

Workplace Learning Guide for Schools

Dec 2023



Table of Contents

Teacher Checklist: Work Placement.....	3
Teacher Checklist: Work Experience	4
Guidelines for conducting Workplace Learning Programs.....	5
What is Workplace Learning?.....	5
Benefits of Workplace Learning Programs.....	6
Principles for Implementation.....	6
Principal’s Approval.....	7
Communication and Provision of Information to all Parties.....	7
Scheduling of Workplace Learning.....	7
Insurance and Restricted Activities	9
School Responsibilities and Duty of Care	10
Work Placement Service Providers	11
Host Employer Selection, Responsibilities and Orientation.....	12
Preparation of Students	13
Students with Additional Needs – Diverse Students.....	14
Child Protection Protocols.....	14
Mandatory and Recommended Support Documents	15
Accidents/Incidents involving students.....	16
Record Keeping	17
Appendix.....	18

Teacher Checklist: Work Placement

Involves students who are undertaking Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses as part of a Stage 6 study program. Work placement is not mandatory for Stage 5 VET courses.

All procedures in this *Workplace Learning Guide for Schools* must be checked and followed. The following list provides a quick reference.

BEFORE

- Establish school needs (timetables/calendars/exams/reports/sport/canteen).
- Establish appropriate time for work placement (employers, students, principal/staff members).
- Communicate needs with your local Work Placement Service Provider (WPSP).
- Have students:
 - register with school's Work Placement Service Provider (WPSP)
 - complete activities on [go2workplacement](#) (student to provide certificate)
- Provide the employer with a copy of the *Catholic Schools NSW Workplace Learning Guide for Employers*, course outcomes and/or applicable units of competency.
- Design a program with agreed learning outcomes based on course content and level of completion, ensuring the special needs of students with a disability have been identified and appropriate support provided; seek special approval if required: animals, mines, abattoirs, vehicle travel, accommodation.
- Provide students with orientation and distribute *Workplace Learning Guide for Students* and industry specific journal.
- Provide parent/caregiver notification/permission/briefing and a copy of *Parent/Carer Guide to Workplace Learning*.
- Ensure the *Student Placement Record* has been fully completed and signed by all parties, secured at the school and copies of all four pages distributed to student, parent/caregiver and the host employer (this may be taken to the host employer by the student on the first day of placement).
- Determine if VET assessment is to occur in the workplace, if so principles and procedures to apply.
- Ensure students going to construction sites have completed Construction induction training (school to retain copy of student's state or territory WhiteCard, achieved through face-to-face training and assessment).
- Inform entire staff about program and organisation of work placements with enough time for alternate arrangements to be made regarding individual learning and assessment.
- Arrange supervision responsibilities: phone calls and visits; complete orientation of workplace supervisors.

DURING

- Make and document phone contact with employer on the first day and arrange time to visit.
- Make every possible effort to visit the workplace (risk management procedures may be applied).
- Complete a work visit report while visiting student.
- If there is an incident/accident, see page 16.

AFTER

- Gather employer feedback.
- Debrief, collect, collate student reports/journals, providing assessment outcomes as appropriate.
- Provide thanks and feedback to employer.

Teacher Checklist: Work Experience

Work Experience provides an orientation to the world of work in general but without a planned program of industry accredited skill development. It may include learning related to career planning or enterprise education.

All procedures in the *Workplace Learning Guidelines for Schools* must be checked and followed. The following list provides a quick reference.

BEFORE

- Establish student needs (workplace readiness, career interest/discernment, transition).
- Establish appropriate time for work experience (employers, students, principal/staff members).
- Have student complete activities on [myworkexperience](#) (student to provide certificate).
- Provide students with orientation, distribute *Workplace Learning Guide for Students* and logbook.
- Provide parent/caregiver notification/permission/briefing and a copy of *Workplace Learning Guide for Parents and Carers*.
- Provide the employer with a PDF or printed copy of the *Catholic Schools NSW Workplace Learning Guide for Employers*.
- Design a program with agreed learning outcomes, ensuring the special needs of diverse students have been identified and appropriate support provided; seek special approval if required: animals, mines, abattoirs, vehicle travel, accommodation.
- Ensure the *Student Placement Record* has been fully completed and signed by all parties, secured at the school and copies of all four pages distributed to parent/caregiver and the host employer (this may be taken to the host employer by the student on the first day of placement).
- Ensure students going to construction sites have completed Construction induction training (school to retain copy of student's state or territory WhiteCard, achieved through face-to-face training and assessment).
- Inform entire staff about program and organisation of work experience with enough time for alternative arrangements to be made regarding individual learning and assessment.
- Arrange supervision responsibilities: phone calls and visits; complete orientation of workplace supervisors.

