



Guidance for Parents and Carers

# Work Experience Placements



The transition from education to employment is a defining moment in all our lives. Leaving the familiar surroundings of college, and entering a work environment, can be a daunting prospect for anyone.

That's why, at South Bank Colleges, we're committed to giving our students the best possible preparation for their future career journey. Focussing on more than just academic qualifications, we strive to build confidence and nurture personal development, so that they're ready to enter the world of work and fulfil their potential.

To achieve this, every student is required to undertake an industry work experience placement as part of their course. We aim to ensure that students spend time in a real-life working environment that relates to their course. We will support students in sourcing high quality placement opportunities with employers that match their career aspirations. At all times, the safety of our students comes first.

# The benefits of a work placement

Even with the abundance of careers information available to our students, they'll find nothing as insightful, informative, and inspiring as spending time meeting employers and working alongside someone who is already doing the job.

A work experience placement will provide them with many benefits that can't be achieved in the classroom alone, these include:

- Putting their classroom-based learning into practice.
- Developing and applying technical and practical skills.
- Learning what life in their chosen career is really like.
- Being able to make informed decisions about their career options.
- Gaining the transferable skills that their future employers are looking for in an employee.

Some of our students are even offered jobs or apprenticeships, as a direct result of their work experience placement.

## How placements work

Students are expected to find their own placements before, or as soon as they start, their course. Searching for a work experience placement can be a valuable learning experience and help build confidence. A Work Experience Placement Officer can also support students to secure placements and we will ensure that all work placements are legitimate and safe by carrying out necessary checks and risk assessments such as Health & Safety.

Many students studying at South Bank Colleges already have part-time jobs that that may be able to count as their work experience. However, they must tell a member of staff about their job so that it can be assessed and recorded.

Placements must last for a minimum of five days, but they can vary in duration. Some placements only last for a few days, while others can last for the entire academic year. Most work experience placements are unpaid, but in some cases the employer may choose to pay the student, or meet some of their associated costs, like travelling expenses.

## How students can secure placements

- ✓ Create a CV, many online resources can help – CV Builder, CV templates and CV
- ✓ Attend CV Clinic's and CV writing workshops at College
- ✓ Research employers and organisations that interests you for the best opportunities and contact them
- ✓ Ask Work Placement Officers for help
- ✓ Speak with family and friends about possible opportunities
- ✓ Organisation is the key
- ✓ Be prepared to put in the work to get the best results!

# Our Standards

To ensure that students are successful in securing a work placement and are career ready, there are certain standards and commitments that we ask of them.

We expect students to:

- Have created a credible CV that they can use to apply for work experience in their first term at South Bank Colleges.
- Maintain a digital logbook to record their work experience and provide constructive feedback after their placement.
- Be fully committed and maintain professional standards and etiquette during their placement.

Any student who doesn't meet these standards could be subject to disciplinary action, which may result in them not completing their course or receiving their qualifications.

## How can you help?

**CV creation:** Encourage your son/daughter to create a credible, professional-looking CV. Without a well laid-out, informative CV they'll find it hard to get work experience, or a job, that matches their career aspirations and allows them to reach their potential.

**Explain the benefits:** Talk to your son/daughter about the benefits of work experience, and how it will help develop the practical knowledge and skills they'll require in their future career.

**Provide support:** Please support your son/daughter during their placement and provide encouragement. You can help them to maintain their professional standards during their placement by ensuring that they're properly prepared and punctual.

**Facilitate a placement:** As a parent or carer, you may already be working for a business that is able to support a work experience placement or provide students with industry insight. In many cases parents and carers are able to facilitate placements, even if this is something they haven't previously considered.

**Encourage reflection:** Encourage your son/daughter to talk to the Work Placement Officers or Careers Coordinator to reflect on their work experience. Discussing their experience can help them to identify strengths and what skills they need to build on.

