

Years 9-12 Project

The Delivery of Work-based Learning to School Students

Requirements and guidelines



Introduction

This document is a product of the Vocational Learning in Tasmanian Schools Framework, developed under the Years 9-12 Project, a cross-sectoral initiative to improve the education and training opportunities for students in Tasmania.

Work-based learning is a term that has slightly varying definitions in state, national and international policy documents and research literature. In Tasmania, we have based our definition on the most recent Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) literature.¹

Work-based learning encompasses formal and informal programs involving learning in the workplace or simulated activities that provide learners with the opportunity to:

- acquire and demonstrate general employability skills
- acquire an understanding of the changing nature of work and workplaces
- acquire an understanding of the changing patterns of employment in industries in which there is likely to be a significant labour growth
- undertake self-managed employment and enterprise initiatives
- undertake structured and targeted learning experiences to understand the nature of employment and workplaces in a variety of industries/businesses.

For the purposes of this document, work-based learning includes:

- vocational placements
- work placements, which may include:
 - » work experience
 - » mentoring
 - » observing practice in the workplace
 - » practical skill development in the workplace under supervision
 - » volunteering and community involvement coordinated by the school
 - » placements that are a requirement of a course.
- work exposure activities conducted on-campus or off-campus, including but not limited to:
 - » industry-focused competitions and challenges
 - » presentations from industry, employers or educational institutions.

Note: These requirements and guidelines should be followed in accordance with advice from the school's contracted legal advisors or departmental legal services. Knowledge of these requirements and guidelines does not replace the need for ongoing learning relating to duty of care and the legal obligations of schools.



¹ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) - Work-based learning and apprenticeships <http://www.oecd.org/education/skills-beyond-school/work-based-learning-and-apprenticeships.htm>

Scope

This document concerns work-based learning activities and programs, and applies to:

- nominated work-based learning coordinators
- principals of schools providing work-based learning.

This document does not apply to:

- paid work situations, including apprenticeships and traineeships
- requirements for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and employers relating to Vocational Placements, these are covered under the Tasmanian Traineeships and Apprenticeships Committee (TTAC) Policies and Guidelines.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to ensure that principals, schools, teachers, work-based learning coordinators, students, parents/guardians, employers, workplace supervisors and partner organisations have a clear understanding of the requirements, responsibilities and procedures associated with work-based learning for Tasmanian school students. This document also creates a shared understanding of the intent of work-based learning and the outcomes for students. It supports Priority Three in the Vocational Learning in Tasmanian Schools Framework – increasing access to quality vocational learning for all Tasmanian schools students, including students with disability, those in remote and regional areas, those who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, those who experience social and economic disadvantage and those from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities.

Roles, Requirements and Responsibilities

Meaning of "must", "should" and "may":

- a. The word "**must**" is to be construed as being legislated and/or mandatory for safety reasons.
- b. The word "**should**" is to be construed as being directory.
- c. The word "**may**" is to be construed as being discretionary or enabling, as the context requires.

Schools:

- **must** be involved or informed, as applicable, in the planning of a student's vocational placement, undertaken as part of a Vocational Education & Training (VET) course (in line with Tasmanian Traineeships and Apprenticeships Committee (TTAC) Policies and Guidelines)

- **must** ensure any person delivering, or assisting in the provision of, work-based learning has the appropriate checks, qualifications and registrations in place, as governed by legislation and school or sector policy
- **must** ensure any work-based learning for students is conducted in a safe environment
- **should** provide details of industry connections and details of student work-based learning experiences to the centralised database.

Catholic Education Tasmania:

- **should** ensure work-based learning is valued by school and sector leadership.

School Boards, School Authorities and Governance Bodies (Government and Non-government Schools):

- **should** ensure work-based learning is valued by school leadership and receives adequate resourcing.

Secretary, Department of Education (DoE):

- **should** ensure work-based learning is valued by senior leadership.

