



St Oliver Post Primary School

Work Experience Policy

December 2024

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Work Experience Policy

1. Policy Statement

This policy applies to **Transition Year (TY), Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA)** and **Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP)** students.

Work experience is an integral element of these programmes, aimed at introducing students to the world of work and helping them develop essential skills for future employability.

Work experience takes place every Friday during school term, constituting 20% of the school week.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the work experience programme is to provide students with the opportunity to gain insight into the workplace, understand the roles associated with specific careers, and develop employability skills. The programme aims to:

- Introduce students to work environments through supervised placements.
- Provide feedback and assessments based on student performance.
- Develop personal and social skills related to job seeking and employment.

3. Work Experience

- **Work Experience:** Involves students working under supervision in an employer's premises to understand job roles and functions.
- **Work Shadowing:** The student observes an employee at work rather than engaging in tasks. This can be particularly useful in careers where students must observe rather than partake such as Gardaí etc.

4. Personnel

The Work Experience Co-ordinator works closely with the TY, LCA and LCVP Co-ordinator in all aspects of the programme. The Work Experience Co-ordinator has a database of past placements to support students if necessary.

5. Preparation

The Work experience Co-ordinator holds an Assembly with all TY students in May prior to commencement of TY outlining all dates, responsibilities, and opportunities. This is also outlined to parents at an Information evening early in September of the academic year.

LCA students receive a specific Health and Safety workshop in relation to their work placements from the HSA. The Work Experience Co-ordinator also has a class a week with the LCA students to organise and monitor placements.

The Work experience Co-ordinator speaks to all LCVP students to prepare them for their placement and give them all documentation in advance of their placement. They are also assisted in this by their LCVP Co-ordinator and teachers.

6. Aims and Objectives

- Provides exposure to different career paths.
- Foster job-seeking and interview skills.
- Encourage personal growth and self-confidence in employment scenarios.
- Enable students to explore career options and gain real-world experience.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 School Responsibilities:

- **Coordination:** The Work Experience Coordinator is responsible for organising placements, briefing students, and ensuring proper documentation.
- **Preparation:** Prior to placement, students are prepared through career research, CV preparation, job-seeking skills, and health & safety training as outlined above.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** The student's progress is evaluated through regular **phone calls to employers, site visits**, and the completion of an **Employer Report Form**. The form is used to assess the student's performance, attendance, and learning outcomes.
- **Debriefing:** Upon returning, students complete a work experience diary and receive feedback.
- **Insurance:** Students are covered under the school's insurance (IPB through LMETB), and parents/guardians must ensure that placements meet safety requirements.

7.2 Host Employer Responsibilities:

- Provide a safe workplace environment.
- Assign tasks that are appropriate for the student's abilities and learning objectives.
- Ensure adequate supervision and health & safety measures are in place.
- Complete an **Employer Report Form** to assess the student's performance.
- Communicate with the school during the student's placement if necessary, including during site visits or calls from the work experience coordinator.

7.3 Student Responsibilities:

- **Securing Placements:** Students are responsible for securing their own work placements. The school provides support if necessary and the Work Experience Co-ordinator has a database of past placements.
- **Adherence to Guidelines:** Students must follow the school's Code of Behaviour and the employer's rules, such as punctuality, dress codes, and health & safety practices.
- **Reporting Absences:** Students must notify both the employer and the school in case of absence.

- **Completion of Diary:** Students must keep a diary of tasks performed, challenges faced, and skills learned during the placement.

8. Work Experience Structure

8.1 Weekly Friday Placement

- Work experience takes place **every Friday**, accounting for **20% of the school week**. Students must adhere to employer guidelines during this day-long placement and are expected to fulfil the duties assigned by their employers.

8.2 Transition Year

- In addition to the weekly placements, TY students must also complete **one block week placements** during the year, typically in January or February, depending on the school calendar.

8.3 Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

- LCVP students typically complete **one three-day placement**, which usually takes place in March.

9. Health & Safety

Employers are required to comply with the **Protection of Young Persons (Employment) Act 1996**, ensuring that no harmful or risky tasks are assigned to students. Students are reminded to adhere to all safety guidelines and report any incidents.

10. Documentation and Procedures

- **Consent Forms:** Students must submit a parent/guardian consent form and an employer evaluation form.
- **Insurance Letter:** Schools provide a letter detailing insurance coverage to employers, provided through IPB by the ETB.
- **Special Requirements:** Certain placements may require certifications (e.g., Manual Handling, Safe Pass, Garda Vetting). The Work Experience Co-ordinator will liaise with the ETB in this regard and provide this documentation.

11. Assessment and Feedback

- **Student Assessment:** Students reflect on their experiences through a work experience diary, evaluating skills learned, job tasks performed, and any challenges encountered.
- **Employer Feedback:** Employers provide feedback on the student's performance through an **Employer Report Form**. This form, along with the Work Experience Diary, phone calls and site visits, is used to evaluate the student's progress.
- **Parent Feedback:** Parents are encouraged to provide feedback to the Work experience Co-ordinator if they wish.

12. Sanctions for Non-Attendance

Leaving Certificate Applied Students are expected to maintain a minimum of 90% attendance for their work experience placements to ensure they fully benefit from the programme and receive the associated credits. Failure to meet this requirement, particularly through ongoing absences without valid reasons, may result in the following sanctions:

- **Loss of Credits:** If a student consistently fails to attend work experience without a valid reason, they will not receive the necessary credits to pass the work experience module.
- **School Attendance Requirement:** Students who fail to attend their work experience placement without prior notice or valid justification may be assigned alternative work or projects during this time.
- **Parental Notification:** Ongoing or unnotified absences will result in the student's parents or guardians being contacted. A meeting may be arranged with the Work Experience Coordinator to discuss the reasons for non-attendance and potential consequences. The school will determine if additional sanctions are necessary.

These measures are put in place to ensure that students engage meaningfully with their work experience and fulfil the programme's requirements.

13. Acknowledgement of Employers

Students are encouraged to write a card/letter of gratitude to employers after their placement. The school also acknowledges employers through photos on social media channels and site visits.

14. Absences and Difficulties


- **Absences:** In case of illness or emergencies, the student must inform both the employer and the school.
- **Issues with Placement:** Students are encouraged to report any dissatisfaction to the Work Experience Coordinator rather than directly to the employer.

15. Remuneration

Employers are not expected to remunerate students during placements. However, any payment made is at the employer's discretion.

BOM & LMETB Ratification/Resolution Process for This Policy

BOM Ratification

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| Date Ratified by the Board of Management: | 11th December 2024 |
| Proposed By: | |
| Seconded By: | |
| Signed: | (Chairperson, BOM) |
| Signed: |  (Secretary to the BOM) |
| Scheduled Date for Review of the Policy: | |

LMETB Ratification/Resolution of the ETB Board

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| Date of Resolution of ETB Board | |
| Signed | (Chairperson) |