



Work experience guidance

Supporting education providers 2025 – 2026

CIMSPA's work experience guidance supports government aims to expand access to high-quality, skills-led placements.

By connecting education providers, learners and employers, it ensures opportunities in the sport and physical activity sector are purposeful, safe and beneficial for all.

Tips for success

To deliver high-quality work placements, education providers should plan effectively, maintain regular support throughout, and guide learners through reflection and evaluation to maximise long-term impact.



Before placement

To ensure learners gain maximum benefit, education providers should take time to plan effectively and build strong partnerships with employers.

Establish clear objectives that link directly to course learning outcomes and employability skills.

Partner with reputable organisations that can offer safe, inclusive and purposeful placement experiences.

Prepare learners through training sessions, pre-placement briefings and **clear guidance on expectations** and professional behaviour.

Provide **access to essential resources** and documentation to support both learners and employers.

Direct learners to the CIMSPA Careers Hub to explore career pathways, professional standards and opportunities within the sport and physical activity sector before starting their placement.

Maintain open and consistent communication with employers to clarify roles, responsibilities and placement expectations.



During placement

Education providers should play an active role in ensuring quality, safety and learner development throughout the placement.

Complete risk assessments and check environments for suitability.

Confirm that employers have appropriate insurance and safeguarding in place.

Manage the work-based learning contract and verify supervisor suitability.

Agree feedback and assessment processes with employers.

Support skill development, provide mentorship and encourage networking.

Maintain continuous feedback, promote wellbeing and recognise learner achievement and career growth.



After placement

To maximise long-term impact, education providers should review each placement and support learners in progressing their careers.

Collect feedback from learners and employers to evaluate success and identify improvements.

Help learners to validate their new skills, recognise achievements and connect learning to future goals.

Offer career support and opportunities to build professional networks and industry links.

Direct learners to the CIMSPA Careers Hub to reflect on their experience, explore pathways and plan next steps.

Recognise success and promote ongoing reflection and professional development.

Government tips

As outlined in GOV.UK guidance, effective preparation, collaboration and structured supervision help to ensure that placements are meaningful, safe and high quality. Reviewing outcomes and celebrating success strengthens employability and supports continued learner progression.



FAQs

Preparation and planning

Q: What are our responsibilities before a placement starts?

A: Education providers should conduct risk assessments, confirm insurance and safeguarding arrangements, ensure supervisors are suitable and agree on feedback and assessment processes with employers. Preparing learners through briefings and guidance helps to ensure safe, meaningful experiences.

Review and evaluation

Q: What's the best way to evaluate placements afterwards?

A: Collect feedback from learners and employers to review success and identify areas for improvement. Use findings to strengthen future placements and link outcomes to course content and employability goals. Encourage learners to reflect and explore the CIMSPA Careers Hub.

Quality and monitoring

Q: How can we maintain quality during placements?

A: Keep in regular contact with learners and employers. Monitor progress, support skill development and step in early if challenges arise. Consistent communication ensures placements remain purposeful and aligned with learner needs.

Curriculum alignment

Q: How can we ensure that placements align with curriculum goals and sector standards?

A: Design placements that connect directly to programme learning outcomes and reflect current CIMSPA professional standards. Collaborate with employers to ensure that activities develop relevant technical and transferable skills that support local and national workforce needs.



Resources and references

CIMSPA resources

Access the latest guidance and tools to support your work placement delivery:

Work-based and placement learning guidance – practical advice for planning, supervising and reviewing placements.

www.careers.cimspa.co.uk/resources-for-employers/providing-work-based-placements/

CIMSPA Careers Hub – explore sector pathways, professional standards and career development opportunities.

www.careers.cimspa.co.uk

CIMSPA professional standards – CIMSPA professional standards set the benchmark for quality, skills, and professionalism across the sport and physical activity sector.

www.cimspa.co.uk/professional-standards

External references

Key national guidance and sector frameworks:

GOV.UK: Employers – could you offer work experience?

www.gov.uk/government/publications/employers-could-you-offer-work-experience

HSE: Young people at work – work experience

www.hse.gov.uk/young-workers/employer/work-experience.htm

DfE: Local skills improvement plans

www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-skills-improvement-plans



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