School Principals:

- **must** ensure risk assessment checklists are completed and placed, for example, on a student's file, prior to students undertaking a work experience placement. For DoE schools, completed checklists should be uploaded to the centralised database
- **must** ensure work-based learning coordinators have completed a risk assessment checklist for a class/group work-based learning activity
- **must** ensure work-based learning programs comply with all other relevant school/department policies
- **should** appoint one or more staff members to the role of work-based learning coordinator
- **should** consider their teaching staff's capacity to provide work-based learning programs within their school's workforce planning processes
- **should** consult any relevant policies on Registration to Working with Vulnerable People (RWVPs) in relation to any visitors/volunteers/external organisations involved with students
- **should** ensure the school maintains regular communication with any third-party organisation contracted to coordinate work-based learning for school students
- **should** ensure work-based learning coordinators are reimbursed for any relevant costs incurred in performing their role
- **should** ensure work-based learning coordinators receive sufficient and specific allocated time within the school timetable for the administration of work-based learning
- **should** ensure work-based learning coordinators responsible for completing a risk assessment receive

allocated time within regular work hours to complete this task, and are supported to do so through use of a department/school vehicle or other supported transport arrangements, eg taxi vouchers or travel reimbursement

- **should** ensure work-based learning is valued by school leadership and receives adequate resourcing within the school's budget
- **should** ensure work-based learning offered by the school is linked to educational outcomes for students
- **should** ensure work-based learning coordinators undertake regular professional learning in risk management processes in the context of work-based learning
- **may** request a host employer to undergo a RWVP check, if they consider it appropriate
 - » This **should** be paid for by the school
- **may** request a visitor/volunteer delivering or assisting in the delivery of work-based learning on the school campus hold a RWVP.

Work-based Learning Coordinators:

- **must** complete a risk assessment, as well as seek approval from the school principal before students undertake any work placement
- **must** ensure a workplace agreement form and any relevant supporting documentation are completed and signed prior to the student beginning a work placement
- **must** ensure students involved in a work-based learning are not paid or given any in-kind remuneration, unless the student is already under a contract of employment with the employer, as this may invalidate school insurance arrangements
- **must** ensure workplaces hosting students have appropriate risk management strategies in place
- **must** make contact with a potential work placement host and discuss any potential health and safety risks that exist and how they will be managed
- **must** maintain regular communication with any third-party organisation contracted to coordinate vocational or work experience placements for school students
- **should** be aware of employers' and RTOs' obligations under the TTAC Policies and Guidelines in relation to students undertaking a vocational placement
- **should** complete a risk assessment for a class/group involved in work-based learning
- **should** seek advice from school or sector colleagues of past employer engagement to ensure workplace is a safe environment for students on work placement
- **should** ensure that students receive workplace health and safety training before visiting a workplace, relevant to the industry and scope and nature of the activity
- **should** ensure workplaces hosting students have a COVID-19 safety plan

- **should** maintain relationships with industry to ensure relevance of work-based learning
- **should** provide details, as per database requirements, of industries involved in work-based learning
- **should** undertake regular professional learning in risk management processes in the context of work-based learning
- **may** consult with the DoE's Vocational Learning and Career Education (VLCE) team for advice and support.

Visitors/Volunteers:

- **must** follow all school policies, processes and procedures applicable to a school campus/facility or an activity
- **must** follow the instructions of the principal or their delegate at all times
- **may** be asked to undergo a RWVP check at the discretion of the school principal.

Hours of Participation

Students **must** participate in work placement only during the normal operating hours of that workplace.

If a student is required to participate in 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.

Work placements **should** not exceed 2 weeks (10 days) in duration per placement, unless this arrangement forms part of an approved learning program for the student approved by the principal.

Industrial Relations

Students **must** not be used to replace paid employees.

Work placements cannot occur during industrial disputes or stand-downs. If a work placement has already commenced the student **must** be withdrawn from the workplace.

Insurance

Schools **must** obtain advice on insurance relating to students participating in work-based learning. This **must** be provided by the school's contracted legal advisors or Department Legal Services Team.

Any activity or program that contradicts this advice **must** not be undertaken, unless the sector head approve an exemption.

Interstate Approvals

It is the responsibility of the school and parents/guardians to ensure the student's safety while they are away from home. For DoE schools, contact Learning Services for advice on the Interstate Approvals process.

Existing school or sector travel policy **must** be observed.

A responsible officer **must** be contactable throughout the placement, including during school holidays and after work hours. The work-based learning coordinator **should** also be in contact with the worksite during the placement.

Any unforeseen consequences arising from accidents associated with activities undertaken outside of the placement are the responsibility of the parents/guardians of the student.

