

Department of **Education**
Learners first, connected and inspired



Workplace Learning

Procedure



Workplace Learning Procedure

1. Scope (audience and applicability)

These procedures apply to:

- Principals of schools providing workplace learning programs.
- Nominated Workplace Learning Coordinators.
- Students and parents.
- Employers and workplace supervisors.

2. Purpose

The purpose is to ensure that Workplace Learning Coordinators and Principals have a clear understanding of the procedures and mandatory requirements for placing students on a work placement.

3. Definitions

Parent

Includes guardian/s or other person/s having the care or control of a child.

Workplace Learning

Workplace Learning is: A student/s who observes and/or participates in workplace functions and activities in a workplace environment under the direct supervision of the nominated workplace responsible officer and without the direct supervision of an employee of the Department of Education (DoE).

Workplace Learning Coordinator

A role carried out by any employee of the Department of Education who is nominated by the Principal to coordinate workplace learning for students. This role exists regardless of whether an external agency provides a workplace learning program service for the school or not.

Workplace Learning Risk Assessment Checklist for Coordinators

This is a mandatory requirement for each placement and allows the school to assess the level of risk and to determine if a more detailed Risk Management Plan needs to be developed.

Workplace Supervisor

An adult employee of a host workplace, acting in a designated supervisory capacity for the student(s) in workplace learning at that site.

4. Procedure Details

Statement

DoE provides workplace learning programs to assist students in the transition from school to work or further study. Work experience traditionally consists of a placement in a workplace where the student shadows or observes work activity.

These procedures include:

- Mandatory Workplace Learning Risk Assessment Checklist for Coordinators and any subsequent Risk Management Plan required to be completed prior to the placement occurring.
- Mandatory Work Placement Agreement Form for each placement prior to commencement.
- Supporting documentation and advice for schools and employers.

These procedures **do not** include the following:

- Requirements for Vocational Education and Training (VET) placements. These are the responsibility of the Registered Training Organisation (RTO).
- Paid work situations (including Australian School-based Apprenticeships).
- Industry Open Days and Industry Excursions:
 - Students attending a work site (supervised by a teacher) to tour the facilities, participate in activities, or to hear an industry representative speak, are considered to be on a school excursion. See Procedures for Planning Off-Campus Activities.

Background

Workplace learning activities provide relevant and authentic learning for students. Students who participate in workplace learning activities should be actively involved in negotiating their work placement with parents, teachers and Workplace Learning Coordinators. Students should be encouraged to discuss their placement preferences with parents or carers. To maximise their workplace experience, the student should be involved in researching the placement through an 'inquiry cycle' which could include stages such as identification, observation, investigation, preparation, participation and reflection.

Workplace learning activities provide relevant and authentic learning for students and can include experiences such as:

- practical skill development in the workplace under supervision;
- observing practice in the workplace;
- project based learning;
- mentoring;
- work shadowing;
- volunteering and community involvement; and
- participating in a mini-trade or a mini-degree.

Responsibilities for Establishing and Maintaining Workplace Learning Programs

The Principal will:

- appoint one or more Workplace Learning Coordinator(s) when a decision has been made that the school will offer workplace learning program(s);
- ensure mandatory requirements for a Work Placement Agreement Form is completed and placed on the student file;
- ensure the mandatory Workplace Learning Risk Assessment Checklist for Coordinators is completed and placed on the student file; and
- ensure Risk Management Plans are completed (if required) prior to the commencement of the placement.

Workplace Learning Coordinators are responsible for ensuring they have:

- completed the mandatory Workplace Learning Risk Assessment Checklist for Coordinators form and any subsequent Risk Management Plans have been completed prior to the work placement commencing;
- completed the mandatory Work Placement Agreement Form for each placement;
- developed and implemented an effective communication strategy between all parties involved in the work placement;
- developed an emergency response strategy;
- procedures for selecting, matching and inducting students;
- procedures for selecting and inducting employers;
- procedures for gaining parent/guardian consent including lunch breaks and travel arrangements;
- procedures for assessing the safety and suitability of the worksite; and
- clearly negotiated, agreed and approved the tasks the student will undertake whilst on work placement.

Students must not be paid, or given any in-kind remuneration unless the student is already under a contract of employment with the employer, as this may invalidate DoE insurance arrangements.

