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1. AIM(s)

This policy is produced in accordance with the rules and regulations produced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and Department for Education (DfE) and has been developed according to the documents each organisation provides.

Shrewsbury Colleges Group recognises the value and impact a high-quality Work Experience placement or Volunteering project can have on a student, contributing to the overall study programme and enhancing progression and positive destination prospects. This policy also contributes to the achievements of Gatsby Benchmarks 5 and 6. The College will provide access for all students to work experience and encourage their participation as listed in section 3 of this policy.

This policy refers to experiences undertaken by Shrewsbury Colleges Group students and does not extend to any work experience requests we receive from external students.

2. OBJECTIVES/STRATEGIES

This policy aims to make clear:

- I. The expected standard of student conduct required to access the Shrewsbury Colleges Group Work Experience and Volunteering programme
- II. The responsibilities of Shrewsbury Colleges Group staff who arrange or are involved with Work Experience and Volunteering regarding the general regulations surrounding Work Experience placements to ensure that Shrewsbury Colleges Group adheres to both the Health and Safety and legislative requirements

3. THE COLLEGE OFFER AND TYPES OF EXPERIENCE

It is the expectation that all Shrewsbury Colleges Group students, including those on Higher Education programmes, will benefit from meaningful employer engagement.

As part of a personalised approach to study programmes, Shrewsbury Colleges Group staff will work with the student to identify the most appropriate types of experience(s) to meet their learning needs. These experiences include, but are not limited to:

- I. Formal placement which forms part of an accredited course
- II. Block work experience for a fixed duration
- III. Regular work experience over an agreed period of time
- IV. Industry Placements (aligned with CDF/T Levels)
- V. Virtual Work Experience
- VI. Volunteering or social action (either group or individual)
- VII. Shadowing
- VIII. Employer visits

- IX. Overseas residential experiences (for example as part of the ERASMUS scheme)
- X. Unpaid work trials prior to an Apprenticeship
- XI. Internal work experience placements*
- XII. Supported Internships

For the purposes of planned study programme hours, Shrewsbury Colleges Group recognises that such experiences can take place throughout a full calendar week and may include holiday periods where this has been arranged and agreed in advance with the student, employer and/or third-party organisation.

4. INTENDED IMPACT ON THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

The intended outcomes of participation in Work Experience and Volunteering are:

- I. Purposeful work experience contributing directly to a Study Programme
- II. Substantial, regular time in the workplace gaining employability skills
- III. Short periods of work experience connected to future study or employment options

Students will experience a range of individual benefits from participating in Work Experience and Volunteering, including but not limited to:

- I. Developing a broad range of interpersonal skills, knowledge and confidence for adult life
- II. Gaining an understanding of the world of work, with sector-specific knowledge and experiences as well as learning about career paths in an authentic setting
- III. Identifying strengths and areas for development and empowering students to set personal work-related learning objectives
- IV. Recording student experiences of their employer engagement and reflections
- V. Broadening understanding of career paths and opportunities
- VI. Developing reflective learning to enhance UCAS and job applications
- VII. Consolidating the link between on campus learning and the workplace
- VIII. Working towards relevant nationally recognised awards such as the Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme

5. STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITY (SEND)

The college promotes Work Experience and Volunteering opportunities to all students, ensuring that students who have an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) or have SEND support needs are actively encouraged to participate.

Where job coaching, assistive technology or other strategies would enable access to Work Experience and Volunteering staff should work with the ALS team including the Preparation

for Adulthood Co-ordinator as part of the experience planning process for the individual student and the appropriate information sharing permissions should be sought from the student to ensure that employers are appropriately briefed on how best to support the student in placement.

Where students express a wish to engage with Work Experience and Volunteering, and either the students themselves, or the college, assess the individual as not yet ready for an external experience, an internal programme may be put in place as part of an overall study programme with agreed timescales and personal development targets to enable access to external experiences. In accordance with the CDF guidance, students with SEND are also able to complete 105 hours of their Industry Placement in an internal college setting.

6. STUDENT BEHAVIOUR AND WELFARE AND ACCESS TO EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES

The Shrewsbury Colleges Group policies relating to Student Conduct and Fitness to Study set out the expectations of its students and the support available to them.

Shrewsbury Colleges Group reserves the right to postpone or withdraw access to Work Experience and Volunteering opportunities, following discussions with the student, and parent/carer where the student is under 18 years old. Alternative arrangements may be put in place until such time where the student reaches the expected level of attendance, conduct and/or well-being to meaningfully benefit from an external placement.

