



Work Experience Guidance for Parents and Carers

What is work experience?

Work experience is a period of time spent by the student in an adult working environment. Students can choose where they wish to do their work experience with guidance from Form Tutors, Teachers, the Careers Advisor and / or Parents.

Why do work experience?

Work experience is an educational activity which will increase the students' awareness of the world of work. It is an effective and practical way of giving young people an awareness of the skills and appropriate attitudes required for the working world.

What are the aims of Work Experience?

- To prepare students for the adult world of work.
- To help students understand and develop the skills and personal qualities which employers look for.
- To help students extend their social skills and develop self-confidence.

What does Work Experience consist of?

- Preparation of work experience takes place in school, for example by thinking about ideas such as personal qualities, key skills and health and safety in relation to the work place.
- Work experience within Harris consists of two weeks between the **10th May and the 21st May**. In school, following the placement, students will evaluate and review their experience. Work experience will provide the basis for work in subjects like PSHE. The outcome of the work experience placement may be followed up in Careers interviews.

How work experience helps the student?

- To develop the key skills and appropriate attitudes needed to be work ready
- To understand the world of work
- To increase their knowledge of particular jobs or careers
- To identify and improve their skills, talents and work interests
- To raise awareness of the skills and qualities that the student already possesses and being able to transfer it to the workplace.
- To gain confidence in a wider setting outside school/home
- To make connections between school work and the working world

Will it cost anything?

Participation in work experience will probably involve small expenditure for travel fares. The mid-day meal may also need to be paid for or provided from home. Employers will provide any special protective clothing or equipment that may be required. Please note, for students choosing to work

out of county, it is very likely there will be additional costs and these will have to be passed on to parents. Unfortunately all our subsidies from central/local government have ended.

Where does work experience take place?

The variety of placements is limited only by safety or security restrictions. The Academy and Warwickshire County Council do not endorse overseas placements for under 16 students.

Requests for out of County placements should be entered on to Unifrog as soon as possible. Health and Safety checks for these take considerably longer to process and failure to inform us in time may mean that your child will be unable to participate in their choice of placement.

Can students take part in virtual work experience?

Many companies are now offering virtual work experience which we are happy to accept as a placement. Students can work from home or we will provide a space at school.

- Many companies are now hybrid working and unable to offer office based placements.
- It prepares young people for a remote working environment.
- It demonstrates how the working world has evolved.
- It allows companies to showcase the breadth of opportunities within the company.
- It allows students to access companies that are not local.

Find virtual placements on the Harris website. www.harris.covmat.org/virtual-work-experience/

Please note: Virtual Work Experience is not logged on UNIFROG in the same way.

Please contact careers@harriscofeacademy.co.uk with details of the placement.

Will my son/daughter be paid for this work?

A condition of work experience is that no payment be made for such work, as to do so would involve a contract of employment and the payment of National Insurance.

What about health and safety?

When an employer is hosting a young person on a placement, they should check that their Risk Assessment sufficiently takes into account having a young person on site, who might be less familiar with workplaces. This check is completed by the employer on Unifrog.

What about Insurance?

Students on work experience placements are treated as employees of the employer for the purposes of insurance. Because of this, to host work experience, employers must have appropriate **Employer's Liability** Insurance.

Finding a placement

All students are required to investigate and secure their own placements. This may require them to write a covering letter, to telephone, email and/or approach the employers directly. Tutors will support their tutees throughout this process and we encourage parental support when searching for

suitable placements.

Help with finding a work experience placement can be found on our website here

www.harris.covmat.org/work-experience-1/

Further Support

In the event of your son/daughter being unable to find a placement, we will endeavor to assist them to find a suitable placement. Should this be the case, please contact us via

careers@harriscofeacademy.co.uk.

How can parents/carers help?

We would appreciate your assistance with ensuring the deadline is met. Obviously, the earlier placements are arranged, the better the choices will be and also ensures that all safety checks are completed in time for the placement to go ahead.

Deadlines:

Placement information must be entered on to UNIFROG two weeks before the placement is due

to start. Please also ensure the following;

- Know where your child is going on work placement and have a contact number for them.
- Ensure that they can get to/from their placement.
- Provide lunch or lunch money.
- Ensure that your child attends their placement. Try to avoid making dental/medical appointments during this period of work experience. In case of unavoidable absence, telephone the employer and the school as soon as possible.
- Check the work experience diary is being completed on Grofar.
- Ensure your child is appropriately dressed.
- Discuss with your child what they have done during their placement and what they have learnt.

What to do if there is a problem?

Illness/non attendance at work placement should be reported to the school and employer immediately.

Students claim not to like their work placements for a variety of reasons, mainly because it is a break from their ordinary routine.

- They may have to travel alone
- They are working with people they do not know
- They do not like the task they are given to do. Many have very unrealistic expectations of what they will be doing. Working in the hospital may involve giving out meals and administrative tasks; it will not involve dealing with patients. Working in a Solicitors office will involve typing/filing and general administration, not dealing with clients.

None of the above is a good reason for failing to attend work experience. Working life involves

meeting new people and new situations. It also sometimes involves doing jobs that you do not enjoy.

Genuine problems may include:

- Concern over health and safety
- Unreasonable requests or working hours

Should you have any concerns please telephone the school.

Points to keep in mind:

Students may have on-going coursework which they are expected to continue over the time of the placement.

Parents should inform both the school and the employer of any change in their child's medical condition that may affect them at work.

If the employer has concerns about your child they will contact the school. A member of the teaching staff will contact you.

All work experience placements must be arranged through the school. Any private arrangements will not have had the necessary health and safety checks and you could be putting your child at risk and you will be asked to sign a disclaimer letter.

The Placement Cycle

Setting up the placement

The school will be working with your son/daughter to prepare them for the placement but you can help by making sure they know the answers to the questions below. Pupils may be requested to have a preliminary interview/visit with the employer or to contact them by telephone.

Before the placement the student will need to identify:

- Whether they are required to wear special dress/clothing
- The time they should arrive at and leave work (pupils are required to work a normal working day). Whilst they cannot be requested to work at night, it may be that they do not keep to the timings of the school day e.g. they may attend from 10.00am to 5.00pm.
- How to arrange their own transport to/from their placement
- Who will act as their supervisor
- Any relevant health and safety issues

During the placement

Students will be involved in a variety of experiences, these may include:

- Work related tasks
- Administrative/organisational tasks
- Work shadowing
- Visits

- Observation

Students will be expected to be punctual, reliable and co-operative. They are expected to undertake any reasonable request given by the employer.

Work experience can be challenging! You can help by:

- Asking if the placement is going smoothly
- Reading and signing the work experience diary each week
- Encouraging a mature response to any difficulties
- Letting the contact teacher know if there is a real problem

A member of staff will call the employer or they may visit the student whilst they are on placement.

After the placement

Employers are requested to provide feedback, which could become part of the final progress file. The student is encouraged to obtain a reference. In addition to this, an evaluation and review of work experience will take place in school during PHSE lessons and on Unifrog.