

PLACEMENT LEARNING POLICY

POLICY SCHEDULE	
Policy title	Placement Learning Policy
Policy owner	Academic Quality and Development
Policy lead contact	Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)
Approving body	Academic Board
Date of initial approval	October 2015
Version no.	4
Date of implementation for this version	September 2020
Related Guidelines, Procedures, Codes of Practice etc.	UK Quality Code for Higher Education UK Quality Code Advice and Guidance on Work-based Learning UoC Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2017/22 UoC Student Code of Conduct & Adjudication Procedure Institute of Health Fitness to Practise Policy UoC Fitness to Teach Policy
Review interval	Three yearly basis. Next planned review Spring 2023.

NB. This policy is available on the University of Cumbria website and it should be noted that any printed copies are uncontrolled and cannot be guaranteed to constitute the current version of the policy.

1. Introduction

1.1 As set out in the University's Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2017/22:

Workplace experience is part of every course of study, whether through formal placement, simulated work environments, or contact with industry experts. We will develop curricula that require students to set vocational goals and to pursue them through formal study, volunteering, work-based learning or reflection on employment-related experience.

1.2 This Policy sets out the expectations and requirements for placement learning that forms part of a University award, whether credit-bearing or not. It applies to all staff and students involved in placement learning opportunities, whether placements are arranged by the University or by students.

1.3 This Policy does not extend to Apprenticeship programmes that are work-embedded courses governed by requirements set out by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. For support on the development and delivery of apprenticeship programmes please refer to the University's Curriculum Design Framework.

1.4 This document is supplemented by further detailed procedures and processes within Academic Institutes and the University's Placement Unit, which reflect specific requirements of individual Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs).

1.5 For the purpose of this Policy, a placement is defined as any work-based or practical experience forming part of a programme of study and fulfilling specific intended learning outcomes. Students are registered with the University during the placement period and are subject to the University's Academic Regulations with the direct supervision of the student falling to the placement area, under the University's oversight.

1.6 The University Placement Unit provides administrative support to programme teams for the organisation and allocation of placements to ensure that PSRB requirements are met.

1.7 In respect of Academic Collaborative Provision, the principles of this policy must be adhered to but the organisation, operation and review of placement activity would normally be delegated to the University's Associate Partner.

1.8 The term placement provider is used throughout this Policy to describe the organisation or provider that is providing the placement learning opportunity.

2. Policy Principles

2.1 Establishment of Placements

2.1.1 Academic Institutes must ensure that all placement providers are fully aware of their responsibilities and that this information is captured in written agreement(s) with the provider. This will include responsibilities in relation to:

- the provision of appropriate learning opportunities
- the health and safety and the duty of care to the students
- accident or incident reporting
- where delegated by the University, any assessment of the student(s)

2.1.2 Formal agreements must be in place before students attend for placement.

- 2.1.3 Institutes must ensure that placement providers have effective measures in place to monitor and assure the proficiency of their staff involved in the support of the relevant placement learning. In particular, the following should be considered:
- Who supports the students if the placement partner is not involved in providing a mentor or supervisor?
 - What qualifications are required / established for staff involved in providing a mentor or supervisor role?
 - What training development and support (initial and ongoing) is provided and/or required?
- 2.1.4 Institutes must have a procedure in place to approve any placement opportunities that have been sourced by the student and to ensure that the placement activity is appropriate to the intended learning outcomes of the programme and at the appropriate FHEQ level.
- 2.1.5 Institutes must ensure that procedures are in place for the termination of any placement learning opportunities where the need arises.
- 2.1.6 Where placement learning takes place outside the UK students must inform the Placement Unit and complete the necessary paperwork to ensure that all insurance and health and safety requirements are met. Note: Tier 4 students cannot undertake placements out with Great Britain.
- 2.1.7 In the case of international placements, there must be confidence that students will have access to the necessary equipment and technology (including IT systems) whilst undertaking the placement.

2.2 Risk Assessments

- 2.2.1 It is the Academic Institute's responsibility to ensure the health, safety and welfare of students when on placement.
- 2.2.2 The placement provider bears primary responsibility for the health and safety of the student whilst on placement and for ensuring that significant risks are appropriately controlled.
- 2.2.3 Risk assessments must be undertaken for all placement areas that are based overseas, or fall outside well-established placement settings, prior to the area being approved as a suitable placement setting, including in cases where the student has sourced the placement opportunity. The University Risk Assessment Form for placement activity can be found on the UoC Health and Safety information website. A risk assessment is not necessary for placements taking place in UK educational (school) and health care (hospitals, care homes, paramedic and social work) settings.
- 2.2.4 It is recommended that the following six health and safety factors applicable to all placements are considered in the risk assessment and review process:
- Work
 - Travel and transportation
 - Location and/or region
 - General/environmental health
 - Individual student
 - Insurance limitations

The risk assessment and review process will involve considering the placement, the placement provider, and the specific student group in terms of each of the six factors above (see UoC Code of Practice for Risk Management of Student Placements).

