



Higher Education Work-Based Learning Handbook for Students

2016-2017

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About Work-based Learning

Work-based, or work-related learning comes in many forms. Learning through work may be assessed or unassessed. It can be in the form of a placement, or a full or part time current occupation relevant to your course. The work itself can be paid or voluntary (unpaid).

Examples of work-based/related learning also include:

- Professional development courses provided by an employer
- Live design briefs in the workplace or college

Work-based learning is not just about being in a workplace, it is what you learn from your experiences in the workplace that is important, and in some cases, your work-based learning may count towards your course outcomes. It will also enable you to acquire and develop transferable, academic, subject-specific, personal and interpersonal skills that will enable you to succeed within your career. To make the most of your work-based learning, you will need to be prepared to work with your employer/mentor, your course/module tutor and any other named individuals/parties (if applicable).

Before undertaking work-placed learning, you should have some expectations of the experience. These may include:

- Gaining experience and knowledge of a particular work sector
- Being able to apply knowledge and skills developed in college to the workplace
- Being able to further develop your theoretical knowledge and skills
- Being able to utilise new technologies in the workplace
- Developing the professional skills and competencies required by professional bodies
- Having a stimulating and enjoyable work experience
- Being able to share your experiences with peers and college tutors
- Developing your career plan and preparing for future employment in the sector
- Being able to observe different leadership and management styles
- Developing your confidence in decision-making processes
- Taking the opportunity for reflective learning and self-development

Where possible, you should be in contact with your employer before the start of your work-based learning (if applicable). You should also be aware of who will act as your mentor.

During your placement/experience, you should be enthusiastic, able to conduct yourself in a professional manner, willing to accept responsibility and be prepared to work alone or as part of a team. You should also be prepared to ask questions if you are unsure of anything in order to prevent misunderstandings.

Reflecting on your experience both during your work-based learning and at the end of the experience is extremely valuable. You should be:

- Prepared to self-assess not only your experience but also your performance in writing
- Able to provide constructive written feedback to both the college and your employer
- Prepared to commit the same amount of time and effort to your work-based learning project as you would to a project in college

Arranging work-based learning

You may already be in the setting in which your work-based learning will take place, or you may wish to organise your own setting. ***It is your responsibility to identify and arrange a suitable location for your work-based learning.*** Whilst seeking an appropriate setting do remember that you are not only looking for experience, but also looking for an opportunity to support your future career plans.

Your course/module leader can provide guidance in identifying appropriate workplaces. The number of hours that you are required to undertake in work-based learning may be specified within your module/unit handbook, and ***it is your responsibility to ensure that you spend the necessary number of hours in your workplace.***

Other Roles and Responsibilities during Work-Based Learning

Role of your Course/Module Leader

Your course/module leader is available for support during your work-based learning through either scheduled meetings, or informal meetings. If they are unable to visit your workplace (because of its location, or your working schedule), then they will contact your workplace by phone or Skype.

They will also:

- Respond appropriately and quickly to any issues that may arise
- Liaise with mentors
- Undertake workplace visits (within a 'typical' working week)
- Review your workplace performance and provide feedback as appropriate
- Provide any additional support around the teaching, learning or assessment activities that are part of your work-based learning

Role of your Mentor

Your mentor will usually be a nominated member of staff within your workplace.

Their role is to:

- Provide an experience that is sound
- Liaise with your course/module leader
- Provide appropriate and practical learning experience
- Support good communication with you and your course/module leader
- Provide verbal and/or written feedback as to your progress
- Promote a safe and healthy working environment

Confidentiality/Data Protection

You may have access to sensitive information during your work-based learning, and ***you should maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality at all times***. You may also need to be familiar with other legislation, such as safeguarding legislation.

Your employer may request that you to sign a confidentiality or non-disclosure agreement, depending on the type of workplace.

You must also take principles of confidentiality and other relevant legislation into account when completing projects within the workplace. If you are unsure of the ethical considerations of your project, please discuss it with your course tutor and/or employer at the earliest opportunity.

