

ABBEY  
COLLEGE  
CAMBRIDGE

# **Work Experience and Volunteering Policy**

**2021-2022**

## SLT Responsible for this Policy

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### This policy is reviewed on an annual basis

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**This policy has been approved by SLT and adopted on behalf of the Governors, and is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers and is available on the school's portal. It is available to parents on request. It applies wherever staff or volunteers are working, including when this involves being away from the school.**

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## 1. Introduction

Work experience may be defined as, ‘A placement on employer’s premises in which a student carries out a particular task or duty, or range of tasks and duties, more or less as would an employee, but with the emphasis on the learning aspects of the experience.’ (DfES Work Experience: A Guide For Secondary Schools 2002)

Volunteering is generally defined as an unpaid activity where someone gives their time to help an organisation or an individual.’

## 2. Aims and objectives

At Abbey College Cambridge work experience placements are a means of achieving learning outcomes. There are certain curriculum areas to which the work experience programme can be linked (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 1998). These include:

- Developing students’ employability and key skills.
- Careers’ education and guidance.
- Personal and social development.

## 3. Benefits and learning opportunities

Work experience is very important: it provides all students with a real insight into the world of work, and presents them with a first-hand opportunity to develop the skills they will need to successfully make the transition to the world beyond education. It may comprise of work experience, internships, taster days, as well as academic projects, or specific programmes to enable all students to prepare for adult life.

### Learning Opportunities

- Employability and key skills
- Insights into skills and attitudes required by particular sectors and employers.
- An opportunity to develop, practise and demonstrate key skills in a work setting.
- Recognising hazards and assessing and controlling risks.
- Working with others – socialising skills.
- ICT skills.
- Improving own learning and performance.
- Careers’ education and guidance
- Increased knowledge of possible future careers.
- Better understanding of changes in the world of work.
- Implications which these changes may have on their own careers.

## 4. Personal and social development

Opportunities to engage in work experience and volunteering opportunities lead to students gaining increased maturity and improvements in aspects such as motivation, self-confidence and interpersonal skills which can be used as character traits on references. For Abbey College Cambridge students such opportunities also help to improve the level of English.

Work experience also enhances students' understanding of the practical issues involved regarding health and safety, reliability, timekeeping and citizenship.

## 5. Preparation through PSHEE for work experience

Work experience skills are taught as part of the PSHEE curriculum and include CV writing, interview techniques, maintaining professional relationships, rights at work, stereotyping, assertiveness and health and safety issues.

## 6. Organisation of Work Experience

Students are encouraged to organise their own work experience, with Abbey College Cambridge staff advising and helping to oversee the process. This arrangement benefits the students in so far as it encourages them to use their initiative to find suitable placements, to make contact with employers and generally to negotiate with adults about issues to do with work experience. Experience has shown that if the student arranges the placement himself/herself it is less likely to 'fall through' and more likely to be successful.

The College reserves the right to withdraw a student from their work experience where there are significant concerns relating to poor behaviour, attendance etc.

### 6.1 Work Experience Form

Abbey College Cambridge will produce a 'Work Experience/Volunteering Form', (see appendix 1). This form must be read and signed by the appropriate people: the employer, parent(s)/guardian(s), the student and the College. The form provides evidence that important checks have been carried out including DBS checks, check on insurance and risk assessments and that all parties have agreed to the conditions and aims of the experience. The tutor/Housemaster will oversee completion of the form and it will be countersigned by a member of SLT. If a placement is deemed to be of higher risk or the student classed as vulnerable, then a health and safety check will be carried out by the school.

All work experience request must be at least 7 weeks before the start of the placement.

Students will have the opportunity to discuss their placements in tutorial and will be encouraged to send a letter of thanks to their employer. The College will also send a letter of thanks.

Where a student has special educational needs, a disability, an illness or any other condition that might affect his/her wellbeing on work experience, the College will inform the employer of this condition via an email. In each case, permission to disclose this information to the employer will be sought from the student/ parents/guardians.

## 7. Volunteering as work experience

Students may wish to join one off volunteering events such as fundraising with Abbey Cambridge's charity EACH or longer term commitments such as placements at Cambridge University Hospitals.

