



**University
of Worcester**

School of Sport and
Exercise Science

Placement and Work-Based Learning Handbook

2020-2021

School of Sport and Exercise Science

Last updated: November 2020 by Claire Sanders

**Inspired
for Life**

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook is provided to support students, placement providers and staff involved in placements and work-based learning for the School of Sport and Exercise Science (SSES) at the University of Worcester and its collaborative partners.

This handbook only relates to placements and work-based learning that are conducted as a required element of a course provided by SSES at the University of Worcester or its collaborative partners, where the supervision of this element of the student's studies is passed to a third party. This includes paid and unpaid placements.

As a degree awarding body, the University of Worcester is responsible for ensuring the academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities within the degrees that it awards, irrespective of where these are delivered or who provides them (Chapter B10 of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education). This means that the University of Worcester is responsible for ensuring the quality of learning opportunities in placements and work-based learning through the preparation of students for placements, the assessment of risks associated with undertaking the placement, through the agreement of appropriate arrangements for the supervision of students, and through the monitoring and evaluation of placements. The University's Policy on the Management of Placement and Work-Based Learning is available on the University website.

As part of fulfilling our responsibility for the management of placements and work-based learning, this handbook provides a source of information on the procedures and provides links to further sources of information.

Please also see:

Work-Based Learning and Placement Guide for students, staff and providers

Work-Based Learning and Placement Student Diary

What are you looking for?

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[RELEVANT POLICY AND DOCUMENTATION](#)

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GENERAL INFORMATION

All placements and work-based learning are based on an arrangement between the student, the placement provider and the University. Each of the three partners has a different responsibility. Whilst the details of the placements and/or work-based learning must be agreed between all parties, there are some general principles that should form the basis of the placement agreement.

This handbook supports two types of student activity: **placement learning** and **work-based learning**. They are both governed by the same University regulations and organised in the same way, so this handbook has been designed to support students, placement providers and staff engaged in either activity.

Quick definitions

Placement learning is a planned specific experience or period of learning, normally outside of the University either in a workplace or at another institution, where the learning outcomes are an intended and integral part of the programme of study.

Work-based learning is learning that is integral to a higher education programme, which is based in the workplace and assessed and credited as part of the University programme. It is achieved and demonstrated through engagement with a workplace environment (which may be the student's own), and normally includes the assessment of reflective practice and/or professional competencies and skills associated with employability.

Throughout this handbook we will refer to all placement learning and work-based learning under an umbrella term of placements.

General principles

SSES recognises some general principles for all placements. These are that:

- placements are only available to students who are registered as a student of the University (or of an approved collaborative partner organisation) for the duration of the placement
- all placements must have appropriate learning outcomes that contribute to the overall aims and learning outcomes of the course and/or module(s)
- placements must provide students with a reasonable opportunity to fulfil the learning outcomes and should also suit the students' broader educational and developmental needs
- where external accreditation of an award adds additional requirements to the procedures for placement, then this will be incorporated into the course structure and management
- all students registered to a module with a required placement activity should have equitable access to opportunities for placements
- all students must be informed about their responsibilities and entitlements relating to placements and be provided with timely and appropriate written information, guidance and support in preparation for, throughout, and following, their placement
- placements must not entail unreasonable levels of risk to the student or others
- all arrangements for the supervision of students during placement must be agreed between the student, placement provider and University prior to the commencement of the placement
- all placements should be monitored and evaluated in an appropriate manner

Registered students

The student must be registered with the University for the entire period of the placement. Where placement learning takes place within the teaching period, then any student registered to a module is normally registered for that academic year. However, where placements take place outside of the teaching period, then the student must be registered with the University in order to undertake the placement or work-based learning.

Summer placements: If students have not yet completed their studies and have not intercalated then they would normally be registered in the summer and are eligible to undertake a placement.

However, students who are starting a degree may not undertake placement activities before their registration. Please note that this includes students who have previously completed an award at the University, or an approved collaborative partner organisation and are seeking to top-up to a higher award (BSc, BA, MSc) as they are not registered with the University in the period between the completion of their previous award and the registration for the next.

Part-time and work-based students: These are considered as registered students and are eligible to undertake placement or work-based learning activities.

Intercalating students: These are not considered as registered students and are not eligible to undertake placement or work-based learning activities.

Students with additional needs – equity of access

Although most of the placements in SSES are sourced by students, we have systems in place to ensure that students with additional needs receive appropriate support or reasonable adjustments to provide equity of access. This includes an early opportunity for students to disclose a disability, individual needs assessment and support in arranging reasonable adjustments with placement providers.

Students with additional needs have a general entitlement to the provision of educational opportunities in a manner that meets their individual requirements, including placements. The University and the placement provider both have responsibilities and some overlapping duties to students with disabilities on placement regardless of whether the placement is arranged by the University or by the student. The legal responsibility to ensure students are not disadvantaged in finding a placement, or whilst on a placement, lies with the University. However, responsibility to make reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities on placements resides with the placement providers. The University is able to offer advice and support for students with a disability through Firstpoint.

If the student needs adjustments to be made, then the module leader will first speak to the student and then the placement provider to discuss arrangements for appropriate support. The module leader may seek specialist advice and support within the University. For further guidance, please see the University guidance for staff in managing work placements for students with disabilities, [Accessible high quality placements and work based learning for all students](#).