CRB/DBS checks

Your work-based learning may involve contact with children or other vulnerable client groups so your employer/placement employer may require you to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (formerly CRB - Criminal Record Bureau check). There are three types of check, a standard, an enhanced and an enhanced with list check (for specific roles only). For more information about the check, the process and the documents required, please speak to your course leader. ***It is your responsibility to ensure that this is in place before your work-based learning commences***

Using Email and Internet at Work

It is important that you use email servers and the internet for work purposes only, and you should not download any materials that are not work-related.

Illness, Absence and Lateness

If you are ill or will miss work for any other reason, ***you must inform your mentor or nominated individual as soon as possible***, and contact your course/module leader. You can leave a message for your tutor through the Faculty Office: 01422 347357 (9330).

You should also contact your mentor or nominated individual if you will be late, and advise them if you may need to leave early, such as for a hospital appointment.

Equality

Whilst carrying out work-based learning, ***you have a right to be valued equally and to have equality of opportunity***. You also have a right not to be discriminated against in particular on grounds of race, sex, gender identity, age, disability, religion or beliefs, sexual orientation, or, maternity, marriage or civil partnership status.

You should be treated in accordance with your employer's equality policies and you should comply with any equality training requirements and policies within the workplace. If you have a disability or difficulty that you may require specific support with during your work-based learning, please raise this in confidence with your course tutor.

Dissatisfaction or Complaints during Work Placements

Work-based learning is usually enjoyable, but if you do have any concerns whilst on placement, these can often be resolved by speaking with your mentor and/or course tutor.

Intellectual Property

Depending on the type of work-based learning you are undertaking there may be a small chance of an intellectual property issue arising. For example, if you are working with a design company, your employer may request a written undertaking that you will waive claim to any intellectual property that you have designed during your placement. Your course tutor can advise further on any discussion around intellectual property.

Health and Safety in the Workplace

Even if you are an unpaid placement student, you are an employee under health and safety law, and therefore should be treated no differently to the other employees.

We are all entitled to work in environments where risk to our health and safety is controlled effectively. Employers have the main responsibility and legal duty for this, although as employees, ***you also have a duty to take care of your own health and safety, and the health and safety of those around you who may be affected by your actions.***

You should:

- Follow training you receive using work items given to you from your employer
- Take reasonable care of your own and other people's health and safety
- Co-operate with your employer and colleagues on health and safety
- Be prepared to tell someone if you think the workplace puts the health and safety of anyone at serious risk¹

Safe and Healthy Working

- Where appropriate, a reasonable (comfortable) temperature should be maintained in indoor workplaces during working hours. In an office-type environment, the temperature should normally be at least 16 degrees Celsius and where work that is more physical is undertaken, the temperature should be at least 13 degrees Celsius.
- Enclosed workplaces (offices, workshops, confined spaces, etc.) should have effective ventilation to ensure there are regular air changes to remove any stale air, air that is hot or humid or air that is contaminated with dust or fumes.
- There must be suitable and sufficient lighting to enable employees to carry out their work, use equipment and be able to move about safely and without experiencing eyestrain. Emergency lighting may also be provided in case of loss of power.
- Workrooms should have enough free space to allow people to get to and from their workstations and to move within the room with ease.
- Floors should be of sound construction and strong enough to support loads placed on them. The surface must be in good condition, free from holes or slopes, or be so uneven or slippery that it is dangerous. All floors must be kept free from obstructions and substances that may cause a person to slip or trip.

¹ Adapted from Health and Safety Law pocketcard, published 04/09; Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and <http://www.hse.gov.uk/WORKERS/responsibilities.htm>

- Workplaces and the furniture, furnishings and fittings should be sufficiently clean and tidy.
- Suitable and sufficient sanitary conveniences should be provided in rooms that are adequately ventilated and well lit, and kept in a clean and tidy condition.
- Suitable and sufficient washing facilities must be provided in readily accessible places (this may include showers if required by the nature of the work or for health reasons). Washing facilities should include a supply of clean hot and cold, or warm water, soap or other suitable means of cleaning and towels or other suitable means of drying.
- A wholesome supply of drinking water must be provided in readily accessible places. Non-drinkable water should be clearly marked as such.
- Where it is unhygienic or unsafe to take breaks in work environment then suitable and sufficient rest rooms / eating facilities should be available.
- If an employee has to change out of their normal clothing into special clothing for the purposes of work then suitable and sufficient changing facilities and accommodation for their clothing should be available.²

Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is a legal requirement for all employers, in order to identify how health and safety risks can be controlled. Legally, employers are not expected to eliminate all risk, rather they are required to protect individuals as far as 'reasonably practicable'. A risk assessment only needs to be recorded if there are five or more employees³.

