



HOST EMPLOYER **HANDBOOK**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

What is Work Placement?	3
What's in it for you?	4
How does it work?	5
Frequently Asked Questions	6
Prohibited Activities	8
Workplace Induction Checklist	15
Useful Resources and Information	16
Our Role and Participating Schools	26

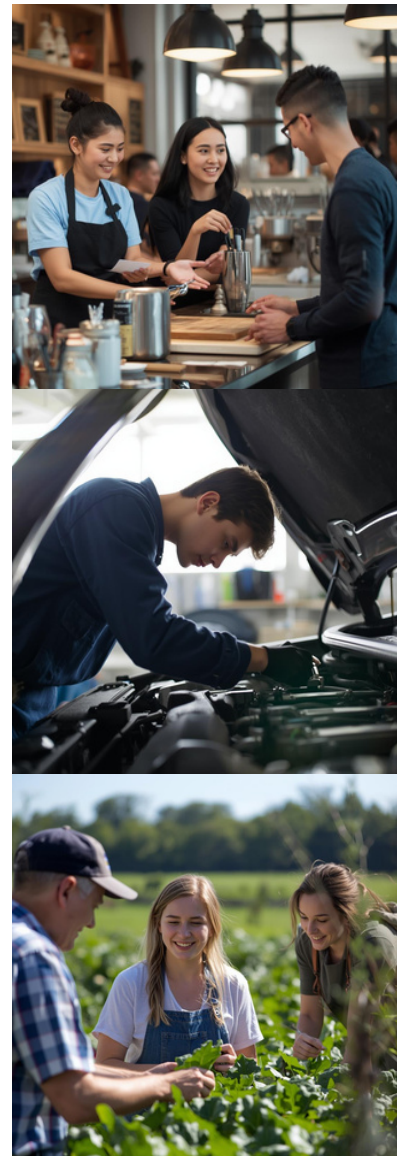
WHAT IS WORK PLACEMENT?

WORK PLACEMENT IS NOT WORK EXPERIENCE

Unlike traditional work experience, Work Placement is designed to provide students with structured, hands-on participation in the workplace rather than passive observation. Placements focus on skill development through meaningful workplace tasks, aligned to the student's course of study.

All students participating through Youth Express are secondary school students who are completing their education at either a secondary school or a TAFE Campus.

Each supported course includes a **mandatory** work placement requirement. This ensures students gain practical exposure to real workplace environments while applying and further developing the skills and knowledge acquired throughout their training.



INDUSTRY COURSES & AREAS OF STUDY

- Automotive
- Allied Health Assistance
- Business Services
- Construction
- Electrotechnology
- Entertainment
- Financial Services
- Fitness
- Hospitality
- Human Resources
- Metals & Engineering
- Primary Industries
- Retail Services
- Sports Coaching
- Information & Digital Technology
- Tourism, Travel and Events

HOST EMPLOYERS

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

- Supports young people in your local community
- Great way to find your next apprentice, a cost-effective recruitment strategy
- Provide 'real world' learning opportunities to students who want to learn
- Raises the profile of your business
- Develops supervision/management training skills of your existing employees
- Links your business to a training provider and local schools
- Gives you more understanding of education and training requirement

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW.

- ✓ Insurance and indemnity are arranged by the NSW department of Education, TAFE NSW or relevant body for private schools. To learn more about what's covered refer to [The Workplace Learning Guide for Employers](#).
- ✓ There is no cost to the host employer. Students are not paid while undertaking work placement. Any payment made to a student may invalidate insurance coverage.
- ✓ Each work placement consists of a minimum of 35 hours, typically completed over one week during the school term. These arrangements may be adjusted to accommodate employer availability and student needs.
- ✓ Support is available - Youth Express coordinators are available during business hours to assist both host employers and students, ensuring a positive and successful work placement experience.

HOST EMPLOYERS

HOW DOES IT WORK?

1. Initial Enquiry

Youth Express will contact you to check your availability to host a work placement student. This initial contact is an enquiry only and does not confirm a placement. You will be provided with proposed placement dates, the student's school or TAFE college, and relevant background information to assist you in making an informed decision.

2. Placement Confirmation

If you agree to host a student, a confirmation email will be sent approximately three weeks prior to the placement start date. This email will outline key placement details and next steps.

3. Student Contact & Documentation

The student will contact you directly to arrange a pre-placement interview at a mutually suitable time. This meeting allows you to discuss duties, expectations, hours, and workplace requirements.

The student will also provide a **Student Placement Record (insurance documentation)**, which must be completed before the placement can begin.

