



University of Brighton

Placement Handbook for Students: Indicative content

Preamble

The Placements Working Group has developed three documents outlining the indicative content of handbooks associated with placement activity:

- Students
- Placement Providers
- Visiting Tutors

The purpose of this document is to provide the suggested content of handbooks for Students.

Throughout this document, *paragraphs formatted using italics provide guidance on what to include in each section*. Paragraphs formatted using normal text provide examples of possible text that it may be appropriate to adapt for individual placements.

The following terms are used within this document:

- The **Placement Co-ordinator** refers to any person within the university who organises or co-ordinates student placements, which form part of a university course. The role of the Placement Co-ordinator may be divided in practice into administrative and academic aspects, but both are related to the overall role of Placement Co-ordinator.
- The **Placement Provider** is the host employer or organisation providing the placement.
- **Placement students** are University of Brighton students seconded to and working under the control of a placement provider (usually) away from University premises (unless the university is the placement provider). Placement students may be paid by the placement provider or may be undertaking the placement on a voluntary basis.
- A **Visiting Tutor** is any member of the university staff who visits a placement student at the premises of the placement provider during the placement.

1. Introduction

An introductory statement to the handbook should be included here. The following paragraph is an example:

Welcome to the Placements Handbook. Students should find the general advice about placements helpful as well as setting out clear dos and don'ts. The University is extremely grateful to employers for providing worthwhile positions and we expect students to make the most of these opportunities – always remembering that they are representatives of the University of Brighton. A hard-working, diligent attitude will create a legacy of goodwill for future cohorts as well as the possibility of a future career. In addition this Handbook offers clear guidelines on the assessment of the placement.

The aim of the placement is to allow the student to benefit by learning from practical work experience alongside the more formal study of the degree course, putting theory into practice

2. General advice

This section should include advice appropriate to the placement. This will vary according to the nature and location of the placement (ie office, laboratory, manufacturing etc). It may also be appropriate to recommend that the student joins the relevant professional body associated with their placement. The following is an example:

1. **Making a Success of your placement and how to enrich your year**

This section contains hints and tips for making your placement both successful and enjoyable, based on feedback from previous students and from employers.

1.1 *Before You Start*

- **Arrange accommodation** - the nearer to your workplace the better. Commuting long distances is a waste of time and money.
- **See your bank manager.** You won't be paid until the end of the first month, so increase your overdraft if necessary. Get a credit card if you expect to travel as part of the job.
- **Check out travel arrangements.** Get timetables for trains and buses. If you're planning to drive to work, time the journey during the rush hour. Plan for the day when the car won't start.
- **Buy a filofax or PDA** if you don't already have one.
- **Take a holiday**, and spend some time with your family. You may not be able to take a long break (i.e. a week) for the first few months.
- **Swap your new address and phone number with friends.** Arrange a get-together for a weekend in late July or August.
- **Check that your tuition fees** for your sandwich year have been paid.

1.2 *The First Week*

Here are some suggestions for things to do as soon as you arrive. Many companies will have everything planned for your arrival, with a program of tours, meetings, training etc. At the other extreme you may find yourself left to take the initiative.

- **Arrange to have a long meeting with your manager as soon as possible**, if this isn't already scheduled. Make sure he/she knows about the course and the

academic requirements. Talk about your duties, and who is responsible for showing you how to carry them out.

- **Get to know people in your office / department** - without disrupting their work. Make sure you know names. You'll find most people very helpful, so don't be shy about asking for advice or information.
- **You should aim to get on well with everyone** - you'll be working together for a year. You may find you have more in common with other placement students and young graduates, but people don't become unfriendly and boring when they pass 25 (debatable, until you reach 26). Find out if there's a social-club or other out-of-work activities where you can meet people.
- **Contact the Placements Co ordinator with your** correct postal address, telephone number and extension and job title. Also the name and job title of your manager.
- **Collect and read general information about the industry**, e.g. trade press, about the company, e.g. internal newsletters, and about your department, e.g. organization chart.
- **Obtain information relevant to your job.** For example if you're in marketing you may need product information, sales literature, price lists etc. If you're in personnel, you may need to know the organizational structure, recruitment procedures and so on. There will be company jargon - the quicker you get to know it the better.
- **Persuade someone to give you a tour of the site.** Find out what the other departments do and how they relate to the department you are based in.
- **Make sure the telephone operator knows you've started** and has your name, department and extension number. Get an internal phone directory. Find out how to make external calls, how to call people at other company sites, how to transfer calls.
- **Find out if there are regular meetings you will be expected to attend.** Get a copy of the minutes of recent meetings if possible - these show you who attends and the sort of issues discussed.
- **You'll probably "inherit" a desk and filing cabinet.** Look through everything, so you can find information when you need it. Make sure you have the necessities of office life, and know where to get replacements - paper, pens, floppy disks, coffee.....
- **Learn to use the computer.** You may be able to spend more hours using a computer in the first few days than in all of the first-year IT workshops. Start with word processing and the spreadsheet, so you can produce your own memos, reports etc.
- **If there is an electronic mail system**, make sure you have an e-mail address and learn how to send and receive messages. There may be rules (written or unwritten) about use of the system, e.g. don't use it for gossip. Don't put anything in an e-mail message unless you would be prepared to say the same thing in public. Messages can all too easily be forwarded to other people in the organization.

2. Office Rules, Etiquette and Code of Conduct

There are unlikely to be any written rules - but there will certainly be unwritten ones. Here are some to look out for:

- **Attendance.** Your conditions of employment will specify hours of work, but there may be quite different "norms" in practice. Don't take risks - just because someone else gets away with leaving early doesn't mean you will. It is common for managers to work several hours of (unpaid) overtime each week - don't be surprised if the same is expected of you.
- **Keep to the official lunch hour**, unless you're with a customer / supplier, a manager or your university supervisor. Even then you should only take a long lunch with the permission of your manager. Limit your alcohol consumption to one small drink, even if others are drinking more.

