

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE,
DIOCESE OF BROKEN BAY

AN EMPLOYER'S GUIDE TO WORKPLACE LEARNING 2009

*Guidelines for employers providing
workplace learning opportunities for
school students*

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE, DIOCESE OF BROKEN BAY

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This guide may be photocopied to support workplace learning programs for Catholic school students.

WHAT IS WORKPLACE LEARNING?

Workplace learning refers to programs that provide students with valuable opportunities to develop vocational skills, knowledge and attitudes in the context of real work environments. Workplace learning extends the school curriculum by enabling students to gain practical experience that may assist them in their transition from school to work and further study.

The two main types of workplace learning programs are work experience and work placement.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Work experience programs give students aged 14 years or over the opportunity to develop a more informed opinion about their possible career options by enabling them to spend some time in a workplace they have chosen.

Work experience allows students to:

- observe a variety of work being done
- undertake supervised work appropriate to the student's skill level
- ask questions about the workplace
- gain skills related to being at work
- find out about training and employment opportunities

WORK PLACEMENT

Work placement is different from work experience as it is an integral part of Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses that can be completed by students for their Higher School Certificate (HSC). These courses lead to nationally recognised VET qualifications and it is important for students to have opportunities to apply their classroom learning in real work contexts. For this reason, work placement is a mandatory component of these courses.

Work placement should be relevant to the vocational course being undertaken by the student. It should have a clear purpose and achievable outcomes in the particular employer's workplace and should complement off-the-job learning programs.

Work placement also provides opportunities for work-based assessment of specific course competencies, which are negotiated between the student's school or training provider and individual employers. Local Community Partnerships assist schools and employers to broker these placements.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF WORKPLACE LEARNING?

Host employers have the opportunity to:

- be involved in the education and training of young people
- meet and train potential employees and contribute to the development of a committed and skilled workforce
- enhance the professional development of staff as they gain experience as workplace supervisors
- meet students from diverse backgrounds who may have skills which can be useful to your organisation
- promote good will in the community through closer links with schools

Students have the opportunity to:

- experience real work situations,
- access industry standard facilities, equipment and experienced staff
- develop self-confidence, skills and understandings that will assist them in their transition to meaningful work
- evaluate their abilities and interests in relation to career choices

ABOUT WORKPLACE LEARNING.....

1. Are students paid?

Students are volunteers and should not be paid. Any payment to students may invalidate insurance and indemnity arrangements.

2. Who do I contact if there is a problem?

If you have any concerns or difficulties during the placement regarding the student or other matters, please contact the nominated school coordinator as soon as possible so that solutions can be found quickly. Contact details are provided in the student's workplace learning record.

3. What do I do if an accident occurs involving the student?

If a student is injured during a workplace learning program, including travel to and from the place of work, the following steps should be taken:

- seek medical help immediately
- contact the school as soon as possible and, depending on the seriousness of the injury, contact parents or carers.
- ask the doctor attending for a medical certificate
- use the student's Medicare number. As students are not employees, Workers' Compensation does not apply

- complete a written report of the accident and forward it to the school. Include a full statement from the student and employer or employees involved.

A copy of the Catholic Schools Insurance Covers for workplace learning is attached for your information. All claims for injury, loss of property or damage to property should in the first instance be referred to the student's school.

4. When can workplace learning occur?

All students aged 14 years and over are eligible to participate. However, students under the age of 15 cannot participate in workplace learning outside the hours of 7.00 am and 6.00 pm.

Placements usually occur during school term time. However, Principals may approve placements during school holidays on the condition that the same level of duty of care and supervision is provided.

5. Are there any industrial concerns?

- The hours worked by the student during the placement should be in accordance with the award for your industry.
- Students should not replace paid employees (including employees who are on paid leave).
- Students should not be used to replace employees engaged in industrial disputes. In the event of industrial action, students must return to school.

WHAT ARE MY RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING STUDENT SUPERVISION?

