

**RICHMOND
EDUCATION
BUSINESS
PARTNERSHIP**

**Richmond Education
Business Partnership:
Work Experience Policy**

Work experience is governed by the Education Act 1996, as amended by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Work experience may be defined as:

“A placement on employer’s premises in which a student carries out a particular task or duty, or a range of tasks and duties, more or less as would an employee, but with an emphasis on the learning aspects of the experience.”

Work experience placements are permitted by law only for students during Key Stage 4 and beyond. Students under school leaving age may take part only in schemes for which the arrangements have been made as part of a student’s education, by the Local Education Authority, or the school’s governing body on its behalf.

Work experience placements will normally be for a minimum of five days, however, where the type of placement requires it, arrangements may be made for periods of less than this. For example, extended work experience is encouraged by the government as a realistic alternative for students who may benefit from a more work-related focus in the school week alongside a revised curriculum for the individual.

Richmond Education Business Partnership (REBP) is part of the Children’s Services and Culture Directorate of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and supports schools in developing their work related learning curriculum and business links. REBP is the main point of contact for school work experience coordinators and employers. A database of businesses and organisations who offer work experience is maintained by REBP and is published to participating schools at the start of their programme. REBP provides schools with all the necessary documentation that validates each placement and confirms that the employer is willing to accept the student. It also provides the required evidence that health and safety and suitability checks have been completed for each employer and that child protection issues have been addressed. .

Schools participating in the standard mainstream block work experience programme must submit details of their students at least nine months before the start of the actual placement. It is intended that that all paperwork and confirmation of placements is completed two weeks before the experience. Where schools submit applications after this deadline, REBP will endeavour to meet school requirements and ensure standards are maintained.

The submission of paperwork and applications for other work experience programmes, such as extended and the SEN programme will vary and deadlines can be negotiated on an individual basis.

REBP is responsible for:

- Confirming placements for work experience programmes.
- Targeting employers for placements.
- Encouraging students to find their own placements that match their individual needs.
- Carrying out suitability checks with all new employers who offer work experience placements. This will include ensuring that the employer effectively manages learners and young person's health, safety and welfare, insurance cover in respect of employer liability and public liability is in place, agreeing job descriptions with the employer and addressing child protection issues. Schools will be notified when a placement is considered to be inappropriate.
- Explaining to the employer the purpose and aims of the work experience programme.
- Ensuring employers are aware of their responsibilities and duty of care and sign the REBP work experience agreement.
- Ensuring a re visit programme is in place according to DCSF guidelines for revisiting and monitoring of employers.
- Ensuring the parent or carer agree to their son or daughter taking part in the work experience programme and agree with the placement that has been arranged for them by signing the REBP parental consent section of the work experience agreement form.
- Ensuring that REBP team members responsible for carrying out employer suitability checks receive relevant training and refresher training when necessary, in order for them to carry out their role proficiently.
- Ensuring employers have the necessary advice and support available throughout a student's placement with their company.
- Maintaining regular contact with all school work experience co-ordinators, particularly during the lead in and during their school's work experience programme.
- Holding a termly meeting for all school work experience co-ordinators.
- Offering a one day training course to newly appointed school coordinators and refresher training for co-ordinators in post.
- Ensuring SEN students are given priority and the necessary support to enable them to engage in the work experience programmes offered by REBP.
- Providing a system of ensuring disengaged students are included in the programmes and receive relevant support as a priority.

REBP will:

- provide enhancement of the work experience programme by attending a work experience evening for parents and briefing and debriefing sessions for pupils;
- arrange work experience programmes for pupils engaged on diploma qualifications;
- review and update policies and procedures to meet the constant changes in work experience development; and
- provide a one stop shop for enquiries from schools, pupils, parents and employers.

The following publications provide further information and can be obtained either direct from issuing office or through the REBP:

Work Experience: A Guide for Employers
DfES ref. 1471-2005DOC-EN

Work Experience: A Guide for Secondary Schools
DfES ref. SPD/WES/01/02(rev)

Work-Related Learning and the Law
DfES ref. DfES/0475/2004

Work Experience and the Law
Anthony Johns with Andrew Miller