- **Dress.** Best policy is to be very smart at first, until you have the chance to see what other people wear. If everyone is casually dressed you can start to wear more casual clothes yourself - but don't take this to the extreme. If there is a range from very smart to very casual, you should stay at the smart end of the range. People who wear very casual clothes to work may have proved themselves to be very good at their job - you haven't, yet.
- **Meetings.**
 - a) Be on time.
 - b) If you can't attend, let the chairperson know in advance.
 - c) Take with you the minutes of the previous meeting, and all relevant papers, reports etc.
 - d) Take your filofax / PDA - to arrange / record date of next meeting.
 - e) Write down anything which affects you - don't rely on memory or the minutes.
 - f) Watch out for "protocol" - it may be very formal, with the chairperson deciding who speaks when.
 - g) Try to work out how a good chairperson "steers" the meeting - you may have to chair meetings yourself.
 - h) If you're asked to take the minutes, write the points made and conclusions reached in note form, then write these up soon after the meeting while you can still decipher them. Use previous minutes as a guide to the style and level of detail.
- **Deadlines.** At work, the consequences of missing deadlines are serious - your manager will lose some faith in your ability to do the job. Keep a list of "things to do" with deadlines and priorities - five minutes at the start of each day updating this should help you avoid problems. If you really can't meet a deadline, inform your manager as soon as possible. It may be that you can arrange to complete the most important parts by the due date, or even get an extension.
- **Secretaries.** Treat secretaries with the same respect as managers - they are almost certainly more important to the organization than you are.
- **Confidentiality.** All personal data is covered by the Data Protection Act. Company data - financial figures, plans for new products etc. - must all be treated as confidential.
- Naturally you will have to include company data and information in your project - if it is sensitive, discuss this with your manager and university supervisor.
- **Telephone.** Answer the phone quickly - it could be your boss, or a customer. If you receive a trivial call during an important discussion, ask the caller to phone again, or offer to call back. Don't put off making a difficult call - it won't make it any easier.
- **If you share an office,** you will be expected to answer other people's phones whenever possible. Make sure you note the time and date of the call, name of caller, message and next action (e.g. "will call back tomorrow" or "please call"). Most company phones make different ringing sounds for internal and external callers - remember that the time taken to answer a ringing phone, and the manner of the person answering, can make quite a difference to how people view the quality of service provided by the company.
- **Office Equipment.** The company phones and copiers are not for private use. Many companies have "call-logging", so they can tell if you phoned for the test match score every ten minutes, or spent an hour talking to your grandmother in Australia. Copiers may need a personal identity number before you can use them, so that the number of copies each person makes can be recorded.
- **Gossiping.** Most people in offices are very sociable - but don't let a short chat turn into a long gossip. Even if you don't have urgent work to do, the other person probably does. This applies to phone calls too.
- **Mobile phones.** If you have a personal mobile phone, switch it off when at work. There is no reason why you should be making or receiving personal calls during working hours.
- **Smoking.** Now banned in most offices.

- **Expenses.** If you have to travel or entertain as part of your job, find out the rules on expenses first. You'll almost certainly have to keep receipts for every purchase and then claim at the end of the month (a credit card comes in handy here). Fiddling your expenses is criminal.

3. *Enriching Your Job*

- **Do the routine tasks quickly and capably.** Aim to do them better each time. Dragging them out won't make them interesting, will give the impression that you're busy, but won't enhance views of your competence.
- **Learn to use the computer well** - even if nothing comes of this, it is a valuable skill to have when you're applying for jobs in the final year. It is quite possible that even when you arrive you'll be the most computer-literate person in the office (although the opposite will probably apply in computer companies!) You may well find that there is already a training package on the computer, like "Learning Word", or a tutorial in the manual, or someone in the office who's willing to give you help. If you've struggled to teach yourself without success, enquire about training courses - although many companies will send you on these as a matter of routine.
- **Look for things not being done.** For example if you're producing a regular report using a computer, see if you can find out what people receiving the report think of it. Is there information missing? Is more/less detail needed? Is there any analysis of trends?
You should be able to come up with a lengthy list. Don't take them all to your boss - select two or three which interest you, and you think you can do quickly. In the early stages of your placement, your manager is more likely to agree to you doing work which can be done in addition to your everyday tasks, won't cost the company money, isn't in a very sensitive area, and will produce information or proposals which he/she will find useful. Once you have ideas which match these criteria, discuss them with your manager. Don't start work until you have approval.
- **Look for opportunities** created by staff leaving, or re-organizations in your department. Could you help out for a few weeks until they appoint a replacement, or fill a new post?
- **Talk to your manager** (and any other managers you work with) about the project required for the University. Remember the supervisor will want to discuss this, so the first visit is an excuse to arrange a meeting in advance with your manager to discuss your project.
- **Talk to other managers about their responsibilities.** If they mention something covered in the course, drop a hint that you know something about it - "I studied that on my course at Brighton" could do the trick. Every manager will have favourite ideas and projects which they don't have the time or resources to follow up. If you don't think your boss will agree to release you to work on a project for someone else, see if you can (tactfully) ask the manager concerned to approach your boss. Incidentally, you should always try to speak favourably of the university – even if you have reservations. Apart from being in your interests, remember that you are a "product" of the course – and your reputation and ours go hand-in-hand. If you have doubts let us know.
- **Most training courses are worth attending** - talk about possible courses with your manager or the person responsible for placement students. The course should be useful for your job and/or your personal development. It will increase your "network" of contacts in the company, and it will be a change of environment. The food and drink is usually good too! Of course, you'll have to work harder before and after to complete your normal work - it's unlikely that anyone will do it for you while you're away.
- **Could you spend a week or two in another part of the company?** It's likely that in such a short period you'll only get routine and simple work, but this sort of arrangement could develop into something more permanent - either a transfer or a

"sharing" arrangement. Again it will be a change of environment, increase your breadth of experience, and widen your network.

- **Keep smiling!** Don't let it get you down.
- **Don't under-estimate your abilities or what you can achieve** - but remember you have to prove your capabilities, step-by-step. Here's an example of what has happened in the past:

"Initially I was responsible for maintaining an accurate reporting procedure ... after three months I started to control our departmental budget of £1.7 million ... after six months I began to develop, write and give my own briefs to advertising agencies ... During my last three months I did not have a manager so I ran the direct mail programs myself."

3. Academic Framework

3.1 Aims and learning outcomes of the placement

This section should include information on the aims of the placement and what it is anticipated that the student should be able to do at the end of it. This may be an extract from the related module description (if the placement is credit-bearing) or a summary statement (with the module description included as an appendix if appropriate). Below is an example of what could be included.

