

# **Employers' Guide**

# to Student Work Placements









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This guide has been created for the Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) Program to assist employers with student work placements. SWL officers provide support to businesses and link them with students and schools. For information or assistance contact the Local Learning and Employment Network (LLEN) in your area.

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# Introduction

The transition from school to work has evolved significantly over the past 20 years, ensuring young people are better prepared for employment.

Work placements offer students valuable real-world experience, bridging the gap between education and the workplace. This booklet focuses on SWL (Structured Workplace Learning), which enables students undertaking VET (Vocational Education and Training) as part of their VCE (Victorian Certificate of Education), VCE-VM (Vocational Major) or VPC (Victorian Pathways Certificate) to apply industry-specific skills. It also covers SBATs (School-Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships), which combine paid work with training, and clarifies why work experience is not considered a work placement.

This guide defines key terms, highlights the benefits of work placements for employers and students, outlines responsibilities, and provides practical advice for successful placements.

### **Structured Workplace Learning**

SWL allows students to acquire skills and knowledge in an industry setting as part of their school program. Students undertake SWL to put theory learnt in the classroom into practice in the workplace. SWL may be undertaken by students as part of their VET program.

During the SWL placement the student will be given specific tasks to undertake to demonstrate competence within their area of study.

A student may complete an SWL placement in a one-week block or may attend the workplace for one or two days per week for an agreed number of weeks. Work placements are flexible and are guided by what is suitable for the host employer.



Structured Workplace Learning = Doing

For more information about the Department of Education's policies and guidelines for SWL, please visit https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/structured-workplace-learning/policy

# School-based Apprenticeships and Traineeships

SBATs are the same as normal apprenticeships and traineeships except that they are completed part-time while the student continues their schooling, rather than being done full time. Government incentives, available to employers for taking on a full-time apprentice or trainee, are also available for employers who provide an SBAT.

# Work experience

Work experience is not considered a work placement.

Work experience is often undertaken by students in the year prior to seeking a SWL placement or SBAT. It allows students to observe a workplace and learn about the jobs available in a particular type of business or industry, helping them to understand career options and decide if a path may suit them. It gives employers the chance to showcase their industry and make a positive connection with young people.

As the program is 'watch and learn', students are not permitted to undertake activities that require training or experience.

Work experience provides an opportunity for students to observe a workplace to gain an insight into a particular job or industry.



Work Experience = Observing

#### Victorian Certificate of Education

The Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) is awarded to students who successfully complete their secondary education through the VCE program. Students who complete the VCE can receive an Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR), which will allow them to apply for entrance to university.

### **VCE-Vocational Major**

The Victorian Certificate of Education–Vocational Major (VCE-VM) provides a hands-on option that is equivalent to the VCE. Students completing VCE-VM gain practical work-related experience and, at the same time, study subjects such as literacy and numeracy to prepare them for the world of work.

The main difference between VCE and VCE-VM is that VCE is designed to prepare students for university, while VCE-VM prepares students for a trade, further study at TAFE, or full-time work after finishing school.

### **Victorian Pathways Certificate**

The Victorian Pathways Certificate (VPC) is a flexible, hands-on learning program designed for students who need additional support to transition into employment, apprenticeships, or further training. It focuses on developing core skills like communication, teamwork, and problem-solving while incorporating workplace experiences to build job readiness.

### **Vocational Education and Training**

Vocational Education and Training Delivered to Secondary Students (VET or VDSS) allows students to study nationally accredited qualifications at a Certificate II or III level while at school. Examples of common VET programs include building and construction, agriculture, hairdressing, community services, and plumbing.

VET programs involve hands-on training and can be completed as part of either VCE or VCE-VM. Students complete a minimum of 180 hours during a year and need to organise work placements that align with their study units. Some VET programs have mandatory SWL requirements. Even if work placement is not a mandatory requirement of their course, it strongly recommended that all students complete a related work placement.



# Benefits of work placements

### Benefits for employers

Offering a work placement to a student can provide a range of benefits to employers. These include:

- Lowering recruitment costs by 'trying before you buy' and employing a promising work placement student
- The prospect of recruiting new employees who are pre-skilled and immediately productive
- Addressing industry skills shortages
- Developing in young people a realistic understanding of employer expectations, needs and entry level requirements
- Seeing students develop and improve their skills
- Promoting career options in your industry
- An opportunity to evaluate the work ethic in your workplace
- Providing meaningful input into a young person's preparation for life after school
- Allowing you to receive feedback on your business from a young person's perspective
- The satisfaction of sharing your knowledge and skills while contributing to student learning and making their education more relevant
- The opportunity for you to teach students to 'think outside the square'
- Providing an opportunity to be involved in a direct industry–school program
- Assistance with planning for staff succession
- Reducing your workload
- · Increased opportunities to become familiar with school courses and student performance standards
- · Enhancing staff morale and employees' leadership and training skills while working with students
- Opportunities for staff development
- An opportunity to enhance the business's image in the community
- An opportunity for your business to give something back to the community.

#### Benefits to students

Work placements enable students to:

- Try out career choices before leaving school
- Develop contacts with potential employers
- Be exposed to the 'real' world of work
- Develop work-related 'soft' skills, such as communication and interpersonal skills, ability to work in a team, an understanding of employer expectations etc.
- Gain an appreciation of the relationship between knowledge acquired at school and the skills required in the workplace
- Develop a conscientious approach towards work through on-the-job experience
- Demonstrate the mastery of specific skills and competencies related to the certificate they are undertaking
- Develop greater confidence and selfesteem
- Undertake relevant courses that count towards their senior school certificate and give credit towards further education and training.



