



Fairfield School of Business

Work Placement Policy

Version 2.2

Approved by the Board of Governors

Last Amendment: October 2020

The following policy sets out how the School works in partnership with students and work placement providers to arrange and monitor work-based learning opportunities that are of genuine value to students, and in which students or placement providers are not unduly placed at risk.

This policy is aligned to the expectations and core practices of the Revised Quality Code for Higher Education; regard is given to the Code's accompanying guidance themes of:

- i. *Work Based Learning*
- ii. *Enabling Student Development and Achievement*

The QAA's Quality Code is the definitive reference point for all UK higher education institutions and sets out how academic standards are established and maintained and how the quality of learning opportunities are assured and enhanced.



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*The document owner is responsible for maintaining and updating the content of this document and ensuring that it reflects current practice at the School.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Fairfield Business School (FSB) seeks to promote good practice and ensure that it meets its responsibilities regarding managing the quality of the student learning experience as well as students' safety and wellbeing in the context of placement or work-based learning as part of a programme of study. This includes all placement and work-based learning opportunities provided regardless of duration, including those that are integral to a course delivered by collaborative partners of the School.
- 1.2. Additionally, the School aims to maintain strong relationships with placement providers in local communities to promote a sustainable and mutually beneficial approach to the provision of work-based learning.
- 1.3. The policy aims to:
 - i. provide a comprehensive statement of the School's principles, processes and procedures that govern the management of work-based Learning (a placement);
 - ii. provide a framework for the identification and assessment of the risks associated with placements, and the proportionate processes and procedures to effectively manage that risk;
 - iii. ensure that the School's Work Placements Team and faculty teams have appropriate procedures in place to plan, secure, approve and/or allocate and manage placements in ways which comply with health and safety and legal requirements;
 - iv. clarify the relative roles and responsibilities of various parties involved in Placement and/or Work-based Learning, including the Institutes, course teams, students and placement providers.
- 1.4. The policy is supplemented by guiding documentation for staff regarding the assessment of risk, and health and safety arrangements; additional guidance is provided to students to ensure they are aware of the School's procedures and expectations regarding work-based learning.

Definition of a Work Placement

- 1.5. For the purpose of this policy, a placement is defined as any work-based employment or practical experience that is part of a student's programme and fulfils intended learning outcomes, for which the student may or may not be paid.
- 1.6. Although the student is registered with both the School and the awarding body, direct supervision and duty of care is transferred to the employer/placement provider for the duration of the



placement. The School will however seek adequate assurances that placement providers have due regard for health and safety and that appropriate liability insurance arrangements are in place.

- 1.7. Other activities which might contribute towards students' employability development, such as forms of community engagement, short visits, and insight days play an important and valuable part in the enrichment and enhancement of the student experience, but are purposefully excluded from this policy where they do not form an integral part of a programme of study.

FSB's Work Placement Team

- 1.8. The School's Work Placement Team provides assistance to students in finding work placements which are of genuine value to their learning objectives and career goals by connecting them directly with trusted placement providers. The Team will guide students in making an application to a placement provider and offer support over the course of their placements.
- 1.9. The Work Placement Team maintains an extensive bank of placement opportunities and provider contact details; the team will ensure that employers/placement providers within its network are appropriately vetted and evidence of employer liability assurance and due regard for health and safety are kept on file.

2. General Principles

- 2.1. The following principles underpin the aims of the School's Work Placement Policy:
 - i. The School has ultimate responsibility for the quality, academic standards and student experience wherever the learning takes place and whomsoever provides it;
 - ii. Any work-based, employment or practical experience that is part of a student's programme of study should contribute to the overall learning outcomes of his/her programme;
 - iii. All work-based or placement activity must be appropriately approved, monitored and reviewed to ensure the quality of the student experience and the continued appropriateness of the work-based or placement activity;
 - iv. Clear guidance must be available to all those involved in work-based and placement activity, including staff, students and placement providers;
 - v. Procedures for securing, approving and allocating placements should be transparent to all, and consider, as a minimum:



- The suitability of the placement to allow students to successfully meet the learning outcomes of the placement;
 - Health and safety requirements including any requirement for DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks;
 - Any relevant professional, statutory or regulatory body (PSRB) requirements governing the suitability of placements;
 - Student support on placements, including the mechanisms for dealing with any problems or complaints
- vi. Students are expected to show enthusiasm and genuine commitment whilst on a placement and must ensure that they follow the rules and regulations of the employer;
- vii. During their placements students will continue to be bound by the policies and codes of conduct of FSB, as well as those of the programme's awarding body, and may face disciplinary action from the School where their actions on a work placement are in breach of these.