Abbey College Cambridge's Active Citizen Programme and academic departments assist students in finding the right type of volunteering opportunity and make sure that this work does not interfere with academic workload.

## 8. Volunteering at school

There are many volunteering opportunities in school e.g. student ambassadors, peer mentors, house captains, student council reps and volunteers at school events, for example the Halloween party or Christmas/May balls. Every student should be aware of their responsibilities in these roles.

**Students sign the risk assessment and code of conduct pro forma (Appendix 2) before engaging in volunteering events.**

Appendix 1  
Work Experience/Volunteering Form

Please sign and date below:
Student name:
Student signature:
Teacher in charge name:
Teacher in charge signature:
Date:

**Checklist for teachers who assist in setting up work experience / volunteering for students e.g. future medics. All work experience should be logged on Evolve.**

Key assessment criteria	Checked
Is the activity accessible to the volunteer?	
Does the session run at an appropriate time for the volunteer?	
Can the volunteering work be properly balanced with academic work?	
Is the placement overseen and led by appropriately qualified/trained staff?	

Does the placement have appropriate insurance, with minimum requirements for public liability insurance?	
Does the volunteer have insurance cover?	
Have the placement staff undergone DBS checks and are they barred?	
Does the placement comply with good practice guidelines when working with children?	
Can the placement identify a suitable person to support the volunteer?	
Does the placement operate an equal access policy?	
Has parental consent been gained?	
Has the student signed the *code of conduct and risk assessment?	
Has the club organiser counter signed the *code of conduct and risk assessment?	
Has the teacher in charge counter signed the *code of conduct and risk assessment?	
Is the risk assessment complete?	
Has the risk assessment been submitted to the EVC?	
Has the risk assessment been submitted to SLT?	
**Teachers must act immediately if mentors do not follow their guidance/rules and child protection guidelines.	

<b>Abbey College Cambridge - Work Experience Request Form</b>	
<b>Name and Tutor Group:</b>	<b>Date of Birth &amp; Age:</b>
<b>Student Contact Details:</b>	
<b>SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY EMPLOYER</b>	
<b>Placement name and address:</b>	
<b>Contact (name and position):</b>	
<b>E-mail:</b>	
<b>Contact number:</b>	
<b>Type of work to be undertaken/duties:</b>	
<b>Agreed dates of experience:</b>	
<b>Employer: Please take a few moments to answer the following questions,</b>	
<b>Sign/date:</b>	
<b>Do you have employer liability insurance? (please give details of insurer, policy number and expiry date) YES/NO</b>	
<b>Do you consider this placement to be of low, medium or high risk? (High risk placements included construction, agriculture and manufacturing, motor vehicle workshops &amp; garages) · Do you employ people under the age of 18? YES/NO</b>	
<b>Have you had work experience students before? YES/NO</b>	
<b>Will the induction process include sharing of appropriate risk assessments/risk management strategies? YES/NO</b>	
<b>Do you have an ICT usage policy? YES/NO</b>	
<b>Will the induction process involve the sharing/discussion of the ICT usage policy? YES/NO</b>	
<b>Will there be adequate supervision if the placement requires the student to leave the main premises? YES/NO</b>	
<b>Will there be times when the student is working with someone who is classed as a lone worker? YES/NO</b>	

## Appendix 2

### Student Code of conduct pro forma

- Students must act with the same level of maturity and responsibility as they would do with a teacher present.
- Students must not break the law.
- Students must contact the school immediately if lost or in danger or trouble.
- Students must not listen to music or use the phone while walking along busy streets.
- Students must not confront or engage in antisocial behaviour, and should contact the school immediately if faced with a situation that is getting out of control.
- Students must inform the club organiser of any event/organisation which they independently volunteer for.
- Students must talk to their Boarding team or host family about what time they are going out, where they are going and what time they will be back.
- Students who break the trust of the school will not be allowed to volunteer on future occasions.
- Students who are mentoring other students must follow the teacher's guidance and child protection guidelines when in this role: mentoring only takes place during the set time and that students are not allowed to complete work for other students. Mentors must report to the teacher in charge if they feel uncomfortable or have any concerns.