Prohibited Activities

Students **must** not undertake the following tasks as part of work-based learning:

- Being in contact with any medication, needles or bodily fluids.
- Being in the proximity of any loaded firearms or explosives.
- Being in the proximity of any persons who are naked or semi naked.
- Being underground.
- Driving any vehicle or mobile plant without an appropriate licence.
- Handling any hazardous substances.

Some industries have more risks than others. The list is not intended to list all possible prohibited activities but does identify many common issues.

It is the responsibility of the work-based learning coordinator to undertake the required investigation wherever there is doubt on the suitability or safety of a particular placement.

Restricted Activities and High-Risk Situations

Schools **must** obtain advice from their contracted legal advisors before exploring work-based learning opportunities in high-risk areas, including, but not limited to:

Air travel (eg helicopters, light planes)

- » Activities involving air travel **must** be approved by the sector head with a comprehensive risk management plan undertaken.

Childcare and Early Age Learning

- » Childcare service employees and volunteers are required to hold a RWVP, however those volunteers under the age of 16 years **may** not be required to hold a RWVP.
- » Childcare services may request students to have a RWVP for work experience placements.
- » If placing a student into a child related area the requirements **should** be discussed with the employer, a minimum of 6 weeks prior to the placement, allowing for the RWVP application to be processed.

Commercial Fishing, Diving, Aquaculture

and Other Maritime

- » Students **must** not participate in diving unless they hold an occupational diving licence.
- » Students **must** wear personal flotation devices while on the water.
- » Overnight or multi-day trips on sea **must** be approved by the sector head with a comprehensive risk management plan undertaken.

Construction

- » Students **must** receive appropriate industry specific OH&S preparation.
- » Students **should** receive an induction when commencing at a worksite and cover safety, communication and key work procedures.

Defence

- » Students **must** not be in the proximity of loaded weapons and not placed in any location where nuclear material is used, stored or handled, nor may a student be placed in any location where combat activities of any kind are in progress.
- » A full and comprehensive risk management plan **should** be undertaken by the school prior to placement. This can be done in collaboration with representatives from the Australian Defence Force.
- » Schools **should** consult their contracted legal advisors for further information.

Electro-technology

- » Students **must** not partake in any electrical work including the handling of electrical equipment that will be installed in domestic or industrial situations.
- » Students undertaking work-based learning in electro-technology **must** only observe.

Health

- » Due to the threat of viruses to the elderly and ill, students who are affected by any virus (including common cold and influenza viruses) **must** not attend their placement.
- » Placements within medical facilities must be strictly observational. The student must not interact with patients by handing out medication or discussing their condition. Students **must** not hold or hand equipment to a medical professional or have access to patient medical records.

Heights

- » Students **must** not use uninsulated ladders in excess of 2 metres or erect, dismantle or work from scaffolds.

Operating vehicles

- » Students **must** not drive any vehicle or mobile plant without an appropriate licence or industry-endorsed documents deeming competency while on work placement - this includes, but is not limited to cars, motorbikes, tractors, all-terrain vehicles, ride-on mowers, bulldozers, excavators, skidders. Work placement cannot be used as the means to obtain such licence or competency.

Overnight placements

- » A comprehensive risk management plan **must** be undertaken for any overnight placement.

Please note: this list is not exhaustive. Individual workplace and industry considerations must be discussed between the school and workplace when determining activities to be undertaken by the student.

Depending on the situation or activity, a student **may** be required to undertake industry-specific induction or basic certification (eg White Card, Responsible Service of Alcohol) before participating in a work-based learning activity or program on a worksite. This **should** be discussed between the teacher and workplace prior to the activity and included in any risk assessment.

The following resources **should** also be consulted when determining the scope of student activities:

- [Safe Work Australia](#)
- [Worksafe Tasmania](#)
- [Fair Work Ombudsman](#).

For a list of restricted activities for vocational placements undertaken as part of a VET program, please refer to [Skills Tasmania](#), as Tasmania's State Training Authority.

Risk Management Process

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 work-based learning **may** be no 'riskier' than any other educational activity.

Every activity has specific risks and opportunities, which **must** be managed. The risk management process helps to identify risks, reduce the severity of the outcome and the likelihood of a risk occurring.

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

For more information on risk management and effective processes, schools should contact their contracted legal advisors, relevant departmental business unit or consult existing school or sector risk policies and resources.

