

Title	Work Placement Policy
Description	Every VET Provider should have a Policy and Procedure for managing Work Based Learning. This is an example of the Policy in SERC
User	VET Provider and Teachers
Goal	VET Providers require a policy and procedure for teaching and placement staff to adhere too
Objective	To provide quality assurance of all staff working with students on placements
Method	Made available online or as a hard-copy.
Recommended Use	Staff should be offered training in the Work Placement Policy and Procedure so the are aware of their role and responsibility and therefore will adhere to the legal and health and safety requirements
When	Prior to commencement of placement
Language	English
Further Links	<u>Related Documents:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SERC Work Placement & Experience Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) 2. SERC Placement Partnership Agreement example 3. BEST Functionality Case Study

Work Placement Policy

1. Introduction

South Eastern Regional College (SERC) recognises and values the importance of work placement and its current and potential future benefits for the approach to students' work based learning. This policy is intended to be a general policy which gives guidance on the minimum requirements prior to and during placements.

Please note: This Work Placement Policy should also be read in conjunction with the Work Placement & Experience Standard Operating Procedure and related documents.

2. Aim

- To ensure there is appropriate consistency and Quality Assurance in the management and administration of placements across SERC.
- To ensure placements provide the work based learning objectives.
- To take reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of students is not compromised by activities undertaken during placement.
- To guarantee student support and ensure that all necessary provisions are made for students with disabilities.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all College Staff involved in organising and monitoring work placements, and SERC approved Placement Providers whether allocated by the College or independently found by students. The Policy is intended to include SERC Placement Students gaining experience/training in paid or unpaid placements attending a couple of days per academic year or in block placements, participating in mandatory or non- compulsory work based learning managed by the college.

4. Work Placement Procedure

SERC has developed a five stage approach to placing students to ensure students and Placement Providers are well prepared and supported and all placement related information, assessments and evaluations are recorded and monitored.

5. Placement Partner Roles – Information, Support and Guidance from SERC

College Placement Staff will provide Placement Providers with appropriate contact and support from SERC via Health & Safety and assessment visits, placement guidelines and induction. Placement Providers will be offered the option to interview potential students and access relevant student profiles to enable selection. College Placement Staff will require Placement Providers to complete Partnership Agreement documentation prior to commencement of placement to ensure all necessary obligations will be understood and strictly adhered to at all times. The Placement Provider shall advise the college immediately of any change in the Partnership Agreement requirements for work placement. SERC will seek commitment from Placement Providers to provide appropriate training, opportunities to gain employability skills and put 'Theory into Practice', and to provide a pre-designated Industrial Supervisor to supervise and mentor each student. Students must be supervised at all times, ensuring a safe environment (as far as reasonably possible). SERC will require reasonable access to visit the student and Placement Provider on placement to observe and assess the student. Placement Providers' feedback requested by SERC will be evaluated.

College Placement Staff will strive to place Students in safe, secure, caring placements which will meet the qualification requirements/assessments. SERC will prepare students for placement by making them aware of current working practices and provide regular and continued contact and support throughout. Assessment/evaluation/evidence will be made available in line with course requirements. Students will be required to attend regularly, keep in contact with College Placement Staff, inform them of any changes and complete all requirements of the qualification.

6. **BEST - Business Engagement & Student Tracking System**

BEST is a comprehensive secure software system developed in SERC to manage and record each department's placement and business information. All placement related information (including Work Experience) will be recorded on BEST by SERC staff in a secure manner. User guidelines and training will be made available to all SERC staff requiring access to BEST. Placements students, College Placement Staff and Placement Providers will be given secure access to BEST.

7. **Placement Visits and Documentation**

College Placement Staff will complete an Initial Placement Visit to complete placement partnership agreements before commencement and record all information on BEST, this information will be updated for additional students.

The College will complete an Assessment Visit to evaluate the student as part of course requirements and to provide a record of the placement and ensure each student is in a safe environment.

8. **Indemnity and Insurance**

SERC will indemnify the Placement Provider for the time and period of the student on placement as long as College Placement Staff are satisfied the Placement Provider has met the health, safety and insurance requirements.

9. **Work Experience**

SERC differentiates between Work Placement and Work Experience and will encourage all students to complete a two weeks or less Work Experience in which they can shadow a member of staff in an organisation prior to pursuing a career. SERC will ensure the appropriate documentation is in place before commencement.

10. **Work Placement Overseas**

SERC recognises that work placements overseas, with Placement Providers based beyond Northern Ireland are beneficial to students fostering particular strengths and broadening prospects. The 'Work Placement Overseas Student Guidelines and Agreement' prepares students for placements taking place beyond Northern Ireland.

11. **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups – ACCESS NI**

The College recognises that placement students working with vulnerable groups may require Access NI 'Enhanced with Barred List' checks and provide counter signatories to process applications. When placing students under the age of eighteen child protection must be taken into consideration and SERC Policies and Procedures applied. College Placement staff must adhere to the application procedure detailed in the SERC 'Work Placement & Experience Standing Operating Procedure'.

12. Confidentiality

SERC has identified the need to share student's confidential health related and/or other support needs with the Placement Provider in order to place the student in an appropriate working environment. The student must give permission to College Placement Staff in writing or on BEST for this information to be given to the Placement Provider.

Placement students' personal information must be kept confidential by SERC and the Placement Provider; their employees and agents acting on their behalf.

13. Data Protection

As a public authority, the College will obtain, process and manage all data in compliance with the Data Protection Policy (1998) and its eight main principles. The College will not ask for more information than is legally necessary or essential to fulfil its obligation to placement students and providers.

14. Allegations of suspected malpractice, abuse or wrongdoing on Placement

SERC placement students will be subject to the SERC Student and Trainee Disciplinary and Behaviour Policy and any alleged breaches of the policy by a student will be subject to investigation under the policy.

SERC will promptly investigate any reports of suspected malpractice, abuse or wrongdoing reported to them by or concerning placement students or Placement Providers via informal and formal investigations and will inform all parties in writing of the outcome.

15. Communication

This Policy will be available for all staff on the SERC intranet. Staff will also be made aware of their responsibilities during induction and staff development. In addition, staff to whom this Policy is deemed most relevant will be notified by email or staff briefing.

16. Review

This policy will be reviewed (and if necessary updated) annually or sooner if required to reflect changes in legislation or circumstance.