

Revised Health and Safety Guidelines for Work Experience Students aged 15 years and over

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

There are additional guidelines, compulsory arrangements and procedures for work experience students aged under 15 years which are not contained in this document.

For students under 15 years, please refer to the document *Revised Health and Safety Guidelines for Work Experience Students under 15 years* available at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/sensecyouth/careertrans/worklearn/workexperience.htm>

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1. INTRODUCTION

These guidelines have been developed to assist principals, schools and employers when organising work experience arrangements for students aged 15 years and over in determining whether it is appropriate for students aged 15 years and over to undertake work experience, and contain information on the requirements of the Working With Children Check, and Criminal Records Checks for students undertaking work experience or structured workplace learning in aged care services.

Work experience is an important part of school curriculum. Principals, schools, employers and workplace supervisors need to be aware that **all** work experience students:

- are still developing physically, cognitively, and emotionally. Consequently, there may be tasks that are beyond their current capabilities
- are inexperienced and less skilled than older workers and unaware of workplace risks
- may not have the confidence to ask questions or speak up for fear of looking incapable
- may neglect their own health and safety in their enthusiasm to impress others.

Work experience students must successfully complete the relevant Department of Education & Early Childhood Development (DEECD) [safe@work](#) program online modules prior to commencing their placement. Host employers must ensure that students receive an appropriate induction and on-the-job occupational health and safety training before commencing their work experience. Work experience students must also be closely and competently supervised throughout their placements. Those supervising should be mature, responsible and have a thorough understanding of workplace health and safety requirements.

Occupational Health and Safety Resources

DEECD in consultation with WorkSafe Victoria and other relevant stakeholders have produced the Workplace Learning Toolbox, an occupational health and safety resource that should be used to support the safe@work program:

www.education.vic.gov.au/careertrans/sensecyouth/worklearn/workplacetoolbox/default.htm

WorkSafe Victoria has developed several publications specifically about the training and supervision needs of young workers. In the case of work experience students, the most relevant are:

A Training Checklist for Work Experience and Structured Workplace Learning Students, located at:

<http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/wsinternet/worksafe/home/forms+and+publications/educational+material/training+checklist+for+young+workers>

Managing Young Workers, located at:

<http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/wsinternet/WorkSafe/Home/Safety+and+Prevention/Health+And+Safety+Topics/Young+Workers/Managing+young+workers/>

While undertaking work experience, students learn through observing and assisting with simple tasks. They must NOT undertake activities that require extensive training or experience, or expose them to dangerous or risky situations.

In addition, there are certain industries, hazards and activities from which all work experience students are excluded, detailed in this document. These exclusions have been carefully considered, and exist in order to protect the health and safety of students and employers.

2. STUDENT HEALTH AND SAFETY

2.1 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY PROGRAM

All students undertaking work experience must complete [safe@work](#), the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) program developed by DEECD, prior to undertaking their work experience.

2.2 WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

The requirements of the Working with Children Check legislation do **not** apply to employers or supervisors of students aged 15 and over who are undertaking work experience or structured workplace learning.

2.3 REQUIREMENTS FOR CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD CHECKS (POLICE CHECKS) FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS WORKING IN AGED CARE SERVICES

For students undertaking either Work Experience or Structured Workplace Learning in aged care services, the *Police Certificate Requirements for Aged Care Providers* guidelines state that full time students under the age of 18 do not require a Check. These Guidelines are available at: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ageing-quality-factsheet-policechecks.htm>

These requirements apply to all Australian Government subsidised services, specifically:

- Residential aged care;
- Community aged care services under the Act: Community Aged Care Packages (CACP); and
- Flexible care services under the *Aged Care Act*: Extended Aged Care at Home (EACH); and
- Extended Aged Care at Home Dementia (EACHD) packages, Multi-Purpose Service places and Transition Care.

For further information, please contact:

The Assistant Director, Compliance and Programs
Office of Aged Care Quality and Compliance
Federal Department of Health and Ageing

via the Aged Care Information Line: 1800 500 853

3. GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS (15 YEARS AND OVER) UNDERTAKING WORK EXPERIENCE WITH ANIMALS

These guidelines apply only to work experience students aged 15 years and over. No student under 15 years should be permitted to undertake work experience involving direct contact with animals (students under 15 can undertake other activities that are safe and suitable, such as preparing feeds).

In August 2006 DEECD released guidelines for all students wishing to undertake work experience with animals. These guidelines allow students to have a safe and rewarding work experience in workplaces whose business involves dealing with animals.

In order to undertake work experience with animals, students must complete the [Proposed Work Experience with Animals: Summary of Student's Experience](#) Form, and provide it to their school's work experience coordinator.

Before filling out the Form, students must read the DEECD Fact Sheet No. 25: Work Place Hazards in Working with Animals, to help them appreciate some of the hazards and understand some of the conditions that will apply to their work experience.