You may need to carry out a risk assessment as part of your work-based learning.

The HSE use [Five steps to risk assessment](#) which are:

Step 1 Identify the hazards

Step 2 Decide who might be harmed and how

Step 3 Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

Step 4 Record your findings and implement them

Step 5 Review your assessment and update if necessary (HSE)

You can obtain a blank risk assessment template from the HSE [here](#) and they provide a number of templates/examples for risk assessment

² Taken from: Calderdale College Quality Assurance Procedure Maintaining a Safe and Healthy Workplace. HSP 5.05; Issue B; Issue date 01/04/14

³ hse.gov.uk

(<http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/casestudies/index.htm>). Designed to take around 20 minutes to complete some can be completed online:

- Classroom risk assessment: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/classroom-checklist.pdf>
- Office risk assessment: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/office.htm>

Fire and Evacuation Procedures

On entering any new premises, **ensure that you know what to do in case of a fire or if evacuation is required** for any other reason.

In the event of a fire:

- Sound the alarm immediately by activating the nearest available break glass point
- If it is safe to do so, extinguish the fire using the firefighting equipment provided (if you have not received training in the safe use of firefighting equipment do not attempt to fight the fire)
- If electrical appliances are involved, switch off the current before dealing with the fire
- Do not take personal risks. If in doubt you should get out, closing doors and if possible windows behind you
- If your escape is cut off, go into a room with a window, close the door behind you, stand by the window, call for help and await rescue

If you hear the fire alarm:

- Leave the building immediately by the nearest safe exit route (this includes 'Emergency Exit Only' routes)
- Report to the nearest/designated Assembly Point. Do not congregate in doorways or use a lift
- Do not re-enter the building for any reason until authorised to do so⁴

First Aid

You should **familiarise yourself with those nominated as appointed persons, or first aider(s) for your workplace**. It may be an appointed person only in a small workplace with minimal health and safety risk. A first aider in larger, and/or higher risk workplaces holds a valid certificate of competence in first aid at work, issued by an organisation whose training and qualifications are approved by the HSE.

First aid notices usually indicate the name and location of appointed persons/first aiders and the location of the first aid kits. First-aid kits are identified by a white cross on a green background.

⁴ Taken from: Calderdale College Quality Assurance Procedure Emergency Procedures; HSP5.09; Issue D; Issue date 01/04/14

Accident Reporting Procedure

It is your responsibility to report any incident or accident that has resulted in, or could have resulted in, injury or ill health whilst at work.

Substances Hazardous to Health in the Workplace

Some workplaces can contain hazardous substances. The following checklist is useful if you know you will be encountering any hazardous substances within your workplace.

Do you know:

- Which of the substances/materials used in your workplace can damage your health?
- Where hazardous substance information is kept for the materials that you use?
- What the immediate and long-term damage is to your health by each of the substances/materials that you use?
- The precautions you must take in order to avoid any adverse health effects?
- How the substance should be stored?
- The type of personal protective equipment (PPE) that you must wear when using each of the substances / materials?
- What action you must take in the event of a spillage and/or first aid procedures?
- If any form of health surveillance is required?
- Who to report problems to?⁵

Insurance

All employers carry employment insurance and many also hold public liability insurance. All insurance certificates are usually in a prominent place in the building.

Manual Handling

Manual handling is any form of physical activity that involves pushing, pulling, lifting and carrying of loads at work (as opposed to mechanical handling by crane, lift trucks, etc).

Approximately a quarter of all accidents reported to the Health and Safety Executive are caused by work-related manual handling activities. Many of these manual handling injuries build up over a period of time rather than being caused by a single handling incident.

