# Placements and Work-based Learning Policy

### Careers and Employability

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| Responsible Office | Careers and Employability |
| Responsible Officer | Barrie Grey - Head of Careers and Employability |
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**Placement and Work-based Learning Policy**

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**Appendix 3 – Placement Agreement:** To be completed by students in advance of the placement (or equivalent document for PGCE)

**Appendix 4 – Placement DetailsForm:** To be completed by students in advance of the placement

**Appendix 5 – Health and Safety Booklet:** To be read by students in advance of the placement

**Appendix 6 – Placement Induction Checklist:** To be completed by student at start of placement

**Appendix 7 – Placement Provider Feedback Form:** To be completed by the Placement Provider at the end of the placement *(one form for each student)*

**Appendix 8 – Students’ Placement Feedback Form:** To be completed by every student at the end of the placement

## 1. PURPOSE

1a. Bath Spa University recognises and values the importance of placement and work-based learning. The University seeks to maximise the opportunities for students to develop their professional attributes through experience of work-based settings.

1b. The aim of this Policy is to promote best practice in the provision and management of placement and work-based learning opportunities, in order to protect the interests of the University, its students and placement providers. The policy:

i. Ensures compliance with the OfS Conditions of Registration(A1, B1, B3 & B4), which is a legal requirement upon the University

ii. Promotes best practice across all subjects and fields within Bath Spa University and its formal Partner Providers

iii. Reduces institutional risk, both in terms of the University’s legal responsibilities and of the reputational risk which arises from outsourcing learning opportunities

1c. This policy has been informed by the relevant Indicators set out in the OfS Conditions of Registration (specifically conditions A1 in terms of placement impact on the university Access and Participation Plan; B1 in terms of the impact of work-based learning on a ‘high quality academic experience’; B3 in terms of ‘successful outcomes for all students’; and B4 in terms of qualifications holding their value in particular when awarded with a ‘Professional Placement Year’) and best practice guidelines defined by the professional placements body, ASET. Additionally, the policy has been written to align as closely as possible with the QAA Code, Advice and Guidance: Work-based Learning and subsequent good practice defined by the QAA.

1d. External reference points such as the requirements of any Professional and Statutory Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) must also be adhered to.

1e. All Bath Spa University programmes which include any aspect of placement or work-based learning, including those delivered by formal Partner Providers, are required to comply with this policy. All work experience placements, including those in schools, are required to comply with this Policy whether or not they are part of a module or assessed.

### 1.1 Principles

This policy establishes principles to assure the quality of the learning opportunities offered to students:

1.1a The University and its academic staff remain responsible for the quality of the learning opportunities provided on placements and for any assessment undertaken as a part of that placement, whether formative or summative.

1.1b Placement Providers, whether small businesses, individuals or larger employers (including schools), take responsibility for the welfare and day to day supervision of the students on placement with them.

1.1c Students have responsibility for fulfilling the requirements of any placement and of conducting themselves in a professional manner, as described in the agreement they sign in advance of the commencement of any placement (Appendix 3).

1.1d Courses and modules containing work-based and/or placement learning should have clearly defined intended learning outcomes (ILOs) which should identify the knowledge and skills that students will achieve.

1.1e Module Co-ordinators (or equivalent) are responsible for providing comprehensive information to students to support them in their placements. The Placement Handbook template (Appendix 1) should be adapted to their module and made available to students well in advance of the commencement of the placement. In certain cases, such as for school placements, a similar handbook will be provided which covers the same information. For placements which fall outside of a module, but are arranged by the University (such as funded placement schemes run by Careers & Employability) the same template can be used - adapted to remove defined ILOs and assessment - to provide a more generic form of handbook.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

**2a. Placement -** For the purposes of this policy, any form of work-based learning or professional development opportunity is described as a placement. The University defines a placement as follows:

*Work based and/or placement learning is usually taken as part of a programme of study at the University. The University would define work- based and/or placement learning as any situation where a student works or studies, ordinarily in a non-University location (can be remote/virtual/working from home), in an approved situation whether in the UK or overseas, and where learning outcomes contribute to the overall aims of their programme of study, and are assessed.*

*This could take the form of a year spent studying in a different institution, work undertaken over an entire academic year as part of a sandwich course, work during a whole year (as in PGCE), external engagement with professional practitioners, work placements offered by an employer or a short block of work. The placement may be paid or unpaid.*

**2b. Student -** for the purposes of this policy, anyone undertaking a course of study at Bath Spa University or one of its Partner Providers, including Bath Spa Teachers, is referred to as a student. This includes graduates and postgraduates who are on a funded placement scheme.

