

Work experience - policy

Department of Education and Training

Contents

1. Summary	3
2. Purpose	3
3. Policy	3
3.1. School work experience orientation program	3
3.2. Workplace observation requirement	5
3.3. Risk mitigation	5
3.4. Placement hours.....	5
3.5. Record keeping requirements.....	6
4. Process	6
4.1. Pre-placement.....	6
4.2. During placement.....	7
4.3. Post-placement.....	8
5. Roles and responsibilities	9
5.1. School principal.....	9
5.2. Work experience coordinator.....	9
5.3. Student.....	9

This policy must be read with the:

- Industry placement - framework
- Industry placement framework – acronyms and definitions
- Industry placement framework – related legislation and policy.

1. Summary

School principals have the flexibility and autonomy to make decisions regarding work experience requirements to suit their learners' needs. However, principals must comply with legislative obligations of:

- the *Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011*
- the *Education Act 2015*
- the *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007*
- the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1992*.

2. Purpose

This policy applies to the implementation and management of work experience programs conducted by Northern Territory (NT) Government schools. Participation in work experience programs is not a compulsory curriculum requirement. However, where such a program is offered, schools must adhere to this policy in conjunction with the Industry placement framework.

This policy provides the must do actions and activities when schools coordinate work experience placements for students, it clearly states the:

- guidance for staff involved in the development, management, and coordination of work experience programs
- defined roles, responsibilities, and expectations for all parties participating in work experience programs.

3. Policy

3.1. School work experience orientation program

To ensure students are adequately prepared for their work experience placement, schools must design and deliver a tailored orientation program. This program should align with the level of understanding, skills, and knowledge of secondary students, particularly those who may be unfamiliar with workplace environments.

If the principal or work experience coordinator determines that a student has not completed the orientation program to a satisfactory standard, the student must not proceed with the placement.

The school must maintain records of students who have completed the orientation program.

The work experience orientation program should include the following considerations:

Topic	Information
Purpose of work experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the purpose of the work experience, including its role in career planning and skill development.

Topic	Information
Rights and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlight the benefits, including gaining workplace insight, improving employability skills, and building industry networks. Students - Outline student responsibilities such as adhering to workplace policies, punctuality, dressing appropriately, and behaving professionally. Host businesses - Brief students on what to expect from their supervisors, including supervision, support, task guidance, a safe work environment and feedback. Schools - Explain the school's role in monitoring placements, addressing concerns, and ensuring a safe experience.
Workplace health and safety	<p>Ensure students understand the importance of safety in the workplace. Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> completing all necessary inductions not participating in any prohibited activities completing the workplace induction, including emergency procedures and hazard awareness proper use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) how to recognise and report unsafe conditions, incidents, or injuries. following instructions only when reasonable and safe ensuring that their actions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons.
Communication and professionalism	<p>Provide tips on professional communication, including how to address supervisors and colleagues respectfully. Encourage students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ask for help or clarification if unsure about tasks maintain confidentiality and adhere to workplace policies highlight the importance of non-verbal communication, such as body language and active listening.
Behavioural expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss appropriate workplace behaviour, including respect for diversity and inclusivity. Address the importance of maintaining a positive attitude and showing initiative. Provide guidelines on the use of personal devices and social media in the workplace.
Reporting absences, incidents and accidents	<p>Clear instructions for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> being aware of emergency contacts, evacuation plans, and first aid protocols reporting all absences, incidents, accidents or unsafe situations immediately to their supervisor and the work experience coordinator.
Administrative requirements	<p>Ensure students are familiar with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the work experience agreement form and its conditions the agreed days and hours and requirement to notify supervisors of absences or lateness

Topic	Information
Reflection and feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> process for documenting hours and days they attended the workplace. Encourage students to keep a journal or log of their activities and reflections during the placement. Explain the process of post-placement evaluation, including feedback from both the employer and the student.
Optional activities	<p>Schools may include interactive components to reinforce orientation topics, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> role-playing workplace scenarios case studies of common challenges students might face Q&A or frequently asked questions.

3.2. Workplace observation requirement

The principal or work experience coordinator must exercise reasonable judgment when determining if a workplace observation is necessary. This decision may be based on prior knowledge of the workplace and the nature of its activities. For identified low-risk industries or organisations, an onsite inspection may not be required, and alternative measures – such as a telephone discussion to clarify the nature of the work or the submission of relevant emergency procedure documents – may suffice.

If a workplace observation or risk assessment is deemed necessary, it must be conducted before the commencement of the placement.

Employers who have hosted a vocational work placement student may have already undergone a workplace observation with an Industry engagement coordinator. Schools can access this information by emailing vwp.doe@education.nt.gov.au.

3.3. Risk mitigation

Risks must be assessed with consideration given to the student's maturity and capabilities. If the level of risk cannot be reasonably justified by the expected educational outcomes, the student must not be placed with the host workplace.

If a significant level of risk is identified, the principal or work experience coordinator must determine appropriate measures to reduce the risk as far as reasonably practicable. There are minimum requirements that apply to identified risk managed activities, these are detailed in the Industry placement framework.

All restrictions that apply to the placement must be clearly outlined in writing on the work experience agreement form and accepted by the host business, student, parent, and school.

3.4. Placement hours

Placements should typically occur during the normal operating hours of the relevant industry and should avoid weekends or school holidays. However, principals may approve special arrangements for individual students if deemed appropriate, provided that any additional risks are identified and effectively mitigated.

For students aged 14, placement hours must be restricted to between 6:00 am and 6:00 pm on school days.

The principal, work experience coordinator or another appropriate member of staff must always be contactable when a student is on placement. The host business, student and parent must be provided with the necessary contact details prior to placement.