4. Commencement of Placement

The student will commence their work placement with your business. Students are required to maintain a daily journal of hours worked and tasks completed, which must be signed by the nominated workplace supervisor.

5. During the Placement

During the placement, the student's teacher will contact the nominated supervisor to arrange an onsite visit to support and monitor the student's progress.

6. Completion & Feedback

At the conclusion of the placement, you will receive a follow-up email inviting you to provide feedback on your experience as a host employer.

Important Information - *hosting a student is voluntary, and there is no obligation to accept a placement. If a placement has commenced and is not a suitable fit, or if the student demonstrates a lack of interest or engagement, the placement may be discontinued at any time.*

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I get started & where can I ask for more information?

Contact a Work Placement Coordinator on:

P: (02) 4931 2777

E: workplacement@youthexpress.com.au

What insurance is the student covered by?

Insurance and indemnity are arranged by the NSW Department of Education, TAFE NSW or relevant body for private schools.

Do I need to pay the student for their time and work with my business?

No, if the student is paid their insurance is void. Students understand that this is a learning activity for which they will not be paid.

What are my WHS obligations for students?

Hosts are obligated to provide an workplace induction, and a safe workplace with supervision for students from a suitably trained and experienced professional.

What happens if I am hosting a student and things are not going well?

Contact your Work Placement Coordinator, and we will negotiate with the student and their teacher to have them moved from the placement.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



What are the student's responsibilities while on placement?

Students must dress appropriately, be punctual, maintain a positive attitude, and follow workplace health and safety procedures. If your workplace has specific requirements, please discuss them with your Work Placement Coordinator.

How do I know what tasks I can get the student to do?

We can provide Vocational Framework information to help you identify suitable tasks for students.



Will there be support available to me during the time I am hosting?

Yes! Work Placement Coordinators are available during business hours to support you and the student for a positive placement experience.

Can I offer employment to the student after the placement or in the future?

Yes. If you're happy with their performance, you may offer employment, a traineeship, or apprenticeship. They would then become a paid employee under your business's employment and insurance arrangements.



Can a student make a Workers Compensation claim?

As students are not employees (and not paid for their time on Work Placement) they cannot make a workers compensation claim.

Prohibited and activities for special consideration

Workplace Learning Prohibited Activities

Young workers can lack the experience, knowledge, confidence and skills to identify and deal with potential hazards. Inexperience and a lack of awareness can increase the likelihood of a young worker being injured. There are some activities that are not suitable for students (young workers) in an approved workplace learning program and there are others where special consideration needs to be given to addressing risks.

Schools and host employers will need to consider and take into account the competency, maturity and physical capabilities of the student in relation to all activities he or she will undertake.

Students cannot undertake these prohibited and [high-risk construction](#) activities:

- any work of a sexual or explicit nature
- travel by helicopter
- travel outside the 12 nautical mile limit at sea
- scuba and deep-sea diving
- any excavation work at a depth greater than one metre or near utilities
- any excavation work at a depth under one metre without direct supervision by a competent person
- work on permanent or temporary structures used to enable construction work in marine environments
- work on a roof, roof trusses or in a roof cavity
-

- work at an elevated level higher than two metres
- work where asbestos is present
- any activities involving or adjacent to the repair, removal or demolition of any construction work containing asbestos or in the clean-up process following the activity
- any activities involving the manufacture, supply and installation of engineered stone benchtops, panels and slabs
- construction work in tunnels, confined spaces or involving the use of explosives
- work in and around pressurised gas distribution mains or piping and energised electrical installations or services
- be in close proximity to traffic or mobile plant operating on a worksite. Students are to attend onsite induction and traffic management meetings. Host employers are to closely supervise students, especially when plant is operating, and question students to ensure understanding of no-go areas and related safety procedures
- demolition work other than simple stripping of walls
- attendance at a site while chimney stacks or buildings are being demolished
- drive their own vehicles while undertaking activities on behalf of the host employer
- be asked or directed to drive the employer's vehicles or any client vehicles while they are on a workplace learning experience
- driving any old or unregistered vehicles commonly known as 'bush bashers'.

Additionally, the following activities should not be undertaken by students.

Use of machinery or equipment which **may** be dangerous for new or young workers to operate is prohibited **unless** the activity is first risk-assessed as suitable and safe for student operation by the host employer and each of the following occurs:

- the student is given appropriate information, instruction and training and a checklist for the safe operation and handling of the equipment
- the equipment is in safe working order, complete with required safety devices or guards
- a suitably qualified or experienced person in the workplace who has good communication skills and the ability to give clear instructions provides ongoing close supervision.