⁵ Source: Calderdale College Quality Assurance The Safe Use of Hazardous Substances. HSP 5.16. Issue E. Issue Date: 08/04/2014

Reducing the Risk of Injury from Manual Handling Activities

The following precautions can help you minimise the risk of injury when undertaking manual handling activities:

- Avoid manual handling whenever possible by using equipment such as a trolley, sack cart, hoist, etc.
- Before carrying out any manual handling operation **stop and think** how the task can be carried out safely
- Never be afraid to ask for assistance if it is required
- Consider whether the load be made lighter, smaller or easier to handle
- When required, use of personal protective clothing such as overalls, safety footwear and gloves
- Always practice good lifting technique

There is no general guidance given as to what load is “too heavy” for a person to carry, this depends on a person’s age, physique, condition and whether the person knows how to lift and handle loads. Weight is not the only factor that makes things difficult to lift and carry, the size and shape of an object can make it difficult to handle.

Where manual handling is required as a part of a placement you should be provided with adequate information, training and supervision to enable you to carry out the task safely and without risk of injury.

Good Handling Technique

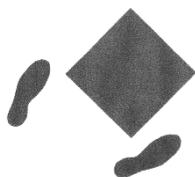
A good handling technique is no substitute for other risk reduction measures such as improvements to the task, load or working environment. However, good handling technique forms a valuable addition to the other control measures in place.

Step 1. Stop and think!

Plan the lift. Where is the load going to be placed? Use appropriate handling aids if possible. Do you need help with the load? Remove obstructions from the floor. For a long lift, such as floor to shoulder height, consider resting the load mid-way on a table or bench to change grip.

Step 2. Assess the load

So that you can determine how best to handle the load you will need to estimate the weight of the load, stability of any contents, centre of gravity and any inherent hazards.



Step 3. Position the feet

Position your feet apart, giving a balanced and stable base for lifting (tight skirts and unsuitable footwear make this difficult). Have your leading leg as far forward as is comfortable.

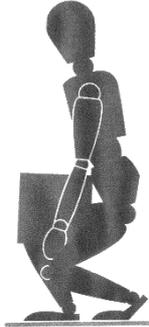
Step 3. Adopt a good posture

Bend the knees so that the hands when grasping the load are as level with the waist as possible. Do not kneel or over-flex the knees. Keep the back straight, maintaining its natural curve (tucking in the chin while gripping the load helps). Lean forward a little over the load if necessary to get a good grip. Keep the shoulders level and facing in the same direction as the hips.



Step 4. Get a firm grip

Try to keep the arms within the boundary formed by the legs. The optimum position and nature of the grip depends on the circumstances and individual preference, but it must be secure. A hook grip is less fatiguing than keeping the fingers straight. If it is necessary to vary the grip as the lift proceeds, do this as smoothly as possible.



Step 5. Carry out the lifting movement

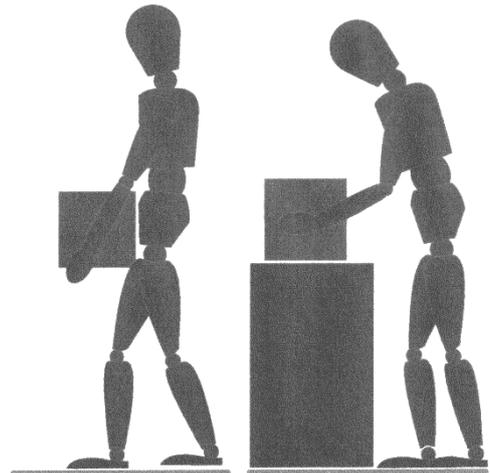
Don't jerk, carry out the lifting movement smoothly, raise the chin as the lift begins, keeping control of the load.

Step 6. Carrying the load

Keep the load close to the body for as long as possible. Keep the heaviest side of the load up to the body. If a close approach to the load is not possible try sliding it towards you before attempting to lift it. If you need to turn to the side, move your feet, do not twist your body.

Step 7. Putting the load down and then adjust

Putting a load down is a reverse of the lifting action. If precise positioning of the load is necessary, put it down first, then slide it into the desired position.



