

# Assumption Grammar School

## Work Experience Policy 2011/12

### 1. Rationale

Work Experience is now an integral component of students' (14-18) Careers education. It is endorsed by the various Education and Library Boards, the Department of Education (NI) and Employers' representatives. Assumption Grammar School is committed to ensuring that students are offered the opportunity to undertake work experience as part of their Careers education.

Assumption Grammar School acknowledges that a student work experience programme is fully consistent with the ethos of the school. Every student should be 'Fully Alive': they should receive the fullest preparation for life after Assumption Grammar School.

### 2. Definition

*'Work experience may be defined as: a placement in an employer's premises in which a student carries out (or observes) a particular task or duty, or a range of tasks or duties, more or less as would an employee, but with the emphasis on the learning aspects of the experience.'*

*(Adapted)*

(*'Work Experience: A guide for employers'*: DfES 2002)

### 3. Learning Outcomes

Assumption Grammar recognises the benefits for students offered by the school's work experience programme:

- informs UCAS and career choices;
- builds confidence;
- develops students' social skills.

Assumption Grammar also recognises the benefits work experience provides for the wider school community:

- develops links between school and employers;
- enables Teachers to experience a variety of work environments;
- provides opportunities for students to learn from their peers' experiences.

### 4. Management of Student Work Experience

Assumption Grammar School recognises that quality Work Experience provision requires careful planning and the promotion and maintenance of excellent relationships with external agencies.

To achieve these objectives it is school policy that the following measures are put in place and reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team on an annual basis.

- The Head of Senior School and the Head of Careers will organise a Year 13 Leadership Programme during which, time will be set aside to assist students in their preparation for their week on placement.
- The Teacher responsible for Work Experience (Co-ordinator) will ensure that records of previous placements are available to students for reference purposes.
- The Co-ordinator will ensure that full instructions and the necessary documentation are available at all times to students on the school's VLE (Appendix 1)
- The Co-ordinator will be responsible for all contact with 'Charter' on behalf of those students seeking placements in local Hospitals and Health Trusts subject to the qualifications laid out in the student instruction material in VLE (Appendix 2).
- The Co-ordinator will make regular visits to the Leadership class groups offering advice and reminding students of their responsibilities.
- The Co-ordinator will be responsible for ensuring all placement providers receive the necessary documentation which includes acknowledgement letters / indemnity forms and thank you letters. (Appendices 3-5)
- The Co-ordinator will provide the Principal with a complete list of all Year 13 pupils and their placement details prior to the commencement of their placement week.
- The Co-ordinator will ensure that all students on work experience during the 'block session' receive a visit or a phone call from a member of the Teaching staff.

## 5. The role and responsibilities of our Students.

The Work Experience Programme involves Year 13 students who complete a 5 day 'block session' in late January. It is policy that students adhere to the following guidelines.

- Students seeking placements in local Hospitals Health Trusts must inform the Co-ordinator no later than mid-September.
- Students (other than those referred to above) are responsible for securing their own placements. When this is done they must furnish the Co-ordinator with full details using the Placement Confirmation Sheet (VLE) (Appendix 6)
- Students cannot go out on placement without first producing a letter of consent from a parent/guardian (Appendix 7)
- Students are responsible for their travel and subsistence costs.
- Students on placement must follow the instructions and guidance issued to them during the Leadership Programme during the Autumn term (Appendix 8)
- Students will adhere to the rules and regulations which pertain to their specific work placement environment.
- On return to school, students will make a presentation about their placement to their peers.
- If a student is unable to attend for any reason during the week set aside for work experience they must inform the school and the placement provider before 9am.
- Students should not expect payment.
- Students will write a letter of thanks to their placement provider.

- Students who have been placed by Charter will complete their evaluation forms and return them to the Co-ordinator no later than one week following their return to school (Appendix 9)

## 6. Students on placement. Ensuring their Health & Safety

Assumption Grammar School has the primary duty of care for students while on work placement. The school must be seen to take all 'reasonable' steps to safeguard students when they are removed from the security and familiarity of the school environment. To this end the following policy guidelines will be adhered to.