The service of alcohol where the student is under 18 years of age is prohibited. If the student is over 18 years of age, the activity must be essential to the placement and have been agreed to by the school or EVET provider, and the student must have completed the Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) training course.

Air travel on charter flights and aircraft is prohibited, other than those providing a regular public transport service such as on a regular route with paying passengers.

Activities for special consideration

Some workplace activities are potentially high-risk. Inexperience and a lack of awareness can also increase the chances of a young worker being injured.

Host employers must closely supervise students to keep them safe.

The following activities have special requirements before they can be considered for workplace learning.

Construction Industry

Before working in the construction industry, students must:

- complete work health and safety induction training
- obtain a general construction induction card (white card).
 - The training package mandates delivery and assessment via face to face or real time audio and visual media. The department recognises the validity of both forms of delivery and assessment. Schools are in the best position to

understand the learning style of their students when determining the mode of delivery of the white card, ensuring the safety of the student is paramount.

- Where a student has obtained a White Card issued by another state, the school must undertake additional actions to meet its duty of care obligations.
- A white card is not valid if the student has not undertaken work in the construction industry, such as workplace learning, in the 2 years since the white card was issued.

Where there is concern regarding the student's ability to manage their own safety and the safety of others on a construction site, irrespective of holding a White Card, the school principal should not approve the activity. Ultimately, the school principal is responsible for meeting duty of care requirements.

Workplace supervisors must carry out an induction for students, including training in procedures and how to manage site-specific risks. Handling and operating of all tools and equipment must be explained, along with associated risk management.

Horses and Livestock

Working with horses and livestock can be dangerous, no matter how experienced the student. Any workplace learning involving horses or livestock needs extreme caution.

Horses

Schools must comply with the following additional precautions for students working or riding horses during workplace learning.

- Host employers must follow the [SafeWork NSW code of practice](#) 'Managing risks when new or inexperienced riders or handlers interact with horses in the workplace'. Schools should keep records in accordance with the factors described in the code of practice:
 - Appendix B – assessing a horse
 - Appendix C – assessing a new or inexperienced rider or handler who will interact with horses in the workplace.

Livestock

Students must learn how to reduce the risk of Q fever infection and receive the [NSW Health – Q fever fact sheet](#) before attending.

Additionally, students must not be exposed to Q fever bacteria through:

- observing or assisting with animal birthing
- handling birth products
- cleaning up birth products and animal excreta
- handling an animal's carcass.

Driving, including farm vehicles and golf carts

Any activity requiring a licence, permit, or certificate of competence is prohibited unless:

- the student already has the relevant current licence, permit or certificate
- the activity is directly related to the learning outcomes of the placement
- the activity is included in the Student Placement Record prior to approval.

Quad bikes, 2-wheel motorbikes and farm vehicles

Schools and EVET providers must undertake the following precautions before students use farm vehicles, quad bikes or motorbikes.

- Students must successfully complete the appropriately accredited training course for the operation and maintenance of the machinery and equipment. This includes tractors, implements, equipment attached to a tractor power take-off and side-by-side utility vehicles.
 - Students with a long record of safe use of quad bikes or motor bikes on farms might not need to complete accredited training. This decision is made on a case-by-case basis.

- Host employers complete a risk assessment to ensure the activity is safe for students. These are submitted to the school or EVET manager before workplace learning approval.
- Students must be closely supervised when using any vehicles, machinery or equipment.
- When riding quad bikes and motorbikes, students must be at least 16 and wear:
 - an approved helmet with strap fastened
 - eye protection such as goggles
 - hand protection such as gloves
 - a long-sleeved shirt and full-length pants
 - sturdy footwear such as boots.

Students with little or no experience mustn't operate vehicles, machinery or equipment unless the host employer has demonstrated substantial experience in providing quality training to manage the student under close supervision.

Golf carts

A risk assessment must be conducted prior to students driving golf carts. Students are to be closely supervised.

For further information, please contact the NSW Department of Education by email:

careerworkplacelearning@det.nsw.edu.au

© State of New South Wales (Department of Education), 2023

The copyright material published in this resource is subject to the *Copyright Act 1968* (Cth) and is owned by the NSW Department of Education or, where indicated, by a party other than the NSW Department of Education (third-party material).

Copyright material available in this resource and owned by the NSW Department of Education is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International \(CC BY 4.0\) license](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).



This license allows you to share and adapt the material for any purpose, even commercially.

Attribution should be given to © State of New South Wales (Department of Education), 2023.