Pushing and pulling

Your risk of injury could be reduced if lifting can be replaced by controlled pushing and pulling. For example it may be possible to slide the load or roll it along on a trolley. However, uncontrolled sliding or rolling, particularly of large or heavy loads may introduce fresh risks of injury.

For both pushing and pulling, you need to ensure that you have a secure footing and your hands need to be applied to the load at a height between the waist and the shoulder wherever possible. A further option, where other safety considerations allow, is to push with your back against the load so that you can use your strong leg muscles to exert the force.

Handling while seated

Handling loads while seated imposes considerable constraints. The relatively powerful leg muscles cannot be used. Nor can the weight of your body be used as a counterbalance. Most of the work, therefore, has to be done by the weaker muscles of

the arms and trunk. Unless the load is positioned close to your body you will have to reach and/or lean forward. Not only will handling in this position put the body under additional stress but the seat, unless firmly placed will tend to move as the handler attempts to maintain a stable posture.

Lifting from below the level of the work surface will almost inevitably result in twisting and stooping (this increases the stress on the lower back).

Team handling

Handling by two or more people may make it possible to handle an item that is beyond the capability of one person, or reduce the risk of injury to someone working alone. However, team handling may introduce additional problems, which the assessment should consider.

The load that a team can handle (particularly over rough ground) is less than the sum of the loads that an individual member of the team could cope with when working alone.

As an approximate guide the capability of a two-person team is two thirds the sum of their individual capabilities and for a three person team the capability is half the sum of their individual capabilities. Other things that need to be considered are if steps or slopes must be negotiated, or if team members are likely to impede each other's vision or movement.⁶

Using Computers/DSE safely

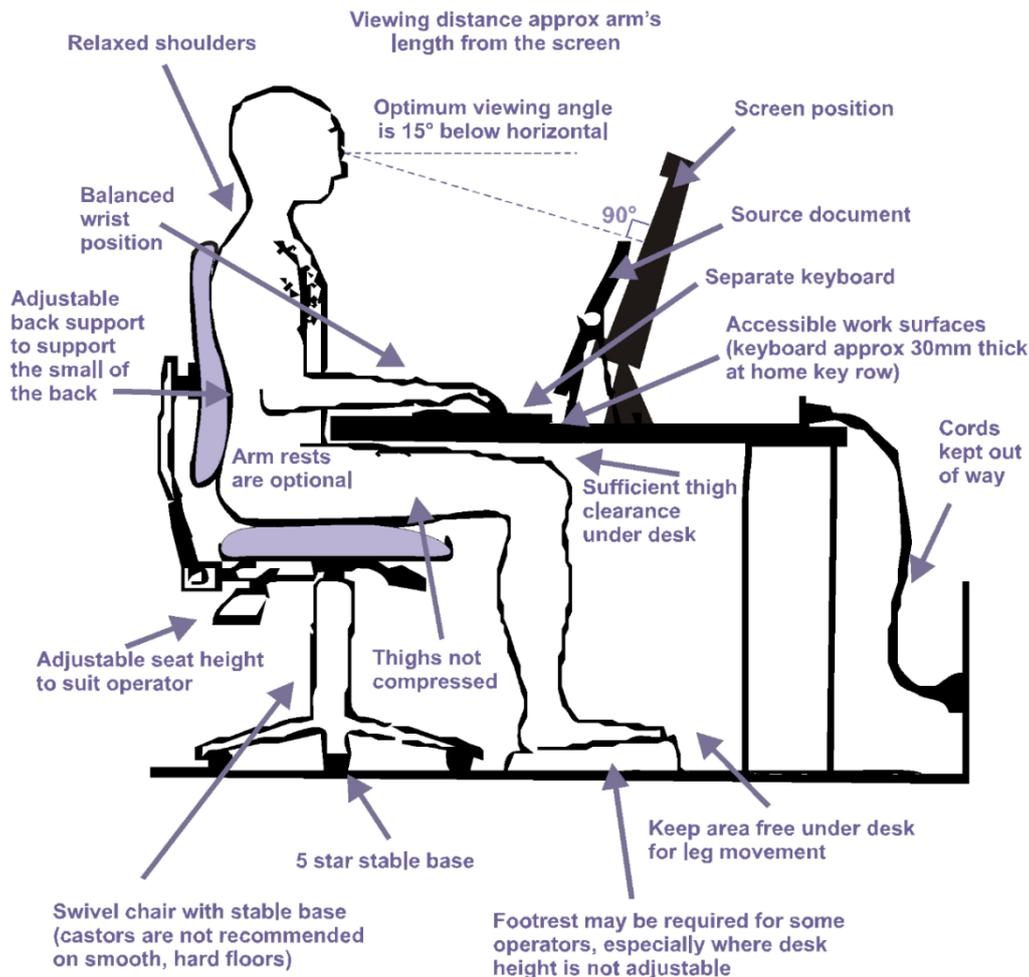
As the use of Display Screen Equipment (DSE) has increased, it is blamed (often wrongly) for a wide range of health problems. In most cases these problems do not arise directly from the equipment itself, but from the way in which it is set up and used. Adverse health effects associated with the use of DSE are mainly those leading to, upper limb disorders (ULD's), visual discomfort and stress.

