

WORK PLACEMENT GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS

Your guide to hosting students undertaking workplace learning programs from WIT

Section One:

About workplace learning

This guide introduces you and your staff to the concepts of workplace learning. It explains the workplace learning programs available to our students, the support available to employers, and your roles and responsibilities when hosting students in your workplace. It also includes a summary checklist for employers, both large and small, to help guide you through the workplace learning process.

What is workplace learning?

Workplace learning programs form part of WIT's curriculum. They enable students to spend a planned period of time in the workplace, gaining practical experience, assisting their career choices and building their industry skills.

We aim to place students in the type of workplace of their choice, reflecting the type of work they plan to do after completing their studies.

For some students workplace learning is their very first experience of the workplace while others have done many hours of paid work.

What kind of workplace learning program is this?

WIT requires mandatory work placement for all its students. This program is designed to bridge the gap between qualification and employment. Work placement ensures that these students spend a period of time as voluntary workers in a relevant workplace. Employers supervise the students as they practice and extend the specific industry skills they have learned in their course work.

During their work placement, students work towards gaining specific industry competencies. They are assessed by our trainers and assessors.

How long will the student spend in your workplace?

All work placements are negotiated based on the requirements of the workplace and the student's needs.

The benefits for employers

Hosting students allows you to:

- participate in the education, career development and vocational training of students in your community.
- talk to students about your industry, its career paths and future directions.
- promote the attitudes and skills you want in your workforce.
- identify students with potential for your workplace or industry.
- increase the supervisory, training and mentoring skills of your staff.
- give students knowledge of the value of work and raise the quality of those coming into your industry.

As you will see in this guide, there is plenty of support and resources available to host employers. If you have any queries or concerns, WIT and the Work Placement Supervisor is only a phone call away.

Section Two: How Workplace Learning works

What is the general procedure for a placement?

Before the placement

- Host employers receive workplace learning guidelines with essential information about completing documents to meet WIT's requirements
- Workplace positions are negotiated with employers and submitted to the institute for approval.
- Arrangements are confirmed to support student safety.
- Students are matched to a position based on their course work and/or career planning. They must sign off on these arrangements.

- Teachers conduct work ready activities to prepare students for the experience.

During the placement

- Students attend the workplace every day of the program.
- Host employers or nominated workplace supervisors supervise the students in the workplace, sometimes providing tasks that are agreed and appropriate and at times, challenging for the student.
- The employer and workplace supervisor take action to provide a safe working environment, in accordance with the requirements of the relevant state or territory Work Health and Safety legislation and anti-discrimination legislation.
- Careers assistants make a supervisory visit or phone call to the employer and the student to check on their progress, safety and welfare. Where relevant, students are assessed for industry-based competencies.
- Students complete their structured distance education training and assessments.
- Host employers report any incidents involving the student to the College.

After the placement

- Students record their experiences and review their career preferences and training pathways.
- Host employers report on the student's performance in the workplace.
- Teachers immediately follow up with the students to ensure maximum benefit and check on student safety.
- Students attend a debriefing session and submit or resubmit any outstanding assessment items.

Who has duty of care?

WIT maintains a duty of care to students undertaking workplace learning. They are responsible for deciding if placements are suitable, preparing students for workplace learning, monitoring the student's progress and welfare during the placement and following up with them immediately afterwards.

It is the responsibility of the host employer to provide a safe workplace environment and appropriate supervision for the student. Host employers must report work health and safety issues or concerns to the institute.

Section Three: Legal requirements and documentation

Are the students paid?

No. Students on placement are classified as 'voluntary workers' and host employers are not required to make any payment to them.

Do I have to sign any documents?

Yes. Each student is issued with a Workplace Confirmation Form to document the arrangements for their placement.

This important form allows for information to be shared and approved by all parties – the student, the host employer and WIT.

As an employer, you will be asked to provide your workplace details, the student's working hours, arrangements for their supervision, the activities they will undertake during their placement, any pre-training required and the measures you are taking to enable them to do the work safely.