Overseas students

The University of Worcester has students from around the world. **Students can seek advice from [Firstpoint](#)**, but where students are not nationals of the UK or EU then any placement activity (whether paid or unpaid) must be in accord with their visa. In most cases students from countries other than the UK or EU will be able to complete placements.

The module leader will be aware of students who are not nationals of the UK or EU from the class list and they must ensure that any proposed placement does not contravene the visa conditions for that student. At the University the module leader is required to consult with the University's visa specialist. Collaborative partners have similar arrangements.

Students must disclose the type of visa that they hold to any potential placement provider. As some visas set limits on the number of hours worked, placement providers must maintain records of attendance.

Appropriate learning outcomes

It is important that all elements of a course contribute to the overall aims and learning outcomes of the course. Thus, the learning outcomes of the module must relate to the aims of the course. This means that modules will

often include learning outcomes that relate to understanding professional practice, applying theoretical knowledge in a workplace, developing reflective practice etc. However, the learning outcomes will vary according to the level of study and the specific nature of the module. The learning outcomes for each module are mapped against the learning outcomes for the course within the course documentation. Thus, overall, we seek to ensure that placements are planned and integral components of courses that contribute to the development of students' professionalism and employability.

A reasonable opportunity to fulfil the learning outcomes

The University has a responsibility to ensure that the availability, timing, quality and accessibility of placements allow students a reasonable opportunity to fulfil the learning outcomes. This means that staff must assess the demands of the placement, in particular the availability and quality, provide advice and support to students on sourcing placements, and ensure that students are made aware of the opportunities for placements. Thus, they must ensure that the opportunities are appropriate to all students including those with disabilities, carers etc.

Students must expect that placements may take time to source and organise and may require different skills and approaches. In most cases, placements cannot be guaranteed, and the students will need to seek placements that suit the needs of the learning outcomes as well as their particular educational and developmental needs.

As part of all placements in SSES, students are provided opportunities to consider their broader educational and developmental needs through lectures, tutorials and by completing activities such as skills inventories, career planning and learning contracts. They are encouraged to use these as the basis for reflection and self-evaluation before, during and after their experience.

Externally accredited awards

Where placements are a required element of a programme where the qualification leads to a licence to practice, then the course leader will ensure that the placements are arranged in accordance with the requirements of the relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB). This has particular relevance to Sports Therapy courses.

Student entitlement and responsibilities

Students must be fully informed about their responsibilities and entitlements relating to the placement, and be provided with timely and appropriate written information, guidance and support preparation for, throughout, and following, their placement. This is provided in the form of a placement/work-based learning briefing (either individually or in a group), through this handbook, student guide, diary and supporting online resources. All supporting material can be found on Blackboard.

Risk-based approach

“National guidance on student placements/work-based learning and health and safety emphasises a risk-based approach to the appropriate management of the health, safety and welfare of students and the risks arising from the associated liabilities. This allows a lighter touch on placements with relatively low risks and more rigorous control measures where the risks are higher. The University endorses a risk management approach to placements and work-based learning in relation to health, safety and well-being and academic standards and quality.”

This means that we will evaluate the potential risks and benefits before making any decisions on the approval of placements. We use a standardised approach to risk evaluation and any placements that present medium or high levels of risk require further checks prior to making decisions about the approval of the placement.

Risk assessment

The risk assessment itself is conducted before approval and the person approving the placement activity must be assured that the placement provider will:

- provide the opportunities and resources for the student to achieve the intended learning outcomes at the required standard and level as per the module specification
- provide support for the student from a designated member of staff in the placement setting
- fulfil their responsibilities under health and safety legislation
- provide an experience that complies with the requirements of any relevant statutory, regulatory, professional or funding bodies, as appropriate
- make reasonable adjustments as identified through a needs assessment for students with disabilities

Duty of care

The University has a statutory duty of care to protect, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its students during placement and/or work-based learning activities. Collaborative partner organisations that deliver University of Worcester awards have a similar duty of care.

We take reasonable steps to ensure that all placement environments are compliant with statutory health and safety requirements and that students are covered by sufficient levels of insurance in the case of injury to themselves or others. Thus, we require information on the health and safety arrangements and insurance documentation from all placement providers and inform all students about their responsibilities for their safety whilst in the workplace.

In some cases, we may also conduct checks on the appropriateness of the organisation or the workplace as a safe environment for the student, and we retain records of previous placements.

Safeguarding of children and adults at risk

Placement providers are responsible for the management of safeguarding issues within the workplace in accordance with the law of the country in which the placement activities are conducted. The University recognises its responsibility for the safeguarding of children and adults at risk where registered students undertake placements where the learning outcomes are an intended and integral part of a programme of study at University of Worcester (even where delivered through a collaborative partner).

The University has clear policies related to Safeguarding, including processes for checking where DBS is required ([see the University's Policy for Students with Criminal Records and Procedure for the Management of Disclosure and Barring Service \(DBS\) Checks](#)). Placements which involve engagement in regular and unsupervised 'regulated activity' (as defined by the [Protection of Freedoms Act 2012](#)) with children or in certain adult settings may require students to undergo an **enhanced DBS check** and gain a satisfactory DBS before they start their placement. For some PSRB courses an enhanced DBS will be required prior to the student commencing their course.

