

GUIDANCE FOR PLACEMENT ORGANISERS

This guidance note draws heavily from a guidance document, being drafted by UCEA Working Party, for the placement of HE students which is currently under consultation. It adopts a risk based and risk management approach that can be applied across all placements which allows for more rigorous control measures for areas where the risks are greater and a lighter touch for on placements with relatively low risks. The salient points are outlined below.

Step 1. Prepare the student

The placement organiser and provider should provide information on each of the health and safety risk factors below (non exhaustive)

Work and Study Factors

What are the hazards associated with the activity/work?

There are significant hazards associated with laboratory work, community work with known high risk groups of clients etc.,

Low hazard environments could be office based.

Travel and Transportation

Is the student required to drive an unfamiliar vehicle/reasonable condition?

Is the travel significant, prolonged? Are they using public transport?

Their experience, driving licences and insurance will need verifying.

Location and Region

Is there a risk of crime/war unavoidable lone or remote working? Has the FCO advised against travel?

General/Environmental health

Health risks that require specific health protection/inoculation against disease

Very Hot/Cold working conditions

Personal Student Factors

Student may have or develop a health condition or a disability which may require specific adjustments or support during the work.

Consider the student's knowledge, understanding and skills for the type of work.

Insurance Limitations

Locations, activities and/or circumstances that may be excluded from the University's insurance cover.

Locations where the placements provider's insurance does not cover the student for personal or third party liability associated with the work by the student.

Step 2. Risk assessment and control measures

The organiser should establish through risk assessment the risk profile of the provider. This is achieved by consulting people with the relevant knowledge of the practices and health and safety issues associated with the activities in which the students are may be involved. This is particularly relevant in instances where the placement has a high risk profile.

General control measures

Check that the following are in place within the organising department

1. A process by which the student can raise problems that they are experiencing and receive guidance and support on their resolution.
2. A system for logging these problems about health and safety raised by the student and resolution
3. Instructions for students on how to contact you in the event of an emergency.

Clarify Expectations with the Placement Provider

Inform the placement provider of your expectations with regard to health and safety and raise any questions that you need answered in order to for you to approve the placement with confidence.

Pre placement health and safety visit

Decide whether a pre placement safety visit is required before the placement is approved particularly if there are specific concerns which are best resolved by a visit and inspection.

Step 3. Approving the placement

When you are satisfied that all the necessary actions have been completed, then the information should be documented in a risk assessment form which should be used for each student or student group.

Step 4. When the student is out on placement

When the student is out on placement responsibility for their health and safety rests with the student, and with the placement provider. It may be prudent for the visiting tutor to ask general health and safety questions with the student. Typical examples:

How do you feel about the placement and your well being?

Have you had any accidents?

Are there any practices that you are concerned about?

Did you receive any induction training?

Step 5. When the Student returns from the placement

Initially and each year the portfolio of the placement provider should be reviewed by checking any recorded concerns that may have been investigated and the subsequent action to prevent recurrence. The review should be used in completion of future risk assessments with the same placement providers.