support you with any questions or concerns you might have. Ultimately, the safety of the students is their responsibility and they will ensure everyone involved in your programme, including your employees, stays safe and gets as much as possible from the positive experience of the world of work you are offering.

Best practice for Employers

- Always work with students in an open work area. Avoid meetings in enclosed spaces or 1:1 where possible
- If a student discloses any information that is concerning the employer contact the school or college to inform them as early as possible
- Be mindful of working hours and giving regular breaks
- Ensure you have emergency contact details of student on placement and a school or college contact
- In the event a student does not turn up for work experience and you cannot reach them the school or college should be informed
- Ensure students are well briefed on any confidentiality clauses – they may very innocently share something, for example on social media, they have learned which may be sensitive to the organisation
- If you want to promote or share information about the work experience student ensure you have the relevant permissions from student/parent/school or college

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