



Department of Education and  
Early Childhood Development

# Structured Workplace Learning Manual

For Victorian secondary  
schools



**Published by the  
Department of Education and  
Early Childhood Development**  
Melbourne  
March 2014

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This document is also available on the internet at  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/careers/work/Pages/structuredlearning.aspx>

## A Quick Guide to this Manual

<b>Section A</b>	<b>Overview</b> This Section outlines the principles and benefits of structured workplace learning and provides a glossary of key terms.
<b>Section B</b>	<b>Requirements and Conditions Applicable to Structured Workplace Learning</b> This Section gives a detailed outline of the requirements and conditions that apply when developing, delivering and managing a structured workplace learning program in secondary schools.
<b>Section C</b>	<b>Roles and Responsibilities</b> This Section details the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders involved in the delivery of structured workplace learning programs, and provides guidance on the coordination required for delivering a successful program.
<b>Section D</b>	<b>Student Safety and Welfare</b> This Section provides guidance to assist in securing student safety and welfare in every structured workplace learning placement. Things that must be planned for include the potential for unacceptable workplace behaviour (harassment, bullying, violence, discrimination), the needs of students with disabilities, and employer priorities for safeguarding young workers, including their induction and supervision.
<b>Section E</b>	<b>Sample Forms</b> This Section contains a list of sample forms for structured workplace learning.
<b>Section F</b>	<b>Frequently Asked Questions and Useful Websites</b> This Section provides frequently asked questions and a list of websites that may assist with developing materials to support delivery of a structured workplace learning program.



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# 1. Section A: Overview

## What is structured workplace learning?

Structured workplace learning is on-the-job training during which a student is expected to master a set of skills or competencies related to a course accredited by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) or the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), and undertaken as part of either the VCE or the VCAL.

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) has determined that structured workplace learning is an appropriate and valuable component of all VET undertaken by VCE and VCAL students. Structured workplace learning complements the training undertaken at school or at a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and should be spread across the duration of the training program. It provides the context for:

- enhanced skill development;
- practical application of industry knowledge;
- assessment of units of competence/modules, as determined by the school or RTO; and
- increased employment opportunities.

## Principles of quality structured workplace learning

Quality structured workplace learning is integrated into a program that operates within:

- a framework which provides the opportunity for all students to access it (though not all students may choose to do so); and
- the context of vocational courses which are recognised by industry, are responsive to industry needs, and form part of a student's exit credentials.

Quality workplace learning is structured, in that it:

- has a clearly articulated and documented purpose;
- has clearly identified and documented learning outcomes for students within accredited programs which are linked to post-school qualifications;
- is of sufficient duration and depth to enable students to acquire a reasonable understanding of the enterprise/industry to be able to demonstrate competence according to industry standards of at least Level 1 of the AQF;
- matches students' skills and interests with the structured training; and
- thoroughly prepares students, teachers and employers beforehand so that expectations and outcomes of the structured workplace learning are clearly understood by all parties.

Quality structured workplace learning is monitored, in that:

- the learning is coordinated by staff with appropriate expertise and adequate resources; and
- support is available to students and employers throughout the course of the structured workplace learning.

Quality structured workplace learning is regulated, to ensure that:

- the health, education and moral and material welfare of students is protected;
- students work in a non-discriminatory and harassment free environment;
- students receive appropriate training and instruction in occupational health and safety;
- students are not exploited by being continuously engaged in a production or service capacity, or being used to substitute for the employment of employees or the engagement of contractors and payment of appropriate wages or fees for service; and
- students understand the roles and responsibilities of employees in the workplace and are expected to follow reasonable directions of their supervisors and other employees.

Quality structured workplace learning is assessed, so that:

- students' competencies achieved in the workplace are measured against industry standards, and contribute to the overall assessment of the program; and
- there are mechanisms for recording and reporting of students' competencies.

## Benefits of structured workplace learning

### Benefits for students

- Improved understanding of the work environment and employers' expectations.
- Exposure to the world of work.
- Increased self-understanding, maturity, independence and self-confidence, especially in the workplace.
- Increased motivation to continue study and/or undertake further training.
- Enhanced opportunities for part-time and casual employment.
- Opportunity to develop and gain work-related competencies.
- Opportunity to acquire skills relevant to the workplace.
- Opportunity to try out career choices before leaving school.
- Opportunity to develop contacts with potential employers.