Complaints received regarding student conduct or attendance which occur during Work Experience or Volunteering will be followed up in line with the Student Conduct policy, with the Lead Work Experience Co-ordinator joining the panel where appropriate. Students will always be required to provide a letter of apology to the employer where conduct and/or attendance has fallen below the expected standards. The Work Experience team will liaise with the employer or third-party organisations to ensure that future opportunities for Shrewsbury Colleges Group are not compromised.

7. ORGANISATION OF PLACEMENTS AND GROUP VOLUNTEERING

The Work Experience and Agency teams are responsible for the management of placements and group volunteering and will support students in sourcing placements, except in those instances where the student is required to do this as part of a unit of their qualification. For study programmes where a self-sourcing route is required, teaching staff should liaise closely with the designated Work Experience Co-ordinator to ensure H&S assessments and any DBS applications are completed in advance of the placement start date. Appendices A and B illustrate the processes for placements requested by staff and individual students.

Details of all placements and activities are recorded by the Work Experience team via the Grofar platform and all work experience placements, including work trials for Apprenticeships should be arranged by this team.

8. SAFEGUARDING AND HEALTH & SAFETY

The Work Experience team will continue to work closely with the Shrewsbury Colleges Group Safeguarding team to ensure the College's duties are extended to Work Experience and Volunteering, including PREVENT as part of its safeguarding activities.

Work Experience placements are governed by the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999; which places the responsibility for the health and safety of all employees, including work experience students with the employer.

The Work Experience team assess employer settings as low/medium/high risk based on a range of factors including previous H&S assessments, external agency ratings (e.g. Ofsted, CQC) and the nature of the sector and student placement. For low risk employers, a Health & Safety and Safeguarding questionnaire is completed and reviewed by the Work Experience H&S Officer, with additional auditing by the H&S Officer for Shrewsbury Colleges Group and the Lead Work Experience Co-ordinator. Medium and high-risk placement settings are visited by the Work Experience H&S Officer to ensure the following is completed and made available to the Work Experience Co-ordinators prior to a Shrewsbury Colleges Group student undertaking a placement:

- I. Age appropriate risk assessment
- II. Employer Liability Insurance and/or Public Liability Insurance
- III. A written health and safety policy where the organisation has more than 5 employees

Where an employer or third sector organisation has been assessed and is deemed not to meet current Health and Safety requirements, the Work Experience team will produce an action plan with the organisation, with appropriate signposting to the relevant Health & Safety agencies and will liaise with that organisation until such time as it is fully compliant and able to engage.

Details of all Health & Safety visits and assessments are recorded and centrally stored on REMS, the shared drive with Business Solutions and Grofar.

Students accessing virtual work experience placements are signposted to the Students Working Safely Online guidance, and are instructed by the Agency team to use only their college email address and to complete their virtual work experience in a college setting, rather than at home. For those students under 18, parents are also contacted to set out the expectations and requirements re. any virtual placements or projects and safeguarding.

On occasions, students will have access to placements where PLI, ELI or access to conduct a H&S assessment is not available. These are rare and are usually restricted to government bodies. In addition, students may seek to access placements abroad or in distant UK locations where it is not practicable for a physical H&S assessment to take place. In these circumstances, the Work Experience and Co-ordinators and Work Experience H&S Officer will liaise with the College H&S Officer as well as the Finance Manager for clarification of the College's position prior to the placement commencing. Any requirements or guidance will be communicated to the students (and parents, where the student is under 18).

9. PANDEMIC MEASURES

Shrewsbury Colleges Group will comply with the government guidance in relation to any current or emerging pandemics. The College reserves the right to postpone any planned work experience or Industry Placements where the level of risk exceeds the perceived benefit of the experience. The Work Experience team will work with partner employers to provide alternatives including virtual work experience placements, work-related project, virtual tours or a virtual guest speaker programme, and this will be agreed in conjunction with the relevant curriculum teams.

The Work Experience H&S Officer will check pandemic risk assessments as part of the overall due diligence checks which are completed prior to a placement commencing.

10. DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS)

For students who will be working with children and/or vulnerable adults and where a DBS check is required, the Work Experience team on behalf of Shrewsbury Colleges Group, will carry out an Enhanced DBS on request by the placement provider. Where the work experience placement forms an essential assessed component of the qualification, the cost of the DBS will be met by the College.