Employers are expected to act in accordance with workplace responsibilities as set out for all employees and members of the public. This includes responsibilities that flow from legislation such as Occupational Health & Safety, Child Protection, Privacy, Equal Employment Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Legislation.

Occupational Health & Safety

In accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000 No 40 and Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001, all employers are required to have:

- an Occupational Health & Safety policy,
- documented safe work practices and
- a risk management system to identify hazards.

It is expected that employers would have these requirements in place prior to accepting a student for workplace learning, and would make any relevant documentation available if requested. It is also expected that all employers will give students a site-specific Occupational

Health & Safety briefing at the commencement of, or prior to, the workplace learning program.

Where the workplace is a construction site, employers should apply the legislative requirements for OHS training that were introduced in April 1999. Employers should be satisfied that the student holds the required WorkCover card for general OHS induction for Construction training, and ensure that work activity and site specific training is conducted on the site.

Child Protection

Employers should ensure that all employees are aware of the special responsibilities associated with working with young people and of the consequences of any abuse. Child Protection legislation also applies to students undertaking workplace learning programs. Employers should take all possible steps to ensure that students do not:

- undertake an unsupervised task that involves contact with children under the age of 18 years (applicable to Child –related employers only)
- undertake a task that involves unsupervised contact with just one employee or client. Supervision can be provided by visual contact or the physical presence of another employee at all times.

Unacceptable conduct by an employer or their employees includes sexual intercourse with a student; inappropriate sexual conversations of a sexual nature; obscene language of a sexual nature; suggestive remarks; actions including showing of publications, electronic media or illustrations which are sexually suggestive; jokes of a sexual nature; obscene gestures; unwarranted and/or inappropriate touching; sexual exhibitionism; personal correspondence with a student in respect of the employer's or employee's sexual feelings for the student; and deliberate exposure of students to sexual behaviour of others.

Additionally students must not be treated in a manner that may be psychologically harmful or that would constitute physical assault. This would include pushing, grabbing, pulling or hitting a student as well as berating, humiliating or belittling the student.

It is expected that these requirements would be consistent with the employer's existing workplace policies and practices.

Employers must be aware that complaints of harassment or abuse of a student in the workplace will require investigation and possible notification according to *Part 3a NSW Ombudsman's Act 1974* and *Section 39 Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998*.

Privacy

The Commonwealth Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000 regulates the collection and storage of personal and sensitive information that may be held by organisations. In order to meet duty of care responsibilities and to facilitate the design of suitable workplace learning experiences, employers are provided with relevant information regarding students who are on work placement or work experience. This may include name, address, age, emergency contact details and possibly sensitive health information. In accordance with privacy requirements, it is expected that employers will:

- keep all personal student information secure and confidential, particularly any health information
- ensure that information regarding the student is used only for the purpose of the workplace learning program
- dispose of all student details once the workplace learning program is completed
- provide student access to any student records held by the employer, including the supervisor's report.

This legislation applies to the information collected about students by the school and passed on to employers, regardless of whether or not it directly applies to your organisation. Similarly, all information provided by the host employer to the school will be used only for the purpose of the workplace learning program.

CHECKLIST FOR SUCCESSFUL WORKPLACE LEARNING

Before the placement:

- Ensure that employees, including union representatives, understand the purpose and the benefits of the workplace learning program. For the success of the program it is essential that all staff who will have contact with students, support the organisation's approach to workplace learning and understand the special responsibilities of working with young people.
- Appoint experienced staff to coordinate the program and mentor the student. In consultation with the school coordinator, plan a schedule of activities which will provide students with an understanding of the nature of the industry and a variety of opportunities to learn and practice specific agreed skills.
- Ensure that you have provided the school with clear information about the type of activities you can provide and any special requirements such as first day arrangements or behaviour, clothing and safety regulations, etc.

- Where students with special needs have been identified, including students with learning disabilities, liaise with the nominated school coordinator to ensure that needs are understood and appropriate adjustments are made.