- Opportunity to demonstrate mastery of specific skills and competencies related to the accredited course which they are undertaking.
- Opportunity to undertake relevant courses which count towards the student's exit credential and articulate into further education and training.

#### **Benefits for schools**

- Improved knowledge and understanding of changing work environments.
- A positive relationship between the school, local community and industry.
- Opportunity to work collaboratively with parents in their child's schooling.
- Providing a relevant curriculum which helps students develop skills for life-long learning.

#### **Benefits for parents/guardians**

- Opportunity to discuss with their child the topic of work, including their own previous and current experiences.
- Opportunity to positively contribute to their child's secondary education.
- Opportunity for family involvement in discussions about further education, training and employment.

#### **Benefits for employers**

- Opportunity for involvement in the education and development of students.
- Opportunity to contribute to the development of entry level skills in industry.
- Opportunity to promote to young people the career potential of their industry.
- Opportunity to develop the training and supervisory skills of employees.
- Opportunity for employers to mentor young people in their career decision-making.
- Opportunity to create dialogue with teachers on aspects of work readiness and other matters related to work.
- Building industry-school partnerships that provide for local community needs and endeavours.
- Encouraging students to become involved with businesses in their local community.

#### **Benefits for the community**

- Provision of links between LLENs, Workplace Learning Coordinator (WLC) services, local government, industry, unions, and education and training providers, to maximise employment and training outcomes for young people.
- Involvement of schools, training organisations and communities in collaborative projects.
- Opportunity for young people to become actively involved in building the local community, especially in regional and rural areas.

## Glossary

**Accredited Course of Study:** A course of study accredited by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) or the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA).

**Articulation:** Arrangements agreed to by the accrediting organisations, enabling students to move either horizontally or vertically between education, training and employment through formal linkages between the different courses of study.

**Assessment:** The process of measuring the learning which has occurred in the training which determines if the student has mastered the designated set of skills and competencies.

**Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF):** A unified system of national qualifications in schools, vocational education and training (TAFE and private providers) and the higher education sector (mainly universities). The AQF links qualifications together and is a highly visible, quality-assured national system of educational recognition which promotes lifelong learning and a seamless and diverse education and training system.

**AQTF:** Australian Qualifications and Training Framework

**Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA):** ASQA is the national regulator for Australia's vocational education and training sector. ASQA regulates courses and training providers to ensure nationally approved quality standards are met.

**Career education:** The development of knowledge, skills and attitudes through a planned program of learning experiences that assists students to make informed decisions about their study and/or work options and enables effective participation in working life (MCEETYA Career Education Taskforce, 1998).

**Career Education Association of Victoria (CEAV):** The peak association for Victorian careers practitioners. Its mission is to support careers practitioners to improve and extend the quality of their program, promote career development as a lifelong exercise and increase the likelihood of appropriate career choices by students and adult learners.

**Certificate:** An officially recognised qualification or award gained upon completion of an Accredited Course of Study.

**Competency:** The ability of a student to perform a particular task in a particular context and to apply knowledge and skills to new tasks and situations.

**Credit transfer:** Credit earned in one program being accepted by providers delivering other programs.

**Duty of care:** The School Policy and Advisory Guide states that: Whenever a student–teacher relationship exists, the teacher has a special duty of care. This is defined as: “A teacher is to take such measures as are reasonable in the circumstances to protect a student under the teacher’s charge from risks of injury that the teacher should reasonably have foreseen.” [Richards v State of Victoria (1969) VR 136 at p. 141.] This duty can extend beyond school grounds, and includes school approved activities such as structured workplace learning. In order to discharge their duty of care in these

circumstances, Principals should comply with Part 5.4 of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* and Ministerial Order 55 – Structured Workplace Learning Arrangements.

**Learning outcomes:** Statements of performance expected of students undertaking Accredited Courses of Study.

**Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs):** There are 31 LLENs in Victoria which work to create strategic, sustainable partnerships that improve participation, engagement, attainment and transition outcomes for young people. LLENs are made up a range of groups and organisations including education and training providers, business and industry, community agencies, and parent and family organisations.

**Ministerial Order 55 – Structured Workplace Learning Arrangements:** This provides the operational framework for the delivery of structured workplace learning programs in Victorian secondary schools.