If students are paid by an employer (e.g. as a part-time worker or as a School-based Apprentice or Trainee) they become, for insurance purposes, the responsibility of the employer. They are no longer covered by DoE insurance. In this case the student needs to be covered by the employer's insurance arrangements for worker's compensation and other insurance e.g. personal accident.

Hours of Participation

Students must only be placed on a work placement in a workplace during the normal operating hours of that worksite.

If a student is required to participate in a work placement outside of normal school hours, including school holidays, then the school must provide the employer with the name and contact details of a responsible officer who will be available during these times.

Interstate Worksite Approvals

It is the responsibility of the school and parent(s) to ensure their student's safety while they are away from home. The Workplace Learning Coordinator or another staff member must be contactable throughout the placement including during school holidays and after hours. The Workplace Learning Coordinator should also contact the worksite during the placement to ensure that all is progressing well.

Recreational activities conducted during the placement are not covered by the department's insurance policies. Consequences arising from accidents associated with recreational activities are the responsibility of the student/parent(s).

Industrial Relations

Students must not be used to replace paid workers. Displacement of existing workers at worksites is not allowed.

Placements cannot occur during industrial disputes or stand downs. If a placement has already commenced the student must be withdrawn and provided with an alternative placement.

Risk Management Process - Mandatory Requirement

The [Workplace Learning Risk Assessment Checklist](#) is a mandatory requirement for each placement. The checklist allows the Workplace Learning Coordinator and Principal to assess the level of risk and to determine if a more detailed Risk Management Plan needs to be developed.

The Workplace Learning Risk Assessment Checklist and any subsequent Risk Management Plan must be kept on the student's records.

Risk management is about embracing opportunities and managing risks to achieve better outcomes. It is not about avoiding risks. Placing a student into a workplace creates specific risks but workplace learning may be no 'riskier' than any other educational activity.

Every activity has specific risks and opportunities which must be managed and/or embraced. The risk management process helps stakeholders to identify risks, and to reduce the severity of the outcome (consequence) and the likelihood of a risk occurring.

Appropriate risk management processes must be in place for all workplace learning activities. The nature of the management processes required is determined by the nature of the particular activities in which students are engaged.

Risk management is a collaborative process. This requires communication with those involved in the school as well as people in external agencies and the DoE. In general terms the risk management processes cycle must encompass:

- Establishing the context (including identifying activities; stakeholders; activities; and environment etc).
- Identifying risks (including listing risk treatment in place).
- Analysing the risks including assigning risk rating (Extreme, High, Medium, Low).
- Evaluate risks (determine whether risk level is acceptable).
- Treat risk (further treatment if current treatment actions are deemed to be insufficient).
- Communicate and consult (with stakeholders at every step of the risk management cycle).

- Monitor and review risks (risk and assigned level can change over time).

If the Workplace Learning Risk Assessment Checklist identifies the need, then a Risk Management Plan *must* accompany the workplace learning activities prior to the placement commencing. Principals must ensure a standardised risk management process using DoE's Risk Management Plan Template has been completed. Examples can be found on the DoE intranet:

<https://www.education.tas.gov.au/intranet/CSD/HR/whs/SitePages/Home.aspx>

Workplace learning activities must be monitored as they are taking place and reviewed after completion. This requires detailed communication with those involved and in some cases, consultation with others who have particular insights and skills relevant to the activity.

Decisions about workplace learning activities, venues, transport, relevant qualifications and all Risk Management Plans must be documented and kept on record.

Appropriate measures must be taken to ensure that programs, risks and equipment are suitable and safe with precautions in place to minimise potential hazards. Where necessary, advice should be sought from people who are qualified in the activity.

Good Character Checks

When a Tasmanian Government school student under 18 years is working one-on-one with a host employer/employee, or working in an isolated environment, the host employer and/or employee must undertake a Good Character Check prior to the student's placement:

- The employer/employee must complete a [Good Character Check Application Form](#).
- The form must be returned to the DoE's Conduct and Investigations Unit. Allow at least 4 weeks for the check to be done.
- Once the assessment process is completed and an employer/employee has been cleared, a clearance letter is sent directly to the employer/employee.