(i) **Aims**

- To help put into practice the theoretical aspects of the previous two years
- To provide a greater understanding of the subjects that will be studied in the final year and enable students to apply the practice to the theory
- To provide a platform to assist the student in the transition from academia to employment upon graduation
- To enable the students to integrate themselves into the work environment, conducting themselves in an appropriate business/professional manner
- To develop the ability to see a task through to its conclusion
- To develop personal skills including communication, problem solving and confidence
- To develop academic skills in such areas as research and report writing

(ii) **Learning outcomes/objectives**

By the end of the placement the students should:

1. Have a thorough understanding of the working environment and ethos
2. Have developed time management skills and completed specific tasks within set parameters
3. Be able to manage business relationships and integrate into a team environment
4. Have contributed positively to the company/department
5. Have built upon their interpersonal skills and confidence

3.2 Assessment of the placement

This section should clearly set out the assessment tasks that the student is required to complete for the placement, the assessment criteria and the time required to complete these tasks.

Each placement is assessed in a different way; therefore, this section should include the various different assessment tasks associated with the placement. This may include:

- *Academic assessment ie project, dissertation, logbook, report*
- *Professional Assessment*
- *A self assessment undertaken by the student*
- *Assessment undertaken by the placement provider*

Any relevant forms should be included with the handbook.

A timetable of assessment tasks could be included highlighting when visits may occur and when the student needs to return to the University for assessment.

3.3 Calendar

This section should include a timeline of when the visits should take place, any scheduled study days, term dates, deadlines for coursework/assessment.

4. Student Support

4.1 Support from the Placement Provider

This section should outline the support that the Placement Provider should provide to the student during their placement. This may include, for example:

- *Provision of appropriate induction, guidance and training.*
- *Clear information about the terms and conditions of employment*
- *Discussion and agreement of specific aims and objectives with the student at the start of the placement*
- *Allocation a member of staff as mentor and supervisor for the placement student*
- *Provision of a stimulating, challenging and appropriate work experience*
- *Provision of training/information on health and safety in the workplace*

The following is an example:

Placements undertaken by students vary widely, depending on type of position, size and type of organisation, employment sector, etc. It is not feasible, therefore, to produce a prescriptive description of what a placement position should be. However, in broad terms, the placement requirements relate to a position of either trainee professional or trainee/junior manager and being relevant to the degree course that they are undertaking. Whilst on placement a student is subject to the employer's own code of conduct regulations and should be treated as an employee and not as a 'special case'. Placement students remain under the University Student Regulations whilst on placement.

The main criteria considered for the appropriateness of a placement are:

Level of Work: the placement position should allow the student (subject to showing sufficient ability) to reach a position where he/she can be entrusted with responsibility for either the supervision of others, liaison with colleagues in management, or the execution of a task requiring independent action and initiative.

Range of Work: the placement experience should encompass several activities, with experience not confined to one narrow task, allowing the student to develop a broad range of skills and face a wide range of experiences and opportunities. It is hoped that the student will

be given, or be involved with, at least one project which they can use as the basis for their university dissertation.

Accountability: the student should be accountable to a supervisor, who will be available to discuss the individual's performance with a university visiting tutor on the two occasions that the student is normally visited during the year.

Training: appropriate training should be given to the placement student to enable them to undertake the role(s) required of them by the organisation.

4.2 Support from the Placement Co-ordinator

This section should outline the continuing support and guidance that the Placement Co-ordinator should provide to the student during their placement.

4.3 Support from the Visiting Tutor

This section should outline the support provided by the Visiting Tutor to the student during their placement. The following is an example:

Whilst undertaking a placement a student remains a student of the University of Brighton. A placement must provide a supervised learning experience as well as a specific vocational experience. It is essential, therefore, that the student is properly monitored during the placement and that his/her performance is assessed in an appropriate way.

Each student is allocated a visiting tutor who is available to the student for guidance about their academic assessment and placement. She/he will also be available to the placement provider for similar guidance when necessary. Whenever possible, the allocated supervisor is a specialist in the functional area in which the student is based.

The Visiting Tutor is the link between the student and the placement provider. The tutor may have to guide the provider on its supervisory role, expectations of placement learning and aims of the placement in general. It is important to maintain the good links forged between the university and the placement provider through adopting a professional attitude and clear communication.

The main functions of the visiting tutor are to:

- Maintain regular communication between the student, University and the placement provider during the placement;
- Monitor the progression of the placement and feedback any concerns or problems to the relevant year tutor, course leader and placements unit;
- Arrange and undertake visits to the workplace during the period of the placement, completing the appropriate documentation and providing appropriate feedback to the placements unit;
- Supervise the students through the development of their academic assessment
- Support the placement provider in the assessment of the student;
- Provide pastoral support to the student during the period of placement, referring them to appropriate University departments as required;
- Develop and maintain a good relationship with the placement provider.

4.4 Support from Student Services

This section should summarise the support services on offer from the University of Brighton and the Students' Union to a student whilst s/he is on placement. This includes support from the following areas in the Student Services Department:

- *Careers Centre*
- *Chaplaincy*
- *Disability/Dyslexia support*
- *Medical care*
- *Nursery*
- *Personal Counselling*
- *Welfare*

Additional information regarding the above in relation to placements has been given in Appendix 1 and can be deleted / kept as is felt necessary.

5. Statutory Framework

5.1 Legislation affecting the student

Reference should be made to the paper summarising the legal requirements associated with placements (which is attached as Appendix 2). You may wish to provide an introduction to the legislation affecting placements – the following is an example:

There is a substantial amount of legislation relating to employment. You should receive a lot of information from your employer, but if you're in doubt about anything, the company Personnel Department should be able to help. Alternatively contact the Placements Co ordinator if you need advice or information.

- Before you start you should have received (and signed) a **Contract of Employment**, a key document which sets out the duties and obligations of both employer and employee. This should tell you, for example, the procedures to be followed in the event of your having a "grievance" with another employee.
- The employer must also provide information on **Health & Safety** policies.
- Employment is also covered by **Equal Opportunities** legislation. You must ensure that you do not discriminate on the grounds of sex or race. If you think you have been discriminated against contact the Placements Co ordinator for advice. Naturally, you should avoid language and behaviour which could be interpreted as sexist or racist. A particularly common mistake is to assume that if a female voice answers the telephone then you are speaking to a secretary. This is not against the law - just rude.
- You have the right not to belong or to belong to a **Trade Union**.
- If your job brings you into contact with information the company holds about individuals, this will be covered by the **Data Protection Act**. Obtain advice within the company before disclosing personal information.