To read the full college career programme please visit:

[www.southbankcolleges.ac.uk/student-support/career-programme](http://www.southbankcolleges.ac.uk/student-support/career-programme)

## FAQs

### What if the placement doesn't match my son/daughter's career aspirations?

We strive to secure work experience that is relevant to the students' chosen industry or career path. However, in the rare cases where this isn't possible, we'll still provide students with a placement where they can develop transferable personal and professional skills. Regardless of the working environment, we believe all work placements will benefit our students in their future working lives. They can also discuss alternative options with a Work Placement Officer and start planning future work experience before completing their course.

### Why don't students receive a salary while undertaking work experience?

Under the Education (Work Experience) Act of 1973, Parliament decreed that all work experience is required to be a learning process, and the Act therefore prohibits payment. However, in some cases the employer may offer out of pocket expenses to cover travel or meal costs, or may offer a gratuity to the student. This is entirely at the employer's discretion.

### What if my son/daughter is unhappy with their placement?

Discuss the problem with your son/daughter and try to find out the cause of their unhappiness. Is it that they don't think the placement is useful? Do they feel like they're being under-utilised? Are they uncomfortable in the workplace? Is it just the culture-shock of a new environment? By finding out the root-cause of their unhappiness, you may be able to offer advice or support that helps them through it. If, following your advice, they're still concerned then please contact the Work Placement Officer overseeing the placement.

### What about health issues or Special Educational Needs & Disability?

It's vitally important that the College is made aware of any medical, mental health, or other issues that your son/daughter may be affected by. By providing us with this information, we can ensure that they're not placed into an unsuitable environment and we can take all necessary steps to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made. We aim to work with business that are committed to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

For more information please contact the Employer Engagement Team on 020 7501 5286 or [employerengagement@southbankcolleges.ac.uk](mailto:employerengagement@southbankcolleges.ac.uk)

# Parental/Guardian consent - Work Placements

The permission of parents/guardians is required for all journeys or activities outside the College for learners under 18 years of age. The parent/guardian must complete and sign this form before the learner takes part in the activity.

<b>Family Name(s)</b>	
<b>First Name(s)</b>	
<b>Name of Parent/Carer</b>	
<b>Contact details of Parent/Carer (telephone number &amp; email)</b>	
<b>Name and Telephone number(s) of alternative Carer</b>  <i>(in case of need if you should be unavailable)</i>	
<b>Placement Details</b>	Company Name & Address: Contact Name Contact Details: Placement duration Start time End time:

**(to be signed by the parent/carer)**

I have read the details of the proposed work placement activity and I give my consent to my son/daughter/ward's participation in the activities described. In the event of it to be necessary, obtaining or rendering qualified first aid or medical assistance or arranging the administration of medicine to him/her. I undertake to advise the College of any changes to the details given in the learner medical questionnaire completed at enrolment between the date of signing this form and the date of the proposed activity.

I give my consent to the processing of this data on the understanding that the information I have supplied will be used only for the purposes set out above and my consent is conditional upon the College complying with its duties and obligations in accordance with the College's registration under the Data Protection Act 1998.

I agree to my son/daughter/ward named above being allowed to participate in social activities outside the formal College organised and supervised activities, including visits to local public facilities, bars, restaurants and theme park type activities. By giving such agreement, I hereby INDEMNIFY and absolve the College from any liability, responsibility or cost which may arise from such extra-curricular activity and understand the College cannot provide personal supervision to students during such activities.

I agree and understand that my son/daughter/ward must abide with all reasonable instructions given by College or other supervisory personnel relating to all activities during the above activity and that the prescribed standards of behaviour and compliance with instructions and standards of dress must be observed by my son/daughter/ward at all times. Failure to do so may result in him/her being excluded from further participation in the activity and, if excluded in the sole estimation of College staff and Employer, I will make all arrangements at my own cost for the return of my son/daughter/ward to his/her home.

I agree that in the event of any accident or incident should occur arising from my son/daughter/ward failing to comply with reasonable instructions, then the College cannot be held liable for any consequences arising from such failure to comply.

**Signature of Parent/Carer** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_