For placements in the UK, the legislative requirements are encompassed in relevant sections of a variety of Acts, including:

[Local Authority Social Services Act 1970](#)

[Education Act 2011](#)

[Children and Families Act 2014](#)

[Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#)

In the UK, it is the placement provider's responsibility to determine if the placement role includes regulated activity with children or adults at risk. [The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012](#) definition are provided in brief below:

Definitions for regulated activity for children and young people can be found [here](#).

Definitions for regulated activity in relation to adults can be found [here](#).

In situations where the placement role does include regulated activity then the placement provider should consider whether this will be done on a regular basis and whether the student will be under supervision. Where the student will not be undertaking the regulated activity on a regular basis or where the student will be under supervision then it is unlikely that the student will require an enhanced DBS check. In most cases, placement approval in SSes is

dependent on the provision of evidence that students will be appropriately supervised (including in all regulated activities), or where this is not possible that the placement provider has ensured that the student has a satisfactory enhanced DBS.

We ask all placement providers to notify us if the placement role requires DBS clearance. For all UK placements where the placement role does need a DBS, the University requires its students to register a satisfactory enhanced DBS with the University. Failure to register a satisfactory enhanced DBS will mean that the placement will not be approved. For DBS guidance and an application form, please visit Firstpoint.

Agreement of all parties to the placement or work-based learning

The placement approval process requires all parties to formally agree to the terms of the placement and to specify the arrangements for the supervision of students during placement. The submission of the placement online forms acts as confirmation of the agreement between the student, placement provider, mentor and University prior to the commencement of the placement.

Monitoring and evaluation of placements

All placements are recorded and monitored through student feedback and placement provider feedback. The Sports Office administers and retains records of all placements. The monitoring and evaluation of learning, teaching, and assessment, including module and course feedback, occurs at School level by the Senior Management Team. It is then scrutinised at College level by the LTQE Committee before being reported at University level to the Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee (ASQEC).

PLACEMENT PROVIDER INFORMATION

This section is for placement providers, or for those considering providing placement opportunities for students in the School of Sport and Exercise Science at the University of Worcester and its collaborative partners.

Placement provider's responsibilities

Health and safety requirements

Insurance requirements

Dealing with problems

Placement provider's checklist

There are many benefits to providing placements, however the decision to provide student placements needs careful consideration and needs to be entered into with due diligence. When a student is on placement, they would normally be considered to be involved in the business, under the supervision of the placement provider and consequently are considered as an employee.

Most placement providers are altruistically motivated, feeling that it is right to support new entrants to their profession, and to help students to understand the world of work. However, providing placement opportunities can also provide significant benefits for organisations to:

- use the placement as part of their graduate recruitment programme, by identifying suitable candidates for employment on graduation
- have a highly motivated and committed employee willing to tackle more complex issues and projects at a relatively low cost
- assist with operational requirements, particularly in the areas of staffing, project work and the introduction of new systems
- gain opportunities for staff to develop supervisory skills and gain experience of mentoring a student or junior in their career development
- develop links to the University and its partners

If you would like to see details of the course that the student is undertaking then please visit our website at www.worcester.ac.uk or the websites of our partner organisations. We hope that you choose to provide a placement and that it is a positive experience for your organisation. We value your help and recognise the important role that you play in developing highly employable graduates.

Placement provider's responsibilities

The placement provider is responsible for the management and supervision of the student during the placement. In addition, they would normally be expected to:

- provide an induction into the organisation
- ensure the student is fully aware of the relevant health and safety and insurance requirements
- discuss the student's learning objectives with them
- endorse any learning logs once completed
- provide the student with helpful feedback on their progress and performance by reviewing the learning objectives with the student
- ensure that reasonable adjustments have been made in relation to the inclusion of all students
- ensure that the legislative requirements in relation to duty of care, safeguarding, equal opportunities and health and safety have been appropriately met
- ensure that the risk to the student and others has been assessed and is appropriate

Health and safety requirements

Universities and Colleges Employers' Association guidance (UCEA 2009) states:

“Primary responsibility for the management of the health and safety for a student while on the placement lies with the placement provider (under Section 2.1 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974). The student will be treated as equivalent to one of their own employees in relation to health and safety matters. The student has responsibilities to follow instructions and act sensibly to protect their own health and safety and that of others (as set out in Sections 7 and 8 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974).”

For the duration of the placement the student is subject to the supervision of the placement provider and therefore the placement provider is responsible for ensuring the health and safety of the student in the same way as any other employee.

The University has a statutory duty of care to protect, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its students during placement and/or work-based learning activities. Collaborative partner organisations that deliver University of Worcester awards have a similar duty of care.

As the University has a duty of care to our students, the University will wish to understand that the workplace will be appropriate for the student and that there are reasonable procedures in place to assure the health and safety of the student. We will not approve placements without evidence that suggests that the placement provider is compliant with statutory health and safety requirements.