# Supporting diversity in the workplace

Employers play a vital role in fostering an inclusive and diverse workforce by providing opportunities to students from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. This includes students from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, students with disabilities, and students pursuing careers in non-traditional trades. Embracing diversity can enhance workplace culture, increase understanding, and bring fresh perspectives to industry settings.

### Benefits of hosting diverse students

Students from underrepresented backgrounds can bring a range of strengths to the workplace, including:

- A strong desire to learn and work.
- Unique problem-solving skills and adaptability.
- Different cultural perspectives that can enhance workplace inclusivity.
- Reliability, resilience, and motivation to succeed in their chosen field.

### Creating an inclusive workplace

To ensure all students feel welcome and supported, employers can consider the following inclusive practices:

**Clear communication:** Avoid jargon, idioms, or complex instructions. Encourage students to repeat instructions in their own words to confirm understanding.

Visual support: Where appropriate, use images or diagrams to reinforce spoken instructions.

**Cultural awareness:** Be mindful of religious or cultural practices, such as attire, dietary needs, and customs around eye contact or direct communication.

**Gender inclusivity in trades:** Encourage and support students pursuing careers in non-traditional fields, such as women in construction or men in early childhood education. Ensure they feel respected and valued in the workplace.

**Disability inclusion:** Discuss with the student and their school or training provider to understand any necessary adjustments or supports. Focus on strengths and abilities rather than limitations.

**Respect for individual needs:** Some students may require alternative supervision arrangements or specific workplace accommodations. Open discussions can help create a positive experience for both students and employers.

By embracing workplace diversity, businesses not only contribute to social inclusion but also enhance their own workplace culture and potential talent pool for the future.



# **Prohibited or restricted**

#### Industries and businesses

Students must not be placed in industries or businesses that pose an unacceptable risk to their safety, health, development or wellbeing. Structured workplace learning in the following industries or businesses is prohibited or restricted on this basis (this is not an exhaustive list).

Industry	Restrictions
Abattoirs	Students may undertake structured workplace learning in
Fishing vessels	these industries only if they are completing a relevant VET qualification and the SWL will allow them to obtain or further
Funeral homes	develop the skills and knowledge outlined in a relevant unit of competency within the qualification. Employers must provide
Transmission and distribution industries (linework and/or cabling)	students with an appropriate health and safety induction and any activities must be carried out under direct supervision.
Equine industry	Where students are not completing a relevant VET qualification, they may only undertake SWL in the equine industry in line with the department's guidelines for work experience with animals and they are not permitted to undertake riding activities.
Mining, quarrying, extraction	
Recycling plants	Students may only undertake office duties above ground in
Foundries	these industries.
Tips	
Trading vessels	Where students are not completing a relevant VET qualification, they may only assist on trading vessels used for passenger ferry services or charter activities and operating on inland or enclosed waters.
Any business where firearms and/or ammunition are manufactured, repaired or sold	
Gaming	
Morgues	
Prisons, correctional or remand centres or immigration detention centres	Students may not undertake work placements in these industries.
Recreational vessels	
Security industry	
Sex industry	
Tattoo shops	

#### **Activities**

Students are prohibited or restricted from engaging in the following activities (this is not an exhaustive list):

- door-to-door selling (selling any goods or services at a private or commercial residence (including making a contact sales agreement within the meaning of the Fair Trading Act 1999)
- handling or using explosives
- holding or transporting more than \$100 in cash and negotiable items, such as cash, cards stamps or cheques, excluding the student's personal items

 holding keys, codes, or ciphers except those required to operate standard office machines and other permitted equipment

Students may undertake the following activities only if they are completing a relevant VET qualification and the SWL will allow them to obtain the skills and knowledge outlined in a relevant unit of competency within the qualification. Employers must provide students with an appropriate health and safety induction and any activities must be carried out under direct supervision.

- administering medical treatments
- bathing patients
- discussing the condition of patients
- dispensing and administering medication

### Dangerous plant and hazardous equipment

Students must not use plant or equipment that pose an unacceptable risk to their health or safety, or that require extensive training or experience to use safely.

Students are permitted to use the listed plant or equipment only if they are explicitly required in the performance criteria or assessment requirements of a unit of competency the student is undertaking as part of a VET qualification. Employers must provide students with the relevant health and safety induction and any activities must be carried out under direct supervision.

- Abrasive blasting equipment
- · Brush cutters with attached metal blades
- Buzzers
- Chainsaws
- Compressed air power tools
- Elevating work platforms
- Explosive power tools
- Firearms
- Gas-fuelled cutting equipment
- Guillotines (manual and electric-operated)
- Jackhammers
- Lathes
- Nail guns
- Petrol sales consoles
- Plastic moulding machines
- Power presses (unless the press has laser guarding or a remote control, and training and close supervision are provided)
- Power saws, including docking saws, circular saws and buzz-saws
- Power wood shapers

Note: This is not an exhaustive list.

- Powered cutting or grinding tools (excluding those used for key cutting and engraving on items such as trophies)
- Powered lifting equipment
- Powered mobile plant or vehicles (students must never be permitted to drive any vehicle or mobile plant while on work experience, including tractors, forklifts, all-terrain vehicles, ride-on mowers, bulldozers, excavators and skidders)
- Rubbish compactors
- Scaffolding
- Sharp objects and cutting equipment (not including scissors and secateurs sold for general use)
- Spindle moulders
- Thicknessers
- Ultraviolet (UV) equipment
- Welding, brazing and open flame soldering equipment



# Workplace responsibilities

### **Employer responsibilities**

Employer obligations fall into three broad categories:

#### Supervision

Host employers nominate a supervisor to help the student undertake their designated tasks and master agreed skills. The supervisor should work with the student to record the tasks and skills undertaken during their placement in the student's logbook. These records may later be used as a basis for reporting on the student's progress.