Once all parties have provided and approved the information on the Workplace Confirmation Form, WIT's insurance and indemnity arrangements for you and the student are in place. A full copy of the Student Placement Record with all sections approved will be provided to you before the placement starts.

What about insurance?

Insurance and indemnity requirements are arranged by WIT. WIT indemnifies employers participating in approved workplace learning programs for any amount which they may be legally liable to pay for injury to students or teachers arising out of an approved workplace

learning program, up to 500 000 Fcfa and for damage to property belonging to or in the care, custody or control of the host employer, up to 200,000 Fcfa provided that:

- any claim made against the employer in respect of a student or teacher participating in an approved workplace learning program is immediately notified to WIT and that WIT has full conduct and control of the claim against the employer as is normal practice for the party providing the indemnity
- the employer cooperates fully with WIT and the insurer in the conduct of the claim
- the employer has complied with work health and safety legislation.

Section 4. Accidents and emergencies

If a student is sick or injured:

- Seek medical help immediately.
- Contact emergency services for Ambulance or other emergency services immediately where required.
- During normal business hours, contact WIT
- Outside normal business hours, contact the student's nominated emergency contact.
- Note that students should carry their personal Student Contact Card with details of their trainer's contact numbers.
- Medical invoices should be made out to the student and are payable by them.
- Ask the doctor attending for a medical certificate.
- Contact WIT immediately to advise of the situation. As soon as possible, complete a written report of the accident and forward it to WIT. The report must include a full statement from the student, the supervisor and relevant witnesses.

Section 5. Providing a safe workplace for students

The safety and wellbeing of students during work placement is our number one priority. Before any placement can be approved, employers need to satisfy WIT that they can provide a safe and healthy host workplace for students, compliant with the relevant Work Health and Safety laws.

Are any activities prohibited for workplace learning students?

Yes. Some activities are completely prohibited e.g. working on a roof or working where asbestos is present, while other activities have conditions attached.

There are restrictions on the service of alcohol and some adventure or sporting activities.

Students are not allowed to undertake activities requiring a licence (e.g. a driver's licence), permit or certificate of competence unless they already hold the relevant licence, certificate or permit.

Even then, the activity must relate directly to the learning activities of the placement. Employers must list these activities on the Student Placement Record prior to approval.

We encourage you to get to know your student and set them work that is appropriate for their skill level. As all our students come with an existing qualification in your industry, you can ask them to perform any of the roles or tasks that someone with that qualification would reasonably be expected to perform in your workplace.

Please don't limit them to the jobs that no one else wants to do. It is important to give them a broad range of experience. You never know, they may be so good at the tasks that you assign that you might just find your next employee!

Section 6. A checklist for employers

- Decide when it is convenient for you to host students for work placement.
- Appoint an experienced staff member to supervise the students.
- Consult with staff to draw up a list of activities that can be achieved and safely managed by students.

Appropriate activities should:

- } offer insight into the industry and workplace.
- } be varied, safe, interesting and sometimes challenging.
- } not contravene the prohibited activities indicated in Section 5 of this guide
- } include tasks and skills appropriate to the student's coursework requirements
- } provide time for some career conversations.

Appoint supervisory staff for each student.

Supervisory staff should be capable and trustworthy with good communication and delegation skills. They should be briefed for the task and given sufficient time to instruct and monitor the student and provide feedback. We also advise you appoint a separate workplace advisor or mentor to provide the students with general support and advice.

Prepare your staff by ensuring they:

- } understand the purpose of the workplace learning activity.
- } are aware of the responsibilities of working with students.
- } do not use the students in place of regular paid employees.
- } receive a timetable of proposed student activities and arrangements for their supervision and induction.
- } understand special needs including how to respond to medical conditions e.g. anaphylaxis.
- } comply with agreed arrangements.

Complete the employer section of the Student Placement Record and return it to WIT.