3.5. Record keeping requirements

The principal and work experience coordinator must maintain necessary records which can verify that the requirements of the Industry placement framework and Work experience policy have been fulfilled.

Types of documentation that should be kept, include but not limited to:

Document	Additional information
Work experience agreement form	The form must be fully completed prior to the placement commencing. Including student, host business, parent and principal or work experience coordinator signatures.
Workplace observation	Completed observations should be submitted to vwp.doe@education.nt.gov.au .
Risk assessment	Saved alongside the workplace observation and submitted to vwp.doe@education.nt.gov.au .
Special conditions letter	The letter must be fully signed by student, parent, and principal prior to the placement commencing.
Visit or contact records	This may include a register, or a form completed when the student is visited or contacted while on placement.
Industry placement reflection	A copy should be provided to students for their own records.
Incident reports	Ensuring all student accidents, injuries, and incidents as per the department's Recording and reporting student injuries - guidelines and procedures .

4. Process

4.1. Pre-placement

Who	What
Work experience coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver and record student's completion of the school's work experience orientation program. • Assess the need, and where necessary conduct a workplace observation or risk assessment. • Ensure that students who will be engaged in work experience in child related employment, hold a current Working with children clearance notice or exemption. • Ensure a copy of the work experience agreement form is fully completed, signed by all parties involved, and a completed copy is supplied to each party.

Who	What
Host business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform staff about the placement's start and end dates, as well as their expected involvement. • Reiterate to staff that students are not employees and will have limited knowledge and experience of workplaces and must be treated in accordance with their age, experience and abilities. • Discuss any additional student requirements with appropriate workplace staff and in doing so require staff to ensure that a student's privacy is protected, and that confidential information is not unnecessarily disclosed. • Prepare a range of opportunities for students to work shadow employees to give students an insight into as many aspects of the workplace as possible. • Appoint a workplace supervisor and a back-up supervisor. • Determine which employees the student will work shadow and ensure those staff are aware of their role in providing the student with insight into work practices. • Organise a workspace, including laptop or desktop, and building access for the student.
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the school's work experience orientation program. • Contact the host business the week prior to commencing to confirm placement details.
Parent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the student has reliable and safe transportation to and from the workplace.

4.2. During placement

Who	What
Host business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the first day meet and greet the student, conduct a workplace induction, and explain workplace practices to minimise risks to the student's health and safety. • Discuss the types of tasks that a student will be expected to do. • Introduce the student to any supervisors and co-workers as appropriate. • Ensure that the student is adequately supervised at all times. • Monitor the student's progress and discuss with the school staff member on their visits or phone calls. • Conduct ongoing monitoring of risks and hazards to ensure the health and safety of the student. • Give feedback to both the student and the school as necessary. • Immediately notify the school of any student absences, accidents, or incidents. • Ensure the student is not paid to perform any duties for the host workplace. • Ensure that the student only travels in a comprehensively insured, registered company or departmental vehicle with an appropriately licenced driver.

Who	What
Work experience coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the host business on the first day of a placement to confirm attendance and address any issues. • Visit or contact the host workplace to monitor student progress and address any issues. • Further visits must be made where an issue has been raised by either the host workplace or the student to ensure the matter has been resolved. • Placements must cease immediately if an issue that may affect the safety or wellbeing of a student cannot be satisfactorily resolved.
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with all reasonable and safe directions given by their supervisor. • Reiterate to the host workplace any medical conditions or other special needs that may affect their placement as required. • Take necessary care for their own health and safety as well as the health or safety of other persons in the workplace. • Immediately report any hazards to their workplace supervisor. • Notify their workplace supervisor and work experience coordinator if they are going to be absent or late to placement. • Immediately report any accidents or incidents to their workplace supervisor and work experience coordinator.

4.3. Post-placement

Who	What
Host business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide feedback to the student regarding their time in the workplace and provide information about employment pathways. • Complete the supervisor feedback form and return to school.
Work experience coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the host business if further training or employment was offered to the student and provide information regarding notification of arrangements, or School Based Apprenticeship or Traineeships (SBAT). • Debrief with the student to ensure whether the host business and/or workplace is appropriate for future placements.
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the host business and thank them for the opportunity. • Complete the Industry placement reflection and debrief with work experience coordinator.

5. Roles and responsibilities

These roles and responsibilities are in addition to those outlined in the Industry placement framework.

5.1. School principal

The school principal as the instructional leader of the school is responsible for:

- nominating the role of work experience coordinator to a responsible and appropriate staff member
- ensuring work experience programs adhere to the Industry placement framework, the Work experience policy, and relevant legislation
- approving work experience programs that align with an educational outcome or transition beyond school into further employment or training
- ensuring the student is visited or contacted at least once during the placement by an appropriate staff member
- approving a work experience orientation program that ensures students are adequately prepared for the workplace
- ensuring the health and safety of students while on work experience, as far as reasonably practicable.

5.2. Work experience coordinator

The school's nominated work experience coordinator is responsible for:

- developing and delivering a work experience orientation program to ensure all students are adequately prepared for the workplace
- providing students, parents and host businesses with the necessary information about the work experience placement and ensuring they are aware of their responsibilities
- retaining a copy of completed work experience agreement forms, risk assessments, and other relevant documentation
- visiting or contacting the student in the workplace at least once during the placement
- maintaining a register of high-risk workplaces that require risk management strategies.

5.3. Student

The student is responsible for completing the work experience orientation program.

Document title	Work experience - policy
Contact details	Department of Education and Training – Skills NT branch
Approved by	Deputy Chief Executive, Skills Pathways and Quality
Date approved	25 March 2025
TRM number	50-D25-16566 in file 50-F25-1881

Version	Date	Author	Changes made
1	February 2025	Skills NT	First version