

Frequently asked questions

These are provided for guidance or quick reference guide only, so always refer to the policy

1. General Definitions

1.1 What does 'Directly employed' mean?

These individuals would have been recruited through our recruitment processes for permanent or fixed term posts. They will have been issued with an NHSBT employment contract; recorded and paid through the NHS Electronic Staff Record system (ESR).

1.2 What is an honorary worker?

These individuals are not employed by NHSBT but are normally employed by another NHS or educational establishment. They are not paid through ESR but are normally recorded on the ESR system to enable expenses to be claimed via the Travel and Expenses Policy.

1.3 What is the definition of a Visitor?

These individuals will normally have requested a visit to one of our establishments or where a process is carried out/service delivered. This will normally be requested through an educational establishment, public body or private organisation. This could be anyone with no real restrictions. The main purpose would be for seeing what we do, observing our processes, or even to attend our premises for events or meetings we may be hosting. Anyone under the age of 14 must be accompanied by a parent/guardian or an appropriately nominated adult. They will be required to:

- Sign in at premises
- Accompanied at all times
- Not normally paid
- Arrange for themselves travel to and from the centre

1.4 What are Agency / contract workers?

These individuals are not employed directly by NHSBT but via a third party, normally a recruitment agency, with a job-specific responsibility on a short term, temporary basis. They are not paid or recorded through ESR. This group may include those employed via an agency or an external professional service provider (the latter often referred to as contract workers).

1.5 What is a Volunteer?

These individuals are not employed by NHSBT. They are not recorded or paid through ESR. They will have a work placement agreement setting out our values, expected behaviours as well as roles and responsibilities, training requirements etc.

1.6 Who is considered a child?

Any individual under the age of 16.

1.7 Who is considered a Young Person?

Any individual under the age of 18.

2. General

2.1 What happens if a student or placement has a complaint?

Should a student or placement not be happy about any aspect of their programme, they are encouraged to speak to their NHSBT supervisor in the first instance. Should this not be resolved between them, then they are encouraged to speak with their sponsor. The sponsor will then need to make arrangements to discuss the matter with NHSBT. Should both parties be unable to resolve their differences, NHSBT may decide to terminate the scheduled work experience or placement term.

2.2 As a manager, what do I need to do on the first day of a work experience/placement?

On the 1st day of the work experience/placement you will need to:

1. Provide an induction – this must include emergency procedures, working hours and breaks, any support identified through the application process to help them whilst at NHSBT, the importance of good housekeeping – safe behaviours, local orientation and presentation
2. Ensure that the 'Learning Agreement' document is discussed
3. Explain their training plan and expectations, check practical understanding of the risk assessment
4. Ensure that there is adequate supervision at all times throughout the work experience/placement
5. That you have completed the 'First day' reporting tool'

Emergency procedure covers fire evacuation and Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (if required), accident reporting and how to obtain first aid.

2.3 As a manager, what do I need to do at the end of work experience/placement?

On the work experience/placements last day you will need to:

1. Inform the individual how well they have done and give constructive feedback.
2. Look out for 'talented' individuals and signpost to our Apprenticeship programme
3. Ensure they have completed the 'Work experience/placement Feedback'

2.4 How long should I store Work Experience and Work Placement records?

We recommend they may be destroyed 12 months after the work experience/placement period has finished.

2.5 I have been asked to provide a reference for my work experience/work placement learner?

There is a template for this available on People First under Work Experience and Work Placements. You must ensure that you provide a true, fair and accurate reference. Should you need any additional advice or guidance, contact HR Direct.

2.6 Do we have Employers Liability and Public Liability Insurance?

No because under section 3 (1) (b) of the Employers' Liability (compulsory Insurance) Act 1969, the National Health Service is exempt from this insurance and 'self-insures' for its risks. We do this by being a member of the NHS Risk Pooling Scheme. A copy of our current certificate can be found on People First 'Related documents'. This confirms our level of cover for any Employers Liability and Public Liability claims that may arise. Any personal injury claim from a work experience or placement students would be dealt with under this.

3. Work Experience

3.1 What possible activities could an individual perform if on work experience?

There are certain prohibited activities such as driving a forklift and restricted activities. These include, but are not limited to, possible contact with blood due to working with blood and blood products including clinical waste, working with irradiators, working with liquid nitrogen, working in cold rooms, working with toxic chemicals and travelling in NHSBT vehicles. Solutions to these restrictions could include shadowing an employee performing the activity, provision of videos, photos and talks, controlled practical's with training equipment not live equipment, classroom training exercise, making own way to location (if off-site). See People First for 'Work Experience Guidance Notes' on suggested activities.