Insurance requirements

We recommend that placement providers notify their insurers that they are providing student placement facilities to ensure that legal liability is adequately covered. Please note that the University's insurance cannot cover anything that is the legal liability or responsibility of someone else. As the placement provider has control of the student while they are on placement, many responsibilities are their legal liability. Therefore, any injury, loss or damage that the student may cause whilst they are under the supervision of the placement provider is the responsibility of the placement provider. Similarly, any injury, loss or damage suffered by the student while they are under the supervision of the placement provider is also the responsibility of the placement provider. Criminal acts committed by the student are not covered under any insurance arrangements.

Public Liability Insurance

We expect all placement providers to hold Public Liability Insurance cover of at least £5 million for the entire time that the student is on placement. As evidence of this we ask for a copy of the certificate, copy of the policy schedule or a 'To whom it may concern' letter so that we are aware of the policy number, limit of liability, date of expiry and insurance company.

The University holds Public Liability insurance cover up to the value of £25 million. This insurance covers the University in the event of a claim arising out of our own negligence. A claim could be brought by the student against the University. It also covers the University, and the relevant student, for any claim made as a result of a negligent act carried out by our student whilst they are on placement. A claim could be brought by the placement provider against either the student or the University. Should placement providers require evidence that the University has Public Liability insurance in place for its students, a 'To Whom it May Concern' letter can be downloaded from the Insurance tab on the Finance page of the [University's website](#).

Employers' Liability Insurance

We expect all placement providers to hold Employers' Liability Insurance cover of at least £10 million for the entire time that the student is on placement or involved in work-based learning. As evidence of this we ask for a copy of the Employers' Liability Certificate of Insurance or a 'To Whom it May Concern' letter so that we are aware of the policy number, limit of liability, date of expiry and insurance company.

Within the UK a reciprocal arrangement is in place within the Insurance sector and most Employers' Liability Insurance policies accept the student as a 'temporary employee' within the Host Organisation. Also, some membership organisations and National Governing Bodies (NGBs) include aspects of Employers' Liability cover in their membership packages and, in some cases, this covers placement students.

If a placement provider does not hold Employers' Liability Insurance cover, and if this is not covered through membership or affiliation, then we would recommend that they ask their insurance broker to extend the cover on their Public Liability Insurance for the period of the placement. If the placement involves students doing activities other than their normal business or if it extends over two weeks, then placement providers should inform their insurers. Failure to appropriately insure a 'temporary employee' may result in significant fines.

Volunteer run clubs that do not hold Employers' Liability Insurance are able to provide a placement for students as long as the student whilst undertaking a placement as a volunteer is covered under the volunteer run clubs Public Liability Insurance. We advise placement providers to contact their insurance broker to confirm. Once confirmed by the insurance broker, we require an email confirmation from the placement provider that it has been confirmed.

The advice from Association of British Insurers:

"If you have Employers' Liability Insurance cover already, you do not need to buy additional cover if the student will be doing work that sits within the normal business practice of your firm or organisation. If you do not have Employers' Liability Insurance, and you are taking on a student who is not a member of your family, then you must take out Employers' Liability Insurance for the duration of the work experience in order to be covered."

Links to further advice:

[ABI website link](#)

[Government advice on Employers' Liability Insurance](#)

Medical Malpractice/Clinical Negligence/Professional Indemnity Insurance

Where placements require students to hold Professional Indemnity Insurance then they will be notified in advance and, in some cases, it may be necessary for the student to be a member of their professional body for Professional Indemnity cover to be in place.

Dealing with problems

Whilst on placement, students are under the day-to-day supervision and guidance of the employing organisation and any mentor assigned to them. They are expected to conform to the normal discipline of the organisation, working the hours specified for the department in which they are employed, and adhering to the normal dress and conduct standards expected of permanent employees.

However, in the event that a problem arises, the student and mentor should normally meet to discuss issues such as role clarity, student behaviour, re-assessment of aims and objectives. If this meeting does not alleviate the problem then it is advised that the placement provider discusses the issue with the Work-Based Learning Co-ordinator and a suitable strategy is agreed between all parties (placement provider, Work-Based Learning Co-ordinator, student and module leader). If required, a visit to the placement provider to see the placement provider/mentor and the student can be arranged. This should be arranged with the Work-Based Learning Co-ordinator in the first instance.

Feedback to the University

The University of Worcester is committed to improving the quality of its service to placement providers and welcomes feedback on all aspects of the placement process. As part of this you will receive a short questionnaire about the experience, but we would also welcome feedback. If you wish to provide verbal feedback or to discuss the placement, then please contact sportplacements@worc.ac.uk and they will refer you to the appropriate member of staff.

Record keeping and data protection

All placement agreements are stored in line with the University policy on data management. Data provided by the student and placement provider for the approval or administration of placement is subject to the rules of the Data Protection Act.

As part of the SSES placement approval process for the students we request some personal information from the placement provider and mentor, including contact details, so that we can process the student's application to undertake a placement. This information is used to judge the appropriateness of the placement to the student's studies, to facilitate communication and as the basis for agreement on the appropriate supervision of the student. We may also use this information for auditing, reporting or for programme evaluation. For the same purpose we may provide this information to other departments within the University including: the International Experience Office, the Disability and Dyslexia Service and the Finance department. This information does not have to be provided and consent may be withdrawn at any time by emailing sportsplacements@worc.ac.uk. The University of Worcester is the Data Controller and details of how we process data including how long we retain it and the provider's rights are detailed on <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/informationassurance/privacy-notices.html>.