When the student arrives:

- Provide each student with a workplace induction, including safety instruction, emergency procedures, dress requirements, work expectations, location of facilities, working hours, break times, etc.
- Introduce the student to the supervisor and coworkers. Advise who to notify in the event of non-attendance due to illness or misadventure and who to speak to in regard to any problems or questions.

During the placement:

- Regard students as voluntary workers, not visitors. Provide an interesting range and variety of tasks so that students can develop skills related to the agreed outcomes of the program.
- Establish a supportive environment where students are able to ask questions and accept helpful advice.
- Ensure that students work normal working hours and have sufficient time to complete workplace learning journals and assignments.
- Always provide appropriate instruction and supervision – especially in relation to safety issues. Don't assume previous experience.
- Ensure that students are not assigned tasks that are identified as prohibited activities in the attached insurance document.

Before the student leaves:

- Complete the student evaluation report and take time to discuss your feedback with the student.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Thank you for your interest in providing workplace learning opportunities for students. Your contribution to the social and vocational development of young people is valued and appreciated.

If you have further questions, contact the VET Coordinator or Careers Adviser at the school, or the Vocational Learning Officer at the Catholic Schools Office.

The CSO Broken Bay acknowledges the NSW Department of Education and Training (2005) An Employer's Guide to Workplace Learning as an invaluable reference in the development of this employer guide.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WORK EXPERIENCE/PLACEMENT INSURANCE COVERS

Revised 2 February 2009

**This Statement only provides a general overview of available insurance cover; it does not represent legal advice. For precise advice, please consult the relevant CCI or QBE Insurance Policy Documents.
This advice replaces all earlier advice.**

_____ (**name of school**) provides insurance cover for students and employers involved in Work Experience and Work Placement activities.

Two separate policies providing this cover are:

- CCI School Care Personal Accident and Disability or Students' Work Experience Personal Accident Policy with Catholic Church Insurances (CCI) (or equivalent)
- Work Experience/Work Placement Public Liability Policy with QBE Insurance (Australia) Limited (effective 31 January 2009)

1. **CCI School Care [Personal Accident and Disability] Policy or Student Work Experience Personal Accident Policy**
(Each school or Diocese purchases these policies or equivalent. Schools and employers need to confirm the nature of their particular policy.)

These policies cover students for personal injury sustained whilst engaged in Work Experience/Placement activities. Students are covered whilst directly travelling to and from work places.

PLEASE NOTE: *These policies do not cover medical expenses including general practitioners/medical specialist fees or hospital services. Under current Commonwealth Government legislation these items can only be claimed through private Health insurance or Medicare. Similarly, charges over or above the schedule fee cannot be covered by this policy.*

The Policies Cover:

- a) Death by accident;
 - b) Permanent disablement compensation dependent on injury of up to maximum e.g. \$500,000 or \$200,000 depending on SchoolCare policy chosen (*please refer to your policy to confirm extent of your coverage*)
 - c) Non Medicare expenses (e.g. dental, limits apply)
 - d) Damage to student's clothing or artificial aids resulting from an injury (limits apply).
2. **QBE (Australia) Insurance Work Experience/ Work Placement Public Liability Insurance Policy (Policy Number AT-0014866-PLB) (CEC,NSW purchases this policy on behalf of participating Catholic Schools).**

This policy provides indemnity for the student, the employer and participating schools involved in Work Experience/Placement activities. Coverage applies to placements within the territories of the Commonwealth of Australia.

The Policy Covers:

- a) Indemnity for students and employers for Personal Injury caused to a Third Party (limit \$20 million any one occurrence);
- b) Indemnity for employers for Personal Injury to students (limit \$20 million any one occurrence)
- c) Indemnity for Property Damage to an employer's property (limit \$20 million for any one occurrence)
- d) Indemnity for Errors and Omissions **in relation to the participation by students in Certificate II in Sports (Coaching) and Certificate III in Sports Fitness only** (Limit \$1,000,000 any one Occurrence and in the aggregate in respect of claims made). These E & O claims must be reported to QBE through CEC,NSW during the Period of Insurance.

