



Sligo College
of Further Education

Work Experience Policy

Purposes of work experience

Sligo CFE recognises the value of work experience as part of a programme of study designed to develop the skills and knowledge which will enable students to participate fully and succeed in the workplace and in society. Work experience should:

- Provide learning opportunities not available in the classroom.
- Provide an understanding and appreciation of the workplace environment.
- Allow students to discover personal strengths in a different environment.
- Increase students' self-confidence in relation to applying for employment.
- Allow students to showcase their abilities to an employer.
- Increase the student's chances of securing employment.
- To afford the learner the opportunity to be assessed for certification purposes as appropriate.

Policy statement

Sligo CFE aims to include appropriate work experience as an integral element of all courses in our College.

Recognised types of work experience

Appropriate work experience may take a number of forms:

- Work placement.
- Work shadowing.
- Work simulation.
- Work based learning

Placement

Students are required to find their own work placement.

Procedures

1. Before placement, a preparation for work experience programme will be done in class.
2. Students approaching employers will be given a letter of introduction from our College.
3. On obtaining a work placement, our college will provide a pack to the work experience student giving details of insurance, as well as student, college and sponsor responsibilities. The student will pass this information on to the sponsor.
4. During the placement, our College will endeavour to visit the place of work to monitor progress. (Due to logistical and cost considerations, teachers will only visit students in a work experience setting within 10 miles of the college). Where a visit is not feasible, the College will contact the employer by phone.
5. On completion of the placement, our College will request a report from the sponsor.
6. During and after their placement, students will detail their learning from the process.
7. Students must complete all blocks of work experience required by their course in order to be assessed.

Remuneration

Employers are not expected to remunerate students during work placement, or to pay travel or subsistence costs incurred.

Some specific requirements

Certain specific work placements have specific requirements, for example, certification in manual handling, first aid or 'Safe Pass'. Garda vetting will be necessary for all students.

Insurance

Students are covered by Sligo CFE's insurance during work placement, subject to certain conditions and exceptions.

Eligibility

Please note that students who have not completed the planning and preparation for work experience in class will not be eligible to participate in work placement. This involves the following:

- 1. Weekly, regular attendance.*
- 2. Completion and submission of the planning and preparation collection of work*
- 3. Key skills related to 'specific requirements'.*

Requirements of students on work experience

When taking up work experience students are expected to represent our College to the best of their ability. Students on work experience remain subject to our College Code of Behaviour and, in addition, should comply with any guidelines laid down by the employer.

Learning: Students must take responsibility for their own learning while on work experience, in order to gain the maximum benefit from the time spent with in the work environment.

Attendance: Students are expected to be present and punctual at their designated work experience place during normal working hours. Minimum requirements in relation to attendance apply to all courses.

Absence: If a student is unable to attend work experience, s/he must inform the employer and course coordinator immediately. Absence from work experience is permissible only in very exceptional circumstances e.g. illness, and will require a full explanation, Medical Cert etc. Absence from Work Experience will automatically be referred to the management of our College. Time missed must be made up at a later date, in consultation with our College.

Appropriate Dress/Hygiene: Many employers have a dress and/or hygiene code, whether due to the nature of their business or for health and safety reasons. Students must comply with this code.

Instructions/Initiative: Students are expected to follow all reasonable instructions issued by employers and to show initiative in their practice. Students should also familiarise themselves as necessary with the policies and procedures of their workplace.

Documentation: Students are required to keep/collect all relevant work experience documentation as advised by the Class Teacher. Students attending placement must have the relevant documentation stamped by both the college and the employer.

Confidentiality: Students must respect confidentiality in relation to observations made while in the workplace. Any issues of concern should be discussed only with their work experience tutor in our College.

If students have a genuine difficulty during work experience, they should contact our College immediately. Under no circumstances should they leave or change their placement without prior permission from our College.

In order for the college to verify work experience, the college must be in a position to contact a supervisor. The onus is on the student to provide correct contact information. The college will not process work experience for assessment until this verification has been completed.

Date of ratification: 14th March, 2016

Date of most recent review: 21st March, 2018