It is the **responsibility** of the **Workplace Learning Coordinator** to ensure that the host employer has obtained a good character clearance for all relevant people. A clearance is valid for three years.

For further information, or queries relating to the form or the process, contact the Conduct and Investigations Unit via email at: Conduct.and.Investigations@education.tas.gov.au.

Insurance

Students participating in school approved workplace learning activities and special and alternative learning programs are covered against legal liability claims made against them, and personal accident subject to the following conditions:

- All activities must be approved by the Principal and must comply with departmental policies and directions, including these Procedures.
- Students must not receive remuneration for work undertaken whilst on a work placement. To do so will invalidate their insurance cover.
- Non-government school students must be insured by the school in which they are enrolled.
- Employers are not insured by the DoE for acts of negligence and omissions for which they are responsible.
- The department's insurance cover does not diminish employers' obligations to provide a safe and adequately supervised work environment.

- Legal liability insurance does not cover wilful damage caused by students.
- Insurance arrangements cover students at their workplace and whilst travelling *in a direct way* between home/school and their place of work.
- Students travelling in registered vehicles are covered by Motor Accidents Insurance Board.
- Tasmanian Home Education Advisory Council (THEAC) registered students placed in accordance with these Procedures are covered by DoE's insurance for legal liability claims made against them. Parents are responsible for the first \$1,000 of any excess arising from a claim.

Workplace Health & Safety

Workplace health and safety is everyone's responsibility.

Schools have a duty of care to ascertain the degree of risk of a worksite and the risk of placing a particular student in that site.

All employer sites, no matter how small, are legally required to abide by the regulations of the Work Health and Safety Act 2012.

The operation of equipment at work sites must be undertaken or supervised by suitably qualified persons.

Workplace Standards Tasmania has developed a publication *Welcome to the Workplace: A work health and safety guide for new workers* that contains useful information and checklists directed at the student (new worker) and the trainer. Copies are available by phoning 1300 366 322.

Questions to ask an employer that will help to ascertain worksite safety might include:

- Do you have Workplace Health and Safety (WH&S) policies and procedures in place to identify and control hazards, accidents and emergencies?
- Do you have a person responsible for safety? (If so, the Co-ordinator should talk to that person).
- What will the student be doing?
- What supervision will be provided?
- Is personal protective equipment required or supplied?
- What form will the student's induction process take?
- Have you had students on your site before?

Care should be taken to ensure that WH&S preparation and information is communicated to students in a way that they can understand.

It is important that information about any health condition that may pose a risk in the workplace (such as asthma, colour blindness, epilepsy) is communicated to all relevant parties.

Workplace Agreement Form - Mandatory Requirement

The [Workplace Agreement Form](#) is designed to ensure that the employer, student, school and parent/guardian are all aware of the placement and receive consistent information from DoE schools. The Workplace Learning Coordinator is responsible for completing the form and a copy of the signed form must be maintained on the student file.

Accidents

Workplace Learning Coordinators must ensure that the employer has a copy of the Workplace Agreement Form that provides contact details for the person to contact in the event of an emergency involving a student.

In the event of major accidents and injuries requiring hospital treatment, students will be taken to the nearest available medical facility, as determined by ambulance staff.

Parents of Tasmanian Government school students should pay all invoices, seek Medicare reimbursement (keeping copies of the original invoices and payments received from Medicare) and then make a claim on the appropriate claim form available from schools. Prior to all placements, schools must inform parents regarding these insurance arrangements.

If an accident occurs, the school must complete an incident report form which is available at: <https://staff.education.tas.gov.au/hr/ohs/incident> [Staff access only].

Procedure:

For additional supporting information and samples of forms and letters, please refer Appendix A.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is 'duty of care' in relation to workplace learning?

A: Schools and employers have a duty of care to students. This requires schools and employers to take reasonable care to avoid exposing the students to any reasonably foreseeable risk of injury. The duty of care cannot be delegated.

Q: What should I do if a student perceives or alleges harassment, discrimination, bullying or other harm while in the workplace?

A: Remove the student from the placement and report the problem to your Principal to decide which authorities need to be notified and what action is appropriate.

Q: What should I do if an employer alleges a student has undertaken malicious conduct while at their workplace?

