

Work Experience Policy

Human Resources Policy No HR43

Additionally refer to:

- HR01 Policy for Equality and Diversity
- HR53 Dress Code and Appearance
- HS01 Trust Health and Safety Policy
- HS08 Safe Moving and handling Policy
- HS11 Health and Safety Risk Assessment Templates Policy
- Work Experience Support Pack – Trust Intranet Learning Zone

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Version Control Sheet

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1 Policy Statement

- 1.1 The Trust is committed to providing work experience for young persons and adults and works in partnership with local Schools, Colleges and other organisations to provide work placements.
- 1.2 This policy outlines the process to be followed when placing people for work experience, and the considerations that should be made by Trust departments.
- 1.3 The aim of work experience is to give people the opportunity to find out about careers within a health and social care environment.

2 Scope

- 2.1 Work experience at the Trust is open to everyone in line with HR01 Equality and Diversity Policy. The majority of work experience requests are from school/college students; however there is no upper age limit in place when considering someone for a placement. But for reasons of health & safety, and the protection of young people, some departments have a minimum age requirement in place for work placement students.
- 2.2 Work placements will be offered on the basis of: the Trust's ability to provide placements; availability of time and resources necessary; level of interest expressed by the student in the area of work selected; any objective and justifiable requirements or restrictions which affect the suitability of the student for the work selected; and the health and safety requirements affecting the requested work or work area. Students with learning disabilities are welcomed, providing a suitable placement can be found following risk assessment.
- 2.3.1 This policy excludes the offer of placements to students from Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) who are covered under separate arrangements. The Trust has formal agreements to host students from specified HEIs.
- 2.3.2 Overseas Health Professionals wishing to gain experience in the UK through a 'clinical attachment' are also excluded. Applications by Overseas Doctors must be made via the Regional Overseas Associate Dean. Further information is available on the following website:

<http://www.westmidlandsdeanery.nhs.uk/OverseasDoctors/ClinicalAttachment.aspx>

3 Definitions

- 3.1 Work experience may be defined as:
"A placement on the employer's premises in which people can carry out a particular task or duty, or a range of tasks or duties, more or less as would an employee, but with the emphasis on the learning aspects of the experience". All work experience placements will be unpaid.
- 3.2 Work experience can take the form of various activities such as work shadowing, work observation or visits and work-based projects. Where appropriate, work experience is governed by the Education Act 1996, as amended by the School Standards & Framework Act 1998. This policy complies with those standards and with Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Education Standards.

4 Process

- 4.1 All people enquiring about work experience should be directed to the website (www.sath.nhs.uk), where they will find all details about departments offering placements, the member of staff to contact, and an application form. People who do not have access to the internet at home should be directed to access via their school/college or their local library. Alternatively staff should send an application form in the post. In addition, all schools and colleges throughout Shropshire have access to and are supported by Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin Education Business Links who have copies of the Trust's Work Experience Directory. This details opportunities available within the Trust by vocational area.
- 4.2 An application form **must** be completed, without exception, for **all** placements, even those of a short duration these should be sent to the relevant department to be considered for a work placement.
- 4.2.1 It should be noted that private arrangements are **not permitted** between members of staff and personal acquaintances or family members. This is to protect the member of staff, the organisation and the student. No offer of a placement should be made, even in principle, before the formal application process has been made.
- 4.4 A **Work Experience Support Pack** is available for Managers/Work Placement Coordinators on the Trust's intranet site, within the Learning Zone. This contains all documentation that needs to be completed for any work placement
- 4.5. Once a department has received an application for work experience, they must send a written response, within 1 month of receipt, to either confirm or reject the application (refer to the Work Experience Support Pack documents for example letters). If confirming the placement, details such as dress code, start and finish times etc, should also be included.
- 4.6 Details of each placement should be sent to the Corporate Education Department. For monitoring and health & safety purposes this will be retained on the Work Experience database. Confirm student's name, name of school/college etc, department they will be working in, contact whilst in the department and dates of placement. Refer to the Work Experience Support Pack for the Notification of Work Placement form.
- 4.7 At the end of the experience, people on placement should be asked to complete the evaluation form found in the Work Experience Support Pack. A copy should be sent to the Corporate Education Department.

5 Responsibilities

5.1 Department Managers

- 5.1.1 Individual department managers will decide whether they can offer a placement or not. Each department manager is also responsible for selecting their own Work Placement Coordinator, whose name will appear in the work placement directory – the Corporate Education Department must be notified of the coordinator's name.
- 5.1.2 If a department does offer a placement, the member of staff coordinating the placement must adhere to the following responsibilities:
- To ensure all individuals on placements are properly prepared and briefed on the hazards within the workplace (achieved by pre-placement interview, phone call or letter). Control measures to reduce or eliminate risk of injury before a student starts their placement should be in place (refer to section on risk assessments).