DURING

- Make and document phone contact with employer on the first day and arrange time to visit.
- Make every possible effort to visit the workplace (risk management procedures may be applied).
- Complete a work visit report while visiting student.
- If there is an incident/accident, see page 16.

AFTER

- Gather employer feedback.
- Collect and collate student reports/journals, debrief with student.
- Provide thanks and feedback to employer.

Guidelines for conducting Workplace Learning Programs

The procedures outlined in this document as well as other associated documents and forms are designed to support the success of workplace learning programs and alleviate any legal, insurance and communication problems that may arise. The guidelines outline the minimum procedures that must be followed and are not intended to limit the development of flexible and innovative programs.

This document should also be read in conjunction with other *Catholic Schools NSW (CSNSW) Workplace Learning Procedures and Standards* available on the Catholic Schools NSW website.

What is Workplace Learning?

Workplace learning refers to programs approved and organised by the school that involve hands-on learning for students in an authentic workplace. It is recognised as constituting part of the total school curriculum and as having relevance for students at all levels of ability.

Broadly, the purpose of workplace learning programs is to enhance the educational, social and vocational development of all students by assisting students to:

- gain generic and/or industry-specific competencies.
- achieve curriculum outcomes.
- enhance the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to manage the transition from school to further education, training and work.

Work Experience

- Provides an orientation to the world of work in general but without a planned program of industry accredited skill development. It may include learning related to career planning or enterprise education.
- Is included in Work Education (Stage 5), Work Studies (Stage 6), Career Education and Transition Education programs.

Work Placement

- Is a mandatory component of some VET courses for the purpose of enhancement and/or structured workplace training.
- Involves students who are undertaking Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses as part of a Stage 6 study program. Work placement is not mandatory for Stage 5 VET courses.
- Involves negotiation between schools and employers about the course learning outcomes to be achieved on the job.
- Enables students to access industry standard facilities and equipment and provides the opportunity for development and assessment of student competency in an authentic industry setting.

Australian School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships

Students undertaking Australian School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (ASBAs or SBATs) are signatories to a legal contract or indenture that is registered with State Training Services or Skills Canberra. While the duty of care principles in these guidelines are relevant, the same insurance arrangements do not apply. Schools should also refer to the SBAT Guidelines available on the CSNSW VET webpage. Any concerns regarding SBATs or ASBAs should be directed to the relevant Diocesan SBAT Coordinator.

Benefits of Workplace Learning Programs

Learning that takes place within workplace context, or is programmed to include personnel, material or simulated activities derived from relevant workplaces, provides access to a range of benefits for the students, the school and the participating employers and industries.

Through planned and appropriate workplace learning programs and activities, **students** will:

- develop appropriate attitudes towards work
- demonstrate understanding of enterprise principles and work related issues such as the impact of social and technological change and the importance of equal opportunity in the workplace
- clarify and evaluate their abilities and interests in relation to career choice
- demonstrate an understanding of career pathways within an occupational field, including opportunities for employment and further education and training
- develop social and communication skills in a workplace environment
- apply business and industry concepts to curriculum and classroom activities
- enhance their self-esteem, confidence and motivation to learn

Workplace learning initiatives provide **schools** with opportunities to:

- enhance and supplement school-based training by drawing on the skills, knowledge and resources available in industry
- meet the needs of a broad range of students
- improve links with industry and the local school community and promote their complementary roles
- extend the contexts for the professional development of staff.

Local enterprises and industry partners have the opportunity to:

- be involved in the education and vocational training of young adults
- raise the profile of the industry within the local community
- assist with the selection of potential recruits into their organisations
- expand and enhance training programs by providing professional development opportunities for staff
- contribute to the development of a committed and skilled workforce.