For each claim the QBE Insurance policy has set a deductible cost (i.e. excess) of \$5,000. The policy requires that CEC,NSW, acting for the Catholic sector of schools, will provide for the payment of any deductible cost. The CEC,NSW reserves the right to recover the cost of the excess from a diocese or independent school. For further advice regarding the details of this policy or QBE Insurance (Australia) Limited please contact Catholic Education Commission, NSW. Copies of the Policies and Certificate of Currency are available from the Catholic Education Commission, NSW, Fax (02) 9264 6308 or from your Diocesan VET Adviser.

Some Key Exclusions (i.e. cover does not apply)

- A. Travel by Private and Charter Aircraft other than those providing a regular Public Transport Service (CCI provides cover as a passenger in a fully licensed commercial aircraft operated by a licensed airline over an established air route)
- B. Travel by helicopter
- C. Radioactivity/Nuclear material/Fuel/Ionising Radiations
- D. Scuba/deep sea diving
- E. Attendance at abattoirs (killing areas)
- F. Driving any motor vehicle (including motor bikes) except as part of the BOS HSC Primary Industries Curriculum Framework (and then only under instruction and supervision)
- G. Activities involving guns or firearms except as part of an approved and supervised Australian Defence Force activity
- H. Watercraft exceeding 8 meters in length
- I. Travel outside the 12 nautical mile limit at sea
- J. Results from AIDS or HIV (direct or indirect)
- K. Asbestos and tobacco or tobacco smoke
- L. Activities involving service of alcohol unless the student is aged over 18, and the activity is essential to the placement and it has been agreed to by the school and TAFE NSW Institute and the student has completed the Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) Training Course
- M. Sporting activities/events except as part of the Certificate II in Sports (Coaching) and the Certificate III in Sports Fitness (and then only under instruction and supervision)

- N. 'High risk construction work' as defined in the NSW OHS Regulation (2001): i.e. construction work involving the use of explosives; work near traffic or mobile plant; and work in and around major gas and electrical installations
- O. Any excavation work at a depth of one metre or more; at a depth under one metre without direct supervision by a competent person; near utilities
- P. Work on a roof, unless all safety conditions are met, including the use of harnesses.
- Q. Work on caissons or coffer dams (permanent or temporary structures respectively, used to enable construction and excavation work)
- R. Fines or penalties, and/or liquidated, punitive, aggravated, exemplary and/or multiple damages imposed by law
- S. Occurrences as a result of the insured person being under the influence of intoxicating liquor or any narcotic or drug unless taken in accordance with the direction and prescription of a legally qualified medical practitioner
- T. Total exclusion of claims arising from sexual and/or child molestation
- U. Claims arising from repair, replacement or recall of products
- V. Professional Indemnity for negligent advice given by any student (except for those in Sports Coaching/ Fitness courses for which separate E&I cover has been negotiated)
- W. Any consequence of war, invasion, act of foreign enemy, hostilities (whether war be declared or not), civil war, rebellion, revolution, insurrection or military or usurped power of confiscation, nationalization, requisition, destruction of or damage to property by or under the order of any government or public or local authority.

Activities Requiring Special Approval by CCI and/or QBE (otherwise excluded)

- i. Activities involving the handling of animals, other than retail (pet) shops and/or participation in BOS Stage 6 Primary Industries Course;
- ii. Mining/Quarrying/Tunnelling;
- iii. Demolition;
- iv. Timber getting/Sawmilling.
- v. Abattoirs and meat processing plants (other than killing areas)
- vi. Placements outside the territory of the Commonwealth of Australia. NOTE: These placements are not advised. Any considerations of overseas placements should take into account the federal government website www.smarttraveller.gov.au and must be referred to the broker Marsh via CEC,NSW prior to approval,

Key Conditions of Cover
(If these conditions are not observed available insurance may be rendered void)

When an incident occurs

- (i) Any incident which may result in a claim against the employer or the school in respect of a work experience/placement student is immediately notified (within 7 working days) in writing to the student's school and the school then causes CEC, NSW to be notified either directly or through the school's Diocesan Office. Suspected spinal injuries must be notified to CEC,NSW within 24 hours.