- 2.2.5 Due to the diverse nature of placements, University staff may not be able to make a direct assessment of Health and Safety risks associated with individual student placements. However, programme staff must consider written evidence detailed by the provider relating to their awareness of and commitment to Health and Safety prior to the approval of the placement. This may be information in the public domain, e.g. published on an organisation's website.
- 2.2.6 The Placement Unit is responsible for maintaining records of placement venues and the programme team is responsible for reviewing the awareness of and commitment to health and safety of the placement provider (see UoC Code of Practice for Risk Management of Student Placements).
- 2.2.7 Where placement learning may involve working with children or vulnerable adults, Institutes must comply with the University's Safeguarding Policy & Procedure and ensure compliance with Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

2.3 Insurance

- 2.3.1 All UK placements are covered by UK law therefore the placement provider takes legal responsibility and liability for the students while in the workplace. The only exception to this is in the case of sole traders, and if a placement opportunity is to take place in this setting, early discussions must take place with the Placement Unit.
- 2.3.2 Where required the Placement Unit will request from the placement provider written confirmation of their health and safety and insurance arrangements and advise programme teams of any concerns raised.
- 2.3.3 Students should be made aware of any potential additional insurance costs, including:
- a) Any routine, on-going health requirements, which will need to be covered by a separate health insurance policy taken out by the student at his/her expense.
 - b) Additional travel insurance including extra health care and personal possessions insurance.
 - c) Any building and contents insurance as required locally.
 - d) Car Insurance for travel to placement and for use of their vehicle whilst at work.

2.4 Information for Students

- 2.4.1 Each student must be provided with information through a Placement Handbook that is made available to students in advance of the placement. This must include detail of:
- the benefits of the placement
 - the nature of the placement within the programme (e.g, credit weighting, hourage, requirements)
 - the intended learning outcomes
 - the nature and extent of support available to them whilst on placement (academic and personal support, both in the placement setting and the University's Placement Unit website)
 - relevant deadlines

- links to information on placement travel allowances and other expenses where applicable (normally linking to the
- any health and safety risks
- who to contact in the case of an emergency
- what action to take if they have a concern

2.4.2 Where students are responsible for securing their own placement opportunity, the following information must be provided to students:

- a) guidelines on any support available from the Institute and Placement Unit
- b) arrangements for having the placement approved by the Institute
- c) alternatives to completion of a placement if it is not possible to source a placement opportunity

2.5 Support for Students on Placement

2.5.1 All students must receive an appropriate induction on commencement of the placement. This should include health and safety related matters and associated processes.

2.5.2 All students must be provided with a named supervisor or mentor in the placement setting. A meeting should take place between the student and the supervisor/mentor within the first five days.

2.5.3 Student learning should be supported through the development and review of a learning agreement between the student, the placement provider and the University.

2.5.4 Where a student has notified the University of a disability or specific learning need and has in place individual action plan, students are encouraged to share these with the relevant placement provider. The agreements covered within other sections of this policy will be supplemented with the details of agreed and appropriate reasonable adjustments. Programme staff must liaise with the Disability/ SpLD Team, and Occupational Health where necessary, to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made, as appropriate.

2.6 Support and Information for Placement Providers

2.6.1 Institutes, with the support of the Placement Unit, must ensure that placement learning partners are provided with appropriate and timely information prior to, throughout and following the students' placement learning.

2.6.2 Institutes are responsible for ensuring that supervisors, mentors and assessors in the placement setting are aware of their responsibilities and are provided with regular training, development and updates as appropriate, ensuring that any specific requirements of PSRBs are met.

2.6.3 Institutes are responsible for establishing key contacts internally and making appropriate and timely arrangements for liaison between the University and the placement learning setting(s) to enable the effective management of the placement.

2.6.4 Where placement providers are involved in the formal assessment of students, the Institute must ensure that staff are fully briefed on the University policies and requirements.

2.7 Quality Assurance

- 2.7.1 Institutes must have in place effective arrangements for securing, monitoring, and reviewing placement learning environments, in line with any PSRB requirements.
- 2.7.2 Institutes are responsible for ensuring that effective mechanisms are put in place to collect and consider feedback on placement activity from both students and placement areas.
- 2.7.3 Placement activity is monitored through the University's Annual monitoring processes. Reports should highlight any particular concerns or issues that have arisen and/or examples of good practice. Sources of evidence for the annual monitoring report should include student, placement and external examiner feedback as appropriate.