Principles for Implementation

There needs to be a whole-school commitment to the concept of workplace learning and its organisation. The educational value of the program for students should always be the prime consideration. Areas for consideration in implementing and evaluating the effectiveness of workplace learning programs include:

- integration into the total school curriculum
- establishing a clear understanding of the expected outcomes for all participants
- appropriate communication and collaboration between schools, Work Placement Service Providers (WPSP) and industry
- a thorough preparation and training of all participants
- the development of teachers' skills in meeting industry training requirements

- a commitment of resources and a willingness to negotiate flexible school organisation to support learning and minimise any disadvantages to students, teachers and industry
- encouragement of students to take responsibility for their own learning
- regular collection of stakeholder feedback and evaluation of workplace learning programs.

Principal's Approval

The principal must approve any workplace learning program. The insurance and indemnity provisions for students in NSW Catholic systemic schools apply only to workplace learning programs that have this approval. Principals may delegate the development of the program to others, including the approval of placements, but they take ultimate responsibility.

In approving workplace learning programs, the principal must be satisfied that the program satisfies the requirements of these guidelines and that employers meet Work Health and Safety (WHS), child protection and other legislative requirements.

Communication and Provision of Information to all Parties

Successful workplace learning programs involve close communication and collaboration between all parties including employers, teachers, students, parents/caregivers, training providers and Work Placement Service Providers (WPSP). Positive relationships should be developed through regular communication, cooperation and respect for the skills and expertise of the various stakeholders.

The following workplace learning documents for Catholic Schools should be issued to relevant stakeholders:

- *Workplace Learning Guidelines for Schools*
- *Employer's Guide to Workplace Learning*
- *Work Experience Work Placement Insurance Summary and Certificate of Currency for NSW Catholic Schools* (updated annually) for participating schools or your relevant insurance documentation
- *Workplace Learning Guide for Students*
- *Workplace Learning Guide for Parents/Carers*
- *Student Placement Record* – four pages, completed and signed (a copy can be provided to the employer by the student on the first day of placement).

Scheduling of Workplace Learning

The scheduling of workplace learning programs should take into consideration a number of factors such as individual student needs, school curriculum and activities, the need for student preparation and follow up, host employer availability and work cycles, etc. Considerations include ensuring:

- students are at least **14 years of age** when they undertake the placement
- **sufficient time** is available for preparation or evaluation and follow-up work with students by avoiding where possible, the first and the final week of each term
- **unreasonable pressure** is not placed on local employers at busy times of the year by consulting with the local WPSP Managers
- Year 12 students have completed their workplace learning **prior to their last HSC examination**.

- students work within the typical **working hours** for the industry and in accordance with the conditions provided in the awards or industrial agreements that are applicable to that job. Under current insurance provisions, **students under 15** may not undertake workplace learning before 7.00am or after 6.00pm
- placements are preferably scheduled during **regular weekday working hours** in school terms. Weekend and school holiday placements are permissible, provided the school can nominate an appropriate school contact person. Schools have a duty of care to their students throughout the placement, regardless of whether it is conducted in school time, at weekends or during school vacations. If such care cannot be provided outside school time, permission to undertake work placement is not to be granted
- disadvantage to students resulting from **loss of class time** in other courses is minimised or eliminated by using strategies such as notifying teachers to arrange make-up of work missed; obtaining agreement from teachers not to teach new material during the absence; and/or introducing a student buddy system
- a student who is **not yet workplace ready** is provided more time to develop the necessary knowledge and skills to confidently undertake work placement.

When planning **mandatory work placement for VET courses**, appropriate sequencing needs to be considered in order to provide students with a coordinated, cohesive and comprehensive learning package. Planning should build upon the students' previous learning and experiences and provide opportunities to further develop their knowledge and skills. Scheduling of mandatory work placement for VET courses needs consideration of:

- providing **sufficient workplace learning time** for each individual student to achieve the desired outcomes and to satisfy mandatory NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) requirements for work placement hours
- allowing sufficient time for submission of work placement information to the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and compliance with unsatisfactory **course completion** procedures if needed
- **complementing course skills and knowledge** by ensuring prior delivery of units of competency that are important for adequate student preparation (e.g. completion of WHS units) and considering which other units require demonstration of skills in the workplace
- **providing sufficient resources for teachers to visit students** undertaking workplace learning to enable both teacher professional development through interacting with industry employers and for mandatory assessment of student competence where this is a mandatory requirement of the training package and unit of competency.