Placement provider's checklist

Before placement

- Complete an online SSES placement form including health and safety questionnaire with the student
- Email copies of Employers' Liability Insurance and Public Liability Insurance to sportsplacements@worc.ac.uk
- We recommend that placement providers notify their insurers that they are providing a student placement to ensure that legal liability is adequately covered
- Where a student has disclosed a disability then meet with student or module leader to discuss reasonable adjustment

During placement

- Provide an induction programme within the placement organisation
- Discuss the Learning Plan and objectives with the student – this will define the student's duties and responsibilities
- If asked, verify the student's learning diary – this is a record of activity throughout the placement
- Where problems arise contact the Work-Based Learning Co-ordinator via sportsplacements@worc.ac.uk

At the end of placement

- Review and feedback to the student on their performance
- Provide feedback to the University if requested

Health and safety

- It is expected that placement providers take reasonable precautions to ensure that placement students will be working in a safe environment and will not be exposed to unnecessary risks or danger
- Attention should be drawn to health and safety issues during the induction process and students should be included in any subsequent health and safety briefings for staff

Equal opportunities

- Please note that the University of Worcester operates an Equal Opportunities Policy for both students and staff, a copy of which can be seen at: <https://www2.worc.ac.uk/personnel/655.htm>
- Whilst students are on placement it is expected that similar policies will apply within their employing organisations

STUDENT INFORMATION

[Finding a placement](#)

[Procedures for approval of placements](#)

[Student's responsibilities and behaviour during placements](#)

[How to arrange a Disclosure and Barring Service \(DBS\) check](#)

[Planning how and what to learn from the work placement](#)

[Frequently asked questions](#)

[Advice for students whilst on placement](#)

All students in SSES at the University of Worcester must complete a placement as part of their course. This is an important part of their studies, **and failure to complete this element may impact on their ability to complete their chosen degree.**

The purpose of this handbook is to provide the information to allow all students to plan, conduct, monitor and review learning opportunities during a placement. The handbook goes together with a support programme at the University that will guide the student through the stages required for a successful placement experience.

Finding a placement

In most cases it is the student's responsibility to find and secure an appropriate placement position with a placement provider that satisfies the requirements of the module. In some cases, this can take several weeks. The Work-Based Learning Co-ordinator and module leader will provide the student with information and advice to support these activities. The student must attend all compulsory placement preparation lectures/workshops, details of which can be found in the module outline.

Whilst the module outline will specify the duration and types of placements that are required, it is important that the student considers the placement as an opportunity to learn new knowledge and skills, and to gain experience of professional practice. Therefore, finding a placement involves a realistic analysis of the student's current knowledge, skills and experience, and an identification of any areas for development. Students may be encouraged to identify their career goals, consider the knowledge, skills and experience that they will need to achieve their goals and identify how the placement can help towards these goals.

Once the student has identified a short list of potential placements then they will need to approach them in an appropriate manner. This may include sending a CV and covering letter to a named contact at the organisation, or arranging an introduction from a previous placement student, module leader or mutual contact. In most cases the written contact will be followed by a telephone conversation or a visit/interview to discuss the placement. This is an opportunity to discuss the role in detail and the student should prepare for this conversation by ensuring that they understand the business, the placement opportunity and that they have a clear understanding of how they will address any logistical issues.

It is important that any discussions are confirmed with the placement provider and that online forms are completed and submitted to the Sports Office at least a week before the placement is due to start to allow time for approval.

Procedures for approval of placements

It is **mandatory** that the student completes the placement form **before** commencing a placement. The form will be reviewed by the module leader and (if it is acceptable) will be agreed. Support on how to complete and submit the form can be found in the Work-Based Learning and Placements Student Guide. The student and the Workplace Supervisor/Mentor will then receive an email notification that the placement can commence. It is really important that the online form is completed correctly and that all the required documentation is submitted.

Students with additional needs must inform the module leader if they require support before, during and after placement.

If DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) clearance is required, please see the [How to arrange a Disclosure and Barring Service \(DBS\) check section](#).

Processing the placement approval documentation

All placements are administered in line with the University [Policy on the Management of Placement and Work-Based Learning](#).

It is the student's responsibility to submit the online placement form to the Sports Office ensuring that there is sufficient time for the approval documentation to be processed (at least a week before the placement is due to start).

The module leader will analyse the information provided and decide whether to approve the proposed placement, and whether to specify any conditions. The module leader will check that the placement is appropriate to the student and the module requirements, that there is appropriate supervision, that the risks to the student and others have been properly considered, and that there is adequate insurance cover. If the placement requires DBS clearance, then the module leader will also check the student's DBS status.

Once approved, email notification will be sent to all parties (module leader, mentor and student). This correspondence acts as confirmation that the placement has been approved, and only then are students able to commence their placement, subject to the agreed terms. Any hours completed before approval cannot be used as placement hours. Should the module leader not agree to the placement, students will be asked to submit further documentation, agree to conditions or may be advised to seek an alternative placement.

If the module leader decides that the placement is not appropriate, or if any of the online sections are incomplete, the student will be notified and should seek tutorial support.