Material in this resource not available under a Creative Commons license:

- the NSW Department of Education logo, other logos and trademark-protected material
- material owned by a third party that has been reproduced with permission. You will need to obtain permission from the third party to reuse its material.

Links to third-party material and websites

Please note that the provided (reading/viewing material/list/links/texts) are a suggestion only and implies no endorsement, by the New South Wales Department of Education, of any author, publisher, or book title. School principals and teachers are best placed to assess the suitability of resources that would complement the curriculum and reflect the needs and interests of their students.

If you use the links provided in this document to access a third-party's website, you acknowledge that the terms of use, including licence terms set out on the third-party's website apply to the use which may be made of the materials on that third-party website or where permitted by the *Copyright Act 1968* (Cth). The department accepts no responsibility for content on third-party websites.

WORKPLACE INDUCTION CHECKLIST

Work Placement Students

INTRODUCTION

- ☐ Welcome the student.
- ☐ Briefly provide an overview of the business.
- ☐ Show student restrooms, break areas, staffroom, etc.
- ☐ Introduce student to the team.

SAFETY

- ☐ Explain emergency procedures and first aid locations.
- ☐ Familiarise the student with safety equipment, PPE and how to report hazards.

WORK PLACEMENT EXPECTATIONS

- ☐ Cover dress code, attendance and punctuality.
- ☐ Confirm work schedule, break times and end of shift details.
- ☐ Share contact details and preferred communication methods.
- ☐ Clarify role, tasks and reporting lines.
- ☐ Explain resource usage (i.e. equipment, tools) and workplace rules.
- ☐ Discuss the feedback process.
- ☐ Encourage questions and address any concerns.
- ☐ Ensure you have obtained a copy of the completed and signed Student Placement Record (SPR) before the student commences any activities.

Supervisor Signature: _____

Date: _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____



HOST EMPLOYER INDUCTION

- *WHS*
- *Duty of Care*
- *Insurance*
- *Managing Student & School Needs*

WHS & Duty of Care

Taking reasonable steps to keep everyone safe in the workplace

- Always ensure students are provided with a detailed safety induction on site
- Discuss all procedures around accidents & incidents, including lines of reporting and time frames
- Provide students with any Personal Protective Equipment required to complete work tasks
- Clearly identify any risks or hazards in the workplace
- Ensure students are always adequately supervised for the duration of their work days
- Contact school or EVET provider immediately if there are any Health and Safety incidents (including near misses), or need to change site or location
- Ensure that all employees respect the rights of the students to a safe and healthy host work placement, free of harassment, discrimination and conduct that is unacceptable in terms of child protection



Insurance

What to do in an emergency

- **Insurance and indemnity are arranged by the NSW Department of Education, TAFE NSW or relevant body for private schools**
- **If you need to seek medical help for a student immediately, use student's Medicare number**
- **As students are not employees, it would never be treated as a workers compensation claim**
- **Any medical invoices are to be made out to the student and are payable by the parent/carers**



PREPARING FOR WORK PLACEMENT

Getting prepared to host a student for work placement will ensure a planned & positive placement for all involved

- *Supervision*
- *Staff on board*
- *Expectation of students*
- *Student tasks*

Getting prepared to host a student

Have a clear picture of exactly what tasks a student may be conducting, or what may be required to meet the students needs will support a positive placement experience

- Use the Vocational Framework Flyers to identify suitable job tasks for students
- Have a detailed list of tasks and jobs for students to undertake while on placement
- Have a clear picture of your expectations for students & think about how you will share this with them clearly – this could include work times, attire or attitude
- Ensure all procedures around WHS & site specific procedures are clear and ready for discussion with student
- Identify suitable workplace mentors and have them briefed on the tasks students will be completing
- Identify possible issues or concerns, and problem solve solutions prior to the student arriving on placement



Do you have any questions?

Your Work Placement Coordinator is there to help

- **Do you need support to develop a suitable task list, taking into account your business and student placement needs?**
- **Unsure of your WHS obligations for students on work placement?**
- **Would you like to discuss host responsibilities further to better understand what is required of you?**



DAY 1: STUDENT INDUCTION

Starting day one with a good induction can dramatically raise student enthusiasm & overall success of the placement

- **Site tour**
- **Organisational structure**
- **Safety procedures**
- **Daily task schedule**

Induction & Orientation

A clear & solid induction supports a positive and productive environment

- Spend the first hours of the placement getting to know the student and going through a thorough introduction
- Provide basic information about your business, policies & procedures and all WHS information
- Discuss and explain your expectations with the student
- Encourage student to share their expectations of the placement
- Show them through the workplace, being sure to show them where key staff facilities and work areas are
- Introduce student to staff members and assign a staff member to be a buddy
- Ensure the buddy adopts best practice strategies as the student will be observing them performing tasks and learning correct procedures



Student Responsibilities

What expectations can you set for student?