**myfuture:** Australia's national career information and exploration service, helping people to make career decisions, plan career pathways and manage work transitions.

**National Competency Standards:** Standards developed by industry, which describe the outcomes sought by industry in competency terms, packaged against the AQF.

**Reciprocating State:** Reciprocal arrangements exist for Victorian students to undertake structured workplace learning in New South Wales and South Australia.

**Recognition of prior learning:** This refers to the recognition of skills and knowledge through prior education, training and/or experience.

**Regional Careers Network:** Across Victoria there are over 30 regional groups of school careers coordinators who meet on a regular basis. One function of the groups is to coordinate the timing of workplace learning programs in their region. This is to minimise the demands made on employers, and maximise the number of places available for student placements within each year. Networks can also work together to design evaluation forms and associated documents for employers and students. The CEAV can assist teachers to identify their local network.

**Registered Training Organisation (RTO):** Under the AQTF, an RTO is a training organisation registered with the local State/Territory Training Recognition Authority involved with the delivery or assessment of nationally recognised training. The RTO has responsibility for the recording and reporting of assessment outcomes, appeals and the issuing of qualifications and statements of attainment. An RTO registered with the VRQA or the ASQA will be approved to deliver certain defined courses within Victoria.

**School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBATs):** In Victoria, SBATs offer students enrolled in the VCE or the VCAL the opportunity to combine school with part-time employment and VET.

**Structured workplace learning (SWL):** On-the-job training during which a student is expected to master a set of skills or competencies related to a course accredited by the VRQA or the ASQA, and undertaken as part of either the VCE or the VCAL.

**Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator:** This person is the link between the student, the school, other training providers and the employer. The Structured

Workplace Learning Coordinator assists students to locate placements, liaises with employers, provides support during the placement to both the student and employer, promotes workplace learning programs to employers and monitors workplace assessments. The Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator is an employee of the school, nominated by the Principal.

**Supervisor:** The person nominated by the employer to directly supervise the student while undertaking a structured workplace learning placement. Where required, the supervisor will assess the student at appropriate times and communicate results to the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator.

**TAFE:** Technical and Further Education

**Training Package:** A flexible set of national resources designed to provide guidance on industry training requirements within the context of a national competency-based qualifications system. National competency standards, assessment guidelines and national qualifications form the fundamental components of training packages. These components may be supported by assessment materials, learning strategies, professional development materials and unit cost information.

**Training program:** A structured approach to the development and attainment of competencies for a particular AQF qualification to meet the requirements of the endorsed components of the Training Packages. Training programs are negotiated between providers, employers, trainees and (in the case of School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships) schools. They include the choice of units or options within the package and the method, training and location for achieving the competencies.

**VCAL:** Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning

**VCE:** Victorian Certificate of Education

**VET:** Vocational Education and Training

**Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA):** The VCAA is an independent statutory body that provides high quality curriculum, assessment and reporting for all Victorian students.

**Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA):** The VRQA registers and monitors education and training providers and apprenticeships and traineeships.

**Work experience:** The short-term placement of secondary school students with employers to provide insights into the industry, and the workplace in which they are located. Students are placed with employers primarily to observe and learn – not to undertake activities which require extensive training or expertise. It is generally undertaken in Year 9 or Year 10.

**Workplace Learning Coordinator Services:** Workplace Learning Coordinator (WLC) Services work with secondary schools, VET providers, Learn Local adult community education providers, LLENs and local employers to coordinate work placements for School-Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships, structured workplace learning and work experience.

## 2. Section B: Requirements and Conditions Applicable to Structured Workplace Learning

### Age of student

The minimum age for a student undertaking structured workplace learning is 15 years.

### Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form

All structured workplace learning arrangements in Victoria or in a Reciprocating State must be made using the Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form attached to Ministerial Order 55. All sections of this form must be completed and signed before the structured workplace learning commences.

**NOTE:** The Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form must not be used to make an arrangement in a State or Territory which is not a Reciprocating State.

The Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form can be accessed at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/careers/work/Pages/structuredlearning.aspx>

The Arrangement Form must be signed by:

- the employer;
- the student;
- the parent/guardian of the student (if the student is under 18 years of age); and
- the Principal or Acting Principal (this authority cannot be delegated to a Deputy Principal or other member of staff).