3. Finding a Placement

- 3.1. It is the responsibility of students to find and secure a placement that is relevant and applicable to the programme of study. Such placements must be vetted and approved by the student's tutors and the Work Placement Team in order for it to count towards the programme's assessment objectives.
- 3.2. The Work Placement Team will readily assist students in finding a suitable placement where they require. The Work Placement Team will additionally provide students with support and guidance throughout the process of applying for a work placement; this may include advice and support on updating their CVs, cover letters, application forms and interview techniques and practice.
- 3.3. Students will be permitted to find and arrange their own placements without the assistance of the Work Placement Team, however these must meet the academic requirements of the programme of study and any other applicable Health and Safety requirements.
- 3.4. Students can also use their current employment as their work placement providing it is relevant to the programme that they are studying; in this instance approval is still required from the relevant tutors and the Work Placement Team. Where students are in employment that is not suitable as work placement, then it is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with their employer enabling them to participate in a suitable work placement, whilst continuing to attend their classes as required.



- 3.5. The Work Placement Team will provide ongoing support to students whilst on their placement, regardless of whether the placement was obtained through the Team, and will act as a first point of contact if students have a concern about their placement, or require any other assistance.

4. Accepting a Placement

- 4.1. Where arranging a placement through the School's Work Placement Team, it is normally expected that the student should accept the first placement offered, unless there is a good reason why the student cannot.
- 4.2. Where arranging their own placement, students must ensure that offers are approved by their Tutors and the Work Placement Team before they accept.
- 4.3. It is essential that before any offer of placement is accepted, that a Work Placement Contract is agreed by all parties, namely the Employer/placement provider, the Student and the School; this should include a clear description of the duties the student will be expected to perform.
- 4.4. Once the student has accepted an offer, they MUST respectfully withdraw any outstanding applications and cancel any other interviews.
- 4.5. Changing to another work placement will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.
- 4.6. If during or after an interview, a student feels that they are totally unsuited for the placement or have a valid reason for not wishing to proceed with their application, they should immediately inform the placement provider in question, ideally before an offer is made; the Work Placement Team should also be informed.

Hours of Work

- 4.7. Working hours will need to be determined in between the student and the employer. Foundation Degree and Top-Up programmes have specific requirements regarding the number of hours/weeks students need to undertake to successfully complete the placement year.
- 4.8. Student hours of work should be written into the work placement contract and comply with Working Time Regulations 1998.



5. Preparation for Work Placement

- 5.1. All students will receive a briefing from the Work Placements Team prior to commencing their work placements to ensure they understand the requirements of this policy, and what to do if they have a problem whilst on their placement; this will be in addition to any induction they may receive from their employer/placement provider.
- 5.2. As part of their briefing, all students will be provided with a Work Placements Handbook, containing essential information about Work-Based Learning.
- 5.3. The pre-placement briefing will cover themes relating to health and safety, as well as recognising and safeguarding against abuse and exploitation. This is to encourage students to be vigilant to anything which may pose a risk to their personal safety whilst on placements, and to report it to the Work Placements Team immediately so the School can investigate.

6. Communicating with Students Whilst on Placement

- 6.1. The School may from time to time, contact the student whilst they are on their work placement; such contact will usually be conducted through the placement provider, however students' personal email may be used if the School needs to get in urgent contact.
- 6.2. Students can in turn contact the Work Placement Team's office anytime between 10.00 am and 6.00 pm, Monday to Friday, with any queries or concerns they may have (See contact details on front page)

Sickness and Sickness reporting

- 6.3. Where work placements are paid, students are not legally entitled to full pay while they are sick, and as they will be in receipt of Student Finance they may not be entitled to Statutory Sick Pay.
- 6.4. Students should keep their employer up-to-date regarding any bout of illness and advise them of when they expect to be able to return to the work placement.
- 6.5. Students should additionally notify the Work Placement Team where they have three or more days off sick from a placement.