A: Remove the student from the worksite; report the allegation to your Principal, who will decide on further action. If any injury or damage is attributed to misconduct, the DoE's insurance may not apply.

Q: Are all workplace learning activities insured?

A: All workplace learning activities approved by the DoE schools are covered by the Department's insurance. The cover does not apply to students receiving remuneration.

Students are also insured against legal claims and personal accident subject to certain conditions - refer to Risk Management Process – Mandatory Requirement – (see above).

Q: How do I assess risk prior to placing a student in the workplace?

A: Care must be taken to ensure student safety, and that the activities are safe, appropriate to the student's abilities, legal and compliant with the DoE's policies and procedures. Information and support for conducting a risk assessment can be found in the Risk Management Plan. The mandatory Workplace Learning Risk Assessment Checklist will assist in identifying when a full Risk Management Plan needs to be developed and approved prior to the work placement.

If in doubt, seek guidance from the Senior Consultant (Risk Management) on (03) 61656258.

Q: Does each worksite needed to be visited prior to the placement commencing?

A: Common sense needs to be applied in order to ensure that the workplace is safe for students. Phone conversations might be appropriate where the school has used the employer previously or where the risks are minimal e.g. office environment. Higher risk employers such as warehouses, workshops, farms are to be visited and assessed to ensure that there is clear understanding on what a student will be expected to do and the levels of supervision required. All workplaces are required to comply with the Workplace Health and Safety Act.

A sample WHS checklist is available in Appendix A.

Q: What if I want to place a student into a situation not covered by the Procedures?

A: Any activities that fall outside the scope of the Procedures and existing DoE policies must be documented and approved by the General Manager (Learning Services). Developing a Risk Management Plan is essential. Note that many activities have been excluded from the Procedures for good reason and may hold potential dangers that are not obvious. Risk Management Plans must not simply be used as a vehicle to circumvent the Procedures. Illegal or high risk activities will not be approved under any circumstances.

New opportunities may arise that are not currently covered by the Procedures. In this case, contact the Senior Consultant Risk Management on (03) 61656258 to discuss.

Q: What should I do if an accident/incident occurs?

A: If an accident or incident occurs, you must let your Principal know and he/she will decide on further action. If the incident is very serious (or if you can't contact the Principal), call the DoE's Central Emergency Management Coordinator (0418 332 846 – 24/7).

You must also complete an incident report form available from <https://www.education.tas.gov.au/intranet/CSD/HR/whs/SitePages/Home.aspx> [Staff access only], and contact the Senior Consultant Risk Management on (03) 61656258 if you think it is an insurable event.

Q: Does the Department of Education's Legal Liability Insurance arrangements cover employers?

A: No.

Employers must have their own legal liability insurance cover.

Related Policy and Procedures:

- **Relevant Legislation or Authority**

Work Health and Safety Act 2012 –

<https://www.education.tas.gov.au/intranet/CSD/HR/whs/sitepages/home.aspx>

- **Related Department Policies and/or Guidelines**

Certificate of Currency -

<https://www.education.tas.gov.au/documentcentre/Documents/Certificate-of-Currency.pdf>

- **Summary of Insurance Policies**

Personal Accident Insurance -

<https://www.education.tas.gov.au/intranet/CSD/HR/whs/SitePages/Home.aspx>

- **Procedures for Planning Off Campus Activities**

DoE Policy documentation -

<https://www.education.tas.gov.au/documentcentre/Documents/Procedures-for-planning-off-campus-activities.pdf>

Restricted Activities/Industries/Environments:

Childcare Safety Screening

Licensed child care services require safety screening clearance for all employees, including employees under 18 years of age. Although the safety screening clearance assessment is generally not required for students, individual child care services may request students to have the clearance for workplace learning placements.

Students required to undertake the safety screening process, will need to complete a Safety Screening Application Form.

The application must be sent to the Conduct and Investigations Unit for approval prior to the student beginning their work placement. Allow at least 4 weeks for the application to be approved.

For further information, or queries relating to the form, contact the Conduct and Investigations Unit via email at Conduct.and.Investigations@education.tas.gov.au. Queries regarding the safety screening process should be directed to the Child Care Unit.

Mining

Placements in underground worksites must be approved by the General Manager Learning Services.