- (ii) The Insurer must have full conduct and control of the claim against the employer and or the school. The employer and the school must fully co-operate with the Insurer in the conduct of any such action.
- (iii) When an incident occurs no undertaking or promise of settlement/payment may be made, since compensation decisions are a matter for assessment by the insurance company(ies). NOTE: It may be possible in certain circumstances to make an apology but advice must first be obtained from the insurer through CEC,NSW.

Scope and limits of coverage:

- (iv) Students must be at least 14 years of age and be participating in a school approved activity/placement. Students under 15 years of age must not undertake workplace learning before 7.00am or after 6.00pm.
- (v) Cover is available throughout school holiday periods, provided the work placement is arranged and supervised by the school. Year 12 students cease to be insured by their school once they complete their last HSC examination.
- (vi) Interstate placements are permitted, if arranged and supervised by the school. Placements in the USA or Canada and countries subject to their jurisdiction are not permitted. Placements outside the territory of the Commonwealth of Australia require special approval from the insurer, through CEC,NSW and are not encouraged.
- (vii) Insurance cover may be voided (lost) by serious and wilful misconduct by a student while attending a work site.
- (viii) The employer must have in all cases provided appropriate and reasonable instruction and/or supervision with respect to each Work Experience/Placement student.

Higher risk industries and occupations

- (ix) Student completion of the 'OHS General Induction for Construction Work in NSW' course is a pre-requisite for all workplace learning in the construction industry.
- (x) The employer and school must comply with all Department of Industrial Relations and WorkCover requirements (including reporting requirements) for Work Experience/Placement Programs and observe any prohibited activities or WorkCover regulations (including any age restrictions and safety equipment requirements e.g. helmets and harnesses).
- (xi) Prescribed or dangerous machinery must only be used in accordance with WorkCover requirements, and only then in the context of appropriate training, supervision and risk assessment. Particular care is needed to comply with the OHS requirements for scheduled work as set out in Chapter 9 of the NSW OHS Regulation (2001) available at:
http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_reg/ohasr2001364/s266.html
- (xii) Any electric, oxy-acetylene or similar welding or cutting and allied processes must be done in full compliance with Australian Standard 1674 "Safety in Welding and Allied Processes".
- (xiii) Work experience/placement students undertaking placements in occupations classed as "child related employment" (e.g. placement with pre-schools, schools, personal services for children) are required to provide a prohibited employment declaration under the Commission for Children and Young People Act (1998) as amended. Please note that, under the Act, employers are not allowed to ask students who are not paid employees to complete the background check. You are advised to clarify any such student placement requirements with CCER and/or your child protection "Head of Agency".



Broker: Ms. Frances Foote
Marsh Pty Ltd;

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Certificate of Currency

Policy number	AT 0014866 PLB	
Name of Insured	Catholic Education Commission New South Wales and/or Catholic Education Office, Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn	
Type of Insurance	Public and Products Liability	
Cover	QBE will pay in respect of Personal Injury or Property Damage first happening during the Period of Insurance and caused by an Occurrence within the Territorial Limits in connection with Your Business.	
Limit of Liability	Public	\$20,000,000 any one Occurrence
	Products	\$20,000,000 any one Occurrence & in the aggregate for all injury or damage occurring during the period of insurance.
	Errors & Omissions	\$1,000,000 any one Claim and for all claims made and reported to QBE during the Period of Insurance.
Period of Insurance	From: 4.00 pm on 31 January 2009, to 4.00 pm on 31 January 2010	
Special Conditions	N/A	

Sydney this 29th day of January 2009 Signed



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