**2c. Partner Provider** – a formal partner, such as an FE college, with which Bath Spa University offers higher education provision

**2e. Placement Provider** – a company, school, individual or other organisation which offers a placement or work-based learning opportunity to the students of Bath Spa University and its Partner Providers.

**2f. School** - for the purposes of this policy, the term “school” includes Early Years settings, as well as all schools and post-16 education settings.

**2g. Placement Support Tutor/Module Co-ordinator** – the designated member of academic staff with responsibility for supporting placement opportunities for a particular module or programme of study, or other formal initiative of the University (such as GALA).

## 3. POLICY

### 3.1 Scope

3.1a. This policy applies to all placements undertaken by students, which normally take place outside the University/Partner Provider and involve the co-operation of a third party, including schools. In such situations, students may not be under the day-to-day supervision of University/Partner Provider staff.

3.1b. This policy also covers placements which fall outside the formal requirements of a course of study, as long as they are organised or approved by a member of staff of the University.

### 3.2 Roles and responsibilities

**3.2a. Responsibilities of the University:**

i. To provide a programme of learning that will enable students to develop and document their skills and knowledge.

ii. For all placements, to appoint a designated member of University/Partner Provider staff as Placements Support Tutor to oversee the placement and communicate with students during the placement.

*NB The following responsibilities will normally be fulfilled by the Module Co-ordinator, Placement Support Tutor, or equivalent.*

iii. To ensure accurate, complete and up-to-date records of student placements are kept, including a Placement Details Form and a Student Placement Feedback Form (Appendices 4 and 8, to be completed by each student, excluding those on non-assessed school placements). For Bath Spa Teachers, this is covered by the weekly reviews they are required to write while on placement.

iv. To provide information to research students on placements concerning general principles of research integrity and ethics and, where appropriate, to support the student in applying for University ethical approval for placement research activities.

v. To signpost the full range of support services available to students before and during the placement, including guidance for finding and securing placements, dealing with practical considerations, insurance and finding accommodation.

vi. To obtain an initial health and safety assessment of each placement, except for schools, and ensure that any identified risks are appropriately managed by the Placement Provider prior to approving a placement.

vii. To ensure that the Placement Provider (but not schools or early years settings) completes a Health and Safety Risk Assessment Form (Appendix 2). See also p. 6 of this policy.

viii. To provide information to students on general health and safety prior to their placement (see Appendix 5).

ix. To provide a Placement Handbook specific to the placement (see point 5, above).

x. To ensure that Intended Learning Outcomes and assessment requirements are understood by both students and Placement Providers.

xi. To signpost specialist advice and guidance on access requirements and reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010 for disabled students.

xii. To provide support to students and/or Placement Providers if any difficulties arise.

**3.2b Responsibilities of the Student to the University or Partner Provider:**

i. To attend briefing sessions and access all provided information.

ii. To represent the University by conducting themselves professionally at all times.

iii. To inform the University/Partner Provider of any personal factors (such as health, disability, linguistic or cultural) that may affect the level of risk or may require adjustments to support them in the placement.

iv. To complete all reports and records for the University or Collaborative Partner, including a Placement Details Form (Appendix 4) before starting the placement and a Student Placement Feedback Form (Appendix 8) at the end of the placement, or the equivalent for school placements and Global Citizenship.

v. To consult with the University/Partner Provider before making any changes in the terms and duration of the placement.

vi. To report any incidents in which they are involved and any health and safety concerns that are not addressed by their Placement Provider to the University/Partner Provider.