#### Workplace compliance

When hosting a student, employers must meet occupational health and safety requirements, comply with antidiscrimination legislation, and follow lawful workplace practices as they would for all their employees.

An appropriate workplace induction should be completed when the student first starts their placement and should focus on aspects of occupational health and safety specific to your workplace and the tasks the student will be undertaking. A generic workplace induction form is at the back of this guide.

Child safety: host employers, and their staff, are not required to hold Working with Children Checks if the student is over 15 years of age. Anyone assigned to supervise the student should be chosen carefully.

#### **Insurance**

#### Public liability insurance

When a structured workplace learning arrangement is entered into by a principal of a government school, it is the obligation of the Department to hold or take out public liability insurance to provide at least \$10 million cover per event. The parties insured are the student and the employer.

When an arrangement is entered into by a principal of a non-government school, it is the obligation of that school to hold or take out public liability insurance to provide at least \$10 million cover per event. The parties insured are the student and the school.

When an arrangement is entered into by a principal of a non-government school not covered by public liability insurance as set out above, the employer must be informed of this by the principal of that school at least four weeks prior to the commencement of that arrangement. In this event, the employer will be obliged to hold or take out public liability insurance to provide at least \$10 million cover per event for any loss or damage which may be caused by any act or omission of the student while engaged under the arrangement. The parties to be insured are the student and the employer.

The principal must specify in the area provided on the Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form the type of coverage for the student.

#### Never host a student without a fully complete Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form.

#### WorkSafe insurance

Students who suffer work related injuries or illnesses while undertaking structured workplace learning placements are entitled to compensation under the WorkSafe scheme. All structured workplace learning students are covered under the Department's WorkSafe Insurance policy.

Employers of structured workplace learning students are exempt from the normal employer obligations to provide suitable employment or plan for the return to work of structured workplace learning students who may be injured while undertaking a structured workplace learning placement.

Also, employers of structured workplace learning students are not liable for any claims costs or consequent premium costs that may be incurred as a result of a structured workplace learning student lodging a WorkSafe claim. Claims from structured workplace learning students are lodged against the Department's WorkSafe Insurance policy and the costs are met under the Department's policy.

Gallagher Bassett is the Department's workers' compensation agent.

WorkSafe insurance does not cover people travelling to and from work.

Insurance information from: https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/structured-workplacelearning/guidance/worksafe-and-public-liability-insurance

### Student responsibilities

While the students are attending a work placement they are expected to:

- Dress appropriately
- Maintain interest and participate in work duties
- Be well mannered and behave in a respectful and responsible manner
- Be punctual
- Follow management instructions
- Act in accordance with occupational health and safety requirements
- Work within the team
- Listen and take advice from fellow workers
- Participate in business activities as required
- Respect other people's belongings
- Keep a note pad and pen handy to take notes for their own reference
- Demonstrate the skills they have developed through their course
- Complete their work placement logbook every day.

By reinforcing these expectations, you help to shape good work habits and work readiness for their future.

A student undertaking work placement with your business should meet the behavioural standards you expect of all your employees. If you allow a student on work placement to get away with behaviour you would not accept from your employees, they will believe that their behaviour is acceptable in the workplace, which may cause them problems in the future.

# Offering SWL placements

In the past, students seeking a SWL placement have approached employers directly. In 2016, the Victorian government launched a state-wide online portal where employers can list the opportunities in their workplace for students seeking a work placement.

The online portal can be used by employers to list SWL placements, SBATs, and work experience opportunities.

Students seeking a work placement in a particular industry can access the information on the portal to find a suitable work placement.

Employers wishing to offer a work placement should contact their LLEN. LLEN SWL officers are employed across Victoria to support businesses to list work placements on the online portal. Find the contact details for the LLEN in your area at https://www.vicllens.org.au/find-your-llen/

Go to http://www.workplacements.education.vic.gov.au/ to view the SWL portal.





# **Employers' FAQs**

	Q: How much do I have to pay the student?
Cost	A: The minimum payment for students completing SWL is just \$5 per day. More information, including exceptions for Commonwealth government and not-for-profit organisations, please visit  https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/structured-workplace-learning/guidance/payment-and-taxation
	Q: Can I pay a student more than \$5 per day?
	A: Yes. If you would like to pay more and you think that the student has earned it, you can, but you are not obligated to pay more than \$5 per day.
	Q: Do I need to withhold tax, report payment details to the ATO or supply a payslip
ATO	A: No. If the student is under the age of 18 and paid less than \$112 per week, the employer is NOT required to withhold tax, collect a TFN declaration, issue a payment summary or payslip, or report payment details to the ATO.
	Q: Who covers the student for WorkSafe insurance?
Insurance	A: All SWL students are covered under the Education Department's WorkSafe Insurance policy.
	O: Do I (or my staff) need to have a Working with Children Card or National Police Certificate?
Working with Children	A: A Working with Children Check or National Police Certificate maybe required if the student is under 15 years old. Note: SWL students must be 15 years or older. All host employers are expected to have a Child Safe policy in place. You will be required to assign a supervisor for your student (if not supervising them yoursel Please choose the supervisor carefully and ensure that the person chosen is suitable to be supervising a young person.
	Q: Will the student attend work placement during the school holidays?
School holidays	A: Students are allowed to attend work placement during the school holidays (except the December/January school holiday period) with the principal's approval. Whether the student will attend work placement during the school holidays or not is something that must be agreed to by the student, the school, and the host employer. Some students may be unable to attend work placemen during the school holidays due to family commitments or travel plans.
	Q: What sorts of tasks or activities can the student do in the workplace?
Activities	A: Lists of suggested activities for SWL are included in this guide. A discussion with the student about their VET courses, if relevant, may also reveal relevant activities.