- During Leadership sessions students will be made aware of the risks they potentially face in the work place and in their journeying to and fro. Students will be issued with the booklet entitled 'Mind how you go', issued by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE).
- Placement providers\* will be required to give a signed undertaking that they have an up to date Health & Safety policy and that there is a Risk Assessment in place for that particular environment (Appendix 10).
- Placement providers will also be required to give a signed undertaking they will adhere to a code of conduct relating to child protection procedures similar to those which pertain in the school (Appendix 11)
- The Co-ordinator, or another member of staff nominated by the SLT, may visit a placement provider prior to the commencement of a placement, to ensure it is suitable environment for the student.

*\*This requirement does not apply to Primary Schools and the Health Trusts' facilities as they will already have the same in place. This requirement is aimed at Private Sector Employers especially those with fewer than 5 employees who are not required by law to have a Health & Safety policy. In this case the school would expect that the Employer carries out a Health and Safety induction for the student on their first day.*

## 7. Students seeking additional Work Experience

Assumption Grammar School recognises that students are increasingly seeking work experience in addition to the block session facilitated in Year 13. This occurs for a number of reasons:

- Students having been on their 'block' experience decide that this is not what they want to do after all. They now need to experience another occupational environment;
- Students need additional work experience to satisfy UCAS entrance requirements;
- Students have been unsuccessful in securing their first choice of placement during the January 'block' session.

Assumption Grammar School wants the best for its students. However, facilitating additional student work placements has important implications for students and school managers. For these reasons the following policy guidelines should be adhered to:

- Additional placements should be arranged outside of the school term. Students will be made aware that insurance indemnification is not available when they go on placement during school vacations,

save for exceptional circumstances, subject to the agreement of the Bursar and the school's insurers.

- Students on placement during school vacation periods will not receive a visit or phone call from a representative of the school. The same applies for students who are given permission to go on short placements during term time (Open Days organised by Charter/Health Trusts).

**Preparing for your placement  
(Autumn Term)**

1. Time has been allocated during the Leadership sessions for you to prepare for your work experience placements. You should look up some of the **experiences of past pupils** which have been uploaded to the VLE
2. It is very important that you think about Health and Safety issues prior to your placement. You should consult the booklet entitled, **'Mind how you go'**. Read through this and make a note of possible Health and Safety issues that might be relevant to your planned placement. Discuss these with your Careers Teacher. This will enable you to discuss such matters with your placement provider at the beginning of your week.
3. Think carefully about **the reasons for your choice of placement**. Employers will often ask you on your first day why you wished to gain experience in that particular occupational area. Your inability to give a convincing and sincere response will not make the right impression.
4. You will need to return the **Parental Consent letter** giving us precise details about your placement. This will make it easier for the school to locate/contact you while you are on placement. **Please note that failure to return a signed Consent Form will mean that your placement cannot go ahead.**

Placements in our local Hospitals / Trust Facilities

Those of you who wish to apply for placements in local Hospitals and/or Health Trusts will have to notify Mr Toner **as early as possible in the first term** so as representations can be made on your behalf. This is because there is a dedicated agency (**Charter**) which attempts to place pupils in these specialist environments and **it only deals directly with schools: it does not accept applications from pupils or their parents.** Some of you may be fortunate enough to have family connections who work in the Hospitals etc who would be willing to organise a placement for you. If this is the case you still need to inform Mr Toner so as this information can be relayed to the appropriate agencies for confirmation.

\*Those of you who will be seeking to go into a clinical environment (Hospital /Health Trust) should indicate this on the **Student Planning sheet** which you will complete at your first Work Experience session with your Careers teacher. You can download a copy of this document on the VLE.

**Information to bear in mind!**

- Those pupils hoping to secure placements in the Belfast Hospitals and the Downe & Lagan Valley should be aware that there is **no guarantee** that you will be placed in your preferred setting and even if you are it may only be for one or two days. It is also the case that the school only receives final confirmation of placements

often at the last minute: this, unfortunately, is outside of our control.

- We are required to give the agencies which handle these placements at least three months notice of our requests. This means that pupils going out on Work Experience at the end of January would need to have had their applications made no later than the end of the preceding October. This is why it is particularly important that pupils who would like to go into the Belfast / Downpatrick Hospitals/Trusts must inform us as soon as possible in September so as those applications can be made.
- It is also highly advisable that pupils who make these requests have a back up option in the event that it is impossible to accommodate their requests during the selected week. If a pupil is disappointed in this regard, we will make every effort to seek a desired placement at another time convenient for the pupil (often during the time after the AS exams have ended).

Please remember that competition for places is extremely keen and it is often the case that other schools are out during the same week as we are, only heightening the competition for placements.