Recognition of Paid Work

A student's current part-time work may be used to meet part or all mandatory work placement requirements for VET courses (see NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) guidelines). Students wishing to apply for RPL should use the "Application for Recognition of Prior Learning" form see Appendix of this document, attaching verifiable evidence. Assessment of the student's application must be conducted by a teacher accredited to teach the course.

Where RPL has been granted for paid work, the student is not a voluntary worker and the workers compensation and insurance arrangements of the employer apply.

Insurance and Restricted Activities

As in all educational activities, the welfare of students participating in workplace learning programs is of paramount importance. Particular attention needs to be paid to the suitability of the various types of employment, with a view to ensuring that students will not be involved in hazardous activities or placed in a work environment that exposes them to physical danger or moral pressure.

Prohibited Activities

Some workplace learning activities are prohibited due to their nature, danger, or inherent risk to students. These are detailed in the *Work Experience Work Placement Insurance Summary*. Some examples include:

- limitations on air travel and watercraft
- high risk construction work
- activities where asbestos is likely to be disturbed
- use of prescribed or dangerous machinery
- activities involving working on a roof, scuba diving, service of alcohol, sporting activities and others.

Schools should check the insurance summary document carefully for a full list of prohibited activities.

Higher Risk Activities

Care also needs to be taken to avoid placing students in a workplace where physical, emotional or cognitive limitations constitute a health or safety risk. If, following a risk assessment, it is determined that the placement provides a valuable learning opportunity, the school and employer might consider risk minimisation strategies such as:

- substituting activities or equipment for the student to do or use
- isolating the hazard
- introducing extra controls in the workplace and/or using Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Schools should check the insurance summary document carefully for activities requiring special approval, in particular, those with a designated form available from the [CSNSW VET webpage](#):

- working with animals
- working at a mine site
- working at an abattoir or meat processing plant
- travel in an employer's vehicle
- accommodation away from home

Child Protection Issues

- students must not be requested to undertake unsupervised tasks with children under the age of 18 years (Note: students involved in childcare placements are to be supervised at all times)
- where possible, students are not to undertake unsupervised tasks with just one employee
- if travel with the host employer is a requirement of a specific placement, the school must ensure that written parent/caregiver permission has been obtained and, if the travel is by vehicle, that the vehicle is properly registered and insured.

Payment of Students

Workplace Learning is part of the school's total educational program. Students are volunteer workers and must not be paid. Employers must be advised of this, as payment to students will impact on their coverage for claims for injury or damages.

Non-Local Placements

Non-local and interstate placements are permitted, provided all duty of care requirements can be assured. Overseas placements are not encouraged and require special approval from CSNSW.

School Responsibilities and Duty of Care

The school's duty of care to students participating in approved workplace learning programs involves taking all reasonable care to minimise foreseeable risks and possible harm to the student. The age, health, maturity, experience, physical and intellectual ability of the student are all factors that the school needs to take into account. What is reasonable care in one case may not be in another. As a minimum, schools need to ensure that:

- the suitability of the host employer is reviewed in regard to provision of an environment free from harassment, discrimination, child protection and health and safety risks
- the host employer is provided with an orientation regarding the school's expectations and the employer's responsibility to supervise the student and provide appropriate learning experiences
- WHS requirements and child protection requirements are met
- the host employer and student are matched to optimise learning outcomes, taking into account individual student needs
- any additional personal information necessary to the student well-being is provided to the host employer, with the consent of the student and parent/caregiver, and in keeping with privacy protocols
- any special needs of students with a disability are appropriately supported in the workplace
- the *Student Placement Record* is fully completed and signed prior to commencement of the placement.
- the student is well prepared and has undertaken orientation activities to optimise their safe and effective participation in the placement
- clear communication continues between the school, the student, the employer and other parties
- formal supervision of the student by the school during the placement is maintained and reports of workplace visits or phone calls are documented; assessment opportunities provided if applicable
- post-placement sessions with students such as a debrief, are conducted to review the experience and optimise their learning.

