



TITLE: Work-based, Work-related and Placement Learning policy	REF:	VERSION:2
APPROVED: By HE Academic Board	DATE:25 th February 2014 (Version1) Version 2 approved 25 th February 2015	REVIEW DATE:25 th February 2016
LEAD PERSON: Bill Hunt – Higher Education Manager		
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: To support and enhance the employability of students		

Main points of policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide guidance to staff, students and employers on the minimum requirements of work-based, work-related or placement learning where such activity contributes to the intended learning outcomes of a student's programme of study.
List of procedures for implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students in the workplace policy
Related policies, documents and strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) UK Quality Code: Chapter B10: Managing higher education with others http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/quality-code-B10.pdf Programme Specifications Programme Handbooks Operations Manual Collaborative Agreements

Equality and diversity statement

It is the policy of Activate Learning to recognise and encourage the valuable and enriching contribution from all who work and learn here and the rights of all individuals who come into contact with the organisation such as prospective students and job applicants.

We believe that people from a range of backgrounds and experiences can enhance the life and development of the institution and that all individuals should be treated on the basis of individual merit and without prejudice. Activate Learning will, therefore aim to provide an education service which actively promotes equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination on grounds of age, cultural background, economic status, disability, ethnicity, gender, religion/belief, marriage/civil partnership or sexual orientation in both education and employment. We will strive vigorously to remove conditions which place people at a disadvantage and will actively combat bigotry and discrimination. Activate Learning expects all employees, students, and associated partner organisations to adopt this policy.

Activate Learning is committed to carrying out Equality impact Assessments on its policies and procedures in order that some measurement is made of the contribution that the policy/procedure makes towards equality and diversity objectives.

1. Policy Statement

Activate Learning is committed to ensuring that students are able to benefit from appropriate work-based, work-related or placement learning opportunities which help them to meet the intended learning outcomes of their programme of study.

2. Background to the policy

Activate Learning recognises the importance of work-based, work-related and placement learning and its current and potential impact on the ways in which students learn. Part of the organisations' mission and associated values is to provide an environment for students where they take an active part in developing their contemporary knowledge, professional values and interpersonal skills in order to become confident independent thinkers who will be attractive to employers.

One way of ensuring that students' developing knowledge and understanding is grounded, is to broaden their learning experiences beyond the confines of the College they study at. The increasing number of foundation degree and higher national programmes provides such opportunities by integrating work-based, work-related or placement learning with academic study.

Where work-based, work-related or placement learning is part of a programme of study, its learning outcomes must be clearly identified, contribute to the overall aims of the programme and be appropriately assessed against set criteria.

The responsibility for ensuring that work-based, work-related or placement learning provides adequate opportunities for the intended learning outcomes to be achieved rests with the responsible Programme Coordinator.

This policy is intended to be a general policy which gives guidance on the minimum requirements prior to the commencement of work-based, work-related or placement learning, but the method by which this is achieved can be adapted to suit the needs of individual programmes and/or awarding bodies.

3. Definitions

This policy has been informed by the UK Quality Code for Higher Education; chapter B10; 'Managing higher education with others'. The chapter specifically includes arrangements for work-based and placement learning that is integral to the programme and sets out expectations and indicators of sound practice. This policy relates specifically to the expectation of chapter B10, which states:

'Degree-awarding bodies take ultimate responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, irrespective of where these are delivered or who provides them. Arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with organisations other than the degree-awarding body are implemented securely and managed effectively'.

In relation to work-based and placement learning, Activate Learning adopts the QAA definitions as follows:

Work-based learning

'learning that is integral to a higher education programme and is usually achieved and demonstrated through engagement with a workplace environment, the assessment of reflective practice and the designation of appropriate learning outcomes'

In addition, the Foundation Degree Qualification Benchmark provides a useful reference point in defining the characteristics of the qualification in relation to work-based learning:

The distinctiveness of Foundation Degrees depends upon the integration of the following characteristics: employer involvement; accessibility; articulation and progression; flexibility; and partnership. While none of these attributes is unique to Foundation Degrees, their clear and planned integration within a single award, underpinned by work-based learning, makes the award very distinctive.

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/foundationDegree/benchmark/FDQB.pdf>

Placement learning

'The learning achieved during an agreed and negotiated period of learning that takes place outside the institution at which the full-time or part-time student is enrolled or engaging in learning. As with work-based learning, the learning outcomes are intended as integral parts of the programme of study'

Activate Learning also refers to **Work-related Learning** as:

'Learning undertaken as a result of working with outside agencies or individuals on a specific project, which in turn enhances learning opportunities and enables students to meet the intended learning outcomes of a module' e.g. creative arts students often undertake 'live projects' and/or competitions. As opposed to work-based or placement learning, the absence of work-related learning opportunities would not exclude the student from being able to meet the learning outcomes of a module or programme.