Tips for using computers/DSE safely:

- Adjust your chair and computer to the most comfortable position for your work. Usually your forearms should be approximately horizontal and your eyes the same height as the top of the monitor. Don't be frightened to try different desk arrangements.
- Make sure you have enough legroom under your desk, enough work space and arrange your monitor to avoid reflection on the screen.
- Try to keep wrists straight using a keyboard and never overstretch fingers. Keep your mouse in easy reach.

⁶ Taken from: Calderdale College Quality Assurance Procedure Manual Handling of Loads HSP 5.17; Issue D; Issue date 01/04/14

- Adjust the brightness and contrast controls on the screen to suit lighting conditions in the room. Make sure the surface of the monitor is clean, and adjust the brightness and contrast if necessary.
- Change your posture as often as practical and take the opportunity to take a break (such as by doing another job). It is better to take short breaks than occasional long ones.⁷



www.wiltshire.gov.uk

Good Housekeeping

- Keep your own workspaces clean and tidy.
- Keep personal possessions under lock and key if possible.
- If you identify a risk, speak to the relevant person in the workplace, or if you have no success, your tutor at the college.
- Ensure that you follow workplace policies and procedures.
- Maintain good personal hygiene (e.g. using antibacterial handwash).

⁷ Taken from: Calderdale College Quality Assurance Procedure The Safe Use of Computer Equipment. HSP 5.13; Issue D; Issue date 01/04/14

Documentation

You may receive additional information from the course/module leader specific to your course.

In the next section of the handbook, there is a set of generic forms, a number of which will require completion by you. These forms are available as Word documents if you wish to complete them electronically.

The table below summarises the forms, who needs to complete them, at what point, and who retains ownership of them.

Form	Completed by	When	Owned by
Form A: Work-Based Learning Placement Agreement	Employer/mentor, student and course/module leader	Before work-based learning or placement commences	Course/module leader, employer and student
Form B: Employer Checklist	Employer/mentor	Before work-based learning or placement commences	Course/module leader and employer
Form C: Student Workplace Induction Checklist	Student	At start of work-based learning or placement	Student
Form D: Reflective Log Template	Student	During work-based learning or placement	Student
Form E: Critical Incident Reflection Template	Student	During work-based learning or placement	Student
Form F: Student Reflection Feedback	Student	At the end of work-based learning or placement	Student
Form G: Employer/Mentor Feedback	Employer/mentor	At the end of work-based learning or placement	Employer/mentor and course/module leader
Form H: Visit Log Template	Course/module leader	During work-based learning or placement	Course/module leader

Forms

Form A: Work-Based Learning Placement Agreement

Student

Name	
Phone contact	
Email address	
Emergency contact	

Employer and Placement

Company	
Address (incl postcode)	
Phone number	
Start date	
End date	
Hours of work (incl start/end time)	
Workplace mentor/supervisor name	
phone	
email	