Appendix 3

Covering Letter

Date\_\_\_\_\_

Dear\_\_\_\_\_

We are presently organising a Work Experience Scheme for our Year 13 students. They are 16-17 years of age and have on average obtained ten GCSE passes (A\*-C).

\_\_\_\_\_has indicated that your company has agreed to take her for Work Experience during the week commencing January 201 .

Our pupils are protected during the period of work experience under the school's insurance policy as agreed with H A Leslie and Company. A form of indemnity is attached. You will appreciate that the School has a primary duty of care for our pupils. **For this reason, I would respectfully request that you would read, sign and return the accompanying documentation relating to Health and Safety and Child Protection.** Please retain the additional copies for your reference.

We are very grateful to you for giving this student a very valuable opportunity.. A reply slip and stamped addressed envelope are enclosed for your convenience.

Yours sincerely

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Mr G Toner**  
**Teacher in charge of Work Experience**

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**YEAR 13 WORK EXPERIENCE REPLY SLIP**

Dear Mr Toner,

We are willing to provide Work Experience for your pupil(s) during the period required. We will adhere to the Health & Safety and Child protection guidelines you provided with this communication.

Pupil's Name:

Signed: ..... Date:.....

## Appendix 4

### Thank you letter

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Re: \_\_\_\_\_

On behalf of the Principal, Mr McBride and the Careers Department, I would like to thank you for having provided the aforementioned pupil with the opportunity to gain valuable experience in your area of expertise. The generosity and patience shown by you and your colleagues ensures that pupils are much better informed when it comes to making their choices for tertiary education and/or full time employment.

Yours sincerely

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**G. Toner**  
**Work Experience Co-ordinator**

**Appendix 5**

**Form of Indemnity to cover** .....

**In consideration of Messrs** .....

(herewith referred to as the Employer) agreeing to participate in the Work Experience Scheme and to provide facilities (including the provision of any protective equipment or clothing which may be necessary) and supervision, the Board of Governors of Assumption Grammar School will indemnify the Employers against:

- 1      Legal liability of the employer to pay damages including Claimant’s costs and expenses in respect of Death, Bodily Injury or Disease suffered by a pupil and caused by an event occurring whilst the Pupil was attending for work experience;
  
- 2      Legal liability of the Employer to pay damages including Claimant’s costs and expenses in respect of Death or Bodily Injury of any person if such Death or Bodily Injury is caused by a Pupil whilst attending for work experience;
  
- 3      Legal liability of the Employer to pay damages including Claimant’s costs and expenses in respect of Loss/Damaged Property;
  
- 4      Any claims costs or expenses arising out of Death, Injury or Damage to Property where such claims costs or expenses result from the negligence of a Teacher or Employee of Assumption Grammar School.

**SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_  
On behalf of the Board of Governors of  
Assumption Grammar School

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 6

### Placement Confirmation Sheet

*Please complete this sheet once you have confirmed where you are going on placement. Make sure you provide all of the required information.*

<b>Pupil Name &amp; Class</b>	
<b>School e-mail</b>	
<b>Careers Teacher</b>	

**My work placement details are listed below.**

<b>Name of Placement provider (where I am going on placement)</b>	
<b>The full postal address of the Placement provider including postcode is.....</b>	
<b>The dates are.....</b>	
<b>The phone number of the provider is</b>	
<b>The provider's e-mail is</b>	
<b>Please address the school letter to Mr /Mrs/ Dr etc. Please include any other titles if relevant.</b>	

*(Office use only. Letter sent on .....by.....)*

## Appendix 7

Work Experience \_\_\_\_\_ January \_\_\_\_\_

### Dear Parent/Guardian

Your daughter will shortly commence her work experience placement(s). It is important that you are fully apprised of the arrangements that your daughter has made. During her placement(s), your daughter will be required to keep a record of her experiences.

Staff will endeavour to call or visit as many of the pupils as possible during their placements. Parents/Guardians are reminded that pupil travel arrangements, to and from their placements, are the responsibility of parents. Placement providers have been made aware of our concerns re. Health and Safety and Child Protection. All have signed up to our guidelines in these matters.

*Those pupils who await news from **local Health Trusts** and/or the **Regional Hospitals** should have a back up option in the event that these agencies are not able to offer places. Every effort will be made to accommodate these pupils at a later date if it is not possible to place them in their preferred areas during the specified week. Parents should note that this process is completely outside of our control and depends on a number of factors not least the competition our pupils face from other schools out during that particular week.*

**Please complete the reply slip below and return it to me no later than \_\_\_\_\_ .**

Yours sincerely

G Toner (Mr)

**Work Experience Co-ordinator**

✍️.....Work Experience January \_\_\_\_\_.....

