

Work experience - guidelines and procedures

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Acronyms	Full form
IEO	Industry Engagement Officer
NT	Northern Territory
NTG	Northern Territory Government
SCUBA	Self-contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus
TRM	Territory Records Manager
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WHS	Work Health and Safety

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This document should be read with the [Work experience policy](#).

1. Introduction

These guidelines and procedures apply to the conduct of work experience programs by Northern Territory (NT) Government schools.

Work experience programs are not a compulsory curriculum requirement. Where such a program exists these guidelines must be followed.

The guidelines and procedures:

- provide schools with guidance for those who develop, manage and coordinate work experience programs
- describe roles, responsibilities and expectations for all parties involved in work experience programs.

2. Definitions

Fit and proper person – means a person who has the attributes of good character, diligence, honesty, integrity and judgement.

In deciding if a person is a fit and proper person to supervise a student, a manager must:

- consider the person's criminal history. Have they been convicted of a disqualifying offence as specified in the [Care and Protection of Children \(Screening\) Regulations 2010](#).
- consider any behaviour of the person that:
 - does not meet the standard of behaviour reasonably expected of a workplace supervisor.
 - shows that the person is not of good character.

Host workplace – is a workplace hosting work experience students.

Working with children check, an 'Ochre Card' – is a photo identification, valid for two years, that provides proof an individual has passed the Working with Children screening process and received a Clearance Notice. In the NT, it is a legal requirement for all persons over the age of 15 undertaking paid or voluntary child-related work to hold a current Ochre Card. Individuals may be exempt from holding an Ochre Card if they:

- are engaged only as a volunteer worker
- do not participate in overnight stays
- are a parent of at least one of the children with whom, the individual may have contact with while in this role
- are under the direct supervision of someone who holds a current Ochre Card
- are not required by their employer to hold a current Ochre Card.

Parent – means a child's father, mother or any other person who has parental responsibility for the child, including a person who is regarded as a parent of the child under Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander customary law or tradition.

Parental responsibility – means that the person:

- a) has daily care and, has control of the child, or
- b) is entitled to exercise all the powers and rights in relation to, and has the full responsibility for all aspects of, the long term care and development of the child, or
- c) has daily care and control of the child and the entitlement and responsibilities as mentioned at (b)
- d) and includes a person who has been given the above responsibilities under another state or territory law.

School – refers to a middle, senior secondary or comprehensive NTG school, or Community Education Centre.

Work experience – is a school-based educational program which enables students to undertake short-term unpaid industry placements and is not the same as a Structured Work Placement undertaken by students enrolled in VET delivered to secondary students programs.

Work Experience Coordinator – refers to the school staff member nominated by the principal as the work experience coordinator to coordinate work experience for students enrolled at their school.

Workplace observation – is the risk management process undertaken to determine the suitability of the workplace for a student to attend for work experience, and is done on a case by case basis considering the student's age, maturity, experience, health, and physical and intellectual ability.

Workplace supervisor – refers to an adult employee(s) of the host workplace assigned to supervise a student undertaking work experience.

Important note:

Host employers, are not required to hold a current Working with Children Clearance Notice unless the workplace or its employees are engaged in child related employment as defined by [Section 185 of the Care and Protection of Children Act 2007](#).

3. Excluded activities

Students must not be placed with or remain with a host workplace if there is reason to believe that the:

- a) student cannot be appropriately supervised at all times
- b) workplace supervisor has not provided the student with workplace induction
- c) appropriate industry or business documentation including any legislative requirements have not been approved
- d) host workplace does not hold adequate insurance policies or arrangements
- e) student will be selling or delivering door to door
- f) student is required to perform a task or operate machinery or a vehicle, for which they do not hold the appropriate licence or certification
- g) student will be required to serve liquor and is under the age of 18 years, or is over 18 years of age and does not hold a current Responsible Service of Alcohol certificate
- h) student will be required to operate on or travel in an aircraft or helicopter that is not a commercial flight, with the exception of students undertaking a [Defence Work Experience Program](#) with the Department of Defence
- i) student will be required to operate or be a passenger in any non-commercial watercraft, with the exception of students undertaking a Defence Work Experience Program. Commercial watercraft cannot travel more than 12 nautical miles off shore

- j) student will be required to work underwater using snorkelling or SCUBA equipment
- k) student will be required to work on actual mine sites, whether above or below ground, gas plants or in abattoirs. Students may be placed with host workplaces engaged in these industries provided they do not have access to the actual sites – for example office or other ancillary work associated with such industries may be considered.

Important note:

Host workplaces require public liability and workers compensation insurance to cover accidents or incidents which occur in a situation where the host workplace has not adhered to these guidelines.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Principals are responsible for:

- a school's work experience program. If possible, the principal may rely on the Work Experience Coordinator or nominated person where resources allow to develop, implement, coordinate and monitor the work experience program
- ensuring work experience programs adhere to the policy and guidelines
- approving the work experience program developed by the Work Experience Coordinator or nominated person
- ensuring the health and safety of students on work experience so far as is reasonably practical
- taking all necessary and reasonable steps to avoid foreseeable risk of harm and injury to students relating to the:
 - likelihood of injury occurring
 - potential seriousness of the harm that could occur
 - measures that can reasonably be taken to mitigate potential risks. Relevant factors for consideration include the student's age, maturity, experience, health, and physical and intellectual ability.
- delegating the approval of placements for students 15 years and older to the work experience coordinator as required.

