



Work Readiness, Workplace Experience & Industry Placement Policy

Author: Executive Director of Student Services

Approved: July 2024 (Executive Team)

Review date: July 2025 (Annually)

1. Context

1.1 The programme of work readiness & workplace experience has been built around the Gatsby Benchmarks, a framework of 8 guidelines that define the best careers provision. This will be delivered through a clearly defined and stable [Careers Programme](#).

1.2 At the core of our College strategy are our values – ‘**STAR**’

S: Students at the heart

T: Teamwork - work together, achieve together

A: Be Ambitious, Build Futures

R: Respect each other, share similarities and celebrate differences

1.3 In addition, the College’s vision encompasses that students and apprentices should be developed for “More than courses, Careers”.

2. Policy – Work readiness

2.1 Through the tutorial process the College works with students to assess their work readiness on the steps to being a working professional. See the stages in the diagram below.

Steps to Working Professional

Aspiring Professional	Developing Professional	Young Professional	Working Professional
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prior work experience• Part time work• Volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Course activity• Enrichment activity• Ambassador & student rep opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Live briefs with external clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• External work experience• Industry Placements

Building Work Readiness

2.2 The College sets the expectation that all “leavers” from the College will have undertaken an external work placement or participated in a significant number of employer encounters, in line with Gatsby benchmarks.

2.3 Professional judgement will be used to identify whether workplace experience is appropriate for an individual. Where a student is identified as not being work ready they will be supported to reach a level of work readiness.

3. Development of work readiness

3.1 The College seeks to develop the Skills, Knowledge and Behaviours (S, K&B) for work readiness skills within the curriculum by providing:

- Opportunities to learn from local and national labour market information

- Learning tailored to individual career aspirations
 - A curriculum linked to the 'super six' careers within each delivery area
 - Encounters with employers and employees
 - Opportunities to experience workplaces
 - Encounters with Higher Education
 - Access to personal guidance from an experienced careers team
- 3.2 Managers and teachers detail these opportunities to develop S, K&B in their curriculum plans and schemes of work and through the Tutorial Framework.
- 3.3 Students have the opportunity to discuss and review their own work readiness progress with their teachers through the tutorial process using the online tool Grofar. Teaching staff are able to monitor, review and contribute to this platform.
- 3.4 Our team of Work Placement Officers (WPO) support students to identify, prepare for and successfully complete workplace experiences , for example; a work placement. This includes Industry placement for T Level students, that are relevant to their career aspirations and contribute to developing their work readiness.

4. Health and Safety

The College takes all reasonable steps to ensure that employers are managing any risks to a student during a work placement or Industry placement through discussion with the employer to confirm placement activities and to establish that the employer has arrangements for managing risks. Checks will be made in proportion to the working environment and include but are not limited to:

Low & medium risk

- Conducting a bi-annual health & safety review using the Harlow College Health & Safety Declaration & Agreement. This will be carried out sooner or more regularly sooner if triggered by a reported health & safety concern.
- WPOs conducting telephone health & safety conversations with employers signposting to all relevant supporting guidance information as found in the Health & Safety Agreement.
- Communicating important health and safety and safeguarding considerations with the student, detailing the Health and Safety process and any requirements placed upon them.
- Agreeing a named point of contact at the college and the employer to facilitate good communication and a rapid response to any concerns.
- Provide students with college contact details to ensure they have a safe way to report any concerns when on placement.

High risk (in addition to above)

- Requesting a risk assessment from the employer that covers activities to be conducted by the students
- A review of the risk assessment completed by a Senior Manager and delivery staff member with appropriate industry knowledge, and either:

- a) Signing off risk assignment and confirming as completed on the Grofar system.
- b) Returning the risk assessment to the employer with recommendations which may include either revised actions or a request for a site visit.

If a site visit is required this should be conducted by a staff member with sector specific experience.

5. Disclosure of Disability or Learning Difficulty

We understand that students may be reluctant to disclose a disability or learning difficulty particularly if they are concerned they may be discriminated against. There may be a duty to disclose information to an employer in order for them to make a reasonable adjustment in order to accommodate a placement. In this instance permission to share information would be required from the student and parent (if under 18).

6. Responsibilities

6.1 The College

The College will carry out pre-placement checks including that the employer complies with the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and will report any safeguarding concerns to the college to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the student whilst working with the employer. All systems used will be auditable.

The College has a responsibility to ensure that any staff involved in the management or administration of placements have appropriate training, and are in turn aware of their responsibilities in the process.

The student will be prepared by the college to act appropriately in the workplace, understand employer expectations and will be provided information on general health and safety issues prior to their placement. The college will ensure that the placement provides the best opportunity for the student to apply and develop skills that are related to their occupational field of study.

6.2 Placement providers (Employers)

Employers must comply with Health and Safety Legislation, for example, having up-to-date Employer's Liability Insurance; assessing the risks of a student on placement; providing training; instruction and supervision. These are particularly important aspects given the youth and inexperience of many of the students on placement. The primary responsibility for meeting statutory Health & Safety requirements within a placement remains with the employer (placement provider).

The employer will provide a quality experience for the student, relevant to the student's course of study and will, as far as reasonably possible, enable the student to learn and develop and meet their agreed objectives/learning aims.

The employer will report any concerns regarding the student including absence at the earliest opportunity.

The employer will verify the attendance of the student on the work placement on a weekly basis.