School Contact Person

The school must provide an appropriate contact person for the hours during which the student is on workplace learning. In some placements, this may include evenings and weekends, and school vacations. The staff member should be available to intervene, in person if necessary, should problems arise during the course of the program.

Relevant phone numbers and other details must be provided on the Student Placement Record. Use of an emergency procedures card may also be considered. Schools will need to provide a mobile phone for the purpose of workplace learning supervision that is not the personal phone of a teacher/staff member.

The supervising teacher will generally be the teacher of the course but may be another appropriate member of staff who is familiar with the course and/or workplace learning requirements such as the careers adviser or a member of the school executive.

School Emergency Contact

The school must provide an appropriate emergency contact person who will be contacted in the event of an emergency, accident or incident which involves a student. This person must be contactable whilst the student/s are undertaking workplace learning. This may include early starts, evenings and weekends, and school vacations if permitted/accepted by the school.

School's Duty of Care

All reasonable care must be taken to ensure that the employer is able to provide a safe environment appropriate to the learning needs of the student. This includes a school staff member visiting the workplace at least once during the program. Where practicable, a pre-placement visit to all new workplaces should occur. This includes workplaces that are not known to the school or that have not previously hosted a student for workplace learning. During the placement the school must also visit or make phone contact with the student and host employer.

Given that visits may not always be possible due to factors such as distance or resource limitations, a risk management approach should be taken. For higher risk activities such as metal work or construction, visits to the workplace must be a priority. For lower risk placements such as office work, a phone call may be sufficient.

A site visit record must be complete and filed together with the *Student Placement Record*. All contact should be documented whether it is in person or by phone.

In meeting these obligations, schools not only provide a duty of care to the student but also build stronger relationships with the external community stakeholders who are participating in the education of our students. Teachers also benefit professionally from interaction with employers and keeping up to date with industry developments.

Placements Sourced by Students

Students may identify a potential workplace learning opportunity themselves, but the school should take necessary steps to check that the host employer has appropriate safety and supervision and meets legislative requirements. This responsibility may be delegated to the school's WPSP (see below).

Work Placement Service Providers

Work Placement Service Providers (WPSP) are locally managed organisations that have been established and funded to arrange and coordinate work placements for students undertaking VET courses where work placement is a mandatory NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) requirement.

The WPSP Managers work with schools and employers to ensure that quality work placements are arranged for students. This coordinated approach provides valuable assistance to schools and reduces the pressure on employers resulting from the increasing number of students seeking placements.

Formal communications and agreements to enhance collaboration between the WPSP and schools must be established to ensure each partner's role in the provision of workplace learning is effective and complementary to the whole process.

Catholic Schools NSW works with the NSW Department of Education regarding arrangements for WPSP staff to assist schools with workplace learning programs. WPSP responsibilities outlined in the Workplace Learning Procedures and Standards include:

- an obligation under common law to take reasonable steps to minimise the risks to students participating in workplace learning
- the selection of host employers who will assess any risks to the health and safety of students in the proposed activities; remove or minimise those risks and who will deliver quality workplace learning experiences
- the selection of employers who understand and can make appropriate adjustments and accommodations for diverse students, including students with disabilities
- promoting the benefits to the employer of offering workplace learning placements
- providing mandatory support documents, and explanations about them, to employers, students, and parents/caregivers, including expectations and requirements in connection with child protection
- ensuring that the employer is aware of the purpose, process, and outcomes of the placement so they are better able to deliver a positive learning experience for the student. Personal contact is the preferable approach to meeting this responsibility. This may be by way of a personal visit or a telephone call
- ensuring that the employer is aware of obligations regarding non-payment of students on placement and that, in the event of an industrial dispute, the placement is suspended or postponed
- clarifying and documenting lines of communication between the stakeholders, but most importantly between the employer, the workplace supervisor, and the school.

Host Employer Selection, Responsibilities and Orientation

Students must be placed with host employers who are able to provide required training and supervision in a safe environment. The school **must not** proceed to use a host employer, whatever pressure there might be to find placements for students, if the school cannot by reasonable inquiry be satisfied that the host employer:

- has appropriate facilities and equipment for the targeted learning
- has staff who are able to provide appropriate training and supervision for the student
- is aware of and implements legislative and regulatory requirements such as WHS, Child Protection, Privacy, Equal Employment Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination legislation
- has public liability insurance.