What the approval means

Once approved, the student may undertake the agreed placement with the placement provider within the timescale identified. This is subject to the agreed terms of the placement and any conditions stipulated in the approval. If the details of the placement change before or during the placement then the student must inform the module leader and a decision will be made on whether to approve the changes. Should the module leader not agree to the placement, students will be asked to submit further documentation, agree to conditions or may be advised to seek an alternative placement. If approval for a placement is withdrawn, then the student and placement provider will be informed.

In completing the SSES placement approval process we are requesting personal information from the student so that we can process the application to undertake a placement as part of the student's studies. This information includes contact details and (in some cases) passport numbers. We may use this information for auditing, reporting or for programme evaluation. For the same purpose we may provide this information to other departments within the University including: the International Experience Office, the Disability and Dyslexia Service and the Finance department. This information does not have to be provided and consent may be withdrawn at any time by emailing sportplacements@worc.ac.uk. The University of Worcester is the Data Controller and details of how we process data including how long we retain it and the provider's rights are detailed on the [University of Worcester Privacy Policy](#).

Student's responsibilities and behaviour during placements

The student has the responsibility to carry out the work specified by the placement provider under the supervision of the specified supervisor or mentor. In addition, they should:

- attend and participate in the induction into the organisation

- abide by all rules regarding health and safety requirements, and other practices and procedures of the placement organisation
- actively work to promote a good reputation for the University and do not act in any way that brings the University into disrepute
- abide by the terms of the Student Placement Conduct and Health and Safety Agreement
- ensure they discuss any disabilities that they may have disclosed to the University if additional support or reasonable adaptations/adjustments are required
- inform the University of any personal factors or changes to personal factors (e.g. health, disability, linguistic or cultural) that may affect the level of risk or may require reasonable adjustments to be made whilst on placement, work shadowing or visits
- report any concerns about health and safety at their placement to their placement provider, or to the Work-Based Learning Co-ordinator or module leader, as appropriate
- maintain regular contact with the module leader during the placement experience particularly in case of any significant changes to the placement
- evaluate their achievements and seek feedback from their workplace supervisor or mentor
- recognise that learning from work experience is a self-managed activity in which they accept a high level of responsibility for their own study and development
- be aware that it might be necessary to share next of kin or other personal information with the placement provider
- ensure that any vehicle insurance covers travel to/from work and business use if requested to travel during the placement (if driving to the placement by private vehicle)
- consult with the University prior to seeking any changes in the terms and duration of the placement

How to arrange a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check

Students should check with the placement provider if a DBS certificate is required. In most circumstances, if a DBS is required, it will be an enhanced DBS check which includes working with children, adults at risk or both in regulated activity.

Students holding a current DBS sourced through the University

Students wishing to complete a placement should register their DBS at Firstpoint. There is no obligation to register a DBS at Firstpoint, however, placements that require the student to provide an acceptable enhanced DBS will not be approved unless the DBS is registered at Firstpoint.

Students holding a current DBS not sourced through the University

It is the placement provider's decision as to whether the DBS will cover the student during the placement. If the placement provider is satisfied that it will, the placement provider/mentor will need to email firstpoint@worc.ac.uk. The student will also need to take the DBS to Firstpoint where it will be considered by the University's Assistant Registrar who will determine whether the DBS meets the requirements for undertaking a placement that includes regulated activity.

Placement providers may insist that the DBS has been sourced through the University. If a new DBS is required, a DBS application form can be obtained from Firstpoint. The student will then be asked to provide evidence about their criminal convictions in line with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Bill.

Students who do not hold a DBS but require one for the placement

If students do require a DBS check, then they should contact Firstpoint - either visit the Peirson building, or email firstpoint@worc.ac.uk.

- Firstpoint can provide advice on DBS issues
- Firstpoint will be able to check their current DBS status

- Firstpoint will be able to process their application for a DBS and take payment
- Firstpoint will be able to register their DBS
- If students have a current DBS from another organisation Firstpoint will be able to advise them on what they need to do

Please note: DBS clearance can take up to 6 weeks and there are costs. The DBS certificate will be returned to the address given by the student on the form. The contents of the DBS are considered confidential.

As well as registering the DBS at Firstpoint, students will also have to show the DBS to the placement provider. If the placement provider does not accept the DBS, then the student will not be able to undertake the placement and may need to seek support from the module leader. For detailed advice contact Firstpoint.

Planning how and what to learn from the work placement

There are many ways of planning and evidencing the placement experience. The module leader will go through these in depth during the module. For extra support, students can refer to the Placement and Work Based Learning Student Diary which will assist them through the process.

Frequently asked questions

Why do students have to do a placement?

A work placement can be an integral part of a student's personal and career development as it provides them with opportunities to:

- put theory into practice and to identify the relevance of their academic studies in the world of work
- value and develop their key skills that are in demand from placement providers including effective communication, time management, working as part of a team, self-reliance and the ability to solve problems
- gain marketable experience and skills that will be of benefit when looking for a job following graduation
- learn about workplace cultures
- gain experience of working to deadlines
- test whether a particular sector of work or individual company is of interest to them as a potential placement provider when they graduate

How do I decide what type of placement to do?