**3.2c Responsibilities of the Student to the Placement Provider:**

i. To abide by all rules regarding health and safety requirements, and other practices and procedures, of the Placement Provider.

ii. To conduct themselves in a professional and appropriate manner at all times.

iii. To attend as required on the placement and to inform the Placement Provider in good time  if they are unable to attend due to sickness or any other reason.

iv. To carry out the work programme agreed with the Placement Provider under the supervision of the specified supervisor(s).

v. To inform the Placement Provider of any access or support needs that may require reasonable adjustments.

vi. To report any concerns about health and safety at their placement to the Placement Provider.

v.ii. To follow the safeguarding principles, processes and procedures put in place by the employer, where applicable.

**3.2d. Responsibilities of the Placement Provider:**

i. To liaise with the Module Co-ordinator (or equivalent) to plan the work programme and associated health and safety training to be undertaken by the student.

ii. To provide the student with a full and clear induction to the organisation and its working practices, including health and safety arrangements, fire precautions and emergency evacuation arrangements, how to report accidents, incidents and unsafe conditions.

iii. To ensure the student is fully briefed on the Placement Provider’s safeguarding policies and procedures at the start of the placement.

iv. To nominate a supervisor who will conduct or make arrangements for day-to-day supervision of the student including instruction regarding hazards and health and safety precautions.

iv. To comply with health and safety legislation.

v. To comply with government advice on safety procedures for Covid-19.

vi. To ensure that opportunities do not exceed 15 hours per week during term time (except where the working hours are stipulated in the module or the placement constitutes the main learning activity at that time, e.g. Professional Placement Module), and do not exceed any known visa restrictions of the student.

vii. Students on placement, whether paid or unpaid, should be treated like any other employee of the organisation, with the same rights. Employers should ensure that students are covered by the same insurance i.e. Employers’ Liability Insurance for the duration of their placement.

viii. For research placements, to comply with ethical approval policies and procedures, and (where appropriate) to support the student in applying for ethical approval in relation to their placement activities.

ix. To facilitate access to the student for visits by the Placements Support Tutor (where appropriate).

x. In any case of serious accidents or incidents involving the student, or breaches of discipline by the student, to advise and consult with the University/Partner Provider.

xi. To participate fully in the documentation and dissemination process, including (for non-school placements) the completion of a Health and Safety Risk Assessment Form (Appendix 2) and a Placement Provider Feedback Form (Appendix 7) for each student.

xii. To provide access to all relevant records maintained during the placement to the Placements Support Tutor and the placement supervisor except, in the case of the Placements Support Tutor, where there is an issue of commercial secrecy or security.

### 3.3 Managing placements

**3.3a Risk assessment**

i. Guidance from the funding councils and [ASET](https://www.asetonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/e-ASET-Health-Safety-for-Student-Placements-2016.pdf) has emphasised the need for HEIs to take a risk-based approach to student placements. The possible risks relate to injury/ill health; legal liability, both criminal and civil; and business risk:

“Everyone involved in a placement has an ethical responsibility to do what they can to reduce the chances of harm to the student and the harm that a student may do to others. HEP staff can influence these matters and this document provides practical guidance to help them. It should be noted that, arising from the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, there is also a legal responsibility for HEPs in the UK to do this.”

ii. The following undesirable outcomes could arise from a placement:

* The student could be injured or suffer ill health as a result of working at a placement provider
* The student could be injured or suffer ill health while on placement but not as a result of working at the placement provider
* The actions of the student could cause injury or ill health to others, damage to property, or loss of income to a business

iii. If any of these were to occur, criminal or civil action might be taken against the student, the Placement Provider or its employees, or the University/Partner Provider or its employees, depending on the circumstances.

iv. The  benefits  of  a  risk-based  approach  are  that  requirements for  lower  risk placements are minimised, whilst resources are concentrated on those placements likely to be higher risk.

v. What needs to be risk assessed?

It is recommended that the following six health and safety factors applicable to all placements (except for those based in schools) are considered in the risk assessment and review process (see the Health and Safety and Risk Assessment Form, Appendix 2):

* Work
* Travel and Transportation
* Location and/or region
* General/environmental health
* Individual student
* Insurance limitations

The risk assessment and review process involves considering the placement, Placement Provider, and the student, in terms of each of the six factors above. The risk assessment should be carried out or approved by the Module Co-ordinator or Placement Support Tutor or equivalent, as appropriate.

