



WORK PLACEMENT

Best Practice - Parent and Carer Guide



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h Highlands
College



INTRODUCTION

Work placements are a key part of sixth form education, helping students develop employability skills, confidence, and insight into the world of work. This Parent and Carer Guide has been designed to help you understand what a work placement involves, how the college and employers support students, and how you can support your young person before, during, and after their placement.



WHAT IS A WORK PLACEMENT?

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A work placement is an **unpaid**, structured period of time spent with an employer that allows students to:

- › Experience a real working environment
- › Develop transferable skills such as communication, teamwork, and time management
- › Explore career interests and challenge assumptions about industries
- › Build confidence and employability

Most sixth form placements last a **minimum of one week** and are aligned with the student's course and interests. Some courses may offer alternative work-related projects if an external placement is not suitable or available.

Placements aim to reflect **realistic industry working hours**, which may differ from normal college timetables and can include earlier start times, later finishes or full working days. If parents, carers or students have **any concerns about the proposed working hours**, they should contact the college **in the first instance** so that these can be reviewed and, where appropriate, adjusted.

Your child's safety and wellbeing are central to the work placement programme.

Before a Placement Can Begin

All placements must:

- › Be approved by the college before the start date
- › Have appropriate health and safety procedures in place
- › Have valid Employers' Liability Insurance
- › Include a young person–suitable risk assessment

For students **under 18, parental consent is required.**

Parents and carers will receive **placement details by email via the Navigate system.** This email outlines key information such as the employer, dates, hours and location, and requires **parental approval** before the placement can be confirmed.

Employers receive guidance on safeguarding expectations and health and safety responsibilities, and the college carries out checks as part of the approval process.

During the Placement

- › Students are treated as employees for health and safety purposes
- › A named supervisor is assigned by the employer
- › College staff are available during working hours if any welfare or safety issues arise
- › Any concerns (absence, accidents, inappropriate behaviour, or disclosures) are escalated immediately to the college

Before the Placement:

The college will:

- › Help students research and select suitable placement areas
- › Support applications, CVs, and interviews if required
- › Deliver a **pre-placement briefing**, including health and safety and expectations
- › Ensure all placement details are logged on the **Navigate** system

Students must complete a pre-placement checklist, including any medical information that employers should be aware of.

The college is committed to inclusion and will make **additional arrangements and adjustments** where needed. Students with **additional learning needs, medical conditions, or physical disabilities** are supported to access meaningful placements, which may include reasonable adjustments, adapted tasks, or alternative arrangements agreed with the employer.

During the Placement:

- › Attendance and a daily learning journal are recorded by the student on Navigate
- › A tutor or staff member will normally visit the student during the placement
- › Parents/guardians may be contacted if there are concerns about attendance or wellbeing

After the Placement:

Students are supported to:

- › Reflect on their experience
 - › Identify skills gained
 - › Discuss next steps, such as apprenticeships, paid employment, or further placements
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Student Responsibilities (What Parents Can Encourage)

Students are expected to:

- › Attend on time and follow workplace rules
- › Dress appropriately and act professionally
- › Follow health and safety instructions
- › Commit to agreed working hours, including full working days where required
- › Log daily attendance and journal entries on Navigate
- › Communicate respectfully with supervisors and colleagues
- › Ask questions and seek feedback

Encouraging these behaviours at home can greatly improve the value of the placement.

Employer Responsibilities (What You Can Expect)

Employers hosting sixth form students commit to:

- › Providing a safe, supportive working environment
- › Offering a clear induction on day one
- › Assigning meaningful, age-appropriate tasks
- › Providing supervision, guidance, and feedback
- › Liaising with the college if concerns arise

Placements are designed to be educational as well as practical — students are not there simply to observe.

HOW PARENTS AND GUARDIANS CAN SUPPORT

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You Can Support Your Young Person by:

- › Discussing expectations before the placement starts, including working hours
- › Helping them prepare appropriate clothing and travel plans
- › Encouraging good timekeeping and organisation
- › Talking through their daily experiences and challenges
- › Supporting reflection after the placement (what they enjoyed, what they learned, what they might do differently next time)

Even placements that don't lead to a clear career choice are valuable learning experiences.

If There Is a Problem

If something doesn't feel right:

- › Encourage your child to speak to their supervisor or college tutor
- › Contact the Work Placement Coordinator directly if needed
- › Remember: placements can be ended or adjusted if they become unsuitable

Student wellbeing always comes before completion of a placement.

Key Contacts

Work Placement Coordinator:

Alex Stryzowska
01534 608534

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

Sarah Walker
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07797 820027

Highlands College Reception

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