2.8 International Students

- 2.8.1 For international students to acquire a Student Route Visa, any year-long placement activity must be an integral part of the programme and must have assessed content that contributes to the degree (this can be on a pass/fail basis).
- 2.8.2 To meet Home Office requirements, placements for undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes should not consist of more than 50% of the entire course duration for level 6 and above. For foundation degree the placement must not consist of more than 33%. Guidelines from the Home Office are complex and change periodically so any programme application must be checked prior to delivery to offer to ensure compliance.
- 2.8.3 There may be visa implications for any course transfer to a longer programme so full discussion regarding placement programmes, including sandwich degrees, should be carried out at first application.
- 2.8.4 Students studying with the University on a Student Route Visa cannot be paid for any placement.
- 2.8.5 Student Route Visa students may only undertake placements within Great Britain.
- 2.8.6 Student Route Visa students undertaking a placement must be monitored in line with minimum requirements as set out below:
- A minimum of 10 contact points agreed and documented before commencement of the placement
 - Contact points will involve meetings (face to face or recognised online video platform) between the academic tutor and the student
 - The academic tutor will provide formal reporting to the University after each contact point
 - Where any contact point is missed because the student is absent from work or does not attend the meeting this will count as a non-engagement and be followed up formally through the University's Student Progress Review process.

3. Responsibilities

The **Academic Institute** is responsible for:

- i. Developing placement activity that allows the student to meet the intended learning outcome of the module/programme, taking into account any PSRB requirements, where required.
- ii. Designing assessment for the placement that is linked to appropriate intended learning outcomes at module and/or programme level.
- iii. Approving placement providers (in collaboration with the University's Placement Unit where appropriate).
- iv. Ensuring that a risk assessment is completed for each placement setting where required.
- v. Ensuring that all required adjustments have been put in place for any student who requires them.
- vi. Providing relevant information to the University's Placement Unit as required.
- vii. Provide pre-placement briefing sessions.

The **University's Placement Unit** shall:

- i. Ensure that students are provided with timely and accurate information on their placements.
- ii. Ensure that placement providers are provided with timely and accurate information to enable the safe and effective operation of the placement.
- iii. Monitor attendance of students on placement and maintain accurate records of this when required by a PSRB.
- iv. Maintain records of all students on placement.
- v. Liaise with programme teams to ensure students are placed in appropriate settings.
- vi. Make appropriate payments to placement settings where required.
- vii. Provide help and support to students with any expenses that are payable as a result of attending placement.
- viii. Maintain accurate placement information via a database that is accessible to both students and members of staff.
- ix. Provide help and support to students who require a hire car or accommodation in order to attend placement.
- x. Ensure that students are aware of any expenses they are eligible to claim.
- xi. Ensure any uniforms required for placements are issued to students.
- xii. Provide support at any pre-placement lectures.

The **Placement Provider** shall:

- i. Confirm in writing or electronically their health and safety arrangements as requested by the University of Cumbria.
- ii. Inform the University of Cumbria of any basic competencies that they require the student to have attained to be able to undertake the placement. These would include competencies associated with any requirements of individual professional, statutory or regulatory bodies (PSRB).
- iii. Plan the work or study programme in collaboration with the University, which will allow the student to meet the intended learning outcomes of the placement.
- iv. Sign a student learning agreement, when required, in collaboration with the student, that establishes key objectives and learning outcomes for the placement.
- v. Provide the student with a full and clear induction to the organisation and its working practices, including health and safety arrangements, complying with health and safety legislation.
- vi. Report to the University of Cumbria any serious incidents or accidents involving the student, or breaches of discipline by the student.
- vii. Identify a named placement supervisor/mentor and ensuring that they are

appropriately trained and fully aware of their roles and responsibilities.

- viii. Ensure any reasonable adjustments required for students are fully implemented.

The **student** shall:

- i. Attend pre-placement briefing sessions and familiarise themselves with the information provided including University and placement area policy and requirements.
- ii. Sign relevant placement learning agreements.
- iii. Alert the placement provider and the University of any issues which may prevent the progress or completion of the placement.
- iv. Inform the University of any personal factors that may affect the level of risk or require adjustments.
- v. Abide by the placement provider's health and safety requirements, policies and procedures.
- vi. Carry out the work programme specified by the placement provider.
- vii. Inform the placement provider of any health concerns or disability that may require adjustments.
- viii. Report any concerns about health and safety at their placement to the placement provider.
- ix. Report any incident or accident in which they are involved and any health and safety concerns that are not addressed by the placement provider to the University.
- x. Source any additional insurance required over and above the standard University insurance.