Host Employer Responsibilities

The school must ensure that the host employer has completed the *Student Placement Record*. By completing this document, the host employer will be acknowledging receipt of the guidelines: *An Employer's Guide to Workplace Learning*, and their awareness of the special responsibilities associated with working with children, including their responsibility to provide:

- a safe and positive environment compliant with the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*
- appropriate learning and skill development activities for young workers under the supervision of a capable and trustworthy employee/s briefed for the task
- a site-specific workplace induction including relevant safety matters and control measures for areas of risk
- an activity-specific induction to minimise risk to students who are inexperienced and potentially vulnerable
- adequate facilities for the student's welfare at work.

Employer Orientation

It is essential to establish a line of communication early in the placement procedure between the school and the workplace supervisor nominated by the host employer. This will ensure that information about the student is communicated to the person who will supervise the student. This is particularly important in large organisations.

Adequate preparation of prospective employers is a major determinant of the success of a work placement for the individual student. Employers/supervisors should be informed about the:

- importance of ensuring the safety and welfare of students
- insurance and indemnity provisions
- names and contact details for the school and student's contacts
- relevant personal details and/or needs of particular students, including students with a disability
- need for students to return to school if workplace learning placements are affected by industrial action.

And specifically for mandatory VET work placements:

- the skill level and experience of student and an indication of equipment which students are familiar with and the competencies to be accessed and practised during the work placement
- any competencies upon which the workplace supervisor will be asked to provide feedback.

Preparation of Students

One of the most significant factors contributing to the success or otherwise of a workplace learning program is the degree of adequate preparation provided to students. It is essential that sufficient time be devoted to preparing students for their experience in the workplace. Resources to assist teachers in the preparation of students are available including [myworkexperience](#), [Go2workplacement](#), SafeWork NSW/ACT and the OnGuard training system which provide students with appropriate training on the use of specific equipment.

Student work readiness preparation and orientation programs should consider aspects such as:

- contacting the personnel manager or supervisor prior to the placement
- planning safe travel arrangements and paying for their travel to and from placements
- understanding and using documents such as the Student Placement Record that support their workplace learning placement
- general employee responsibilities such as punctuality, appearance, dress and behaviour norms
- following the reasonable directions of their supervisor in the workplace
- WHS and child protection responsibilities and regulations
- working longer hours
- working with others and accepting responsibility for one's own actions
- coping with inappropriate or illegal situations, e.g. harassment, discrimination, initiation activities, access to drugs and alcohol, unethical practices
- the need to communicate problems or concerns about the placement with the school immediately they arise, whether before or during the actual placement
- the need to return to school if workplace learning placements are affected by industrial action
- the importance of contacting both the employer and the school in the event of absence
- procedures for reporting accidents or child abuse incidents
- completion of the workplace learning log and/or other assigned tasks.

If students are required to provide their own safety equipment such as gloves, eyewear, boots, etc., students or schools must purchase only equipment that complies with the relevant Australian standard or equivalent standard.

Students should be advised to contact the school immediately if they become concerned about any aspect of their placement or if they wish to withdraw from the placement for some exceptional reason. Students who fail to turn up without notifying the employer jeopardise the standing of the program in the community.

Specific Industry Requirements

Students participating in workplace learning at a construction site must complete Construction Induction Training (CIT) (WhiteCard) prior to placement. This includes a range of career areas such as, carpentry, plumbing and electrician; occupations where work is carried out in an area designated as a construction zone. The training for the CIT card must be delivered face-to-face by an accredited trainer through a training organisation registered with SafeWork NSW/ACT. CIT provides a basic knowledge of requirements under WHS legislation, the common hazards and risks likely to be encountered on construction sites and how these risks should be eliminated and/or controlled.

Hospitals and child-related employers may also have additional requirements for immunisations or documentation that must be completed prior to the placement. Schools need to check these carefully with the employer and ensure that students are informed and have sufficient time to meet the requirements, including waiting times between vaccination doses.

Students with Additional Needs – Diverse Students

Thorough preparation for diverse students including those with disabilities is critical when planning workplace learning programs. This preparation should be in line with the student's Individual Transition Plans (ITP) and be in accordance with their identified needs.