Course/module leader

Name	
Phone	
Email	

Signatures

		Date
Student		
Employer		
Course tutor		

Form B: Employer Checklist

Health and Safety

	Yes / No (insert more information if applicable)
Does your company have written health and safety policies?	Yes / No
If applicable, is your company registered with the local authority?	Yes / No
Will you provide your student with an induction in the workplace, including health and safety, fire precautions etc?	Yes / No
Will you provide appropriate instruction and/or training in work practices and in particular any control measures that you have identified in your risk assessments?	Yes / No
Do you have Employers Liability insurance	Yes / No
Do you hold Public Liability insurance?	Yes / No
Does the placement role have any medical fitness or health restrictions associated with it?	Yes / No

Equality

Do staff in your company receive training in equality legislation. If yes, please give details.	Yes / No
Is wheelchair accessibility an issue for the layout of your building?	Yes / No
Do you have procedures in place for emergency egress of people with mobility difficulties?	

Name (print)

Signature

Company Name and Address

.....

Date.....

Form C: Student Workplace Induction Checklist

General

Who is your workplace mentor?	
What is your role and responsibilities?	
What your learning objectives or expectations are?	
Are you aware of facilities in the workplace?	
Who will you contact at your workplace if you will be late or are absent for any reason?	
Have you completed all documentation that your mentor and workplace requires?	

Health and Safety

Who is the first aider/appointed person?	
Where is the first aid kit?	
Where is the accident book?	
Where are the fire exits	
Where is the fire assembly point?	
Are you aware of workplace health and safety policies/procedures?	
Do you know what to do if you have an accident?	
Do you know what to do if someone else has an accident?	
Do you know what to do if there is a gas leak?	
Do you know what to do if there is a water leak or spillage?	

Do you know what to do if there is an incident involving a hazardous substance?	
Do you know whom to contact in case of a personal/property security issue?	

Signatures on completion

	Date	
Student		
Employer/mentor		
Module/course tutor		

Form D: Reflective Log Template

Student name:

Employer/Company Name:

Date of work-based learning/placement:

Write a brief summary (no more than 150 words) of your daily work experiences.

Date	Summary

Form E: Critical Incident Reflection Template

Deliberately reviewing a significant event, or critical incident, during work-based learning (or indeed during any other type of learning) can improve your reflection skills and can identify gaps in your understanding or capability. A critical incident does not need to be a negative event. A critical incident is any event that identifies learning needs and allows deeper reflection.

Student name:

Employer/Company Name:

Date of work-based learning/placement:

What happened and where? <i>Describe the incident and its context, and why the incident was significant for you</i>
What did you think at the time? <i>Jot down your thoughts and feelings both at the time and soon afterwards</i>
How do you feel now? <i>Consider your thoughts about the incident now you have had time to reflect. How have you come to understand it? Did your emotions affect your thoughts/decision making process at the time of the incident?</i>
What have you learned from this incident? <i>Summarise what you have learned, and consider how it may impact upon your current or even future career aspirations</i>

Form F: Student Reflection Feedback

Student Name:

Employer/Company name:

Mentor name:

1. Overall, how would you rate your work-based learning/placement?

Excellent

Good

Satisfactory

Unsatisfactory

2. What have you enjoyed the most from your work-based learning/placement experience

3. What did you enjoy the least?

4. What did you learn from colleagues in your workplace?

5. Describe your physical working conditions (such as cleanliness, health and safety practices etc)

6. Do you consider you were prepared for the experience and any associated assessment? If not, why not?

7. Is there anything you would do differently if you were to repeat the work-based learning?

8. Would you recommend your employer to another student?

Form G: Mentor/Employer Feedback

Student Name:

Employer/Company name:

Mentor name:

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Enthusiasm and interest				
Working with others				
Carrying out allocated duties/work				
Taking responsibility and using initiative				
Verbal communication skills				
Non-verbal communication skills				
Ability to follow instructions				
Ability to risk assess and work safely				
Approach to knowledge and skill development				
Punctuality and attendance				
Personal appearance				

Further comments

Signature

Date

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Form H: Visit Log Template

Date	Employer comments	Student comments	Any actions arising	Actions taken	Responsibility for actions	Date actions completed