5.2 Health and safety

This section should clearly outline the responsibilities of the University of Brighton and the placement provider in respect of health and safety. Reference should be made to the University's Health and Safety Policy for Work Placements (which is attached as Appendix 3) and associated questionnaires (which are attached as Appendix 6).

Placement providers have the primary duty to ensure the health and safety of all employees, including placement students. The University of Brighton also has a responsibility to ensure the suitability of placements. It is each student's responsibility to pay due care and attention to their personal safety at the workplace and report any concerns.

5.3 Disability

Reference should be made to the Policy on Disabled Students and Placements (which is attached as Appendix 4) and associated questionnaires (which are attached as Appendix 6).

5.4 Harassment

Reference should be made to the University's Policy on Harassment and Placement Students (which is attached as Appendix 5).

5.5 Complaints

This section should summarise the procedure should a student wish to make a complaint about their placement experience. It should highlight the existence of the University Student Complaints Procedure. The following is an example:

What to do if a problem arises/complaint needs to be made

If a problem arises or you wish to make a complaint the first point of contact is the Placements Co-ordinator. They will provide impartial advice and guidance and inform you of your options. The Placements Co-ordinator will ensure that the problem/complaint is logged/dealt with/resolved efficiently.

It is always best to inform them of a problem quickly so that it doesn't escalate out of control.

There is a 'Students Complaints Procedure' which can be found on studentcentral.

5.6 Occupational health

Some placements (for example, those within the National Health Trusts) have specific arrangements for occupational health. This section should advise that in these placements, the student should refer to the occupational health department of their placement provider where available / appropriate.

6. Contacts

A summary of relevant contact details should be included here including, for example:

*Placement Co-ordinator
School Office
University of Brighton Switchboard
Students' Union
Student Services*

Student Services support

The support from the following departments of Student Services is available to students on placement as much as it is to students who are studying at the University:

Careers Centre
Chaplaincy
Disability/Dyslexia support
Medical care
Nursery
Personal Counselling
Welfare

However students going out on placement do need to be aware of the following stipulations:

Disability/Dyslexia support

Students with a disability may be in receipt of an allowance from their LEA which funds human support (e.g. a note-taker, scribe and/or learning support tutor), and computer equipment for studying. This funding will not extend to a paid placement. If the student needs personal support on placement and/or the provider is obliged to make adaptations to their environment, they may be able to get help from the Access to Work fund.

If a placement provider has concerns about meeting the needs of a student then the employer should contact the School. Under previously agreed procedures staff from the Disability/Dyslexia team may be able to provide training for employers to help them work with students with disabilities.

Medical care

If a student goes on a short-term placement and they need to consult a medical practitioner in a new area of the country then they should register as a temporary resident with the practice rather than permanent. This will prevent all the medical notes being transferred for a week or month's stay.

For a longer placement such as year then the student should register fully in the normal way and then on their return re-register with the practice or University doctor they've been using while at the University.

Welfare

The entitlement is the same but students should plan ahead because it will be difficult liaising with the University's welfare service if the placement is in another part of the country. Releasing certain funds to help students in hardship requires signatures which can be done by fax but it is not ideal.



University of Brighton

Legal requirements and placements

1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to outline some of the legal implications for the University of Brighton arising out of placement activity.

Much information included within this paper is adapted from guidance published by the Active Risk Management in Higher Education (ARMED) project¹ (the ARMED project is supported by HEFCE and aims to provide simple guidance to reduce legal risk in higher education institutions) and guidance published by the University of Northumbria².

2. Contract

The legal relationship between a student and the University is founded primarily upon a contract. The contract is usually deemed to include information about the course available to this student (eg in the prospectus). Such course information may, effectively, give a contractual promise that a certain placement will be provided as part of the course. If the University fails to deliver satisfactory placements it could be potentially open to a breach of contract action. Exposure is very likely if the course is advertised as leading to a professional qualification, a pre-requisite of which is passing practice placement assessments.

3. Health and safety

Placement activity should take into account The Health and Safety at Work Etc Act 1974 and the Health and Safety (Training for Employment) Regulations 1990. The recently approved University of Brighton Health and Safety Policy for Work Placements³ is consistent with this legislation in order to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its students whilst they are undertaking placements.

4. Equal opportunities

Discrimination legislation, covering sex, race, disability, sexual orientation and religion or belief, obliges a University to take care to ensure that any students sent out on placement are not exposed to discrimination and/or harassment. The University cannot be expected to anticipate harassment or discrimination in unforeseen circumstances. However, it will have a statutory liability to respond efficiently and properly to any complaint made by a student that he/she is suffering harassment or discrimination on the placement. The University should also take care not to place students repeatedly in a situation in which it is known that harassment is more likely to occur.

¹ For further details of the ARMED project, please see <http://armed.ilt.bris.ac.uk/>

² For further details please see http://online.northumbria.ac.uk/LTA/Documents/Teaching_and_Learning/Placements/RBott%20STUDENT%20PLACEMENTS%2021-11-02.doc

³ The Health and Safety Policy for Work Placements is available on staffcentral - <http://staffcentral.brighton.ac.uk/xpedio/groups/Public/documents/staffcentral/doc004676.pdf>

The recently approved University of Brighton Policy on Disabled Students and Placements⁴ and Policy on Harassment and Placement Students⁵ takes into account this legislation, which is complemented by the University's Equal Opportunities Policy, Disability Statement and Harassment Policy.⁶

5. Insurance

The University of Brighton's Insurance Officer can provide further details of the insurance arrangements relating to student placements. In general terms, the University's insurance policy covers all staff and students who are undertaking University 'business' in the UK.

If the student is on a paid placement in the UK s/he would be covered by the placement provider's Employer's Liability Insurance, which is required of all employers.

If a student is on an unpaid placement in the UK, they would still normally be covered by the placement provider's Employer's Liability Insurance, as this normally covers those on either work experience or placements. However, if there were ever any difficulties associated with a claim made against the Employer's Liability Insurance, it would be possible to make a claim against the University's own insurance policy.

If the placement is abroad (whether paid or unpaid), the student would need to register for the University's Business Travel insurance by completing an 'Insurance Notification of Student(s) Making a Visit Abroad' form. Students will be issued with an emergency card upon request.