Diverse students may require more intensive preparation for workplace learning, such as:

- developing agreed priorities, goals and actions with parents/caregivers and support teachers
- developing a detailed learning program for the placement.
- organising simulated or in-school work experience to establish generic and industry-specific competency levels, including behaviour and communication
- providing opportunities to develop the competencies in a supportive environment either at school or in a carefully chosen, known environment
- avoiding placements to which the student may react negatively, especially if they are unable to communicate their feelings clearly.

Schools should refer to the NESAs website for information on [VET Courses and Students with Disability](#).

Where a student has additional needs that are relevant to the workplace learning program, schools must ensure that employers are informed, in compliance with privacy protocols, and that appropriate support is provided.

Child Protection Protocols

It is important to appreciate that for the purposes of Child Protection legislation those who supervise and work with students during work placement or work experience are undertaking child-related employment

on behalf of the school. Schools must always ensure that employers and supervisors are aware of, and comply with, the child protection requirements outlined in the *Workplace Learning Guide for Employers*.

Schools and employers should note that workplace issues that would constitute “harassment” for employees over the age of 18 constitute matters of child abuse when the student is under this age.

Schools must ensure students are prepared prior to the placement and briefed regarding:

- their right to feel safe and secure within the workplace
- their right to refuse to undertake tasks that involve one-on-one contact with employees or clients, particularly if this is to be done in confined spaces
- contact details for a responsible school representative. If a student feels they are being harassed or in any way abused in the workplace, they must immediately report the matter to this person.

When a contact person (i.e., work placement or work experience coordinator) receives a complaint or concern about the actions of a person in the work environment (and it constitutes child abuse according to the NSW Ombudsman’s definitions), the following steps should be taken:

1. information from the student must be recorded in as much detail as possible – who, when, where, what; it is very important that the coordinator does not ask how and why questions that can later be construed as “leading”. Students of this age can generally write their own report and sign it
2. the contact person must immediately inform the student’s Principal, who will inform the required personnel at diocesan office. The coordinator/teacher must not contact the employer at this stage
3. a risk assessment and investigation will be conducted immediately and if the matter constitutes reportable conduct, it is possible that both the student and any other students attending the workplace will have to be withdrawn until the matter is investigated
4. if the matter constitutes reportable conduct, notification to the Ombudsman is required. The Professional Officer’s investigations will include speaking with the employer, students, and parents/caregivers as well as liaison with the principal and school contact person.

Mandatory and Recommended Support Documents

A range of mandatory and support documents has been developed to assist in the implementation of workplace learning programs. This document, *Workplace Learning Guidelines for Schools*, as well as the *Workplace Learning Guide for Employers*, insurance documents, *Workplace Learning Guide for Students and that for Parents/Carers* and the *Student Placement Record* are mandatory. These and other support documents are available on the [CSNSW Vocational Education webpage](#).

Student Placement Record (mandatory)

The *Student Placement Record* is a legal document. Its purpose is to:

- formalise the arrangements and conditions between the school, the host employer the student and their parent/carer,
- include advice on managing and minimising risks, defining the placement so that all parties involved understand their responsibilities.
- be subpoenaed if damage or injury arises from the placement, resulting in an insurance claim and/or referral to SafeWorkNSW/ACT

The *Student Placement Record* must be completed and signed by all parties **prior to commencement** of the placement/experience to ensure that all details of the arrangement are understood and agreed to and to provide evidence of the principal or nominee’s approval of the placement. Additional special approval forms identified on the SPR as required for the placement, contribute to the documentation necessary.

Any variation to or cancellation of the placement should be made in writing. The original should be filed at the school in accordance with the Catholic Schools record keeping requirements for student records and insurance documents (i.e., usually until the student reaches the age of 25). A copy of the completed *Student Placement Record* must be provided to the employer and to the student and parent/caregiver.

Workplace Learning Journals (recommended)

Workplace Learning is preparation for adult work and life-long learning. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning by keeping a record of their learning as evidence of achievement and a means of developing skills of reflection and self-evaluation. The workplace learning journal is also a way of capturing the learning experience for evaluation of outcomes by the teacher at the school. A sample is included in the appendix of this document.

Accidents/Incidents Involving Students

Where there is an incident causing loss or damage for the employer or if a student is injured during a placement, including during travel to and from the place of work, the student must report the incident to the school within 12 hours. Notifiable incidents must be reported to SafeWork NSW by the employer.