### Dear Mr Toner

I/We give permission for .....[13 ] to participate in the Work Experience Scheme at:

1.....from .....to .....

2.....from .....to .....

I/We accept responsibility for her travel arrangements. I/ We accept that the School has made every reasonable effort to ensure her Health & Safety while on work placement.

**Signed:** .....

**Date:** .....

(Parent/Guardian)

## Appendix 8

### During the Work Experience Week

#### Do not forget !!

- **Keep a journal of everything you do each day. Take some photographs for your presentation.**
- **Give your provider the 'Report on Pupil's Work Experience' sheet (VLE) along with a stamped addressed envelope addressed to Mr Toner, Assumption Grammar, 24 Belfast Road, Ballynahinch. BT24 8EA**

#### **Punctuality**

It is important that you arrive in good time every morning. To ensure that you arrive on time, the following advice is useful:

- familiarise yourself with the location(s) where you will be based;
- have a contact telephone number readily available so as you can inform your employer if you are going to be late.

**Remember - it is better to be ten minutes early than one minute late!**

#### **Attendance**

It goes without saying that it is vitally important that you attend each and every day of your work placement(s). It takes a great deal of effort on the school's part to set up a Work Experience programme. Therefore, you are expected to attend punctually every day! If, however, you must miss a day for a genuine reason, you must contact your employer and explain the situation. **Do not just fail to turn up.** It is common courtesy to contact an employer if one is unable to go into work. ***If you are absent, you must inform school, as soon as possible, so as the member of staff who may have been due to visit you that day can be informed. Tel. 97562250***

#### **Behaviour**

Remember that you are going to an employer who may be asked to accept students from our school in future years. Your conduct and performance may determine whether other students can avail of the opportunity that has been offered to you. The highest standards of behaviour and a helpful willing attitude are expected from all students. Do not forget to thank everyone for the time they have spent with you. A letter of thanks and a small gift to the person(s) in charge of your placement(s) are always very much appreciated.

#### **Appearance**

Dress appropriately for the type of work you will be doing during your placement(s). Jeans and casual apparel should not be worn unless specifically requested by your employer. Sensible shoes should be worn in case of long periods on one's feet. Always follow the directions of employers with regard to protective clothing.

#### **Safety**

You must ensure that you adhere to any instructions that the employer may have regarding the health and safety of employees. In the event of an accident or sickness, inform the individual who is supervising you as soon as possible. (You are covered by the school's insurance policy)

#### **Becoming disillusioned?**

You may come to the view that the employment you are observing is not what you want to pursue after all. If this is the case, it is important that you remain positive and make the best of the time remaining. Remember, people have gone to a lot of trouble to accommodate you: it is only fair that you give 100% during your placement(s).

### **Money**

You should carry sufficient funds to cover public transport and subsistence costs. If you are unsure about lunch arrangements, bring a packed lunch on the first day.

### **Mobile Phones**

A mobile phone will prove useful if you are travelling by public transport and are running late. However, you should ensure that it is turned off during working hours. You must not make personal calls during working hours unless it is absolutely essential and you seek permission first from your supervisor.

### **Rules and Regulations**

This scheme is intended, primarily, to enable you to experience some of the differences between school life and the world of employment. It is, therefore, important that you should treat this time in employment in much the same way as you would if you were an employee. Remember, when you are at work, it is the rules and regulations of the employer which you must follow.

### **Confidentiality**

It is of the utmost importance that **you respect the privacy of Employees and Clients** with whom you come into contact during your placement(s). This is especially relevant for those pupils in medical/care/legal placements. Do not under any circumstances disclose information which could compromise the privacy and/or professionalism of the Employer/Clients you may be working with.

## Appendix 9

**Complete and send to:** Completion and return of this form is of vital importance to the successful running of the Charter Work Experience Programme



student work experience feedback

Work Experience Programme  
c/o Business in the Community  
Bridge House  
Paulett Avenue  
Belfast, BT5 4HD  
Tel: (028) 9045 1444  
Fax: (028) 9045 2111  
E-mail: joanne.mehaffy@bitcni.org.uk

Please fill in all sections of this form and return to the teacher in charge of work experience

Student name:
School:
Work Experience Company & Supervisor:
Occupational Area:
Work Experience Date:

**1** Did you find your work experience placement useful? Yes / No

Please state reasons

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**2** Did you find the employer and your supervisor helpful? Yes / No

If no, why?

