



Work experience guidance

Supporting employers 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, employers should plan carefully, provide purposeful and skills-focused experiences, and review each placement afterwards to ensure it is safe, meaningful and has lasting impact.



Before placement

Health and safety should be a key focus. To ensure a safe and successful placement, employers must establish clear expectations and embed strong procedures from the start.

Confirm suitable insurance cover for the placement.

Review policies, procedures and risk assessments to ensure safety and compliance.

Establish a work-based learning contract and clear role description for the learner.

Conduct a thorough induction to introduce the learner to the organisation and clarify expectations.

Ensure supervisors are suitably qualified, experienced and briefed on their responsibilities.

Implement effective safeguarding measures to protect all participants.

Promote equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the placement.

Maintain regular communication with the education provider to ensure ongoing support and alignment.



During placement

To create a valuable placement experience, employers should help learners to build confidence, skills and professionalism.

Support the development of professional behaviours.

Set clear objectives that guide learning and performance.

Provide opportunities for practical application of skills and knowledge.

Help learners to understand organisational priorities and how their role contributes to team goals.

Offer structured supervision and maintain open communication.

Provide **regular feedback** and review progress throughout the placement.

Hold meetings to discuss strengths, achievements and areas for development.



After placement

To ensure lasting impact, employers should review each placement and support learners in their next steps.

Complete any required assessments and **provide constructive feedback**.

Offer references that recognise the learner's contribution and achievements.

Identify and **share opportunities for continued engagement**, such as employment, volunteering or further training.

Direct learners to the CIMSPA Careers Hub to explore career pathways, professional standards and development opportunities within the sector.

Collaborate with other employers and partners to **exchange good practice** and strengthen placement delivery.

Government tips

As outlined in the GOV.UK guidance, high-quality work experience relies on strong preparation, clear communication and ongoing support. Supervision, feedback and reflection help learners build confidence, develop skills and progress successfully in their future careers.



FAQs

Insurance and safety

Q: Does my existing employers' liability insurance cover learners on placement?

A: If you already hold employers' liability Insurance (and the insurer is a member of the Association of British Insurers), it automatically covers learners on work placements. Learners are treated as employees for the purposes of health and safety law, as confirmed by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). This applies to all age groups.

If in doubt, check directly with your insurer.

Supervision and safeguarding

Q: What supervision is required for learners under 18?

A: Employers and education providers share responsibility for learner welfare. A named supervisor should be appointed, appropriate safeguarding checks completed and all learners should receive a proper induction before starting.

Placement design and delivery

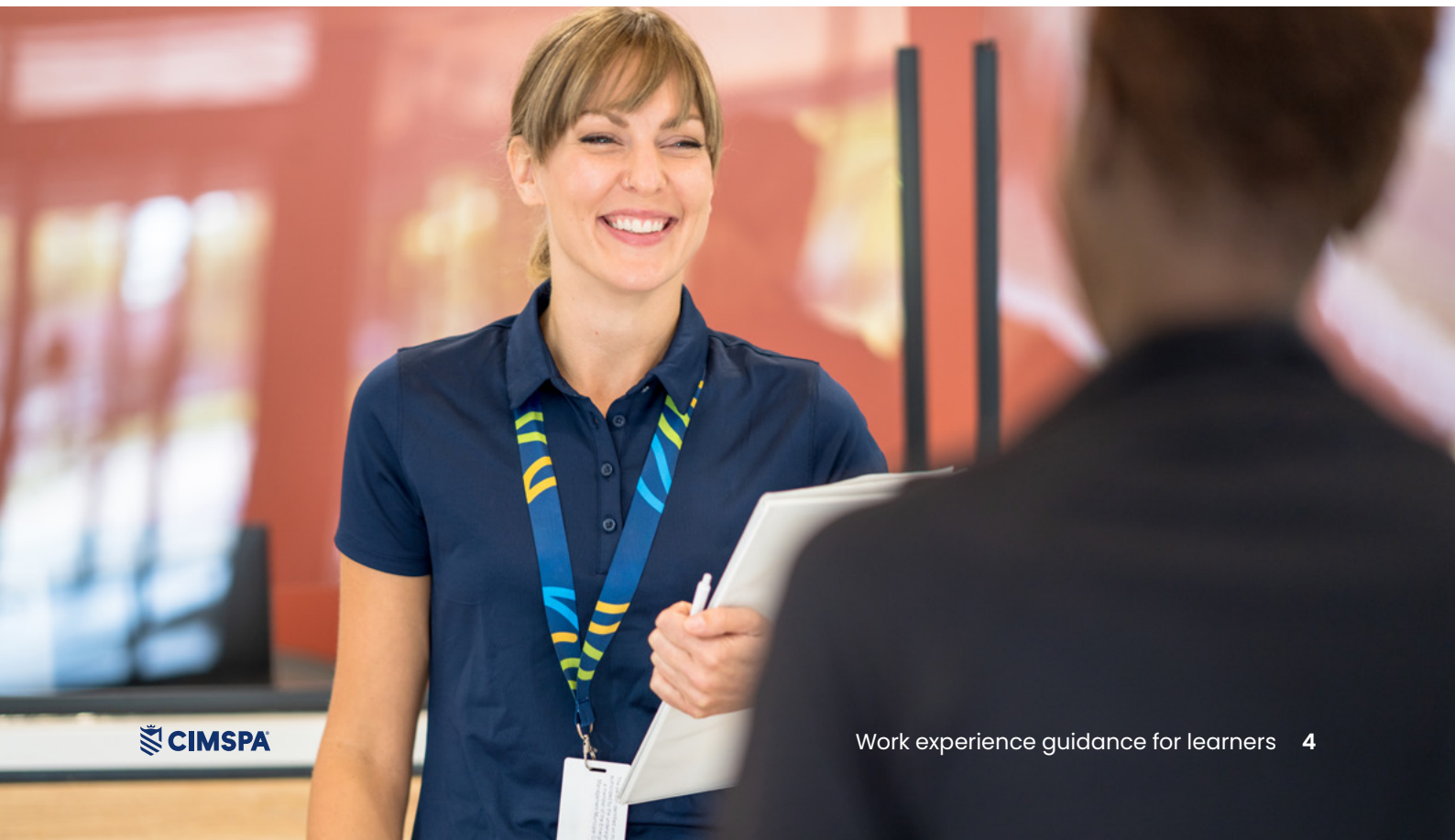
Q: How can we design a placement that's high quality and relevant?

A: Placements should have clear objectives, be designed to provide real-world learning and give learners opportunities to apply practical and professional skills. They should reflect genuine workplace practices and contribute to the learner's growth, confidence and employability.

Feedback and progression

Q: How should feedback and progression be managed after a placement?

A: Feedback and reflection are key. Employers should complete a short review, provide constructive feedback and, where possible, offer references or progression opportunities. This helps learners to recognise their achievements and plan their next steps.



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



Contact CIMSPA

 03438 360200

 www.cimspa.co.uk

 info@cimspa.co.uk