



Gofal Cymdeithasol **Cymru**  
Social Care **Wales**

# Learners

Guidance and support for individuals undertaking a work placement opportunity.

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Go to <https://socialcare.wales/qualifications-funding/work-placement-guide/learners> for the latest version.

Guidance and support for learners (school pupils and their parents/carers, students, job seekers, returners to work) on what you should expect from work placements, how to make sure the placement is suitable and know what will be expected of you.

## **The benefits of work placement**

Accessing work placement can provide you with opportunities to:

- Try out variety of work settings and find out about a range of roles which will help you make informed choices about your future career
- Potentially accumulate UCAS points for study in higher education
- Have experiential learning and assessment of your practice to achieve the practical part of work based qualifications
- Demonstrate skills which may not be able to be assessed in other ways
- Build confidence and develop knowledge, understanding and skills which may lead to employment
- Develop the ability to reflect on your practice
- Provide feedback to employers which helps them improve practice in the work setting.

## **Preparing for work placement**

It is important to prepare carefully for work placement to get the most out of it.

There are a number of things you will need to think about and these are listed below. The Gwent regional partnership have created [an animated video](#) which will take you through all of the key points.

Things to consider:

- What information is available about the work setting – what it does, who uses it, who works there, where it is etc.
- Can you visit the work setting before your placement starts?
- What are the types of activities you will be able to do in the setting?
- Will the activities meet your needs?
- How will you be supported by the employer and by your learning provider?
- What equipment and training will you need for your role when you are on placement?
- Is there any training you will need to complete before you start your placement? If yes, how will you do this?
- Will you need PPE and will this be provided by the employer?
- What procedures are in place for reporting any concerns about the placement?
- What are the practical things such as start and finish times, dress code, travel and subsistence arrangements?
- What happens if you are sick or have difficulties getting to the work setting on time?

## **Getting the most out of work placement opportunities**

It is important to take your opportunity for work placement seriously and do everything you can to get the most out of it.

You may find it useful to [watch this short video of Tyne and Izzy](#) talking about their work placement experience.

This section outlines some areas which it would be helpful to think about.

## **Pre-placement visit**

Some employers will offer you an opportunity to pre-visit the work setting; this will give you a chance to ask questions about the work setting and your placement. Some employers may want to interview you to make sure you are suitable, it will be important to think about what you want to achieve on the placement before this happens.

An [employer/learner placement agreement](#) between you and the employer should be completed either during or after the pre-placement visit.

## **Day 1**

It is important to know what to expect on day 1, this will help you prepare for the work placement experience.

The [Day 1 checklist](#) is a helpful prompt for what should be covered.

It is important you are given a mentor to support you for your placement. A mentor is someone who can provide advice and guidance, they can:

- Help you understand the work setting and what is expected of you
- Answer questions and provide support when you are unsure or have any concerns
- Monitor and provide feedback to you on your practice and progress.

## **Induction**

The All Wales Induction Frameworks for [Health and Social Care](#) and [Early Years and Childcare](#) set out the requirements for new workers in their first 6 months

of employment.

The requirement for learners on placement within the health sector are set out in the [Core Skills Training Framework](#) and the [Clinical Induction accredited unit of learning](#).

The employer may use the frameworks to inform your induction process; remember to record any learning as you will be able to use this towards completion of the framework if you decide to work in health, social care or childcare.

If you are going on placement from FE college you should either have completed or be doing one of the Core qualifications for Health and Social Care or Children's Care, Play, Learning and Development. These match the knowledge learning outcomes of the Induction Frameworks. Your learning provider should map any accredited learning completed for the Core qualifications to the Induction Framework so the employer knows what you have already covered; this will help you to embed learning rather than repeat it.

## **Learning opportunities**

The whole of your placement will be a valuable learning opportunity, finding out about the sector and the roles of those who work in it, job shadowing, applying what you know to practice to develop skills for work. Depending on your placement, the employer may also offer you other learning opportunities such as attending training with other workers, e-learning or guided reading. It is important to be clear about the placement objectives at the outset so you can match the learning and activities you are involved in with your needs. If you are completing a qualification, the placement will help you make links between your course work and practice.

We have lots of film clips about different roles in the sector on the [WeCare Wales website](#). Employers also advertise their job vacancies there, so have a look at what's available.

## Keeping a reflective log

You will be expected to keep a reflective log to record your learning; for some of you, the format and structure of this may be set out by the course you are doing; for others, it will be kept simply as a helpful tool for your own development rather than completing a qualification.

There is a [reflective log](#) template which can be used for reflection; mentors will have an important role here in supporting you to reflect as well as providing feedback on your practice and progress. Reflection on how you relate the values and principles of the sectors to what you are doing is important to think about.

## Helpful hints for keeping a reflective log:

- **Describing an activity which you have been involved in** - Describe what happened and the part you played.
- **Your feelings and thoughts** - Think about the whole experience, did you feel different at the start and end of the activity? Did other people affect the way you felt during the activity?
- **Behaviours of yourself and others** - How did your behaviours and those of others reflect the principles and values of the sector? What helped communication or what made it more difficult?
- **Evaluation** - What went well and what did not go so well during the activity?
- **Conclusions** - What did you learn from the activity? Have you identified any additional training or learning needs for yourself?

- **Action plan** - What would you do differently if you were to do the activity again? How will you meet any additional training or learning needs e.g. guided reading, formal training, shadowing another worker etc.

## **Meeting requirements for regulations, standards and legislation**

### **Safeguarding**

Safeguarding and protecting individuals or children and young people who use health, social care and childcare services is everybody's responsibility. The employer in your work placement will explain your role and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and who you should talk to if you have any concerns about abuse, harm or neglect, at a minimum this should include:

- Reporting concerns and whistleblowing
- Confidentiality
- How to keep yourself and individuals / children in the work setting safe.

### **Health and Safety**

You must be aware of health and safety at all times whilst on work placement. If you see anything you think may be a hazard or a danger to yourself or others report it to your mentor or the manager of the work setting. Make sure you are aware of the fire safety arrangements for the setting and listen to instructions in the event of a fire emergency.

### **Data Protection and Confidentiality**

You have a responsibility to make sure information about individuals or children and their families/carers is handled in a confidential and secure way. When on placement you may see people you know, you must never ask personal questions which could cause embarrassment. You must never discuss anything you hear or see about individuals or children and their families/carers outside of the health, social care or childcare setting. You can discuss with relatives/friends what you've been doing in terms of activities or experiences but never discuss individuals or children, their families/carers or workers.

## **Specific course requirements for work placements**

If you are on a course which leads to a qualification, there may be specific requirements you need to meet when you are on placement, your learning provider should make sure the employer understands what these are and is able to help you meet them.

## **Providing feedback**

An important part of learning from placements for both employers and yourself is having and giving clear, constructive and honest feedback.

Your mentor should be monitoring your practice giving you feedback which supports your learning and development. An end of placement evaluation gives an opportunity for you and the employer to look back over your placement, reflect on the experience and what has been learnt. There is an [end of placement evaluation](#) template which may help you do this.



There may be times where you have to provide negative feedback or report concerns about the placement. The process for reporting any concerns should be agreed before you start your placement.

## **Contact us**

If you have a question or if you can't find what you are looking for [get in touch with us](#).