Placement Co-ordinators should contact the University's Insurance Office if a student is undertaking a military placement.

6. Confidentiality

Confidentiality issues may arise for the University in situations where, for example, the University is aware of information about a particular student which might be relevant to risk on the placement, for example, a criminal record, "hidden disability" etc. This is an extremely complex area, and situations would need to be considered on a case-by-case basis, with variables including the precise circumstances of the placement and the way in which the confidential information has been received.

Confidentiality and disclosure issues are particularly relevant for students with disabilities (please refer to the University of Brighton Policy on Disabled Students and Placements). The use and transfer of information about disabled students is restricted by the Data Protection Act 1998 (please refer to paragraph 8). The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Part IV Code of Practice advises that Universities should seek students' permission to pass on information necessary for making reasonable adjustments, should tell students what use will be made of information they disclose, and ensure that procedures are in place to keep personal information confidential. If a disabled student requests confidentiality under the DDA Part IV, then the Code advises that even for the purposes of making reasonable adjustments, the information should not be passed on. This might mean a lesser adjustment, or no adjustment, being made. The DDA Part IV does not, however, override Health and Safety legislation, or remove the duty which the University has to protect students, employees and others. There may thus be exceptional circumstances in which the University comes under a duty to

⁴ The Policy on Disabled Students and Placements is available on staffcentral - <http://staffcentral.brighton.ac.uk/xpedio/groups/Public/documents/staffcentral/doc004677.pdf>

⁵ The Policy on Harassment and Placement Students is available on staffcentral - <http://staffcentral.brighton.ac.uk/xpedio/groups/Public/documents/staffcentral/doc004678.pdf>

⁶ These policies are available on staffcentral - http://staffcentral.brighton.ac.uk/quality/policy_strat.shtm

disclose information to third parties such as placement providers, even against the student's expressed desire for confidentiality.

On a separate issue, a student may be exposed to and pick up confidential information about the placement provider, its customers and/or products during the course of the placement. The provider may seek to protect itself against unauthorised use or disclosure of such information by requiring the student to sign a confidentiality undertaking. It is likely that any breach of an implied or express confidentiality undertaking would lead to personal liability for the student rather than any liability for the University. However, such a situation would not reflect well on the University and may prevent the provider from offering further placements to students.

Students undertaking placements should be made aware that making unauthorised access to computer records is a criminal offence under the Computer Misuse Act 1990.

Finally, students undertaking placement in certain sectors (for example, Social Work or Nursing) are likely to be bound by Professional Codes of Conduct such as NHS Confidentiality Guidelines in order to protect patient confidentiality.

7. Criminal Records Bureau

Some students will be required to have a cleared Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Standard or Enhanced Disclosure prior to undertaking certain placements, for example those which involve working with children or vulnerable adults.

The University, in agreement with placement providers and Professional and Statutory Bodies, undertakes CRB checks as part of the admissions processes for teaching training, nursing and medicine courses. In relation to other courses, it is the placement provider's responsibility to identify whether a CRB check is required.

8. Data Protection

Placements will inevitably involve a disclosure of a student's personal data, in order to facilitate and administer that placement. Such disclosure may be necessary so as to enable both the University and the placement provider to comply with its legal obligations. For example, the University may pass on details of a student's disability to ensure that his or her special needs are met during the period of the placement (this may only be done with the explicit consent of the student). On occasion, the information disclosed may be "sensitive personal data" as defined by the Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998.

Before making any disclosure of a student's personal data, the University should ensure that the DPA requirements are satisfied. In practice, this means informing the student of the fact that the disclosure will take place and seeking explicit consent to that disclosure (particularly in relation to sensitive personal data relating to matters such as health, racial/ethnic origin or criminal records). If the University transfers data outside the European Economic Area in connection with an overseas placement, it should also be aware that the student's consent will generally be required before disclosure.

The University should obtain a comprehensive and explicit consent from the student at the time of enrolment, authorising the disclosure of his personal data in connection with placements. In the absence of such an explicit consent, the consent of the student to disclosure should be sought. In practice, that consent is likely to be forthcoming, given that the disclosure will be in the student's interest. Clearly any student refusing would not be able to go on a placement.

Whilst the student is on placement, the placement provider's own data protection policies are effective.

The University's Data Protection Officer can provide further information regarding the act and the University's practices in this respect.

9. Intellectual Property

It is possible that intellectual property issues could arise in relation to a student on placement. If the student is working, for example, in a design company s/he could be involved in the creation of valuable intellectual property rights – eg patents, trade marks, registered designs, copyright. Consequently, the placement provider may impose as a condition of taking the student on placement, a written undertaking from the student (and possibly also the University) that s/he waives any claim to intellectual property rights created during the course of the placement.

The ownership of intellectual property should be dealt with on a case by case basis: whilst in some cases it will be appropriate to assign rights to the placement provider, in others it will be the University/student who should own the intellectual property. The University's Business Services Office can provide further information and advice regarding intellectual property.

10. Liability

Risks associated with a placement give rise to the following potential liability to the University:

- (i) Civil liability under duty of care (as a result of proximity of relationship i.e. learning contract) for the injury or ill-health arising out of the placement;
- (ii) Civil liability under duty of care for the injury or loss to the student arising outside of the placement from a foreseeable act e.g. personal attack;
- (iii) Civil liability for loss or injury arising out of the negligent actions of the student whilst on placement;
- (iv) Limited statutory liability for the injury of the student arising out of the undertaking of the placement in the UK and
- (v) Statutory and civil liability arising out of the risk to the institution's employee's health, safety and welfare during placement visits.

The following liabilities apply to the placement provider:

- (i) Statutory and civil liability arising out of the risk to the employee's/student health, safety and welfare during the placement.

The following liabilities apply to the student whilst on placement:

- (i) Statutory and civil liability arising out of their association as an employee.



University of Brighton

Health and Safety Policy for Work Placements

1. Introduction

There is often a delicate relationship between universities seeking to make placements and host employers/placement providers. For example, university employees do not have a statutory right to enter an employer's premises. This policy outlines action consistent with fulfilling the general duty of care imposed by **The Health and Safety at Work Etc Act 1974**. It is acknowledged, however, that placements overseas or in the armed forces will be subject to a different regulatory framework from those in the UK.