# **Employers' FAQs**

	Q: What hours do students normally work on a work placement?
Work hours	A: Students should be expected to work whatever the normal shift is for a full-time employee in your industry. Some students may need to negotiate the hours that they will spend on work placement to fit around transport availability. This should be discussed with you and agreed on before the placement starts. Industries that operate outside of normal business hours may encounter some restrictions on what hours the students are able to attend work placement. If this is the case, please contact the teacher responsible for coordinating work placements at the student's school, or your LLEN's SWL Officer.
Late or absent	O: What do I do if my student arrives late or does not show up?  A: Students are expected to arrive on time and notify their host employer if they are unable to attend work placement. Please notify the student's school if, for any reason, the student does not attend on a designated work placement day. If the student is repeatedly late, you may need to discuss the problem with them. Tips on giving feedback to students and how to deal with problem behaviours are provided later in this guide.
Employer support	<ul> <li>Q: What support is available to me while I am hosting a student on work placement?</li> <li>A: Before the student commences their placement, you should be given the name and contact details of the teacher at the student's school who is responsible for coordinating work placements. If you have any questions or problems while hosting a student, please contact the student's school using the details provided. If the school is unable to help you, please contact your LLEN's SWL Officer.</li> </ul>
Behaviour	<ul> <li>Q: What if there is an issue with the student's behaviour in the workplace?</li> <li>A: All issues with student behaviour should be addressed as soon as possible. If you have followed the tips provided in this guide regarding giving feedback to students but behaviour problems continue, please notify the student's school. If there is a serious issue with the student's behaviour, please contact the school immediately.</li> </ul>
Injury	<ul> <li>Q: What do I do if the student is injured in the workplace?</li> <li>A: You have a legal obligation to provide a safe and healthy working environment for your employees and contractors. Students undertaking SWL are no different. You must take all steps to safeguard them during their time with you. You must assess your workplace to determine which activities can be safely managed. Please review the list of restricted activities included in this guide. You must take care to not place students at risk and you must always provide supervision.</li> <li>Accidents can happen. In the event of an accident, please make sure the student receives either first aid or medical attention. The school's Work Placement Coordinator must be contacted immediately. You should also have medical and emergency contact information for the student. Incidents including near misses (even if no-one was injured) and accidents, even including minor cuts and scrapes requiring only a sticking plaster, must be reported and recorded.</li> </ul>
More info	For more information, contact the school and ask to speak to the teacher responsible for coordinating student work placements. If they are unable to answer your questions or are unavailable, contact your LLEN's SWL Officer.

# Preparing a quality work placement

A work placement should be as beneficial for the host employer as it is for the student.

A little bit of preparation by both the student and the host employer will go a long way towards achieving a quality work placement. By being prepared in advance, your business will demonstrate professionalism and enable the student to feel part of the team with real work expectations.

In the next section, there are some suggestions to help your organisation prepare to host a student. There is also a pre-placement checklist provided at the end of this guide.

### Meet the student

Before you confirm a work placement, it is a good idea to meet with the student. That way you can establish whether the student and the workplace will be suited to each other. It is a good time to ascertain what the student is studying and what they expect to gain from the work placement. You might like to treat your first meeting with the student as a mock job interview. It will be good practice for the student and will help you determine whether you feel you will be able to offer to host them for a work placement.

If the work placement is to go ahead, this is a good time to confirm practical details such as work hours, lunch breaks, clothing requirements, rate of pay, and payment method. Travel arrangements to and from work are the student's responsibility, but you may wish to ensure the student has this organised.

A short list of discussion ideas is provided on the next page.

#### Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form

IMPORTANT: The student must give you a Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form (https://content.sdp.education.vic.gov.au/media/swl-arrangement-form-2504) to be completed and signed prior to the work placement commencing. This form is also signed by the student, their parent or guardian, and the school principal. Once completed and signed by all parties, the student is insured by WorkSafe for personal injury.

# Do not allow a student to commence a work placement with your business until this form is completed.



### Pre-placement conversation points

You may like to ask some of the following questions:

- Which school do they attend?
- What are they studying?
- What do they hope to do when they finish school?
- Why do they want to complete a placement with your business or organisation?
- What do they hope to learn from a placement with your business or organisation?

A Workplace Student Contact Details form is provided with this guide, which you might like to photocopy and complete when you meet with the student so that you have the information you require on file.

#### Don't forget to:

- Confirm the placement dates
- Confirm start and finish times
- Confirm breaks and lunch times and arrangements
- Obtain contact details for the student's supervising teacher or trainer
- Discuss key skills and competencies the student is expected to achieve (has the school provided a list?)
- Details of the course the student is studying
- Explain the standard of dress required in the workplace
- Complete the Structured Work Placement Arrangement Form

### Get your staff onboard

There are several ways to get your staff involved in the work placement:

- Involve them right from the start of the program. Inform staff members of the student's start date. They should be encouraged to make the student feel welcome and part of the team
- Explain to your staff that SWL is designed to allow students to put theory learned in their VCE-VM or VET
  program into practice in the workplace. Students completing SWL are undertaking industry-based training
  and, with supervision, may have the ability to assist staff with some of their basic tasks Promote the value of
  developing staff leadership skills and the opportunity to use these skills when supervising a student.