3.2 Who is responsible for keeping parents informed?

The student and their educational establishment are responsible for keeping parents/guardians informed. NHSBT will not respond to any enquiries directly from parents.

3.3 How do I develop a work experience programme?

If the student is part of one of our programmes, the templates for these programmes are available on People First. These templates are an indication of what can or should be considered for the programme; however, as their manager/supervisor you are responsible for the detail within the programme.

This should be based on:

- The individuals requirements
- The availability of services at the chosen centre
- The availability of the appropriate employees to support and supervise the student

If the student has approached you directly, and you have agreed to host them in your department, there are templates available on People First.

These templates allow you to develop a programme in line with the criteria above, and as their manager/supervisor you are responsible for the detail within the programme. See People First for 'Work Experience Guidance Notes' on suggested activities.

3.4 How often should I meet with my work experience learner?

Work Experience programmes are usually for 1 week and can be a maximum of 2 weeks. As a Work Experience workplace supervisor you will be their main point of contact at NHSBT. The programme should include the following with you as a minimum: an induction on Day 1, a mid-programme reflection on learning so far, and a final review session with the learner on their last day. You may also have contact with them when they arrive and depart our premises if you have not arranged for another contact to do so.

3.5 Why are there restrictions on what a work experience learner can do?

This is for their protection and may in some circumstances also be specified in the law (Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999).

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3.6 What do I do if I have to speak to a student about their behaviour?

It is important that you talk to them about the issue and their behaviour and advise them of our expectations. This gives them an opportunity to rectify their behaviour.

Should poor behaviour continue, speak to the educational establishment who will follow their own procedures. This may include a meeting between all parties to establish a way forward.

As a last resort, we may decide to cancel the work experience of placement with immediate effect.

4. Work Placement

4.1 How do I cover the costs of any individual on a placement?

Depending on the reason and the requirements for the placement, sometimes the sponsoring organisation may have agreed to pay costs to us e.g. to cover bench fees. Should you be aware of this or need to consider any recharges, speak to your directorate accountant.

4.2 How do I develop a placement programme?

This will normally be developed in partnership with the educational establishment and will normally be based on the requirements of their qualification or learning requirements.

4.3 How often should I meet with my work placement trainee?

Work placements are unpaid, usually longer term, learning opportunities of participants. As such, your learner will likely require support from you that is similar to that of a new starter in your department. You may meet daily in the first week, and weekly in the first month to ensure the programme you have provided is meeting the individual's learning objectives and to assess trainee progress towards the objectives.

5. International Placement

5.1 How can I check if my international work placement applicant has the right to train in the UK?

You can perform a quick check if you know the nationality on their passport. Go to the following UK Gov website to check their UK visa requirements: <https://www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa/y> your trainee will be visiting for 'Work, academic visit or business'.

You can also ask them to provide a copy of the visa in their passport/visa waiver or associated correspondence in advance of their starting a placement.

Work placements are unpaid by NHSBT, but can still require a visa or visa waiver with an associated right to work in the UK and we will need to see evidence of this as we would for a new employee.

If you are still unsure, please contact HR Direct.

5.2 What do I do if I receive an expression of interest for training or work placement from an international contact?

If you are able to consider hosting the individual and arranging a training programme to meet their learning objectives, you first need to understand if they have a right to work in the UK. This is important because a work placement can still require a visa or visa waiver with an associated right to work in the UK even though work placements are unpaid by NHSBT.

You may also wish to assure yourself that the individual's specialist subject knowledge and standard of spoken, written, and reading of the English language is at an appropriate level for a work placement. This can usually be confirmed by their sponsoring employer or educational establishment and by asking for a copy of their CV. If you wish to go ahead and host the individual, refer to the Work Experience/ Work Placement page on People First.

There is no obligation to accept a work placement but some consideration should be given to a request along with the rationale for declining this. We recommend that work placements can only be accepted where they can be accommodated without impacting NHSBT service provision.

5.3 Can an International work placement trainee attend an NHSBT training course?

Yes. They can review our Scientific and Clinical training courses here: <http://hospital.blood.co.uk/> and follow the application process. As the trainee IS NOT an NHSBT employee they should expect to pay the usual course attendance fees that apply. Contact HR Direct for information. For Non OWD course, you should contact the NHSBT course lead directly.

5.4 What are Bench Fees?

Bench fees are what can be charged when a work placement requires the use of NHSBT facilities and/or resources. They are usually, but not always, associated with specialist laboratory work and in particular the use of lab consumables to support a work placement. University students will sometimes have access to a bursary or other funding to cover the cost of consumables used while on placement completing a project. If you are hosting a student, their Educational Establishment can advise what, if any, funding is available and how we can be reimbursed for the costs we incur hosting the student.