4. Scope of the Policy

In determining which provision falls within the scope of this policy, the critical factor is whether the achievement of the learning outcomes for the module or programme are dependent on the arrangement made with the other delivery or support organisation(s).

This policy therefore relates to any situation where a student works, studies or volunteers in an approved location, and where their work or placement situation contributes directly towards the learning outcomes of their programme of study.

It also recognises that from time to time a student may undertake work-based learning or placement within one of the College's locations and where this contributes to the learning outcomes of their programme of study; such learning will fall within the scope of this policy.

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education, and therefore this policy, will not apply to any employment, work experience or placement undertaken outside of a programme of study which does not contribute towards the meeting of learning outcomes.

Work-based or placement learning which contributes to the learning outcomes of a programme should be clearly identified in the programme handbook and related module descriptors, and should include details of the number of hours/weeks students will be required to undertake, assessment tasks and the related learning outcomes.

For work-related learning opportunities, such as 'live' projects, Programme Coordinators are expected to ensure that the project will enable students to achieve identified learning outcomes, is manageable in terms of any additional workload and that assessment and feedback are undertaken as stated in the programme handbook.

5. Responsibility for securing a placement

If a placement is a requirement for entry to a programme or a compulsory element of a programme, then it is the responsibility of the student to find a suitable placement unless otherwise stated in the programme specification and handbook. However, information, advice and guidance will be provided to students in helping them to find a suitable placement.

6. Approval of Placement Providers

The Programme Co-ordinator should satisfy themselves that each placement provider, whether allocated by Activate Learning or independently found by the student, is suitable. Procedures for securing, approving and allocating placements should be transparent to all, and take into account, as a minimum:

- a) The suitability of the placement to allow students to successfully meet the learning outcomes of the placement;
- b) Health and safety requirements including any requirement for DBS checks;
- c) Any relevant professional, statutory or regulatory body (PSRB) requirements governing the suitability of placements;
- d) Student support on placements, including the mechanisms for dealing with any problems or complaints.

Information should be given to students on the consequences of failure to either secure or complete a placement where this is a programme requirement.

Procedures should be established to allow students to complete any work-based learning or placement requirements in cases where the placement needs to be terminated early by one of the parties involved.

7. Information for students

Students must be fully informed about their responsibilities and entitlements relating to placement or work-based learning, and be provided with appropriate written and timely information, advice and guidance in preparation for, throughout, and following, their placement or work-based learning experience.

The Programme Coordinator should therefore ensure that students are made aware of;

- a) Their responsibilities in relation to the programme of study of which the placement is a part;
- b) Their responsibilities for managing their behaviour as representatives of the College;
- c) Their responsibilities in relation to health and safety issues including the requirements for a DBS check, where necessary;
- d) The nature of insurance provided, and whether personal insurance is required;
- e) Their need to remain in contact with the programme co-ordinator in order to provide feedback on progress;
- f) Their entitlement in relation to timely information, tutoring, support and guidance prior to, throughout and following their placement;

- g) The need to alert the programme co-ordinator and placement provider to any problems with the placement that may impede their satisfactory progress and completion of the placement;
- h) The need to comply with any PSRB requirements, if appropriate;
- i) The formal complaint procedures
- j) Any information relating to intellectual property rights, if relevant.

8. Information for providers

Providers of work-based and placement learning must be fully informed of their responsibilities, and be given appropriate and timely information, support and guidance in preparation for, during, and after students' work-based learning or placement.

The Programme Coordinator should make providers aware of their responsibilities by providing information in relation to:

- a) The information provided for students (listed under section 6)
- b) Information on the specific roles and responsibilities of the provider and, where applicable, workplace mentor.
- c) The provision of learning opportunities which support the student's educational goals;
- d) Providing a thorough orientation to the workplace, as well as a meaningful, well supervised learning experience
- e) The mentoring of students, and if applicable, providing evidence for the assessment of students;
- f) Providing information about quality assurance of the placement/work-based learning and feedback/evaluation
- g) The health and safety of students, including provision of any specialist materials or clothing needed;
- h) Insurance cover in the event of an accident;
- i) Making reasonable adjustments for students with a disability;
- j) Any obligation to attend any meetings concerning the placement, or provide a report on the placement;
- k) Any changes in a student's circumstances either before commencement of or during the placement.
- l) Contact details of Programme Coordinator and Module Leader.

9. Staffing

Programme Coordinators should also ensure that staff at placement providers receive any additional training required, including any orientation to the College's procedures or policies which may impact on their role in the placement setting.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation of Placements

All placements should be subject to effective monitoring procedures. These should include as a minimum:

- a) That programme coordinators ensure that feedback from students is collected both during and on completion of the placement;
- b) Analysis of the placements should take place as part of the annual monitoring and reporting process for the programme;
- c) Programme Coordinators should ensure that feedback is collected from placement providers, possibly by means of an employer group or survey.