



Work experience guidance

Supporting learners 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 make the most of your placement experience, learners should prepare thoroughly before it begins, remain engaged and proactive throughout and take time to reflect afterwards to support ongoing growth and future career development.



Getting ready for your placement

To get the most out of your placement, it's important to prepare properly before you start.

Find out about the organisation. Look up what they do, their values and how your role fits in.

Know the purpose. Understand why you're there and how it connects to your future goals.

Set personal goals. Think about what you want to learn or achieve during your time there.

Build useful skills. Apply what you've already learned, such as communication, teamwork or digital skills, to real work situations.

Be professional. Show up on time, dress appropriately and be respectful to colleagues and customers.

Stay positive. A good attitude makes a big difference.

Attend your induction. Learn what's expected of you, sign any paperwork and ask questions.



Making the most of your placement

Once your placement begins, it's your chance to learn, grow and show what you can do.

Take pride in your work. Doing your best will help you to develop and shows professionalism.

Ask questions. Be curious and find out how things work – it's how you learn.

Communicate. Keep in touch with your supervisor about your progress and any challenges.

Stay organised. Manage your time well and keep track of what you're learning.

Record your experience. Note down new skills, achievements or moments that stood out.

Seek feedback. Regular feedback helps you understand what's going well and what to improve.



After your placement

When your placement ends, take time to reflect and build on your experience.

Complete any assessments or paperwork. Make sure everything is submitted to your college or employer.

Ask for feedback or a reference. This will help you with future job or university applications.

Reflect on what you learned. Think about the skills you developed and what you'd like to improve.

Plan your next steps. Set goals for what you want to do next based on your experience.

Stay connected. Keep in touch with people you met – networking can lead to new opportunities.

Visit the CIMSPA Careers Hub. Explore career pathways, professional standards and job opportunities in the sector.

Government tips

The GOV.UK guidance highlights that good preparation and meaningful work experience help you to understand working life, build confidence and develop key skills like teamwork, communication and reliability. Reflecting and staying connected afterwards can open doors to future opportunities.



FAQs

Insurance and safety

Q: Will I be insured during my placement?

A: Yes. If your placement is arranged through an employer with valid employers' liability insurance, you are covered in the same way as their regular employees. This applies regardless of your age, but if you're under 18, additional safeguarding and supervision measures will be in place.

Getting the most from your placement

Q: How can I make sure I get the most out of my placement?

A: Be proactive, professional and open to learning. Set personal goals, seek feedback regularly and keep a record of what you learn. Use your experience to build confidence and understand how your skills apply in real workplace situations.

Expectations and roles

Q: What should I do if I'm unsure about my role or responsibilities?

A: Always ask questions. Your supervisor and education provider are there to help. Clarify expectations early to ensure you understand what's required and feel confident in our role.

Next steps and career progression

Q: What should I do once my placement ends?

A: Reflect on what you've learned and ask for feedback or a reference. Record your achievements, identify areas to improve and visit the CIMSPA Careers Hub to explore next steps, professional standards and career pathways in the sector.



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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