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WORK EXPERIENCE POLICY

Updated September 2026
Approved by the Principal

This policy refers to and should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Learning and Behaviour Policy
- Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Policy
- Provider Access Policy

1. Rationale

1.1 Big Creative Academy recognises the unique value of well-organised work experience on employers' premises as an important part of careers education. This policy complies with the Department for Education's statutory guidance document Careers guidance and access for education and training providers (January 2026).

1.2 Every student should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities, and expand their networks.

2. Policy

2.1 By the age of 18, or before the end of their study programme, every student should have had at least one experience of a workplace, additional to any part-time jobs they may have.

2.2 Big Creative Academy's definition of a work experience placement is as follows:

a) The placement is based at an employer location
b) Is at least one working day in duration

2.3 The above definition is useful to distinguish work experience placements from other employer related activities within students' careers education, which include:

- Industry led projects
- Employer briefs
- External competitions
- Employer led talks, masterclasses and workshops
- Enterprise activities
- Business mentoring sessions
- Workplace visits and trips

3. Guidelines

3.1 The Careers Manager and careers team is responsible for organising work experience placements for all students.

3.2 All students regardless of culture, gender, ability, social background or physical ability must have equal access to work experience. A student's individual needs will be taken into consideration prior to organising a work experience placement.

3.3 Priority for work experience placements will be given to looked after students (LAC), students with ECHPs and SEND and any students considered to be at risk of negative progression outcomes. Full consideration will be made for students with ECHPs, SEND and safeguarding concerns as to appropriate work experience placements.

3.4 The team will ensure work experience placements are relevant to the intended progression for learners, and driven by students.

3.5 Students will be encouraged to undertake work experience placements outside traditional gender roles. However, students should not be placed in such placements where they may feel uncomfortable.

3.6 Work experience may be in a block or across the academic year dependent on the type of work placement and employer's needs. Placements will reflect the nature of the sector in which the learner wants to work, for example the creative arts sector is largely project-based, and work experience placements will reflect this.

3.7 Employers must not remunerate students.

3.8 Students should not work for more than eight hours in a day or for more than five days in a week. The maximum number of hours a student may attend an extended work experience placement is 60 hours.

3.9 The following list identifies those work experience placements that are prohibited:

- the security industry
- the sex industry
- tattoo parlours
- any retail or other business where guns or ammunition are sold
- abattoirs
- fishing boats (other than boats operating on inland waters)
- civic construction (such as roads and bridges)
- butchery, fishmongers
- mining (above and underground), quarrying, extraction, recycling plants, foundries and tips
- transmission and distribution industries (linespersons and/or cabling)
- roofing and scaffolding work

4. Documentation checks

4.1 All work experience placements are carefully checked for their suitability by the Work Experience Co-ordinator, and records are maintained.

- due diligence check on the company, i.e. that the company is listed on Companies House
- the employer has up to date policies in place to ensure the health and safety of

employees, as per the Health and Safety Executive advice https://www.hse.gov.uk/young-workers/employer/work-experience.htm

- the employer has up to date liability insurance in place

4.2 A risk assessment for each student is completed to ensure all students needs are considered.

4.3 Students are encouraged to source their own work experience placements. Contact details are then passed on to the Work Experience Co-ordinator who will undertake the relevant checks and complete the relevant documentation for the placement, as per paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2 above.

4.4 All checks and documentation must be in place before a placement commences.

5. Arrangements for work experience placements – students and parents

5.1 The majority of work experience placements will take place in Year 13 of a student's study programme.

5.2 All work experience placements are agreed with students in advance of the placement starting.

5.3 Parents are also informed of the work placement where the student is under 18.

5.4 All students involved in a work experience placement will participate in preparatory work prior to a placement. Students should receive a detailed explanation of the work experience, its purpose, and what is expected of each student.

5.5 Students in receipt of the bursary will be provided lunch and travel money while on placement.

5.6 The needs of LAC students and those with ECHPs, SEND and safeguarding concerns will be taken into account in the planning and preparation of work experience placements, in consultation with the individual learners and parents where appropriate. This will be done in liaison with the DSL and the Student Services team. Additional sessions for these students will be provided to meet the needs of individuals.

5.7 The Work Experience Co-ordinator will liaise with students on work experience placements to check on their progress and safety. This includes visits to the employer to support students' learning.

5.8 Learners are expected to act in accordance with the Attendance and Punctuality Policy and Learning and Behaviour Policy as if they were at the Academy.

5.9 Big Creative Academy will provide guidance to learners on action they should take if they have any concerns about their placement.

5.10 Students must evaluate their work experience placements to record their learning and achievements. This will be logged on the Academy's careers platform to inform individuals' career ambition. Tutors and the careers team can access the platform to inform subsequent careers advice.

5.11 Students should be marked present in the attendance register when participating in work experience placements using the appropriate code.

6. Arrangements for work experience placements – employers

6.1 Big Creative Academy is very grateful for the opportunities employers offer to young people to support their careers education. To support employers hosting our students at work experience placements we provide an information pack to ensure beneficial outcomes for both the employer and the young person.

6.2 Employers will have a dedicated point of contact at Big Creative Academy to organise work experience placements and address queries.

6.3 Employers must complete the relevant documentation outlined in section 4 of this policy. Placements cannot commence without this in place.

6.4 Employers are kindly asked to complete references for young people and provide feedback for continuous improvement.

7. Safeguarding requirements for placements

7.1 Big Creative Academy is committed to the safeguarding requirements for work experience in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

7.2 Big Creative Academy recognises that work experience providers should have policies and procedures in place to protect children from harm. Providers will complete a document check in advance of any placements taking place.

7.3 Where young apprentices or under 18s who are on work placement are working on their own with the placement provider the Academy (or appropriate sub-contractor) will conduct an enhanced DBS check and an ISA check (if appropriate). This will take account of the nature of supervision and frequency of the activity being supervised. It will also include whether the supervisor will be unsupervised themselves, and providing instruction frequently (more than three days in a 30-day period or overnight.

7.4 Big Creative Academy will provide guidance to placement providers as to appropriate action they should take if a learner discloses to them.

7.5 If the activity undertaken by the child on work experience takes place in a school or sixth form college, and gives the opportunity for contact with children, this may itself be considered to be regulated activity relating to children. In these cases, and where the learner doing the work experience is 16 years of age or over, the work experience provider e.g. school or sixth form college should consider whether a DBS enhanced check should be requested for the learner.

8. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

8.1 The Careers Manager, Work Experience Co-Ordinator and Director of Careers will annually monitor and evaluate the work experience scheme.

8.2 Where work experience placements are part of a learner's study programme, details will be provided for relevant ILR returns.

8.3 This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure compliance and student entitlement is met.