Policy Document Control Schedule

REVIEW SCHEDULE				
Review no.	Due date	Reviewed by	Approved by	Completion date
2	Sep 2015	AQSC	Academic Bd	Oct 2015
3	Jul 2017	AQSC (i) Deanery to 'Department' (5.1.6, 6.1) (ii)Cumbria Academic to 'I- Lead' (8)	Housekeeping changes only (Restructure)	Jul 2017
4	April 2020	SSQAC (Full review, JR)	SSQAC	June 2020

Annex 1 Extract from UK Quality Code for Higher Education: Advice and Guidance on Work-based Learning

Work-based learning consists of structured opportunities for learning and is achieved through authentic activity and is supervised in the workplace.

Work-based learning in the context of the advice and guidance is a structured opportunity. It is an integral part of a course that is achieved through authentic activity which is intended to contribute to meeting a genuine workplace need. Arrangements between employer, education organisation and student should be agreed on how the student is supervised within the workplace, and regular contact should be maintained - appropriate to the student, the workplace context and specific work-based learning opportunity.

Education organisations and employers consider any specific issues in relation to the workplace environment and deal with them appropriately, including informal agreements where appropriate.

Education organisations, employers and students have responsibilities to themselves and to others in relation to the workplace environment. These will include, for example, health and safety and safeguarding. Education organisations and employers need to be clear on their respective responsibilities and provide guidance to each other and to students on the specific issues with relevant training, if required. Formal agreements may also need to include details on how specific issues, such as sharing of data, are dealt with.

Work-based learning opportunities are underpinned by formal agreements between education organisations, employers and students.

Work-based learning opportunities will be agreed between education organisations, employers and students; they will need to be formally agreed to ensure all understand the respective roles, responsibilities and expectations. The format and detail of the agreement will vary depending on each opportunity and may follow a format specified by another organisation, for example, apprenticeship agreements and commitment statements in England (see also Partnerships Theme).

Work-based learning is delivered through a meaningful partnership between students, employers and the education organisation.

Work-based learning covers a range of opportunities which, if well designed and managed, will provide a quality experience for all involved. In order to ensure that the needs of the student, employer and education organisation are fully met, the partnership arrangements should be considered and agreed prior to the work-based learning commencing. These arrangements will vary depending on the nature of the work-based learning, as will the format of the recording of the agreed arrangements.

Work-based learning opportunities enable students to apply and integrate areas of subject and professional knowledge, skills and behaviours to enable them to meet course learning outcomes.

The significant potential benefits for work-based learning are best achieved where the opportunity exists to integrate all aspects, that is, subject and professional knowledge, skills and behaviours. Learning outcomes for work-based learning should be written to enable these areas to be fully integrated (see also Course Design and Development, Learning and Teaching and Assessment Themes).

Parties understand and respect the respective roles, responsibilities and expectations of the education organisation, employer and student, and appropriate training and support is provided where required.

It should be clear what the respective roles, responsibilities and expectations are for the education organisation, the employer and the student. These will vary depending on the type of work-based learning and the relationships between the employer, student and education organisation. They should be clear and transparent and communicated to all involved in the work-based learning provision. Where employers are involved in assessment, their role is

clearly defined, appropriate training is given, and, for summative assessment, standard mechanisms of moderation, standardisation and external examination are fully used.

Education organisations and employers acknowledge individuals have unique needs within the education organisation and in the workplace, and collaborate to ensure opportunities are inclusive, safe and supported.

Providers, whether the education organisation or the employer, establish the unique learner needs for the learning environments and work in partnership to ensure an inclusive approach to the provision of work-based learning opportunities. This will include through reasonable adjustments to procedures, activities and physical environments (see also Enabling Student Achievement Theme).

Work-based learning opportunities are designed, monitored, evaluated and reviewed in partnership with employers.

Work-based learning consists of authentic structured opportunities for learning which are achieved in a workplace setting or are designed to meet an identified workplace need. In order to meet the respective objectives for employer, student and provider, the design, monitoring and evaluation of the workplace learning opportunities should be carried out in partnership between the employer and the provider, with input from student representatives where possible and relevant. This partnership should include obtaining feedback from employers and students and involving them in the evaluation process.

https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/advice-and-guidance-work-based-learning.pdf?sfvrsn=f625c181_2