A full and comprehensive Risk Management Plan must be undertaken.

Commercial Fishing, Diving, Aquaculture and Other Maritime

Students are excluded from diving unless they hold an occupational diving licence.

Students on aquaculture placements at fish farms must wear Personal Flotation Devices (PFD) while on the water.

A full and comprehensive Risk Management Plan must be undertaken.

Defence

Students must not be placed at any location where armaments are used, stored or handled, nor may a student be placed at any location where combat activities of any kind (real or practice) are in progress.

Electro-technology

This industry is subject to strict regulations. Work shadowing placements only.

A full and comprehensive Risk Management Plan must be undertaken.

Prohibited Placements and Activities Under Any Circumstances

Work experience students *must not* undertake the following tasks:

- Administer medication either internally or externally or discuss condition of patients.
- Bathe patients.
- Work relying on respirators.
- 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.
- Drive any vehicle or mobile plant without an appropriate licence, while on work placement – this includes cars, motorbikes, tractors, all-terrain vehicles, ride-on mowers, bulldozers, excavators, skidders.
- Use or be in the proximity of any fire arms.

Contact Information

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Workplace Health and Safety

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Independent Schools Association

(03) 6224 0125

aist@tassie.net.au

www.independentschools.tas.edu.au/

Catholic Education Office

(03) 6210 8888

ceo@catholic.tas.edu.au

catholic.tas.edu.au/

THEAC

(03) 6334 5381

admin@theac.org.au

<http://www.theac.org.au/>

Unions Tasmania

(03) 6234 9553

admin@unionstas.com.au

www.unionstas.com.au/

Workplace Standards Tasmania

1300 366 322

wstinfo@justice.tas.gov.au

www.wst.tas.gov.au/

APPENDIX A

Mandatory Documents for each Work Placement:

- *Workplace Learning Risk Assessment Checklist for Coordinators*
- *Sample Risk Management Plan*
- *Workplace Agreement Form*

Sample Documents:

Sample letters, forms and workbooks provided by schools to support Workplace Learning Coordinators are located on the DoE intranet [Workplace Learning Template Library](#):

- *Letter to Parent – Conditions of a Work Placement*
- *Employer Confirmation of Placement Letter*
- *Employer Assessment Evaluation Sheet*
- *Employer Contact Details and Requirements Form*
- *Evaluation Form for Employer*
- *WHS Work Site Checklist*
- *Work Site Questions for Employer*
- *Student Induction Booklet*
- *Certificate of Appreciation to Employer*
- *Thank You Letter to Employer*

For additional supporting information please refer to the document titled:

[**Supporting Information for Workplace Learning Coordinators and Schools**](#)

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Meaning of "must", "is to" and "may"

- (a) the word "must" is to be construed as being mandatory;
- (b) the words "is to" and "are to" are to be construed as being directory; and
- (c) the word "may" is to be construed as being discretionary or enabling, as the context requires.

Deputy Secretary (Early Years and Schools)	Must ensure these procedures are adhered to by Learning Services General Managers.
General Managers/Line Managers	Must ensure all principals, managers and leaders of educational settings are familiar with these procedures.
Principals/Managers/Leaders	Must adhere to these procedures. Must ensure all staff involved with work placements adhere to these procedures.
School Staff / Workplace Learning Coordinator	Must ensure that these procedures are adhered to.

Parents	Parents must abide by the obligations as outlined and signed in the Workplace Agreement form.
Students	Students must adhere to the obligations outlined in the Workplace Learning Agreement form.

6. Risk Management

The approach to managing the risks impacting on the achievement of this Workplace Learning policy centre on the application of a strong governance and co-ordination model managed by DoE and serving the interests of all secondary school and senior secondary schools .

7. Associated Documents and Materials

The following documents are available from www.education.tas.gov.au (Search for the Doc ID)

- *Workplace Learning Policy* (Doc ID: [TASED-4-5638](#))
- *Mandatory Risk Assessment Checklist* (located in [Workplace Learning Template Library](#))
- *Mandatory Workplace Agreement Form* (located in [Workplace Learning Template Library](#))
- *Supporting Information for Workplace Learning Coordinators and Schools* (Doc ID: [TASED-4-5635](#)) [Staff access only]

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