# Appoint a supervisor

When you are appointing an employee to supervise a student, you may wish to consider if the person:

- Is willing to support a student during the work placement
- Has the required leadership qualities
- Can minimise workplace jargon and not assume too much base level knowledge

#### You may also consider:

- Can you rotate the student between several of your staff to vary the duties and experiences?
- Do you have a younger staff member who demonstrates the above capabilities?



### Develop a task list

You need to decide where the student will be placed within your team. Students do not have to spend their entire placement with the same team or individual. You may choose to allocate time to different teams or functions in your business.

Start thinking about tasks that will be suitable for the student to undertake. Get your staff to contribute to this also. Start putting aside some suitable tasks. You may like to develop a task list for each day. A task list gives structure to a student's day and will help the student complete the daily record section of their logbook. The supervisor should be appropriately briefed.

Preparing a list of jobs that a student on work placement can undertake will help to ensure that the placement goes smoothly. If you are unsure about tasks or activities that students can or cannot do in the workplace, please contact your LLEN SWL Officer.

Starting the student out with a few basic tasks will allow you to determine the student's ability to understand and follow instructions and comply with workplace procedures and safety guidelines. Once you are confident in the student's abilities you will be able to set more challenging tasks.

It is important that you discuss this process with the student. It might be a good idea to look at the task list with the student and explain that once they have proven their ability to manage simple (often boring and repetitive) tasks, they will be able to move onto something more exciting and challenging.

# Tips for instructing students

- Review the prohibited or restricted activities list earlier in this guide to ensure that an activity is permitted.
- Create a list of simple tasks and odd jobs that may be suitable.
- Write down step-by-step instructions (these could be used again for future students).
- Talk to the student to find out their current level of knowledge and skills.
- Ensure you give the student clear instructions and that they understand how do the requested activity.
- Consider using images or diagrams to support your verbal instructions, particularly for students whose first language is not English, those with hearing impairment, or who struggle with verbal instruction.
- Give the student something simple to do and observe how they deal with this and then decide if they can go
  on to more difficult tasks.
- Look at ways students can be rotated through a variety of teams, functions, activities, and experiences.

Students on an SWL placement can use some machinery and powered equipment but only after they have been properly trained and only under direct supervision.



### Workplace preparation

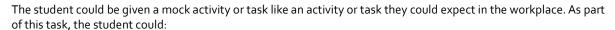
To prepare your workplace:

- Advise staff of the student work placement
- Appoint a supervisor
- Prepare a list of suitable tasks
- Set aside any suitable tasks that can be completed by the student
- Review OHS policies and procedures in the workplace
- Organise a desk or workspace (if appropriate)
- Organise any protective clothing or equipment that may be required by the student
- Prepare a workplace induction to be completed when the student arrives on their first day.

#### Generic task list

The tasks on this list are not industry specific, and some may not be applicable to your industry. The suggested tasks are for SWL only.

- Carry out industry research: career pathways, size of business, competitors, customer profiles, suppliers and the supply chain, outputs, SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats)
- Investigate and complete sample workplace forms: time sheets, leave applications, Tax Declaration, confidentiality agreements, Working with Children Check, Criminal Record Check, incident report, room or vehicle booking sheets, organisational diary, appointment calendar
- Observe and document OHS procedures: speak to the safety officer or OHS representative, research industry specific workplace hazards, research MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheets), observe signage and safety areas
- Interview staff in different departments about their job roles and career paths
- Tidy staff areas, clean display areas and windows, sweep floors, make coffee
- Prepare office signs and basic word processing documents
- Assist with office tasks such as filing and shredding
- Answer phones (once taught correct procedure)
- Review promotional material.



- Determine needs or audience
- Research an activity
- Obtain quotes or estimates for any materials required and prepare a budget
- Develop a plan for the activity: who would be involved, where it would take place, what equipment would be needed, how long would it take?
- Prepare publicity materials, invitations, media releases etc.
- Send invitations and assist in the delivery of the activity (if appropriate)

The student could be tasked with research for purchasing new equipment, materials or services required for the business. As part of this task, the student may be asked to determine the business needs (such as price, use case, quantity), research options, prepare a budget, obtain quotes, complete the order (under supervision). The student could be tasked with researching, comparing, and sourcing:

- Consumables such as bulk feed or fertiliser, brake pads or engine oil, branded packaging or tags, office supplies
- Project supplies such as fencing materials (e.g. star pickets, wire, and posts), timber, concrete or roofing materials, new brand of product to stock
- Equipment such as power tools or workshop machinery (hydraulic jack, air compressor, diagnostic scan tool)
- Safety equipment, such as hard hats, gloves, high-visibility clothing, security camera or alarm systems

These are suggested activities only. Not all activities will be suitable for all students or all work sites.



# First day success

### Meet and greet

On the first day, some students may be a bit shy and a little nervous. This is to be expected as it may be the first time the student has been in a business environment. Some students have had more experience than others as they may be older or have part-time jobs that have broadened their understanding of what is expected when working for a business.

When the student first arrives, you need to get them settled quickly. The supervisor can do this by following a simple process of:

- Going through an induction and orientation
- Introducing them to other staff members
- Showing them around the work area and letting them know where they are going to be located (paying special attention to safety)
- Letting them know your expectations of them
- · Showing them where to find staff facilities.

The student's logbook contains useful information and checklists for both the student and the supervisor. The logbook also contains activities that can be completed by the student during their work placement and sections to be signed by the supervisor. Take a few minutes to look through the logbook with the student.