When starting to plan a work experience placement it is important for students initially to think broadly about the scope and nature of different sectors of industry and different types of jobs. Students should carefully consider their personal profile, the areas that have interested them on their programme as well as their future career plans and write down the sort of things that they would like to do and indeed would not like to do. Students should speak to their module leader or the Work-Based Learning Co-ordinator for advice and guidance.

Where can students do their placement?

The placement must be appropriate to the module that the student is studying and approved in advance by the module leader. Past students have completed placements with a wide range of organisations and in many places. Students seeking overseas placements need to be aware that this may be a complicated process and harder to organise and thus may take considerably longer to approve. Additional requirements may include translation of documents, clarification of insurance arrangements, and registration of professional documents. The University is not responsible for visas, work permits, insurance or related issues for international (overseas) placements unless explicitly stated. If a student is thinking of completing an overseas placement, they should speak to the Work-Based Learning Co-ordinator and module leader.

Can I use an existing job as my placement?

It is possible to use an existing job as a placement, but this needs to be agreed by all parties (student, module leader and placement provider). However, students must demonstrate that the placement will provide an appropriate opportunity for learning. Students are advised that whilst this is possible there are many advantages to completing a placement in a new organisation and/or role. These include breadth of experience, working with other professionals, network development, enhanced employability, and evidence for the above within the CV.

How does a student apply to a company for a placement?

Getting the job a student wants for a placement can be very competitive and they must do everything possible to package and market themselves successfully. These elements will be covered in the pre-placement sessions and students can access individual and group support from the Careers Service (booked through Firstpoint).

The module leader, Work-Based Learning Co-ordinator and the Careers Service will give students as much help as possible to secure an appropriate placement, but they must help themselves. We cannot create jobs and do not control the job market or economic climate. We cannot guarantee placements will be available. Students must help themselves as much as possible to secure a placement and take responsibility for their own learning. Attendance, communication and commitment are essential for their success.

It is most important that students communicate effectively and efficiently with the placement provider as well as the Work-Based Learning Co-ordinator and their individual module leader. Students must ensure they are professional in all correspondence; they must ensure that they spell check and write emails in a business format and tone.

Placement providers may ask students to complete a company application form and some may also require a separate medical history, and police security checks. Students should photocopy forms before they start to fill them and work out answers in rough before entering them on the form. Students should keep a copy for their records – they will need to refer to it if they are asked to attend for an interview. Application forms vary considerably, and some can prove to be problematic to complete. If a student has any difficulty completing the forms, they should talk to the Work-Based Learning Co-ordinator or consult the Careers Service.

Advice on being interviewed will be carried out during the module. This will provide students with feedback on their performance and an opportunity to discuss best practice. The Careers Service also run workshops on interview skills.

How do students write a covering letter and curriculum vitae?

If students need to apply in writing, then it is important to present themselves appropriately. That will often mean a CV and a covering letter. Most modules will cover writing a CV, so students should ensure they attend the lecture. Students can also get advice on how to write covering letters and CVs from the Careers Service (book through Firstpoint).

Who should students use as a referee?

Sometimes students will be asked for referees, if so then usually they will be asked for two referees. At least one of these should be able to comment on their academic record – this would normally be their Personal Academic Tutor or their course leader. If possible, the referees should be people who can provide a positive opinion on their previous experience of work or their attitude to work. Students should avoid family members and people who are hard to contact. Students should always ask permission before including someone as a referee.

Advice for students whilst on placement

Professionalism: Students should ensure they behave in a professional manner at all times as they are representing themselves, SSES and the University. This includes ensuring they adhere to dress code, time keeping and conduct standards at all times.

Absence: Students must inform the placement provider immediately in every circumstance they are off ill or have an accident. In the event of an absence exceeding seven calendar days, a doctor's note must be provided.

Transfers during placement: If a student is transferred to a different location they should inform sportsplacements@worc.ac.uk of the move as soon as possible.

Leaving the placement: In the event of a problem arising students should deal directly with their mentor/supervisor or the appropriate senior manager. If no satisfactory solution is forthcoming from the placement provider, and difficulties continue, students should seek advice and/or assistance from the Work-Based Learning Co-ordinator.

Grievance procedure: Students should check the procedure for raising a grievance with their placement organisation. Information will normally be available in a staff handbook, terms and conditions of employment, staff noticeboard, or from the Personnel/HR Department.

Dismissal: As a member of staff, students will be bound by the company's procedures for dealing with dismissals. This usually results from unsatisfactory behaviour. If students receive a written warning for their behaviour, and dismissal may be indicated, they should contact the Work-Based Learning Co-ordinator for advice.

Redundancy and lay-off: Should a student be faced with redundancy, lay-off or a reduction in their hours of work, they should contact the Work-Based Learning Co-ordinator immediately. Every effort will be made to help the student to secure an alternative placement as soon as possible.

Income tax (paid elements): Income tax is a tax levied directly on personal income. How much income tax students pay in each tax year depends on how much income is above their Personal Allowance and how much of their income falls within each tax band. For more information students can look at the government advice on [Income Tax](#) or they can book an appointment with the money advice team in [Firstpoint](#).