The school will need to:

- complete the 'Report Incident' form via the school's usual process. When online, such forms will be received by relevant WHS Team who will follow up with the school/teacher/coordinator regarding any further action required.
- where the incident may result in an insurance claim through CSNSW insurance, the incident must be reported to CSNSW Senior Manager: Vocational Education & Training voced@csnsw.catholic.edu.au

A Notification of Injury report needs to include statements from the student, and employer or employee where possible. It must be completed as soon as the school is advised or becomes aware of any accident or incident. Due to SafeWork NSW requirements about reporting accidents, the anticipated length of time the student will be unable to attend school should be also included in the report.

The school's notification of work injury report must be completed irrespective of any claim (insurance or otherwise). The school must retain a copy of the injury report indefinitely or until advised to the contrary.

All claims for expenses involving injury to students should be processed in the following way:

- students are volunteers, not employees; therefore, such claims should **not** be classified as Workers' Compensation
- the parent/caregiver is to be advised to take the usual action to claim on his or her Medicare or private health funds, noting it is not possible to cover the Medicare 'gap' if not bulk-billed
- the parent/caregiver may be able to claim further expenses under the school's Student Accident insurance cover
- the school should keep all correspondence and documentation relating to the incident and provide this to Diocesan personnel and/or Catholic Schools NSW, or relevant insurer on request.

The principal or other staff should admit no liability. For participating schools, all claims will be managed by Catholic Schools NSW and where relevant, the Diocesan Office.

Upon request of CSNSW, forward the applicable documents listed under the Record Keeping heading below.

Record Keeping

Schools must include the following records of all placements in each student's school file, so they are kept for the necessary time and are able to be retrieved if required:

- *Student Placement Record (SPR)* and any applicable Special Approval forms
- *Workplace Visit Reports*
- As applicable, use regular school procedures to make:
 - accident reports
 - claims for damages
 - records of child protection issues
- Where appropriate for Construction related work placement/experience, records of SafeWork NSW/ACT WHS General Induction for Construction training completed by the school, must be kept for 3 years and may be stored with VET records.

Appendix

Sample Student Workplace Learning Journal Entry					
Daily Record					
Student's Name: _____		Location: _____		Date: _____	
DAY	1	2	3	4	5
Time Started:		Time Finished:		Hours Worked:	
STUDENT SELF ASSESSMENT					
(circle): DRESS Poor 1 2 3 4 5		PUNCTUALITY 1 2 3 4 5		INITIATIVE 1 2 3 4 5	
Activities / Skills Performed	Tools / Equipment			D – Developing	
				S – Satisfactory	
			HD – Highly Developed		
			D	S	HD
New Terminology			Meaning		
Employability Skill Development: <i>Identify a skill on which you concentrated today. Provide evidence / What did you do/ achieve?</i>					
Identify environmentally sustainable work practices and procedures:					
REFLECT ON:					
Today's achievements / Things I enjoyed:					
Difficulties/ issues arising today:					
Tomorrow's Goal:					
Supervisor's comments: <i>Please check what the student has included, add any additional comment and sign below.</i>					
Supervisor's signature _____ Name _____ Date _____					

Using current employment for HSC VET work placement
Evidence of Workplace Activities Schedule

Please use additional copies of this proforma where more activities are completed.

Name of Student _____ Enterprise _____

Employer/Supervisor _____ Work Email _____

Evidence to be provided (e.g.: pay statements, letter) _____

SCHEDULE TO BE COMPLETED BY THE STUDENT, VERIFIED BY THE EMPLOYER OR SUPERVISOR AND RETURNED TO THE VET Trainer and/or VET Coordinator at school

Student position/s in enterprise	Date/s undertaken
Description of duties	
Tasks performed	
Skills practised	
Industry attitudes developed	
Supervisor Comments	Supervisor Signature

Signature of Student _____

Date _____

I certify that the student has met the current requirements for recognition of the student's concurrent employment for work placement purposes as detailed in the NESA ACE Manual.
 (Refer to: ACE Manual <https://ace.nesa.nsw.edu.au/>)

Signed (Student's VET Trainer) _____

Date _____

Print name _____

Position _____