The NHSBT host supervisor decides if Bench Fees will apply to a work placement. We do not expect the fees will apply to Work Experience - this is a 1-2 week learning experience, usually for high school aged students, supported by an Educational Establishment.

The NHSBT host supervisor may also wish to charge a placement administration fee or placement supervision fee if they deem it appropriate.

5.5 How much should I charge in Bench Fees for a placement?

This is decided and agreed by the NHSBT host supervisor. If you need advice, we recommend you discuss the costs of hosting the placement with your Directorate or Cost Centre Finance contact.

If you need advice on how to invoice your trainees for Bench Fees or other placement related costs, you will need to contact Accounts Payable for advice.

If you still have outstanding questions, contact HR Direct.

5.6 Does my work placement learner need vaccinations/immunisations?

The NHSBT host supervisor decides what protection is required based on the placement programme. If the placement involves learning alongside employees working with patient and donor blood samples in a live environment, we recommend the learner is asked to confirm in writing or evidence protection in line with NHSBT employees in that work area. It is the learner's responsibility to ensure they meet our required immunisation protections.

For more information on Health Assessment and Immunisations, see People First: <http://peoplefirst.nhsbt.nhs.uk/immunisation-and-health-assessments.htm>

If you are still not sure, contact HR Direct.

5.7 How do I set up IT access for my work placement learner?

For some work placements, you may decide your learner requires NHSBT IT access and an email account. To set this up, follow the new starter IT Access guidance on People First – New starters. Your work placement learner is NOT an NHSBT employee. At the end of the placement, you will need to remove and close your learner's IT access and email account.

6. NHSBT Employees

6.1 Will the work experience/placement policy apply to an NHSBT Modernising Scientific Careers (MSC) trainee on rotational placements?

NHSBT MSC trainee placements, internal and external, will need to be logged via the Work Experience/Work Placement Day 1 Managers' Checklist survey. The remainder of the Work Experience/ Work Placement policy will not apply to NHSBT employees undertaking internal rotations under MSC or work shadowing experiences.

6.2 Will the work experience/placement policy apply to a non-NHSBT (external) Modernising Scientific Careers (MSC) trainee for a rotational placement?

Yes. They will be asked to apply and have their application managed as any other work placement request. For the specific requirements that may relate to hosting an MSC trainee, please contact HR Direct for more information.

7. If an individual on a work experience/placement who is gender questioning or transitioning or is a safeguarding matter, what should I do?

If you are aware of a *child/young person who is gender-questioning or transitioning, advice must be sought from their school / college as to the current plan of support, level and type of communication with parents and carers, and any current risk assessments with regards to their emotional and social wellbeing, and their physical and mental health needs.

(If the experience is not school / college sponsored, advice must be sought from the *child's/young person emergency contact (which is usually a parent/guardian), staff who have level 3 safeguarding competencies or from the National Safeguarding Lead)

If the experience is not school / college sponsored, advice should initially be sought from the child/young person's emergency contact (which is usually a parent/guardian) unless doing so would place the child or young person at risk of harm. In this situation child safeguarding procedures must be followed; support is available from staff with Level 3 safeguarding competencies or the National Safeguarding Lead.

If the *child/young person makes a disclosure of harm or abuse (or you are suspicious they may be experiencing harm or abuse) it must be taken seriously and NHSBT safeguarding procedures followed. Advice can be sought from staff who have level 3 safeguarding competencies or from the National Safeguarding Lead.

If you have concerns for an adult with care and support needs who may be experiencing abuse harm or neglect safeguarding adult procedures must be followed. Support can be obtained from staff with Level 3 safeguarding competencies or from the National Safeguarding Lead.

Please see contact details below for safeguarding support:
[Safeguarding intranet page](#) (includes Out of Hours contacts)
National Safeguarding Lead - 07385 435251
Natalie.hawker@nhsbt.nhs.uk
corporatenurseteam@nhsbt.nhs.uk
safeguardingconcern@nhsbt.nhs.uk

*Please note – the terminology of young person refers to the term 'child' as defined under the Children Act 1989/2004, which applies until their 18th birthday and therefore 'child' safeguarding procedures need to be followed for all under 18s.

8. Policy Approval and Review

Policy version	UCD/Workforce/WorkExp/034v1.0/FAQsv1.1
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Amendments/changes to Policy	April 2024 Additional clarification provided in 2b in the FAQ's on What happens if a student or placement has a general complaint? Emergency procedure explanation added to 2.2 on the FAQ's. Reference made in 3.7 of the FAQ's that the Code of Conduct applies. New FAQ - 7

8. FAQ's Section Details

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