National Insurance Number, bank details, etc: In order for personal details to be processed on the placement provider's payroll system, it is essential that students take their National Insurance Number with them. Students may also require the name, address and current account number of their bank/building society.

Rights at work: Employment rights laws are subject to change, students should follow citizens advice for up to date guidance on their [rights at work](#). A contract is not a piece of paper, a contract consists of an agreement and includes anything said or promised prior to employment, but it is important (for both employers (including placement providers) and employees) to be clear about exactly what has been said or agreed to. It is also important to remember that in any work situation there will be times when students will need to extend their goodwill and flexibility to their placement provider.

Students are entering into a formal agreement for their work placement. It is imperative that they understand the terms and conditions of employment and read their contract of employment before signing it. It is a legally binding document.

Even if students are not given a formal contract, they are entering into an agreement with the placement provider, and this cannot be broken:

- Students are expected to complete the agreed/specified number of weeks/hours in their agreement/contract
- Students must receive the approval of the module leader before they can start working

Students are responsible for ensuring that they know the terms and conditions of employment including, if and how much they are going to be paid for the hours that they are expected to work, and any arrangements for tips or a bonus. Students should be clear and confirm their wage/salary before accepting a placement.

What should a student do if there is an issue while on placement?

Whilst on placement, students are under the day-to-day supervision and guidance of the employing organisation and any mentor assigned to them. They are expected to conform to the normal discipline of the organisation, working the hours specified for the department in which they are employed, and adhering to the normal dress and conduct standards expected of permanent employees.

However, in the event that a problem arises, the student and mentor should normally meet to discuss issues such as role clarity, student behaviour, re-assessment of aims and objectives. If this meeting does not alleviate the problem then it is advised that the placement provider discusses the issue with the Work-Based Learning Co-ordinator and a suitable strategy is agreed between all parties (placement provider, student, module leader and Work-Based Learning Co-ordinator). The Work-Based Learning Co-ordinator will formally record any discussions held. If required, a visit to the placement provider to see the placement provider/mentor and the student can be arranged.

Where students do not feel that their concerns can be directly raised with the mentor or placement provider (possibly because the concern involves dangerous or illegal activity which has come to light) then the whistleblowing policy and procedure of the host organisation should be used, if this exists. However, students are advised to notify the Work-Based Learning Co-ordinator prior to whistleblowing, both in order to seek advice and to ensure that the University is aware of potential issues with a workplace provider. If no disclosure or whistleblowing policy exists within the host organisation, the University procedure can be utilised with advice from Work-Based Learning Co-ordinator.

SPORTS THERAPY PLACEMENTS

Before any sports therapy student can undertake a placement, they must have passed the appropriate modules in year 1 and year 2 as set out by the module leader. By passing these modules, the student gains eligibility for student insurance via the Society of Sports Therapists for a maximum of 250 hours supervised clinical placement. This insurance covers the student provided they are working under the supervision of an appropriately qualified therapist. The Society of Sports Therapists stipulates that this supervisor/mentor must be a Chartered Physiotherapist, or Graduate Sports Therapist practicing in musculoskeletal (MSK) injuries.

The student must complete **a minimum of 200 hours** for the clinical placement module. The student can do this by accumulating a mix of internal hours, external sports therapy hours and professional development hours.

Sports Therapy internal hours

The student's internal hours include injury, massage and neuro clinics. They also include any external events supervised by a member of the University of Worcester sports therapy staff. A form is not required for these placements.

Sports Therapy external hours

For sports therapy external placement hours, the students must be mentored by a practicing sports therapist in MSK injuries qualified to degree level. Examples of this are Graduate Sports Therapist, MSK Physiotherapist and Sports Rehabilitator. The mentor must have appropriate membership to a professional body. A form is required for these placements with supporting documentation. The student is limited to 250 hours, but additional hours can be requested through the module team.

Professional development placement hours

The students are limited to a set number of hours for professional development. These hours must be justified by the student to rationalise how the hours will support their own personal development and sports therapy practice. The mentor must have appropriate qualifications and membership of their professional body where applicable. A form is required for these placements with supporting documentation.

It is important to note that all placement hours need to be carried out with appropriate supervision and all placement hours and activities must be recorded in the required format. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they have received approval for each placement before undertaking that placement. It is also the student's responsibility to maintain a complete record of all placement hours and activity.

See module outline for more details of sports therapy placements.

RELEVANT POLICY AND DOCUMENTATION

- [Policy on the Management of Placement and Work-Based Learning \(October 2020\)](#)
- [Student Placement Conduct and Health and Safety Agreement \(Appendix 3\) \(October 2020\)](#)
- [Accessible High-Quality Placements and Work-Based Learning for All Students](#)
- [Equality of Opportunity Policy Statement \(2010\)](#)
- [Policy for Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults \(2017\)](#)
- [University's Procedure for the Management of Disclosure and Barring Service \(DBS\) Checks \(Due update\)](#)
- [QAA Quality Code for Higher Education](#)
- [UCEA Health and Safety Guidance for the Placement of Higher Education Students](#)
- [ASET Good Practice Guide for Work-Based and Placement Learning in Higher Education \(2013\)](#)
- [ASET Good Practice Guide for Health and Safety for Student Placements \(2016\)](#)
- [ABI guidance on insurance for placements](#)