1.1 Terminology

The following terms are used in this policy:

- The **Placement Co-ordinator** refers to any person within the university who organises or co-ordinates student placements, which form part of a university course.
- The **Placement Provider** is the host employer or organisation providing the placement.
- **Placement students** are University of Brighton students seconded to and working under the control of a placement provider (usually) away from University premises (unless the university is the placement provider). Placement students may be paid by the placement provider or may be undertaking the placement on a voluntary basis.
- A **Visiting Tutor** is any member of the university staff who visits a placement student at the premises of the placement provider during the placement.

1.2 Applicable legislation

The Health and Safety at Work Etc Act 1974 places a general duty on the University to do whatever is reasonably practicable to ensure students will not be exposed to risk to their health or safety in the course of work placements.

Students on placements come within the scope of the **Health and Safety (Training for Employment) Regulations 1990**. Briefly, persons receiving training or work experience, pursuant to a training course or programme ('relevant training') from an employer are deemed to be employees of that employer (the placement provider). Placement providers therefore have responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of the placement student working under their control.

This policy also meets the requirements of the **QAA Code of Practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education: Placement learning**, in respect of health and safety matters.

1.3 Framework for managing placements

The University does not have a statutory right to enter another employer's premises. Furthermore, University staff may not possess sufficient information or expertise to make a valid assessment of the Health and Safety risks which might arise in the course of the placement. The University cannot therefore make direct assessment of Health and Safety

risks associated with individual placements and will act in a 'regulator' or 'auditor' capacity in approving placement providers on the basis of their awareness of and commitment to Health and Safety issues.

2. Placements arranged by the University

Individual Schools may have different local procedures in place, appropriate to the nature of the placements and the nature of the placement provider, in relation to sector type. The principles and procedures outlined in this section represent the minimum requirements on Schools. However, some Schools may adopt more stringent requirements (for example, by requiring annual renewal of Health and Safety Approved status for all placement providers).

2.1 Training

All placement co-ordinators should attend an initial briefing session run by the Health and Safety Department. (See Annex 1 for the essential elements of the briefing.) Thereafter, placement co-ordinators will be updated by the Health and Safety Department with details of new developments and requirements as necessary.

2.2 Health and Safety Approved status

The placement co-ordinator is responsible for determining a safety profile of each placement provider. On the basis of this profile, each placement provider will be deemed either **Health and Safety Approved** or **not Health and Safety Approved**. The principle here is that the University of Brighton can demonstrate that only placement providers which have a high regard for the safety of our students are approved.

A placement provider will be deemed Health and Safety Approved:

- upon satisfactory completion of a Health and Safety Questionnaire (see appendices 2 and 3); or
- if it is a DfES-recognised school or college; or
- if it is an NHS establishment; or
- exceptionally, directly by the University's Health and Safety Department.

Health and Safety Approved status will be valid for a period of two years before renewal is required provided no adverse feedback is received from placement students or visiting tutors.

Placement co-ordinators will be responsible for:

- sending the Health and Safety Questionnaire to each placement provider requesting its completion before the commencement of the placement;
- chasing any non-completions of the questionnaire;
- determining whether the questionnaire has been completed satisfactorily;
- making a judgement about which placements are covered by the placement provider's approved status⁷;
- maintaining a record of placement providers Health and Safety Approved status.

If a placement provider consistently fails to complete the questionnaire or if the completed questionnaire gives cause for concern, the placement co-ordinator will contact the Health and Safety Department for advice.

⁷ For example, a single questionnaire may be sufficient to approve several office-based placements offered by a large organisation. By contrast, an office-based placement and a laboratory-based placement offered by a single placement provider may require separate approval.

The Health and Safety Department will then make a judgement of the Health and Safety Approved status of the placement provider based, for example, on an analysis of the completed Health and Safety Questionnaire, direct contact with the placement provider or other investigation.

If the Health and Safety Department concludes that the placement provider should not receive Health and Safety Approved status, the placement co-ordinator will contact both the placement student and the placement provider to cancel the placement. The student will be directed not to commence the placement. The effect on the student will depend on the status of the placement within his or her course. However the general principle should be that, wherever possible, the student's progression through their course will not be adversely affected by the cancellation of a placement on health and safety grounds.

If a placement provider has not completed the Health and Safety Questionnaire prior to the commencement of the placement:

- the student is required give a health and safety questionnaire to the placement provider on their first day of the placement and ask the placement provider to complete it as part of the induction process;
- the student or the placement provider should forward the completed questionnaire to the placement co-ordinator.

This may result in the placement provider becoming Health and Safety Approved. If the questionnaire is not completed and returned to the placement co-ordinator within two weeks of the commencement of the placement, the placement student and placement provider should be advised in writing by the placement co-ordinator that the university has concerns over the health and safety aspects of the placement and that failure to complete the questionnaire within a further two weeks may result in the university formally cancelling the placement.

If the health and safety questionnaire is not returned by the date specified then the placements coordinator in conjunction with the Health and Safety Department will undertake a risk assessment of the placement based on the available evidence and determine whether to approve or cancel the placement.

If a placement is cancelled, the student will be informed in writing that the University cannot accept the placement as a component of the student's course and they will be advised to resign from their position with the placement provider. Again, the general principle should be that, wherever possible, the student's progression through their course will not be adversely affected by the cancellation of a placement on health and safety grounds.

3. Placements arranged by students

Where a student arranges a placement independently of the University, the same basic principle applies that only placement providers which have a high regard for the safety of our students are approved.

Where appropriate, students arranging their own placement should be given access to a School's list of Health and Safety Approved placement providers. If a student arranges a placement with an approved provider, no further action is required (other than the student informing the placement co-ordinator of their placement details).

Where a student organises a placement with a new placement provider:

- the student is required give a health and safety questionnaire to the placement provider on their first day of the placement and ask the placement provider to complete it as part of the induction process;
- the student or the placement provider should forward the completed questionnaire to the placement co-ordinator. The onus is on the student to ensure that the completed questionnaire is forwarded to the placement co-ordinator;
- the placement co-ordinator will make an assessment of the questionnaire and either inform the student that the placement provider is approved or, if there are any concerns, consult with the Health and Safety Department;
- if the Health and Safety Department advises that the placement provider cannot be approved, the placement will be cancelled (see section 2.3 above).