The work experience coordinator should use the Form to assess a student's suitability for work experience with animals. If satisfied, the coordinator must forward the Form to the prospective host employer, who will make the final decision. If not satisfied, the coordinator should assist the student to make alternative arrangements.

For further information on these guidelines, please see:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/sensecyouth/careertrans/worklearn/workexperience.htm>

In addition, government schools should contact their Regional Youth Transition Officer for further guidance. Catholic and independent schools should contact Gerard Torpy (tel: 9267 0253) and Pam Hargreaves (tel: 9825 7200).

4. PROHIBITIONS AND RESTRICTIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS UNDERTAKING WORK EXPERIENCE

4.1 PROHIBITED INDUSTRIES

Work experience students must not be permitted to undertake work in:

- Security Industry
- Sex Industry
- Tattoo parlours
- Any retail or other business where guns or ammunition are sold
- Abattoirs
- Fishing boats (other than boats operating on inland waters).

4.2 PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

Work experience students must not be permitted to:

- Hand out medication or discuss condition of patients
- Administer medication either internally or externally
- Bathe patients
- Undertake any task that requires training or special skills to avoid a risk to safety - e.g. operating machinery, using explosives, welding, brazing or flame soldering
- Undertake work relying on safe worker behaviour (for example, the correct use of personal protective equipment such as respirators) rather than risk controls that protect everyone (such as a fully enclosed ventilation booth to isolate the hazard)
- Hold or transport cash and negotiable items – such as cash, stamps or cheques – with a value exceeding \$100. (This excludes the student's personal items)
- Hold keys, codes or ciphers except those required to operate standard office machines and other permitted equipment
- **Use ANY dangerous plant and equipment:**
(The examples listed here do not form an exhaustive list of items in this category.)
- Powered mobile plant (students must never be permitted to drive any vehicle or mobile plant while on work experience – this includes tractors, forklifts, all-terrain vehicles, ride-on mowers, bulldozers, excavators, skidders)
- Powered cutting or grinding tools (excluding those used for key cutting and engraving on items such as trophies)
- Ultra Violet (UV) equipment
- Gas fuelled cutting equipment
- Chain saws
- Welding, brazing and open flame soldering equipment
- Rubbish compactors
- Power presses – unless press has laser guarding or a remote control, and training and close supervision are provided
- Powered lifting equipment
- Excavators
- Elevating work platforms
- Compressed air power tools

- Abrasive blasting equipment
- Explosive powered tools
- Brush cutters with attached metal blades
- Scaffolding
- Power saws, including docking saws and circular saws
- Buzzers
- Thicknessers
- Guillotines
- Spindle moulders
- Power wood shapers
- Nail guns
- Jack hammers.
- Plastic moulding machines
- Lathes
- Petrol sales consoles.

4.3 WORKPLACE HAZARDS

Work experience students must never be exposed to the following hazards:

- Asbestos (including exposure through inadvertent disturbance of, or contact with, asbestos or asbestos-containing material)
- Biological/medical hazards (such as exposure to needle sticks from syringes or other 'sharps', blood or other body fluids, Legionella bacteria)
- Confined spaces (areas where it is difficult to enter or exit and which may have a contaminated atmosphere, low oxygen levels or stored substances that could cause engulfment)
- Exposure to occupational sources of ionising radiation (such as x-ray machines)
- Exposure to non-ionising radiation hazards (associated with devices such as UV sterilising equipment and laser devices)
- Electrical hazards associated with faulty, unsuitable or inappropriately placed leads, electrically powered plant or equipment, contact with live underground or overhead cables
- Excessive noise
- Exposure to hazardous substances and dangerous goods
- Extremes of heat or cold that could result in physical harm through illness or impaired performance
- Falling objects (such as objects falling from platforms, loads slung from cranes)
- Debris (for example, waste material generated by milling or grinding operations)
- Falls from, or collisions with, fork-lifts or mobile plant
- Falls from heights of two metres or more
- Trenching and excavation operations, including digging of post holes
- Exposure to high pressure liquids or gases, (associated with gas cylinders, compressed air tools, boilers and pressure piping)
- Hazardous manual handling involving the application of repetitive, sustained and/or high force, awkward postures or movements, exposure to sustained vibration, manual handling of people or animals, manual handling of unstable loads that are difficult to grasp or hold
- Impalement hazards, such as protruding angle iron
- Sharp objects and cutting equipment (not including scissors and secateurs sold for general use)
- Plant hazards including moving machinery or equipment, unguarded machinery where clothing, hair, limbs or fingers could be get caught, cut or crushed

- Bullying, occupational violence, work-related stress, sexual harassment.

NOTE that there are 30 Workplace Hazards Fact Sheets dealing with hazards encountered in many of the industries and occupations in which work experience may be offered. These Fact Sheets are located at: http://www.education.vic.gov.au/safe@work/workplace_hazards.asp

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