A copy of the Arrangement Form signed by the Principal must be provided to each party. The Principal should retain the original copy.

Variations or amendments to the Arrangement Form may only be made in writing and must be signed by the employer, student, parent/guardian (if the student is under 18 years of age) and the Principal.

**NOTE:** It is preferable that an original copy of the Arrangement Form is signed by all parties, but it is acceptable for an employer to sign and fax, or scan and email, the form to the school, as long as the final copy of the Arrangement Form signed by the Principal is clear, legible and has not had any information obscured or cut off during the fax/scan process. A copy of the form signed by the Principal must be provided to each party.

### **Retention of the Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form**

The Principal must retain a copy of the Arrangement Form for a period of 5 years, or as otherwise stated in the *Public Records Act 1975* or in any other relevant legislation from time to time.

If the employer advises the Principal that the industry to which the structured workplace learning arrangement relates includes potential exposure of the student to scheduled carcinogenic substances and/or other hazardous substances, the Principal must retain a copy of the Arrangement Form for 30 years from the date the student last worked at the employer's workplace.

If a WorkSafe Insurance claim is made, remarks relating to the structured workplace learning (including the claim number and details of any injury or illness) should be retained with the relevant Arrangement Form. Copies of all relevant medical certificates are also to be retained by the school.

### **Timing of a structured workplace learning program**

Structured workplace learning must take place during the school year: that is, between the first school day of the year and last school day of the year, as determined by the school.

Students may undertake structured workplace learning during the holidays in Terms 1, 2 and 3, but not during the holidays at the end of the year (i.e. the Christmas/summer holiday period). However, students should be encouraged to undertake structured workplace learning during school time and within the school week.

If structured workplace learning is undertaken during the school term holidays, the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator must be available as a contact person for the student during the period of the arrangement.

A structured workplace learning placement may only take place outside the school year if the Principal is satisfied that it is necessary for the purposes of the relevant Accredited Course of Study.

### **Cancellation of structured workplace learning**

An arrangement may be cancelled at any time by written notice from the Principal to the employer, or from the employer to the Principal, sent to each of the other parties. It is effective immediately upon receipt of the written notice from the relevant party.

An employer must not cancel a structured workplace learning arrangement without consulting the Principal, unless it is in circumstances where it is not reasonable to require the employer to do so.

### **Contact during the placement**

The *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* requires that the Principal or the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator contacts the student at least once during the placement. Contact may be made by either visiting or telephoning the workplace and speaking to the employer and the student. A sample Record of Contact Form can be found in Section E.

## Hours of work

Students are only permitted to undertake structured workplace learning during normal working hours (i.e. normal working hours for a standard shift without overtime in their chosen industry).

Students are not permitted to work between 11.00 pm and 6.00 am. They are also not permitted to work beyond a time which is ten hours before the start time of the next structured workplace learning day, or a school day which a student is expected to attend.

However, a student may work beyond the hours referred to above, where the Principal determines that working beyond those hours is necessary for the purposes of the relevant Accredited Course of Study, and is not detrimental to the health, education and moral and material welfare of the student.

Students may undertake structured workplace learning during the weekend only if:

- the placement cannot take place during the school week;
- the Principal is satisfied that it is appropriate for the structured workplace learning to take place, and is satisfied that it does not interfere with the welfare and the educational program of the student; and
- the Principal and the parent/guardian (if the student is under 18 years of age) are satisfied with the arrangement.

The employer must ensure that the minimum conditions and entitlements that apply in Victoria in relation to a meal break are adhered to, i.e. at least a 30 minute break after working continuously for five hours.

## Duration of structured workplace learning

The number of days or hours for an arrangement must not exceed the number of days or hours which:

- are set out in the relevant Accredited Course of Study; or
- are set out by the Principal in approving an arrangement where no days or hours are established by the relevant Accredited Course of Study; and
- can be reasonably undertaken by the student within a school year.

## Travel and accommodation arrangements

The student or the parent/guardian (where the student is under 18 years of age) is responsible for the student's transport to and from the workplace.

If it is proposed that the student may need to undertake vehicle travel with their employer and/or supervisor during the arrangement (including transporting the student to and/or from the workplace), the employer must complete the Structured Workplace Learning Travel and Accommodation Form. The student or the parent/guardian (where the student is under 18 years of age) must give their consent by also completing this form.