7. Work Placement Debriefing



- 7.1. At the conclusion work placements, students will attend a debriefing with their tutors. This will be a chance to reflect on the placement and to provide feedback enabling the school to continuously enhance its approach to providing placements.
- 7.2. Students may be required to prepare an assignment or presentation as part of their debriefing to demonstrate the value of the experience to their learning objectives; students should be aware that such exercises may be mandatory a component of how satisfactory engagement the placement is assessed.

8. Roles and Responsibilities under this Policy

- 8.1. The main responsibilities of the Work Placement Team are to:
 - i. Guide students in the process of arranging a work placement (as outlined in Section 3) where this forms an essential component of their programme of study;
 - ii. Connect students with placement providers/employers where requested;
 - iii. Undertake risk assessments of proposed placements prior to approval;
 - iv. Furnish students with key employability skills advice and application checking services;
 - v. Ensure that students are aware of all the services and assistance the Work Placement Team can provide to them;
 - vi. Provide clear information regarding the responsibilities of each party to any agreed Work Placement Contract;
 - vii. Provide pre-placement briefing sessions to students prior to commencing their placements to promote proper engagement and understanding of the School's expectations;
 - viii. Act as a first point of contact for students on placements and placement providers, where either should seek to raise queries or concerns;
 - ix. Retain an extensive database of placement providers relevant to the School's academic offerings, with records of appropriate due diligence being carried out on each. The Work Placement Team will receive assurances that placement providers/employers have appropriate liability insurance in place and that due regard is given to Health and Safety. Depending on the nature of the placement activity and/or location, due diligence and evidence requirements may vary in relation to the level of apparent risk;



- x. Keep records of student engagement with work placements, including any feedback from employers/placement providers.

NB: Records will be kept in both hard-copy and electronic formats *in accordance with the School's Data Protection Policy*.

- xi. Undertake regular business outreach activities, for example at industry networking events, conventions and fairs to develop and expand its network of placement providers;
- xii. Liaise with the School's awarding body partners to provide any required information about students and their work placement arrangements;
- xiii. Keep relevant tutors informed of student's engagement with work placements;
- xiv. Investigate any concerns raised in accordance with the School's procedures;
- xv. Perform its duties above with regard for all applicable Data Protection legislation and in accordance with School policies and procedures;

8.2. The responsibilities of tutors and faculty staff in the delivery of a placement are to:

- i. Ensure that proposed work placements are relevant and accord with the learning objectives of the programme of study prior to approving them;
- ii. Ensure that all work-based learning is assessed in accordance with Academic Regulations and any other applicable standards set by professional bodies;
- iii. Ensure students have undertaken and passed DBS checks where they are required as part of the work placement and the course of study (applicable to student on Health and Social care courses);
- iv. Where required, liaise with students and placement providers to arrange and conduct work place visits;
- v. Ensure that the Work Based-Learning is documented in a form that clearly identifies how it contributes to the overall aims and learning outcomes of the programme;
- vi. Ensure that students' engagement with learning placements is clearly documented, and that satisfactory participation has been demonstrated for them to progress in their study programmes.

8.3. Employers/Placement Providers are required to:



- i. Provide for the safety and wellbeing of students on work placements at their business premises;
- ii. Ensure the continuous supervision of Students on work placements; if the student is under 16 years old or under any supervision should be conducted by someone who has had a DBS check.
- iii. Facilitate any requests for information about a work placement directed to them by the Work Placement Team and provide evidence of employer's liability insurance being in place;
- iv. Where appropriate, provide evidence demonstrating due regard for health and safety in the work place;
- v. Where required, accommodate monitoring visits by members of faculty staff.
- vi. Notify the Work Placement Team immediately where they have a concern about a student for whom a placement has been provided.

8.4. Students on Work placements must ensure that they:

- i. Diligently carry out their duties as set out in the contract of employment;
- ii. Abide by the rules and expectations of the placement provider, including punctuality, appropriate dress, professional conduct, confidentiality, and particularly rules that relate to workplace health and safety and the safety of others;
- iii. Continue to abide by the School's policies and codes of conduct whilst on work placements (*The full Code of Conduct for students on work placements is Appended*);

Keep in regular contact with their tutors and the Work Placement Team throughout the course of the work placement.
- iv. Notify the Work Placement Team immediately where they have a concern for their personal safety or wellbeing whilst on the placement.
- v. Liaise with their tutors and/or the Work Placement Team where they have a concern that placement is not of genuine value towards their learning objectives or does not meet their expectations.