4. Information for students and placement providers

4.1 Information for students

Prior to commencement of placements, the placement co-ordinator will provide placement students appropriate information regarding their responsibilities, the placement process and the point of contact within the School. (The separate document entitled Health and Safety on Work Placements, Guidance for Students, can be adapted for this purpose.) There should also be some method of contacting placement students, for example, by e-mail.

Where appropriate, staff who have attended the safety department briefing can carry out student briefings. It is important that records of attendance at these briefings are kept and that students are not permitted to commence a placement unless they have attended a briefing.

For certain types of placements where there are specific health and safety issues, specific information will also be needed. This will be developed by placement co-ordinators in conjunction with the Health and Safety Department.

It is also important that information is given to students about any known health limitations for a placement they are going on. This should be raised by the placement provider, for example by their answers given to questions on the Health and Safety Questionnaire.

4.2 Student health issues

The policy of disclosure of and student health or disability issues to a placement provider is covered by the policy on disability.

4.3 Feedback

All students should be given the opportunity to provide feedback to the placement co-ordinator at the end of the placement, for example through an end of placement questionnaire. In particular, students should have the opportunity explicitly to comment on any Health and Safety issues they may have encountered. This information may be used to inform the placement provider's Health and Safety Approved status (please refer to paragraph 2.2), in consultation with the Health and Safety Department.

4.4 Unresolved safety concerns

If, during a placement, a student or visiting tutor has any concerns regarding health and safety of the work environment, these should be reported immediately to the placement co-ordinator. Any concerns should initially be followed up by discussion and negotiation with the

placement provider. This may be with assistance from the Health and Safety Department. Serious and unresolved health and safety concerns may lead, on the advice of the Health and Safety Department, to approved status being withdrawn from the placement provider and the cancellation of the placement.

5. Placements where the placement provider is the University of Brighton

Placement students with University of Brighton are considered as employees for the duration of the placement. This means that the same safety controls should be in place for those students, as are in place for University of Brighton employees and no additional measures are necessary.

Approved by Academic Board December 2004

Annex 1

Briefing session for staff who are responsible for organising placements.

The relevant staff would be those that have involvement in organising and authorising student placements.

This may include Visiting Tutors, where appropriate.

Core elements of the briefing session would include the following:

- When and how it is appropriate to maintain a register - containing a profile of the organisation
- When and how students are to be briefed before commencement of their placements
- When it may be necessary to involve the safety department in placement safety problems that may arise
- Contact arrangements during placement/ feedback on completion



University of Brighton

Policy on Disabled Students and Placements

1. The legal context

- 1.1 **The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) (IV)** (or SENDA) requires Higher Education Institutions to ensure that students are not discriminated against for reasons relating to their disability, whilst on a placement arranged by the University.
- 1.2 **DDA (II)** obliges placement providers who pay the student not to discriminate on disability grounds, as the student is an employee and therefore covered by employment provisions of the Act.
- 1.3 **The Disability Act** extends employers' responsibilities under the DDA as of October 2004. It means that unpaid work placements are also covered by the provisions of part II of the Act.

2. Policy framework

QAA Code of Practice (students with disabilities): Precept 11

"Institutions should ensure that, wherever possible, disabled students have access to academic and vocational placements including field trips and study abroad.

Where placements, including international placements, are a formal requirement or standard component of the programme institutions should consider ways of ensuring that the specified learning opportunities are available to disabled students by:

- Seeking placements in accessible contexts;
- Providing specialist guidance on international placements;
- Re-locating field trips to alternative sites or providing alternative experiences where comparable opportunities are available which satisfy the learning outcomes;
- Working with placement providers to ensure accessibility;
- Providing support before, during and after placements that takes account of the need of any disabled student, including transport needs.

Where a placement is an optional but desirable element of the programme, institutions should consider making similar arrangements to support access for disabled students."

3. University of Brighton Procedures

Disabled students may need more support than other students in accessing and maintaining work placements.

Schools which run courses involving work placements, whether essential or optional, should ensure that disabling barriers are removed in order to ensure equality of experience for disabled students on the course. The following steps are recommended in order to ensure that disabled students have a choice of placements which is sufficient not to put them at an unreasonable disadvantage in comparison to their non-disabled peers.

- 3.1 **Audit of placement providers.** Schools should undertake and maintain an audit of placement providers to establish the accessibility of their buildings and practices, and their approach to disability. This can be undertaken by asking them to complete a 'Disability Questionnaire'.
- 3.2 **Provision of information to applicants.** Details of course requirement to undertake placements and the availability of suitable providers should be made available to applicants. Such information, made available during the admissions process, should also cover the steps the School would make in supporting disabled students both to seek and maintain an appropriate work placement.
- 3.3 **Support in securing a suitable placement.** Placement coordinators will work with individual disabled students and placement providers to ensure that disabling barriers are removed wherever possible.
- 3.4 **Support for students during placements.** Support available to disabled students on the course extends to their work placement. Often the support available is extensive, but can take some time to put in place. The nature and level of support that is appropriate may be different from that provided whilst students are studying at the university. Early liaison with the Disability Team is advisable, ideally during the admissions process.
- 3.5 **Support for placement providers.** Where required, the Disability Team will provide support to placement providers, such as awareness training on specific disability issues.
- 3.6 **Disclosure.** Placement coordinators should be aware of personal (for the student) and legal (for the university) issues surrounding disclosure of information about a student's disability to a placement provider. The student may need support in deciding whether or how to disclose a disability, and the university may have a legal obligation to pass on (or not to pass on) this information. Advice on this issue can be sought from the relevant professional body, and/or the University's Data Protection Officer.
- 3.7 **Communication with students on placements.** If not already in place, systems should ensure that any problems which arise on placement are tackled promptly before they result in a situation where a student experiences discrimination due to their disability.
- 3.8 **Staff awareness of legal requirements.** Heads of School should ensure that all staff (but particularly those involved with admissions and placements) are aware of the university's and the placement providers' legal responsibilities in this area.

Approved by Academic Board December 2004



University of Brighton

Policy on Harassment and Placement Students

1. Introduction

The University of Brighton is committed to its shared values and to upholding the dignity of the individual, to creating a stimulating and supportive learning and working environment, to promoting equality of opportunity and to valuing diversity and affirms the rights of individuals to be treated fairly and with respect.