6.3 Students

Students on placement have the same Health & Safety responsibilities as any other employees in the workplace. They must take reasonable care for their own Health & Safety and for the Health & Safety of other people who may be affected by their acts and omissions. They must immediately raise any concerns including safeguarding whilst on placement with their College contact (WPO). They must also cooperate with the placement provider in complying with the placement provider's legal duties. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks may have to be completed by some students before placements can begin, e.g. Health and Social Care & Child Care students. Students should be aware of their agreed objectives/learning aims whilst on placement.

7. **Monitoring**

7.1 Workplace experience is monitored and evaluated annually through college quality assurance processes including the SAR process.

7.2 The College has a robust process in place for gathering employment encounters by students and measuring the impact of these encounters through the Grofar platform.

7.3 Student Surveys are carried out throughout the year to assess student satisfaction of the quality of the careers provision and student experience.

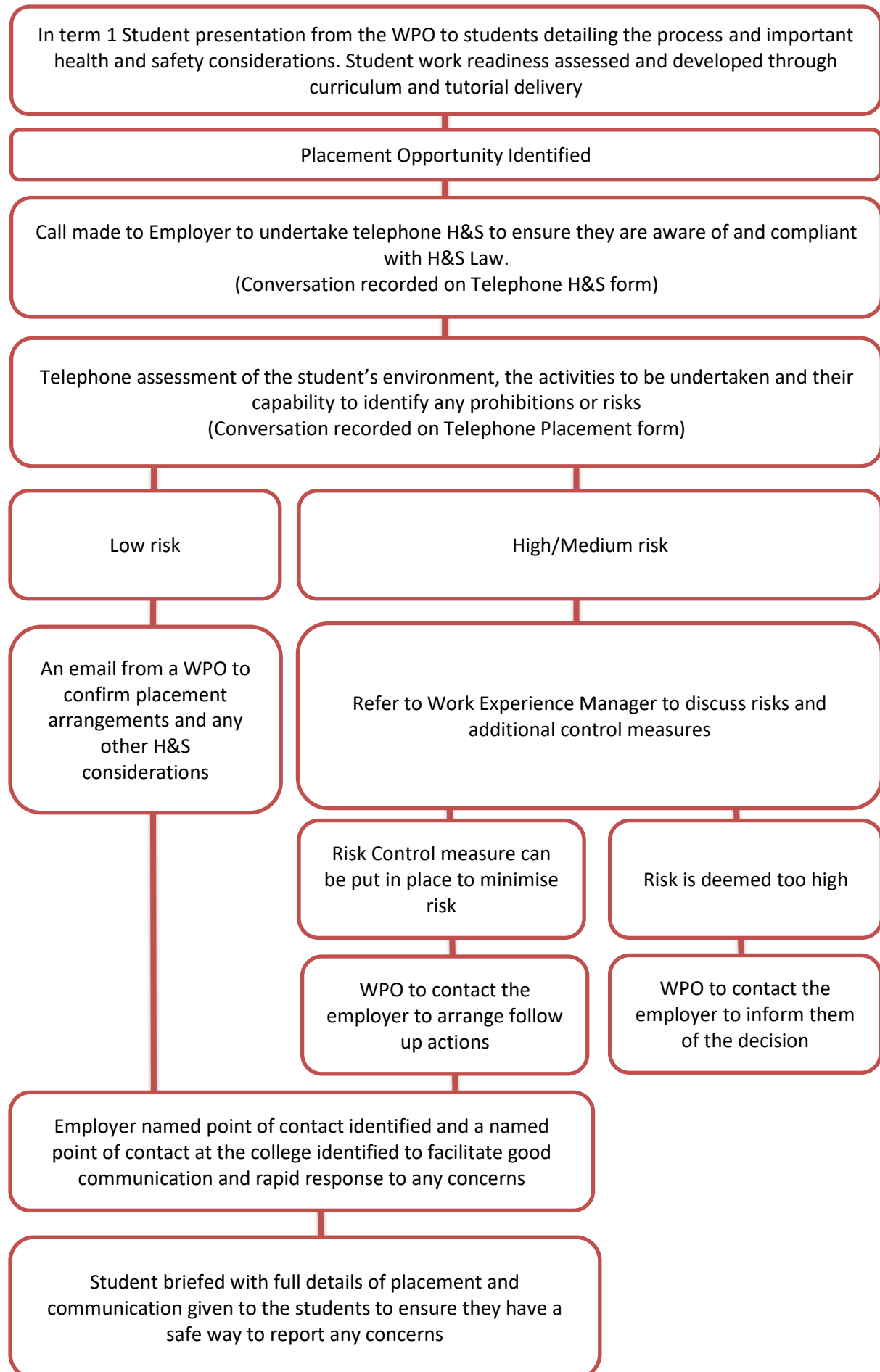
7.4 Students and employers are encouraged to provide feedback to support the quality assurance process.

7.5 An annual action plan is developed by the lead manager based on the self-assessment report.

8. **Review**

This Strategy will be reviewed annually as part of the College's SAR process and published on the College's website.

Workplace Experience & Industry Placement Flow Chart



TRACKING and REFERENCE INFORMATION

Date Approved: July 2024 (Executive Team)

Review Date: July 2025

Author/Responsibility: Executive Director of Student Services

Equality Impact Assessment: The College will ensure the workplace experience impacts positively on equality and diversity, on learner achievements and student progression to employment, apprenticeships and/or HE.

List of related policies, procedures and other documents:

Complaints Procedure

Equality & Diversity Policy

CEIAG Strategy

Complaints: If you wish to submit a complaint about the application of this policy or the procedure of it, please send your request in accordance with the provisions of the Complaints Policy.

Monitoring: The application of this policy and associated procedure will be monitored by The Head of Student Services.

Easy reading: To receive this policy/procedure in a different format, please contact HR Services.