#### Induction and orientation

If you spend the first hour getting to know your student and doing a thorough induction, they should be far more settled and productive. It is good practice to explain to the student that they will be treated just like a new employee. Starting with a good induction is very motivating for the student. The induction will preview more challenging tasks to do later in the placement. This can dramatically raise enthusiasm and the success of the work placement.

Every workplace is unique and safety rules, equipment and work practices vary. Some supervisors skip over small details that may be important to a new entrant in the workplace, so please explain the details of fire extinguishers, first aid kits, emergency exits etc.

You must be thorough with your safety induction and workplace tour. Do not assume that the student has the same safety awareness as your regular staff.

Ensure your staff are aware that initiations, practical jokes, and horseplay that were once commonplace are now considered serious safety concerns and are illegal.



### First day ideas

Once you have completed the induction and orientation process and you have explained to the student that they are here to work and learn, you will need to decide what you want them to do next.

A few suggestions you could use:

- Buddy them up with one of the other employees for the day so they can observe them performing tasks and learn the correct procedures
- Give them lots of information to read about your business, products, and services. Let the student know that
  you will be asking them guestions later
- Start them on a pre-prepared task list
- If you have your own training manual, you could get the student to read it and learn simple tasks from the different sections
- Check to see if you can provide an opportunity for the student to practice specific skills
- Set up some practice work for the student
- Talk to the student about what they may like to achieve during the work placement
- Get them to work on their logbook or any assignment tasks

Any of these suggestions will get you off to a good start with the student.

### **Ending the first day**

If students have a positive experience on their first day, they will feel settled in the workplace and confident that they will be able to make a positive contribution during their placement.

At the end of the first day, it is important to provide the student with some constructive feedback and encouragement regarding how they performed.

Students are naturally nervous and often unsure of their performance. Your feedback and guidance can have a major impact on motivation and performance.

# Last day success

Before the student finishes their work placement make sure that they have:

- Handed back any finished or unfinished work
- Tidied up their work area
- Returned any uniforms, keys, badges, tools etc.
- Completed the relevant sections of their logbook and had them signed by their supervisor
- Had an opportunity to say goodbye and thank the staff with whom they have been working.

As the host employer you should ensure that you have:

- Finalised any payment owed to the student
- Completed the work placement evaluation form
- Talked to your staff about their experience of having a student in the workplace
- Provided feedback to the school and/or LLEN regarding your experience as a host employer.



# First day example

Dan from D&R Autos has agreed to host Jane for an SWL placement.

Jane is a Year 11 student studying Certificate II in Automotive as part of her senior school certificate.

Prior to the placement, Dan met with Jane to sign the paperwork required by the school. This will provide Jane with WorkCover during her placement. Dan also wanted to find out what Jane's expectations of the placement were, and what skills she wanted to develop during the placement. This helped Dan to develop a task list for Jane. Dan also discussed the expectations of behaviour during the work placement, checked that Jane had completed the OHS requirements, confirmed the hours of work including lunch time, and clarified appropriate clothing to wear. He gave Jane the opportunity to ask any questions.

Prior to Jane starting at D&R Autos, Dan discussed Jane's work placement with his staff, encouraged them to be involved in developing a list of tasks suitable for Jane, and identified who would be her main supervisor during her work placement and what that role entailed.

On the first day of Jane's work placement, Dan took Jane for a tour of the work site, described the work done in each area. He introduced Jane to the staff and to her workplace supervisor. Dan took Jane through a workplace induction, the same process that he would do with any new employee. In particular, Dan discussed the OHS considerations of working in his industry. Dan took Jane through the task list that had been developed by his staff and asked if Jane had any questions. Dan then took Jane to her supervisor, and her work placement began.

Dan was confident that Jane would benefit from her time with D&R Autos because of the preparation put into developing the task list and the engagement with his staff in the process. Dan is keen to see Jane's progress during the placement, as he is looking at taking on a new apprentice at the end of the year, and Jane might be a suitable candidate.



# Student logbook

Students should bring a work placement logbook with them to their work placement every day. The student should record all the activities they observe or undertake each day that they attend their work placement. There is a section for the supervisor to sign to verify activities detailed in the logbook, and an area for the supervisor to provide feedback and comments.

When completed, the logbook provides a summary of all competencies and experiences gained by the student. The logbook can be used by students when they are developing their resumés, writing job application letters, and preparing for job interviews. It may also be used by the student as supporting evidence towards assessment for their VET or VCE-VM program.

It is recommended that you allow the student 15 minutes at the end of each day to complete the daily record section of their logbook. You could then spend five minutes discussing the entry and providing feedback to the student.

Reviewing the student's logbook at the end of each work placement day will give you an opportunity to discuss the student's progress with them, and to bring up any minor issues or concerns you may have, before they become large problems. It is also a good opportunity for the student to ask any questions or raise any concerns that they may have.



#### **Employability Skills – DAY ONE** DAILY RECORD - DAY ONE Date:.... In the space below, list your major duties at your work placement today: Which of the following areas did you demonstrate ability in today? What tasks/activities did you undertake today? **Employability skills** How did you demonstrate this? What tools, machinery, equipment or technology did you use? What new skills did you learn? Communication listening and understanding, speaking clearly and ectly, writing, reading and understanding) (e.g. working as a member of a team, applying team work to a range of situations) Problem solving (e.g. identifying problems, developing solutions, solving problems in teams) What do you think you did well? Self management (e.g. taking responsibility and evaluating and monitoring your own performance) Planning and organising What areas do you think you need to improve on? (e.g. time management, setting priorities, making decisions, setting goals, collecting, analysing and organising information) Are there any questions you would like to ask your employer? Technology Supervisor's Comments: (e.g. being enthusiastic about learning, being willing to learn, being open to new ideas and techniques) Initiative and enterprise (e.g. adapting to new situations, being creative, turning ideas into action, coming up with a range of options) Student's Signature: Supervisor's Signature: Page 22

# **Feedback**

### **Providing feedback**

Feedback helps students make the most of their work placement and should be provided regularly throughout the placement. Feedback provides students with an opportunity to find out how well they have performed and if they are suitable for employment within the industry.