- To monitor students at all times to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of both the student and patients/clients. Each department has a responsibility to ensure proper supervision at **all** times, and to ensure that patient care is not compromised at any time.
- To induct the Work Experience Student on the first day – an induction checklist can be found in the Work Experience support packs; it **must** be used and signed by the student. All information must be relayed to the Work Experience Student on or before their first day.
- To notify the Corporate Education Department of placement details. Refer to the above section and the Work Experience Support Pack for full details required.
- To complete a risk assessment form (refer to the Work Experience Support Pack). Refer also to the risk assessment section of this policy for further details.
- To return all relevant paperwork from the Work Experience Support Pack to the Corporate Education Department.
- To maintain links, where appropriate, with the organisation providing the student (e.g. school, college etc), as they may want to visit the student whilst on site.

5.1.3 The Trust Health & Safety Policy (HS01) section on Protection of Young Persons should be read in conjunction with this policy and adhered to.

5.1.4 Departments also have responsibilities for patient confidentiality, safety and other staff as outlined in section 10.

5.1.5 Some departments do not permit Work Experience Students in their areas due to the nature of the work they do (e.g. A&E, Theatres). It is therefore **essential** that the person supervising a Work Experience Student seeks permission from the manager of these areas, prior to taking a Work Experience Student there, including those students 'shadowing' a Doctor. This will involve the completion of an additional Risk Assessment.

5.2 Workforce Directorate – Corporate Education Department

5.2.1 The Corporate Education Department has responsibility to ensure the policy is kept up to date and to log all work placements that take place across the Trust.

5.2.2 The Corporate Education Department has responsibility to ensure the information held on the Trust website and on the Intranet relating to Work Experience is kept up to date and reviewed annually as a minimum.

5.2.3 The Corporate Education Department will incorporate a report on work experience activity into an annual report to the Workforce Committee.

5.3 Schools/Colleges/Partner organisations

5.3.1 The above groups must provide relevant information relating to any medical or behavioural conditions affecting the work experience student.

5.3.2 It is the responsibility of the above groups to assess suitability/maturity of students to the type of placement they are seeking. For example, could they cope with seeing patients displaying confused/aggressive behaviour or witnessing a patient vomit or receiving a blood transfusion?

5.4 Work Placement Student

5.4.1 It is every student's responsibility to abide by the following guidelines, for the health and safety of both themselves and others using the health service.

- Students must obey all safety instructions and read the fire procedure notices displayed. They must ensure that they are aware of the procedure in case of fire in the area where they are working.
- If a student has an accident, incident or near miss, however slight, whilst working it must be reported to the head of the department immediately and the Work Experience Coordinator in the Corporate Education Department. A Datix/Incident Form **must** be completed and sent to the Health & Safety Advisor.
- If a student has an accident or is taken ill during their time in the Trust their parent or guardian should be informed immediately and a follow up call made to the school or college.
- Under **NO** circumstances must a work experience student carry out or assist in carrying out patient moving and handling procedures. A member of staff must be called if a patient requires assistance.

5.4.2 Students must also act in accordance with Section 10 of this policy in relation to patient and staff confidentiality and safety guidelines.

6 Risk Assessments

- 6.1 A 'generic' risk assessment form should be completed by the department before any work placements are introduced within the department. This should include a focus on the specific risks to young or inexperienced people working within the department, including consideration and guidance in relation to the moving and handling of loads, reference should be made to the Trust Safe Moving and Handling Policy (HS08). This document must be modified and updated as appropriate and signed off by the manager of the department concerned. Department Managers are responsible for keeping copies of the risk assessments. Any queries should be referred to the Trust's Health and Safety Team.
- 6.2 Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin Education Business Links have a responsibility on behalf of the Education Committees of Shropshire County Council and Telford and Wrekin Borough Council to approve businesses offering placements to schools and colleges and are required to carry out work place risk assessments on an annual basis for all Departments offering placements. This will be completed each year in conjunction with Corporate Education. Any new area wishing to offer work placements for the first time must undergo this assessment prior to taking any students and must contact the Corporate Education Department to arrange.

7 Young People and Risk Assessments for Individual Students

- 7.1 For young persons (defined as those under 18 years of age) departments should:
- carry out a risk assessment specific to the individual student prior to commencement of the work placement and identify any significant risks, this will highlight any control measures that can be implemented to ensure 'so far as reasonably practicable' the health, safety and welfare of the work placement candidate during their period of work experience;
 - ensure that, due to the student's possible lack of awareness of existing or potential risks, immaturity and inexperience, the work placement student does not carry out activities associated with the work placement that are beyond their psychological or physical capabilities;
 - ensure that the student is made aware of any risks within the work area and any activities they are not permitted to undertake.

- ensure students do not undertake work activities, and are not exposed to any physical processes or to biological or chemical agents, that may have long term effects on their health;
- ensure the student is supervised at all times especially during patient contact.
- ensure, as a minimum, that students are given the same level of health, safety and welfare provision as would be given to Trust employees;
- ensure the student is informed how to report accidents, incidents and concerns
- Inform the school or college of any significant finding as a result of the risk assessment and the measures that will be undertaken to eliminate or minimise the risks in order to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the work placement candidate during their period of work experience.