The University of Brighton has a Policy Statement on Harassment and Bullying which applies to all students including those undertaking work placements. This can be found at <http://www.brighton.ac.uk/aboutus/corporateinfo/policies.php?PageId=405>. The university takes seriously its responsibility to ensure that all students on work placements benefit from the experience and that it is not marred by harassment, bullying and intimidation.

2. What is harassment?

The following is taken from the University's Policy Statement on Harassment:

*Harassment is **unacceptable** behaviour, which can range from violence and bullying to more subtle behaviour such as ignoring an individual. It subjects an individual or group to **unwelcome** attention, violates the dignity of a person and creates an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or offensive environment. It is **unwanted** by the recipient. It **continues** after an objection is made (although a single incident may be serious enough to constitute harassment and justify a complaint). People experiencing harassment may have redress under legislation, e.g. sexual or racial harassment.*

3. Guidelines for dealing with harassment

Harassment and bullying are an unacceptable form of behaviour. Students on placements who are experiencing or have experienced harassment should not feel that they are to blame or believe that they have to tolerate it. Students experiencing harassment should not wait until things become intolerable. Sometimes the alleged harasser may not realise that their behaviour is unwanted and in such cases the misunderstanding can be resolved quickly.

If a student believes that they are being subjected to harassment or bullying whilst on placement, they should try to seek an informal resolution with the person who is causing the distress by challenging their behaviour and making it clear that they find it unacceptable and want it to stop (see (i) below). At any stage the student may seek support and advice from their personal tutor, Placement Co-ordinator or Visiting Tutor. Additionally, the University has a network of trained people acting as 'Harassment Contacts' who will provide confidential support and information. They can be contacted at anytime through Student Welfare. Support is also available from the Student Union Advice Centre.

Wherever possible students should keep a written record of the incidents. This should include such details as date, time, nature of incident, their response and feelings, any action taken and any witnesses present. Methods of informal resolution may include the following.

(i) *Personal resolution*

Students should consider ways in which they can resolve the situation themselves, by making it clear that they find the behaviour offensive and want it to stop. Options to consider include:

- Speaking to the person responsible for the behaviour;
- Writing to the person;
- Challenging the person accompanied by a colleague from the placement provider;
- Asking a colleague from the placement provider to speak to the person on their behalf.

(ii) *Local resolution*

If the situation does not improve following an attempt at personal resolution, if the student finds it impossible to raise the issue personally, or if the allegation is more serious, the student should contact someone within the placement provider's workplace with whom they feel able to discuss the situation. This could be, for example:

- Their line manager
- A member of staff from the Personnel Department
- Their mentor
- A Trade Union representative.

The university's expectation is that the person contacted by the student will seek a resolution of the situation in accordance with the placement provider's policies and processes.

(iii) *Informing the University of Brighton*

If the student feels unable to go through the personal or local resolution stage or if he or she has done so and feels that it has not been satisfactorily resolved, the student should contact their Placements Co-ordinator, who will discuss the situation with the placement provider and attempt to facilitate a resolution.

If the situation is not resolved, this may result in the student being withdrawn from the placement.

4. Withdrawing from a placement

Any student who is withdrawn from a placement because of harassment will not be disadvantaged in terms of their assessment and will be assisted in finding a suitable alternative placement if this is appropriate.

In instances where a student has to be withdrawn from a placement it will be up to the discretion of the Placements Co-ordinator / Head of School to consider the appropriateness of sending further students to the same placement. A copy of this record will be held in the Placements Office, and the placement provider will be notified about the University's judgement in respect of sending further students to the same placement.

Approved by Academic Board December 2004



University of Brighton

Questionnaire for UK based Placements

Will you please complete this questionnaire and return it to:

1. Health and Safety

The Health and Safety at Work legislation requires the University to ensure student placements are made only with reputable companies who take health and safety seriously; and that account will be taken of the student's youth or inexperience.

	Yes	No
Does the company have a written safety policy?		
Is the company registered with the HSE or local authority?		
Will you provide the student with an induction in the workplace health and safety arrangements, including fire precautions, specific hazards and health and safety precautions?		
Will you provide appropriate instruction and training in work practices and in the particular control measures identified in the risk assessments?		
Will you notify the University of any accidents or incidents that you are aware of, which involve the student?		
Are you required to have Employers Liability (Compulsory Insurance)?		
Do you hold a current certificate and Public Liability insurance?		

Please add the address of the site at which the placement student will be engaged:

Please indicate if there are any health restrictions or medical fitness requirements associated with the envisaged activities for this placement.

2. Disability

The University of Brighton requests this information in order to be able to meet the diverse needs of students (including those with disabilities) in providing a suitable placement.

- (i) Are you a 'Two Ticks' employer?

- (ii) Do staff in the organisation receive training in Disability Equality and/or the Disability Discrimination Act? If yes, please give details.

- (iii) Is wheelchair-accessibility an issue for the buildings / lay-out of your organisation?

- (iv) Do you have procedures in place for emergency egress of people with mobility difficulties?

- (v) Do you operate a flexi-time system?

- (vi) Further information relating to the organisation and disability (eg. experience of working with disabled employees, support in place, adaptations issues etc.)



University of Brighton

Questionnaire for non-UK based Placements

Will you please complete this questionnaire and return it to:

1. Health and Safety

The University expects this student to be treated in the same way as your own employees with regard to their health, safety and welfare.

	Yes	No
Will you provide the student with an induction in the workplace health and safety arrangements, including fire precautions, specific hazards and health and safety precautions?		
Will you include the student in the risk assessment programme as it affects activities undertaken by them?		
Will you provide appropriate instruction and training in work practices and in the particular control measures identified in the risk assessments?		
Will you notify the University of any accidents or incidents that you are aware of, which involve the student?		

Please add the address of the site at which the placement student will be engaged:

Please indicate if there are any health restrictions or medical fitness requirements associated with the envisaged activities for this placement.

2. Disability

The University of Brighton requests this information in order to be able to meet the diverse needs of students (including those with disabilities) in providing a suitable placement.

- (i) Do staff in the organisation receive training in Disability Equality? If yes, please give details.

- (ii) Is wheelchair-accessibility an issue for the buildings / lay-out of your organisation?

- (iii) Do you have procedures in place for emergency egress of people with mobility difficulties?

- (iv) Do you operate a flexi-time system?

- (v) Further information relating to the organisation and disability (eg. experience of working with disabled employees, support in place, adaptations issues etc.)