- Dress appropriately
- Be punctual & have a good attitude
- Follow instructions & participate in work duties
- Act in accordance with Work, Health & Safety procedures
- Work within the team & listen to directives from fellow workers
- Demonstrate the skills they have developed as part of their course
- Have their work placement log book with them every day



Education





MOTIVATION & ENCOURAGEMENT

Determine students goals and expectations for their placement experience

- *Student engagement*
- *Providing feedback*
- *Positive experiences*

Student Engagement

REMEMBER: a student who seems uninterested or bored could just be shy or nervous

- On day one of placement ask the student what their goals and expectations of placement are
- Talk with your student to find out more about them – their interests, strengths, and dislikes about the course they are studying
- Find students suitable jobs/roles/tasks
- Allocate them a supportive team member/mentor for the week
- Support students to feel like they are part of the work team – invite their input
- Support students to stay 'on track' by giving them a list/timeline of what is required to be completed by the end of each day or the week
- Encourage students to discuss any issues or concerns with their supervisor and find a resolution Make time at the end of the placement to discuss what they have learned



Coaching & Support Tips

Be clear in your instructions and offer to demonstrate the skill

- Explain the task to the student, and ask them to repeat it back to you
- Get them to write down details where possible/required
- Check in to ensure they understand
- Give them a chance to work things out for themselves where possible – don't rush them.
- Provide constructive feedback
- Remain positive.



LAST DAY WRAP UP

*Employer feedback is very
important to the student*

- *Giving feedback*
- *Employment*
- *Career discussion*
- *Evaluation & report*

Feedback & Evaluation

Employer feedback is important to the student, as it provides them with an opportunity to reflect on their performance, and suitability to specific industry

- When giving feedback, always try to start with positive aspects, and be as encouraging as possible
- Encourage the student to reflect and discuss their own performance, and provide constructive feedback to the student
- Ensure the student's supervisor completes the Workplace Journal and hours signed off
- Confirm with students that they have handed back any finished or unfinished work
- Confirm that students have returned uniforms, badges, locker keys, tools or materials



Employment Discussion

Looking towards the future

- If you would like to know more about school-based part time traineeships, or other work placement opportunities, please contact your Work Placement Coordinator for details
- You may be entitled to employment incentives through the various schemes applicable to your industry
- A few words of encouragement on how to get started in your industry would be greatly appreciated by the student



Education



Work Placement and Our Role

Youth Express is a not-for-profit organisation that provides work placement opportunities for students across **Service Region P**. Region P includes schools within the Hunter Valley, Port Stephens, Maitland, Cessnock, and Upper Hunter LGAs.

Each year, Youth Express coordinates placements for approximately 2,000 students from 32 high schools and 7 TAFE/EVET providers within the service region.

Work placements are a mandatory component of industry-based Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses, which students may undertake as part of their NSW Higher School Certificate (HSC) studies.

Youth Express is funded by the Department of Education.

Youth Express proudly supports students and teachers from the NSW Department of Education, Catholic Schools NSW, Independent Schools NSW, and TAFE NSW.



High schools and TAFE Providers located in Service Region P to which Youth Express provide work placement services:

- ALESCO Senior College
- All Saints College, Maitland
- Aspect Hunter School
- Australian Christian College, Singleton
- Catherine McAuley Catholic College, Medowie
- Cessnock High School
- Dungog High School
- Francis Greenway High School
- Hunter River High School
- Hunter Valley Grammar School
- Irrawang High School
- Karben Training Solutions
- Kurri Kurri High School
- Kurri Kurri TAFE
- Maitland Christian School
- Maitland Grossmann High School
- Maitland High School
- Maitland TAFE
- Medowie Christian School
- Mount View High School
- Muswellbrook High School
- Muswellbrook TAFE
- Rutherford Technology High School
- Scone Grammar School
- Scone High School
- Scone TAFE
- Singleton High School
- Singleton TAFE
- St Bede's Catholic College
- St Catherine's Catholic College
- St Joseph's Catholic College, Aberdeen
- St Joseph's College, Lochinvar
- St Philips Christian College, Cessnock
- St Philips Christian College, Port Stephens
- Tomaree High School
- Wollongbar TAFE



Maitland Head Office

1/12 Ken Tubman Drive

Maitland NSW 2320

www.youthexpress.com.au