Workplace Agreement Form

This form is designed to ensure that the employer, student, school and parent/guardian are aware of the work placement and receive consistent information from all parties.

The work-based learning coordinator is responsible for having the form completed and a copy of the signed form **must** be maintained on the student file, provided to the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and the host workplace.

Coinciding, any relevant supporting documentation **must** be completed.

Workplace Health and Safety

Schools have a duty of care to ascertain the degree of risk of a worksite and the risk of placing a particular student at that site. All employer sites, regardless of size or scope, are legally required to abide by the regulations of the [Work Health and Safety Act 2012](#).

The operation of equipment at worksites **must** be undertaken or supervised by suitably qualified persons. [Worksafe Tasmania's Welcome to the Workplace: A work health and safety guide for new workers](#) contains useful information and guidance for students, employers and work-based learning coordinators/teachers. It is designed to be read in conjunction with the [Work Health and Safety Act 2012](#), the [Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012](#).

- Accidents:
 - » In the event of major accidents and injuries requiring medical treatment, students will be taken to the nearest available medical facility, as determined by ambulance staff.
 - » Schools **should** obtain specific advice from their contracted legal advisors on accident protocol and the completion of incident documentation.
 - » Work-based 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.

Relevant Legislation, Guidelines and Requirements

This document does not cover all the legislative and policy requirements for the delivery of work-based learning for Tasmanian school students.

Other relevant legislation and framework/guide/policy may include:

- **Legislation**

- » Education Act 2016
- » Fair Work Act 2009
- » Office of Tasmanian Assessment, Standards and Certification Act 2003
- » Training and Workforce Development Act 2013
- » Work Health and Safety Act 2012
- » Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012.

- **Frameworks/Guides/Policies**

- » Core Skills for Work Developmental Framework
- » Relevant Departmental, Sector or School policies/guides/manuals
- » Safe Work Australia - Student Work Placement Guide
- » Tasmanian Traineeships and Apprenticeships Committee (TTAC) Policies and Guidelines
- » Vision for Vocational Learning and VET in Tasmanian Schools to 2030
- » Worksafe Tasmania - Welcome to the Workplace: A work health and safety guide.

Definitions

Contracted Legal Advisor - a contracted individual, firm or department responsible for providing legal advice to a school.

Industry - businesses and professional associations working in a specific field.

Office of Tasmanian Assessment, Standards and Certification (TASC) - independent Statutory Office responsible for VET data collection from RTOs delivering to Tasmanian residents.

Parent/guardian - includes guardian/s or other person/s having the care and control of a child.

Principal - person in charge of their school or their delegate.

Registered Training Organisation. (RTO) - training organisations registered by ASQA to deliver vocational education and training (VET).

Responsible Officer - a school staff member with an assigned responsibility.

Risk Assessment Checklist for Coordinators - a checklist that allows the school to assess the level of risk and to determine if a more detailed Risk Management Plan needs to be developed.

Risk Management - identification, analysis, assessment, prioritisation and management of risks. It is the coordinated allocation and prioritisation of resources to minimise, monitor, communicate and control risk likelihood and/or consequences, or to maximise the realisation of opportunities.

Sector Head - the head of an education sector or an independent school. For example, the Secretary, Department of Education is the sector head for government schools.

Tasmanian Traineeships and Apprenticeships Committee (TTAC) - a statutory committee established under and governed by the *Training and Workforce Development Act 2013* (the Act).

Vocational Learning and Career Education (VLCE)
- State government business unit responsible for vocational learning in Tasmanian schools.

Vocational Learning - helps secondary students explore the world of work, identify career options and pathways, and build career development skills. Vocational learning is also delivered within the broader school curriculum.

Vocational Placement - a work placement that is a requirement of a VET qualification.

Work-based Learning Coordinator - any employee of a school who is nominated by the Principal to coordinate work-based learning programs/activities for students. This role exists regardless of whether an external agency coordinates a work-based learning on behalf of the school or not. This role exists regardless of whether it is given an official title by the school. This role can be given to a teacher to perform.

Workplace Supervisor - an adult employee of a host workplace, acting in a designated supervisory capacity for the student(s) at that site.

Work Exposure - work exposure promotes learning in a wide variety of environments, e.g. by bringing the world of work into the classroom and taking the classroom to the world of work.