If there is an area of the student's performance that needs to be corrected or improved, please provide constructive feedback with suggestions on how they might be able to achieve this.

It may be difficult to bring issues up with the student, but it is important to make sure the placement is successful for both parties. The Interim Performance Appraisal Form provided at the end of this guide may help you to start a conversation. You need to clearly identify what area of behaviour or performance is unacceptable and how it needs to be changed. It will be helpful to identify a timeframe for changes to occur. Both you and the student can document this on the form provided and revisit it in the agreed timeframe to see the progress on these changes.

At the end of the placement, the teacher will review the feedback to help them understand how the student has performed.

In preparing to give feedback on the student's performance you may like to:

- Talk to other staff members involved with the student
- Ask the student how they feel their performance went during the week
- Review the student's logbook
- Review the jobs list that you have set out for them.

# Tips for giving feedback

- Always start with the positive aspects of their performance
- Talk to the student and find out how they feel about their performance
- Provide helpful advice and suggestions for improvement
- Be encouraging wherever possible
- If the opportunity exists, allow the student to have another try.



# **Dealing with issues**

### The student is taking too long to do the jobs they are given

It always helps if you give the student an expected timeframe to complete each task. If they are unable to complete tasks in the timeframe given, it may be because:

- They are unsure of how to complete the task
- They have been unable to prioritise their tasks and have been working on another task
- They have a motivational problem and do not wish to complete the task given
- The task is beyond the student's capability.

Check the student's understanding of the task by asking them to repeat instructions to you using their own words.

The student may need help initially when prioritising tasks or may need additional assistance until they have mastered the task.

If you believe that the student has a motivational issue, you may wish to use the Interim Performance Appraisal Form (see Forms).

If you have set a task that is beyond the capability of the student, you may need to revise or simplify the task or you may need to provide extra assistance.

### There is a behaviour or performance problem

If there is a problem with the student's behaviour or performance in the workplace that persists after you've discussed it with the student, and after you have used the Interim Performance Appraisal, please contact the student's school or training provider for further discussion.

Problems with the work placement are best addressed as soon as they arise. Often a work placement is the student's first experience in a work environment, and they may not be aware of workplace protocol.

Ensure you are very explicit in your explanation of tasks to be performed. Ask the student to repeat instructions back to you in their own words so that you are sure they have understood your instructions.

If you feel the work placement is no longer mutually beneficial you are entitled to terminate the agreement at any time. Please ensure you inform the school or training provider immediately.

Students are naturally nervous and often unsure of their performance. Your feedback and guidance can have a major impact on motivation and performance.



# Feedback example

Employer Barb Jones hosted Jack Smith for an SWL placement with their business. On the first day, Barb conducted a workplace induction for Jack and, as part of the induction, explained that employees were only allowed to use their mobile phones during breaks. After this, Barb caught Jack using his mobile during work time on several occasions. Barb reminded Jack that he should leave his mobile phone in his bag until break time but caught Jack using his phone again after the reminder.

Barb filled out an interim performance appraisal form and then sat down with Jack to discuss the form. Barb explained that other employees at the business were required to follow the rules and that they expected the same of Jack. Jack stated that his school had a similar policy regarding mobiles but rarely enforced it and he had assumed that the workplace would be the same.

They agreed that Jack would not use his phone during work time. Both Barb and Jack signed the interim appraisal form, and each kept a copy. Barb felt satisfied having addressed the issue with Jack and mobile phone use was no longer a problem during the work placement.



# After the placement

#### References

The student may ask you if you would be willing to be listed as a referee on their resume. You are not obligated to do so. Should you choose to be a referee, it may be useful for you to keep a copy of the work placement evaluation form. You may also wish to make some additional notes to assist you when providing a reference.

### **Employing students**

Is your workplace student too good to lose?

Would you like to offer them employment or an apprenticeship, but they want to stay at school and complete their education?

There is a way you and the student can combine both! A School-based Apprenticeship or Traineeship (SBAT) allows a student to undertake an apprenticeship or traineeship part-time, while continuing their school education.

An SBAT is a structured training arrangement, usually involving on and off-the-job training for a student employed under an apprenticeship or traineeship training contract while undertaking the VCE or VCE-VM.

What does that mean? A student would be employed by your organisation. They would attend the workplace one or two days each week and the rest of the week at school and training. This is a very cost-effective way for you to train a potential future employee. You may also be entitled to employment incentives through the various schemes that may be applicable to your industry.

Head Start is an SBAT program available in every government school that provides additional supports to students and employers to make sure the employment suits all parties.

If you would like to know more about SBATs or other work placement opportunities, please contact the Head Start team via email at head.start@education.vic.gov.au or your LLEN's SWL Officer.



# **Forms**

The following forms may be copied and used as required by employers.

- Workplace Student Contact Details
- General Workplace Induction for Student Work Placement
- Introduction Checklist for New Tasks
- Interim Performance Appraisal
- Work Placement Evaluation Form
- Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form



# **Workplace Student Contact Details**

Work Placement Details

This form is to be completed by the workplace student and kept on file by the employer. This information is confidential and is to be used solely for purposes relating directly to the student's work placement.