8 Dress Code

- 8.1 Students should be advised of suitable clothing in line with the Trust's Dress Code and Appearance Policy (HR53)
- 8.2 An Identity badge must be worn by the student **at all times** during their time within the Trust. A temporary paper, non photographic Identity badge should be obtained as soon as the student commences the placement, available from the Estates Department on either site. The badge will detail the students name; state they are a 'Work Experience Student, Ward/Dept 'X', school/college attended, and the dates of the placement. The Estates Department will log the presence of the student on site as per the temporary contractor's record.
- 8.3 **Before** attending on the first day the department co-ordinator should advise the student of the type of clothing suitable for work in that particular department (e.g. flat shoes, etc). In clinical areas there is a requirement to comply with the 'bare below the elbows' rule. Any protective clothing must be supplied by the department. Where there is no specific clothing requirement, students should be advised to wear suitable attire.

9 Insurance

- 9.1 The Trust carries Employer Liability Insurance. Work Experience Students will be treated as employees for the purposes of insurance against personal injury and injury caused to others. The Trust does not carry insurance against damage to property; therefore, students should be advised against bringing valuables into the Trust.

10 Patient and Staff Confidentiality and Safety Guidelines

- 10.1 Work Experience Students are **NOT** under any circumstances permitted to read medical files. Whilst working they may see or hear things of a confidential nature. Anything concerning the diagnosis, treatment or personal affairs of a patient must not be discussed with anyone else. No personal information of any kind regarding patients, living or deceased, or concerning staff, may be disclosed. Any breach can result in legal proceedings.
- 10.2 Work Experience Students must sign a Declaration of Confidentiality form (copy of form in the Work Experience Support Pack) and be briefed of the importance of this requirement on or before the first day in the department.
- 10.3 Work Experience Students are NOT permitted to be actively involved with treatment or participate directly in anything of a clinical nature. **The agreement of the patient must be obtained by the responsible clinician before a student observes any clinical procedure. The person supervising the student should consider whether the procedure is likely to**

have a detrimental psychological effect on the student, if deemed likely to, they must not permit the student to observe the activity. Patients should be made aware the student is on work experience and is NOT a medical student.

- 10.4 Work Experience Students are NOT normally permitted to attend during clinician/patient consultations. Exceptions would only be made if the clinician had previously obtained the patient's permission for the work experience student to be present, as above.
- 10.5 Any equipment (including wheelchairs and trolleys) used by a Work Experience Student must have been risk assessed in line with the guidance in relation to young people, they must have received instruction in the correct and safe usage and be supervised by a member of staff (or responsible adult) at all times. Managers/supervisors are ultimately responsible for the appropriate allocation of tasks being undertaken by students within their department.
- 10.6 Work Experience Students must at all times respect the rights and choice of the patient and treat them with dignity and respect.

11. Termination of Placement

- 11.1 The Trust reserves the right to refuse to continue a placement opportunity if any student deviates from the policy or acts in any way to endanger themselves, other employees, patients or visitors. In this situation the school or college will be informed immediately of the occurrence. The Corporate Education Department should also be informed by telephone and may request a brief report from the Departmental Coordinator detailing the occurrence for future reference. The situation may also dictate the completion of a Datix/incident form.

12 Training Needs

- 12.1 There is no mandatory training associated with this policy. If members of staff have any queries about operating the content of this policy they should contact their line manager in the first instance or the Corporate Education Department for advice.

13 Implementation

- 13.1 The policy will be implemented through informing staff and managers of policy changes by use of existing communication methods, for example, corporate newsletters, Intranet. Existing Work Placement coordinators will have copies of the revised policy directly e-mailed to them highlighting any amendments.

14 Review process

- 14.1 The Trust will review this policy when there are any changes to national guidance, relevant legislation or good practice, or within the normal policy review cycle.

15 Outcome of Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

The outcome of the EIA on this policy showed that there was no detriment to people with any of the protected characteristics and that there was a positive impact for young people.

16 Process for monitoring compliance

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Aspect of compliance or effectiveness being monitored	Monitoring method	Responsibility for monitoring	Frequency of monitoring	Group or Committee that will review the findings and monitor completion of any resulting action plan
Duties	<i>To be addressed through the monitoring below</i>			
Quality of placements undertaken by students	Collation and evaluation of feedback forms received from students on completion of placement identifying common themes. Forming part of an Annual report.	Corporate Education	Annually	Workforce Committee TNCC
Volume and diversity of placements offered	Collation of data from copies of student application forms. Forming part of an Annual report.	Corporate Education	Annually	Workforce Committee TNCC
Policy review process	Review of policy when updated	Workforce Director	On policy review	TNCC