Important note:

Only the principal may approve a placement for a 14 year old student.

Work experience coordinators are responsible for:

- developing and ensuring the school has a work experience orientation program for all students to complete pre-placement
- ensuring students are prepared for the work experience placement
- being the main point of contact regarding student issues and concerns while the student is on placement
- ensuring that students are visited at least once during their placement by an appropriate member of staff. Where travel time or another relevant factor precludes an actual visit then a student and their host workplace may be contacted by telephone

- recording accidents and incidents as reported by the workplace supervisor or the student as per the department's [Recording and reporting student Injuries guidelines and procedures](#)
- ensuring work experience placement timing considers community events and cultural or religious obligations
- ensuring that parents and students fulfil their responsibilities as identified in these guidelines. This may require the use of an interpreter such as the Aboriginal and Islander Education Worker or Community Liaison Officer.

Students are responsible for:

- completing the school-based orientation program before commencing work experience placement
- understanding they will have additional responsibilities during their work experience placement as they will not be directly supervised by their teachers
- meeting the expectations and requirements of their host workplace regarding their conduct and behaviour
- understanding their responsibility to report accidents and incidents to their work place supervisor and school Work Experience Coordinator.

Parents are responsible for:

- ensuring appropriate arrangements for the student to travel to and from the host workplace
- organising and meeting the costs of any accommodation required
- giving their consent to the placement by signing the form.

Host workplace is responsible for:

- ensuring that the assigned supervisor is a fit and proper person who understands their obligations as outlined in the Requirements of a Host Workplace section of these guidelines
- taking all reasonable steps to avoid foreseeable risks of loss or injury to students while on work experience and working closely with the work experience coordinator to this end, both prior to and during placement
- ensuring the privacy of students is protected and information provided about a student is treated confidentially and only used for purposes directly related to the placement
- holding current public liability and workers compensation insurance
- ensuring that students are given a workplace induction on their first placement day
- providing meaningful tasks for young people to investigate the world of work both general and industry specific.

Important note:

Students shall not be paid in any way while participating in work experience. Payment by a host workplace will mean the student is considered an employee and the responsibility will rest with the employers to provide workers' compensation and public liability insurance for any accident or injury.

5. Procedures for work experience

5.1. Pre-placement requirements

5.1.1. Ochre card

For placements where the host workplace engages in child-related employment the work experience coordinator must ensure that students who will be engaged in work experience in child-related employment, hold a current Ochre Card or exemption as per Section 186 of the Care and Protection of Children Act **Error! Bookmark not defined.**. The Working with Children Clearance Notices (Ochre Card) Fact Sheet provides further information. The fact sheet is available to staff on the Education intranet.

5.1.2. School-based work experience orientation program

All students must undertake an appropriate school based work experience orientation program that addresses issues relevant to their safety and wellbeing while on a placement.

Allow adequate time to ensure that students are aware of:

- (a) their roles, responsibilities and rights related to work health and safety in the workplace
- (b) procedures to follow if they feel unsafe or uncomfortable in the workplace for any reason
- (c) any specific requirements of the particular workplace e.g. industrial safety issues.

The school is to maintain records of students who have undertaken orientation program.

Where the principal or the work experience coordinator is not satisfied that a student has properly completed the orientation program, the student should not participate in a placement until such time as they have done so.

If a decision is made to not allow a student to participate, the student or their parent are to be given an opportunity to have input before a final decision is made.

5.1.3. Workplace observation

The principal or the work experience coordinator should exercise reasonable judgement in deciding if it is necessary to conduct a workplace observation of the host workplace. This may be determined based on prior knowledge of, and the activities conducted by, the host workplace. Alternative to an onsite inspection, a telephone conversation to identify the nature of work undertaken on the premises and the submission of relevant emergency procedure documents may be sufficient in identified low risk industries/organisations.

Where the principal or work experience coordinator considers it necessary to undertake a workplace observation, this must be conducted before a placement commences.

A list of factors to be considered when determining the suitability of a workplace are identified in document titled Work Experience Host WHS observation checklist.

Important note:

Employers who have previously hosted a structured work placement student may have already undergone a formal risk assessment with an Industry Engagement Officer (IEO). Schools are able to access this information by emailing pathways.det@nt.gov.au

5.1.4. Risk mitigation

If a significant level of risk is identified through workplace observation, the principal or the work experience coordinator must, depending on the level of risk identified, place appropriate limits on the placement. Such limits must be clearly communicated in writing and accepted by the host workplace, the student and their parent.

Risks must always be assessed in light of the maturity level and ability of a student and potential educational benefits and outcomes. Where the level of risk cannot be justified in terms of the desired educational outcomes, then a student must not be placed with a particular host workplace.