**3.3b. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**

i. For certain types of work, especially working with children or vulnerable adults, and in healthcare, it is necessary for students to undergo a DBS check. This is done by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and applicants will be given a certificate showing that they have no criminal record.

ii. Students who go on a placement which require a DBS check must be advised that applications can often take 4-6 weeks to process. Students will not be allowed to start a placement which requires DBS clearance without the certificate.

iii. Students must be informed that if the DBS check reveals any issues the Registrar and Dean of School (or equivalent) will be consulted, and will decide whether the student is suitable for the placement.

**3.3c Ethical approval**

i. Students should be made aware of any ethical approval implications when arranging their placement.

ii. Where appropriate, the student should work with their Placement Provider to ensure that organisational ethical approval procedures are followed, or, where these are not available, work with their Placement Tutor to ensure that University ethical procedures are followed, in respect of any research carried out as part of their placement activities.

iii. Postgraduate students undertaking research placements should follow normal university ethical approval processes.

**3.3d University approval of placements**

i. The University will decline a placement opportunity if the activities proposed:

* Would impair the University in fulfilling its responsibilities and objectives
* Would jeopardise the reputation of the University
* Are at odds with the objectives of the University, its agreed policies or beneficiaries
* Are dependent on the fulfilment of unacceptable conditions applied by the placement provider

### 3.4 Monitoring and Evaluation

3.4a The arrangements for assuring quality and standards for placement learning should be as rigorous, secure and open to scrutiny as those for campus-based programmes. All placements and work-based learning opportunities must comply with the *QA UK Quality Code for HE*, Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others.

3.4b Placement provision should be evaluated as part of the cycle of quality processes including annual monitoring, review and the oversight of programmes by external examiners. It is important that analysis and reflection on the operation of placements is included in these processes.

3.4c The completion of feedback forms by students (Appendix 8) and Placement Providers (Appendix 7) is an essential element in ensuring rigorous monitoring and evaluation of placements and work-based learning.

3.4d Placement Module Coordinators or Placements Support Tutors or equivalent should keep accurate and up-todate records, including the completed copies of the forms attached to this policy.

3.4e All relevant paperwork from the designated Placement Module Coordinators or Placement Support Tutors (or equivalent) will be held online centrally and is overseen by the Placements Team at Bath Spa University.

3.4f The Placements Team at Bath Spa University are responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of this Policy and its implementation, and for raising any issues with the Deputy Vice-Provost (Learning and Teaching). This policy will be reviewed every three years, or more frequently if circumstances change and/or the need arises.

### 3.5 Further information

3.5a The first point of contact for any questions arising in relation to offering or supporting particular placements, or more general questions arising in relation to the Placements and Work-based Learning Policy, is the Placements Team at Bath Spa University, at: [placements@bathspa.ac.uk](mailto:placements@bathspa.ac.uk)

3.5b The ASET *Good Practice Guide for Work Based and Placement Learning in Higher Education* can be accessed at:

<https://www.asetonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/ASET-Good-Practice-Guide-eWBPL.pdf>

3.5c The ASET *Good Practice Guide for Health and Safety for Student Placements* can be accessed at:

<http://www.asetonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/e-ASET-Health-Safety-for-Student-Placements-2016.pdf>

3.5d The UCEA Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy can be accessed at: <https://uceastorage.blob.core.windows.net/ucea/download.cfm/docid/he_sector-level_health_safety_and_wellbeing_strategy_2016_-_2020.pdf>

3.5e Bath Spa University Procedures for Ethical Approval can be accessed at: <https://sulis.bathspa.ac.uk/display/GC/Graduate+College?preview=%2F10226807%2F17238512%2FEthical+Approval+processes+-+Dec+2018.pdf>

3.5f Bath Spa University’s responses to the OfS Conditions of Registration:

<https://sulis.bathspa.ac.uk/pages/viewpage.action?spaceKey=AGP&title=Policy+Handbooks>

3.5g OfS Conditions of Registration:

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/regulation/conditions-of-registration/initial-and-general-ongoing-conditions-of-registration/>

3.5h Sweitzer, H. F. and King, M. A. (2014) The successful internship: personal, professional and civic development in experiential learning. Cengage.

3.5i QAA (2018) UK Quality Code, Code, Advice and Guidance: Work-based Learning

## Appendices

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