Student Name	
Address	
Mobile	
Home Phone	
Email	
Placement Dates	
Commencement	Finishing
School Details	
School _	
Contact Person _	
Phone Number	
Email _	
Fax _	
Student's Emerg	gency Contact Details
Name	
Phone Number	
Relationship to Student	
Alternative Contact Num	ıber
Medical Details Any necessary medical	details (asthma, allergies, medications etc.):
Doctor's Name	
Doctor's Contact Number	er -







# **General Workplace Induction**

# for Student Work Placement

Student's name:	
Manager/Supervisor's name:	
Department/Section:	
Date of induction:	
Introduction (explain)  Nature and structure of organisation Roles of key people in the organisation Work times and meal/rest breaks Phone calls and collecting messages, including mobile phone rules Notification of absences Emergency contact details Work environment (show) Workstation: equipment used for job, hazards involved and control measures Locker and change rooms Wash and toilet facilities Dining facilities Dining facilities Location of first aid facilities, such as the first aid kit and room Location of emergency exits, fire extinguishers and eye wash stations Prohibited or restricted areas Safety signage Security (explain) Building Personal belongings	Specific health & safety information (explain & show) Health and safety policy and procedures, including roles and responsibilities for:  Health and safety consultation and communication procedures, including the function of health and safety representatives and health and safety representative in student's area  Harassment, bullying and workplace violence policies and procedures Safe work procedures Safety signage Hazard reporting procedures Incident reporting procedures Injury reporting procedures Location of forms that need to be completed when reporting hazards, incidents, and injuries First aid procedures Other emergency and evacuation procedures Other emergency and evacuation procedures
Signature	Signature
Name	Student: Name
Date	Date







# **Introduction Checklist for New Tasks**

Stud	ent's name
Supe	ervisor's name
Depa	artment or section
Date	of induction
	O specific training for each new task (explain and show)  Make sure you schedule sufficient time for training in the appropriate learning environment  Provide written (or in other suitable form) safe work procedures to student  Provide and show student how to safely wear or use any protective gear, such as gloves, safety
	ootwear and goggles  Explain the job in detail and the reasons for doing it, including clear instructions for EACH TASK  Explain safety features of plant and equipment, how to know if it is faulty, and how this should be reported
	Emphasise specific hazards and methods of control, such as hazardous substances or difficult customers
	Ask the student to repeat the instructions to ensure comprehension Go through the task using safe work procedures at normal speed, emphasising the main points Go through the task at slow speed using safe work procedures and answer questions Have the student perform the task until it is done exactly as required. Correct mistakes immediately Ask questions as you go to check understanding and encourage the student to ask questions Go to next task and repeat process After all tasks go smoothly, have the student perform the entire job. If it is too long or complex, break it
	nto steps to suit the student's capacity. Take time to repeat the process.  Discuss any maintenance requirements and who has responsibility for this (ensure the student does not believe they have to fix any malfunctions, blockages etc.)  Discuss problems and answer questions  Schedule follow-up training
	Ensure that student is supervised at ALL times during the placement
F	View (explain & show) Review work practices and procedures with the student Encourage and answer any questions, including any ideas about safe work practices Ask questions of student to ensure their recollection of information you have provided Correct any unsafe work habits immediately Ensure ongoing, appropriate supervision and instruction If the student is not yet competent, repeat any training required and provide additional training if needed
Emp	loyer signature Date
Stud	ent signature Date







# **Interim Performance Appraisal**

Student name			
Employer name			
Punctuality	☐ Always on time	☐ Seldom late	□ Regularly late
Appearance/dress	□ Very good	□ Good	☐ Needs improvement
Motivation/attitude	☐ Very good	□ Good	☐ Needs improvement
Supervision	☐ Works independently	□ Needs guidance	☐ Needs supervision
Communication with others	□ Very good	□ Good	☐ Needs improvement
Use of machines and technology	☐ Very good	□ Good	☐ Needs improvement
Acting responsibly and maintaining OHS standards (self/others)	☐ Very good	□ Good	☐ Needs improvement
Taking directions and working cooperatively	☐ Very good	□ Good	☐ Needs improvement
Honesty	☐ Very good	□ Good	☐ Needs improvement
Maintaining professional standards - use of personal phone, privacy	☐ Very good	□ Good	☐ Needs improvement
Overall performance	□ Very good	□ Good	☐ Needs improvement
Areas of greatest strength:			
Areas most needing improvement:			
Strategies to improve performance			
Circulation to improve portormando			
Date of further review (if required)			
. ,			
Employer signature		Date	
Obstant simulatura		Б.:	
Student signature		Date	







# **Work Placement Evaluation Form**

Student	Yea	ır Lev	/el			
School	Dat	е				
Employer	-					
Please rate the student on the following by ticking the appropriate box: 1=Unacceptable; 2=Needs Improvement; 3=Good; 4=Very good; 5=Excelle	- ent: N	/A=N	ot An	plica	ble	
General Evaluation	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Punctuality – arrives at work and back from breaks on time						
Pleasant and courteous						
Compatible with co-workers						
Neat, clean, and appropriately dressed						
Attitude to, and interest in, work						
Ability to follow instructions						
Quality of work						
Works at reasonable speed						
Care and safety, follows OH&S procedures						
Care and use of equipment and machinery						
Completes assigned work						
Seeks out extra tasks						
Initiative						
Ability to take feedback, especially negative						
Asks questions						
Areas in which improvements are needed:						
Areas of greatest strength:						
Does the student show aptitude for this type of work? ☐Yes ☐No ☐Any further comments?	Poss	ibly				
Employer Signature						







# **Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form**



LLEN		
Office phone		
Office email		
SWL Officer		
Phone		
Email		