5.1.5. Placement hours

Placements should generally not be outside of normal operating hours for that industry, on a weekend or during school holidays. However, where a principal considers it appropriate to do so, then they may make special arrangements for an individual student provided any additional risks are identified and satisfactorily addressed. Students 14 years of age should only work between 6am and 6pm on school days.

5.1.6. Insurance

NTG self-insurance arrangements are contingent upon the host workplace observing the policy and guidelines. Principals must be satisfied that the school's work experience program is planned and conducted accordingly.

5.1.7. Documentation

The [School Work Experience Agreement Form](#) must be fully completed, including all signatures, prior to placement commencing.

5.1.8. Interstate placements

Students should only undertake an interstate placement in exceptional circumstances – for example, where an interstate host workplace may be more appropriate in the specific circumstances of the student and more suitable than a Northern Territory host workplace.

5.1.9. Host workplace arrangements

The host workplace will:

- (a) inform the host workplace staff when a placement will commence/end and what their involvement will be
- (b) make it clear to host workplace staff that students are not employees and will have limited knowledge and experience of workplaces and must at all times be treated in accordance with their age, experience and abilities

- (c) discuss any special student requirements with appropriate workplace staff and in doing so require staff to ensure a student's privacy is protected and confidential information is not unnecessarily disclosed
- (d) provide a range of opportunities for students to work shadow employees to give students an insight into as many aspects of the workplace as possible
- (e) appoint a workplace supervisor and a back-up supervisor
- (f) determine which employee(s) the student will work shadow and ensure those staff are aware of their role in providing the student with insight into work practices
- (g) organise a work space for the student

5.2. Requirements during placements

5.2.1. Host workplace requirements

- (a) on the first day meet and greet the student, conduct an induction to the workplace and its practices to ensure risks to the health and safety of the student are minimised
- (b) discuss the types of tasks the student will be expected to do
- (c) introduce the student to any supervisors and co-workers as appropriate
- (d) ensure that the student is appropriately always supervised
- (e) monitor the student's progress and discuss with the school staff member on their visit or phone call
- (f) conduct ongoing monitoring of risks and hazards to ensure the health and safety of the student
- (g) sign the time sheet/record of work sheet daily
- (h) give feedback to both student and school as necessary
- (i) inform the school of any unexplained student absences as a matter of urgency
- (j) inform the school immediately of any accidents or incidents involving the student
- (k) ensure that during a placement a student is not paid to perform any duties for the host workplace
- (l) ensure that students only travel in a comprehensively insured, registered company or departmental vehicle with an appropriately licenced driver.

5.2.2. School requirements

The principal must ensure that a school staff member:

- (a) Contacts the host workplace on the first day of a placement to ascertain that the student has arrived and address any issues.
- (b) Attend all local placements at least once to monitor student progress and each student must be contacted during such a visit. Where travel time or another relevant factor precludes an actual visit, then a student and the host workplace may be contacted by phone. It is essential that the student is provided a private space in the workplace to enable a full and frank phone discussion with the school staff member about their placement. If the school staff member has any concerns arising out of such contact they must take appropriate action, including making a personal visit if necessary.
- (c) 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.

- (d) Placements must cease immediately if an issue that may affect the safety or wellbeing of a student cannot be satisfactorily resolved.

5.2.3. Student requirements

The student must:

- (a) comply with all reasonable directions given by their supervisor
- (b) display the expected behaviour
- (c) inform the host workplace of any medical conditions or other special needs that may affect their placement
- (d) take necessary care for their own health and safety as well as the health and safety of other persons in the workplace
- (e) advise their workplace supervisor and school-based work experience coordinator if they are going to be absent or late to placement
- (f) report any accidents or incidents to their workplace supervisor and school work experience coordinator.

5.3. Post-placement requirements

5.3.1. Host workplace requirements

The workplace supervisor should:

- (a) discuss the work experience placement with the student to identify possible employment pathways
- (b) complete the host workplace evaluation form and return to school.

5.3.2. School requirements

Ensure that a school staff member:

- (a) contacts the host workplace to ensure that the student evaluation form is properly completed
- (b) contacts or visits the host workplace to follow up and discuss any possible employment opportunities available for the student
- (c) debrief the student and ensure that relevant information is taken into account in determining whether a host workplace is appropriate for future placements.

5.3.3. Recordkeeping requirements

Records must be kept by the school that will:

- (a) identify the type and frequency of work experience placements and the number and year level of participating students
- (b) confirm the requirements of these guidelines and the Work experience policy **Error! Bookmark not defined.** have been fully complied with
- (c) show that all accidents and injuries were dealt with in accordance with school, department and NT WorkSafe requirements.

6. Related policy, legislation and documents

6.1. Policy

- Work experience policy
- Recording and reporting student injuries guidelines and procedures

6.2. Legislation

- Anti-Discrimination Act 1992
- Education Act 2015
- Education Regulations 2015, Regulation 5(c)
- Care and Protection of Children Act 2007
- Care and Protection of Children (Screening) Regulations 2010
- Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011

6.3. Documents

- School Work Experience Agreement Form **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- Requirements of a Host Workplace
- Working with Children Clearance Notices (Ochre Card) Fact Sheet