NBB: Students on Health and Social Care, or related courses, must ensure they hold a current and up to date DBS Check, as these will be a requirement for Work Placements for this course. It is the



student's responsibility to make sure they hold a current and up to date DBS check and it is the student's responsibility to arrange and pay for the DBS check.

9. Equal Opportunities

- 9.1. A commitment to equal opportunities guides the School's approach to Work-Based Learning; the School seeks to eliminate all unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation against anyone based on their age, sex, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, a disability, pregnancy and maternity status or based on gender reassignment (collectively termed 'Protected Characteristics' under the Equality act 2010).
- 9.2. The School will ensure that any employers/placement providers with which it works in partnership share this commitment and will cease any partnership with a placement provider where it has reasonable grounds to believe that the principles of the Equality Act are not upheld.
- 9.3. Students are expected to exemplify the School's Equal Opportunities values on work placements just as they would on campus; students and placement providers will be encouraged to report the Work Placement Team where any concerns of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation arise during a work placement.
- 9.4. Students' pre-placement briefings will include information on recognising the various forms of discrimination, harassment and victimisation that can occur; if a student encounters any kind of discrimination whilst on their placement, they are encouraged to contact the Work Placement Team without delay.
- 9.5. The Work Placement Team will investigate all such concerns and may take action up to and including termination of a work placement, cessation of a partnership with a placement provider, disciplinary action against individuals employed by or studying at the School, or, if warranted, reporting concerns to the appropriate external authorities.
- 9.6. Where reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate a student's disability or specific learning difficulty, the Work Placement Team will ensure that similar adjustments are made by the placement provider where required.

10. Health and Safety and Safeguarding

- 10.1. All students working on placement in the UK are legally regarded as employees of the placement provide.



- 10.2. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 applies to all employers and employees in the UK, and there are various regulations that detail more specific requirements. Employers must provide information, instruction, and training to enable their employees to perform their roles safely, and must provide a suitable level of supervision, all of which should be based on the outcomes of risk assessment.
- 10.3. As an employee, students must:
- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others;
 - Co-operate with the placement provider and abide by the rules laid down in the Health and Safety arrangements of the workplace;
 - Not interfere with or misuse anything provided for employees' safety.
- 10.4. The placement provider / employers should:
- Ensure their business complies with all applicable Health and Safety standards under the *Health and Safety at Work Act (HSAW) 1974*;
 - Give a suitable induction to students undertaking work placements, which includes basic health and safety information for any aspect of work that includes significant hazards and clear instruction on the use of any special equipment, as well as building evacuation procedures;
 - Ensure appropriate supervision is always in place
- 10.5. Whilst it is the duty of the placement provider to make all necessary health and safety arrangements in accordance with employment law, the School will take reasonable steps to ensure that work placement opportunities do not pose a risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of its students or the providers themselves.
- 10.6. The Work Placement Team will seek assurances from placement providers that due regard is given to health and safety, regardless of whether the placement is arranged through the School or by the student themselves; such assurances will usually take form of evidence of health and safety/fire certification as well as internal risk assessments. The School may additionally, and where it is able, arrange for a basic on-site inspection to be carried out by a competent person.
- 10.7. For each placement provider the School works with, a level of risk will be determined in relation to the nature of the work, and other pertinent factors identified. This will determine the types of assurances and/or evidence that are required and how often providers health and safety arrangements must be reviewed.
- 10.8. It is the duty of the placement provider as the employer to ensure that all appropriate background checks are carried on employees (including students on placements), however the School (as per 7.2; iii) will ensure that students have undertaken and passed DBS checks where they are required as part of the work placement and the course of study, and will share this information with the placement provider.



- 10.9. The School has a duty under the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 to have due regard to prevent people from being radicalised or drawn into terrorism; this duty extends to Work-Based Learning. The School will encourage students and staff members to be vigilant to anything that may give cause for concern and to refer such concerns to their Designated Prevent Officer.

11. Counselling and Wellbeing

- 11.1. The School provides a free, confidential counselling and mental health support via our Student Support Services. Students will have full access to these services whilst on work placements. Students wishing to speak to counsellor should contact the Student Services team.

12. Review and Update

- 12.1. This policy will be updated annually, or as required by the Head of Student Lifecycle; changes to it will be reviewed Executive Committee and ratified by the School's Board of Governors.



Version History

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Work Placement Coordinator

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Head of Student Lifecycle

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