11. RELATED POLICIES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Shrewsbury College Group policies:

Health and Safety

Safeguarding

Student Conduct

Fitness to Study

Looked After Young People

Rights of Individuals

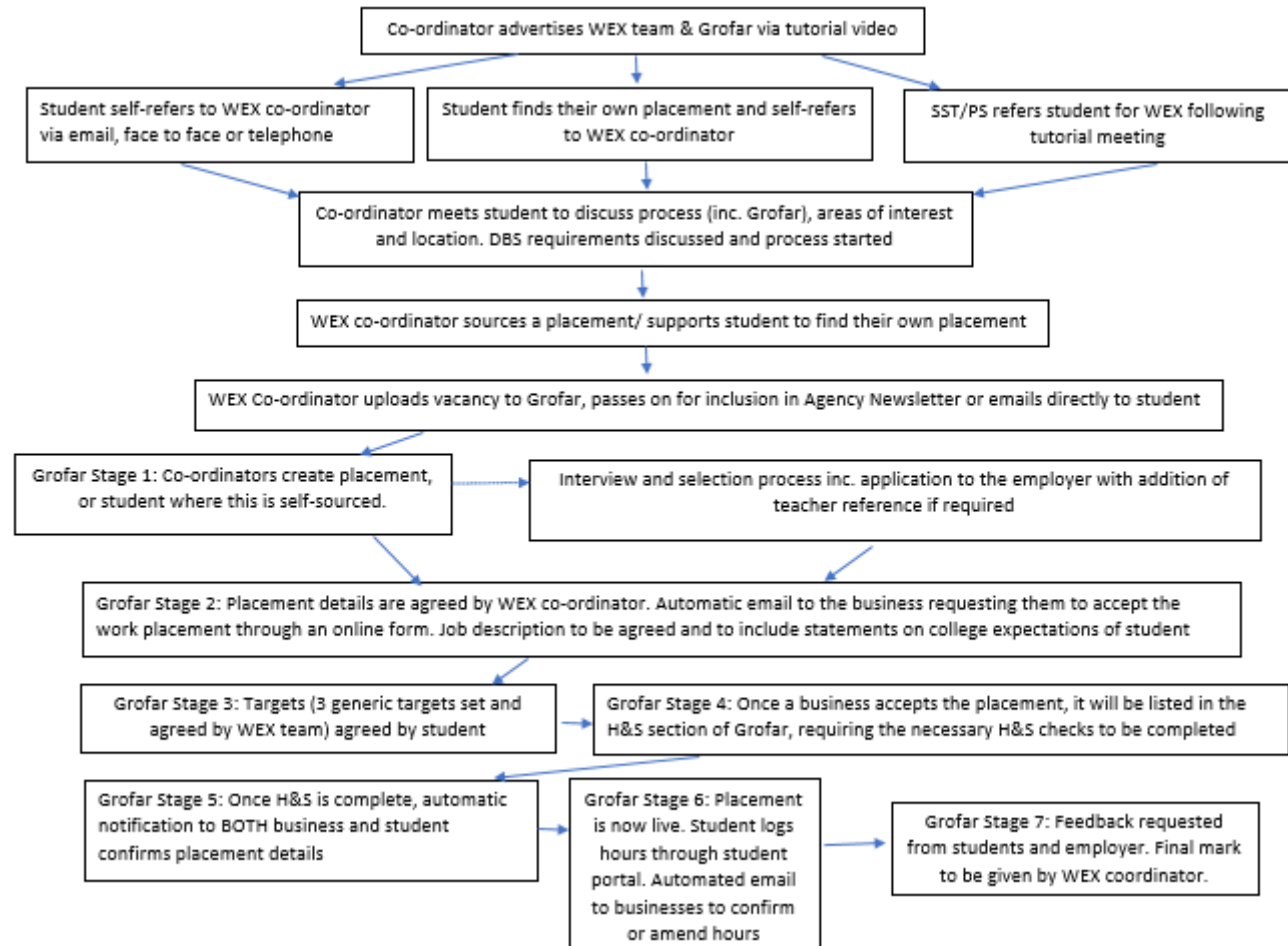
General Data Protection

External Speakers

12. EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose and meets the legal requirements for Work Experience.

APPENDIX A: Work Experience Procedure for academic study programmes, vocational student self-referrals and Industry Placements



NB. Some of the virtual work experience opportunities may be very short (1 hour/1day) and often deemed to be more of a careers insight day. For these opportunities, we will not expect the employer to verify hours, give feedback on the student, and it may not be feasible to add targets. This will be at the discretion of the Work Experience Co-ordinators. The Health & Safety for virtual placements may also be deemed more suited to a desktop/online assessment rather than a physical visit to premises. The agreed approach will be at the discretion of the Health & Safety Adviser.

APPENDIX B: Work Experience Procedure for vocational study programmes