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**3** The work I enjoyed the most was.....

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**4** The part of the job I enjoyed least was.....

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**5** Did your careers teacher give you your copy of the 'job description' **before** the placement?

Yes / No

**6** What additional information would you have liked before your placement?

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**7** Would you recommend this work experience placement to a friend? Yes / No

If no, why?

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**8** Was your time used fully on the work placement? Yes / No

Please expand,

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**9** How do you think the company could have made a difference to your work placement?

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**10** Has your work experience helped you to;

No

Yes

- |  |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Become clearer about your careers choices?                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Recognise the value of skills & qualifications you need to do the job? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Understand how you could progress within your chosen career?           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Be more aware of what employers are looking for when taking on staff?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have a better understanding of how people work together?               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Improve your self esteem/confidence?                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Improve your team working skills & communication?                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**11** From 1 to 10, please indicate how you rated your work experience

Very dissatisfied

Very satisfied

1            2            3            4            5            6            7            8            9            10

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Are there any other comments that you would like to make regarding your work experience?

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Thank you for your co-operation

Safeguarding Assumption Grammar School pupils on Work  
Experience Placement

Health & Safety in the Workplace.

I/We (the undersigned) agree to abide by the recommendations contained herein. I / we understand that students on work placement are entitled to the same degree of Health & Safety protection as paid employees.

1. Each young person will receive a Health & Safety induction on the morning of their first day on placement.
2. A copy of the Company's Health & Safety Policy can be made available to the School for is information, if requested. In the event that the Employer is not legally bound to have said policy, the Employer will compile a Risk Assessment and furnish the School Work Experience Co-ordinator with the same.
3. Each young person will be assigned a Mentor who will be their main contact for the duration of their placement.
4. Each young person on placement will be provided with the requisite safety equipment.
5. Each young person under 18 years will not be allowed to do work which:
  - cannot be adapted to meet any physical or mental limitations they may have;
  - exposes them to substances which are toxic or cause cancer;
  - exposes them to radiation;
  - involves extreme heat, noise or vibration.

Signed:.....

Representing: ..... Date:

.....

## Appendix 11

### **CHILD PROTECTION FOR PLACEMENT PROVIDERS**

*This document has been produced in consultation with the NSPCC*

For adults working with young people, it is important to be aware of potentially difficult situations. By following the simple guidance outlined below it should be possible to ensure that the placement is a secure and productive environment for both the provider and the student.

#### **TOUCH**

There may be occasions when you need to touch young persons (e.g. when you are guiding them in carrying out technical operations) but these should be kept to a minimum. Always discuss this beforehand, explaining what you are doing and why.

#### **BEHAVIOUR**

Whilst it is important to reassure a young person who may be nervous in a new placement and reliant on your guidance, you should avoid being over-familiar. Never permit 'horseplay' which may cause embarrassment or fear, or activities/suggestions of a sexual nature.

#### **ENVIRONMENT**

Where possible avoid being on your own in an isolated or closed environment with a young person. If unavoidable, ensure others know where you are and why.

#### **TRAVEL**

Ensure that there is a known destination and check-in times with a third party in situations where a young person will be travelling alone with an adult during placement. It is a good idea to make available a mobile phone (or equivalent) in such situations. Parental permission is needed.

#### **MENTOR**

Those placed immediately in charge of young people should be competent in their work-role, mature in their attitudes and yet, at the same time, be at ease with them. Mentors should have clear guidance as to their responsibilities and boundaries.

#### **DISCLOSURE**

Occasionally young people may disclose confidential information to a work colleague that gives rise to concern for their environmental welfare or safety. In such situations you should speak to your line manager and share your concern with an appropriate representative of the education provider (usually this will be a school's work experience co-ordinator).

#### **DISQUALIFICATION**

In order to best protect children, all employees whose role will involve their being responsible for, or having unsupervised contact with young people, must declare whether they have ever been disqualified from working with children.

#### **DECLARATION**

This organisation agrees with the principles of Child Protection and Our Duty of Care for those children visiting our premises. We agree to abide by these guidelines in order to provide children with a safe environment to carry out their work experience.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Representing:.....