If a student is required to stay at accommodation other than his or her normal place of residence while undertaking structured workplace learning, the student or parent/guardian (where the student is under 18 years of age) is responsible for making suitable arrangements and must complete the Structured Workplace Learning Travel and Accommodation Form.

Responsibility for the control and care of the student, at all times when the student is not under the control and care of the employer or any other person, rests with the student or their parent/guardian.

The Structured Workplace Learning Travel and Accommodation Form can be accessed at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/careers/work/Pages/structuredlearning.aspx>

## Permitted number of structured workplace learning students

An employer is not permitted to employ more than one structured workplace learning student for every three employees at the workplace.

An employer may engage more than the permitted number of students only where:

- the circumstances of a particular Accredited Course of Study require the placement of a student in a particular work location where the minimum ratio cannot apply;
- the employer certifies, in writing, that all students will be adequately supervised;
- the Principal is satisfied that the placement is not detrimental to the health, education and moral and material of any student in that workplace, and will not lessen the acquisition of skills or knowledge by any student for the Accredited Course of Study;
- the Principal, or the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator, will undertake to attend the workplace as frequently as is reasonably practicable; and
- the number of students will not exceed one student for each employee of the employer.

## Assessment

The purpose of structured workplace learning is the enhancement of learning outcomes and the actual assessment tasks to be undertaken are determined in consultation with the employer/supervisor. Schools are advised to keep a record of the learning outcomes that students are expected to demonstrate in the workplace and the negotiated workplace activities they undertake.

It is expected that under Training Packages, there will be increased demand for structured workplace learning undertaken as part of a VETiS program for both delivery and assessment purposes.

For more information on assessment, refer to the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) website: <http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/index.aspx>

## Student debriefing after a placement

Students should be provided with the opportunity to debrief after their placement. This will involve reflecting on:

- their learning in the workplace;
- the impact on career planning;
- how their experience can assist them to prepare their pathway plans or portfolios;
- their work readiness; and
- comments made by the employer/supervisor on the evaluation form.

Structured Workplace Learning Coordinators/other relevant staff should collect written or verbal feedback from employers, parents and staff members. These comments provide insight into the value of the placement for the student from the perspective of parents and employers.

Structured Workplace Learning Coordinators and other relevant staff should encourage students to share their experience with other students. At the conclusion of the structured workplace learning placement, students should be encouraged to write a letter of appreciation to the employer/supervisor.

## Payment and taxation

The minimum rate of payment for students undertaking structured workplace learning in Victoria is \$5 per day, except:

- If the structured workplace learning placement is with a Commonwealth Department or a body established under a Commonwealth Act, no payment will be made. If the student or the parent/guardian is not prepared to accept this condition, then it is their choice not to proceed with a Commonwealth placement. On the Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form, the line “Rate of payment” should be completed with the words “Commonwealth establishment – exempt from paying”.
- If the structured workplace learning placement is with an organisation that is engaged wholly or mainly in an educational, charitable or community welfare service not conducted for profit, the student may determine that the whole of his or her payment will be donated back to that organisation. If the student determines that the whole of his or her payment will be donated back to that organisation, the parent/guardian (where the student is under 18 years of age) must provide written consent to the proposed donation.

Students aged 18 years and over will be required to provide a Tax File Number declaration to the employer. The employer will be required to withhold amounts in accordance with the tax tables (where applicable), issue payment summaries and report these payments to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO), as they would do for their employees.

Where the student is under 18 years of age, if the payment made to the student is \$356 or less per week, the employer will not be obliged to:

- make any withholding;
- collect tax file number declarations;
- issue payment summaries; or
- report payment details to the ATO.

## Privacy legislation

Victorian privacy laws (*Information Privacy Act 2000* and *Health Records Act 2001*) protect the personal and health information of students.

The information provided by students, parents/guardians and employers is obtained for the purposes of coordinating structured workplace learning. It must be kept confidential by all parties and should not be used for any other purposes.

If the Principal has disclosed any health information to the employer, the employer must maintain the confidentiality of that health information and only disclose it to another party if the student requires treatment for a known medical condition or in the case of a medical emergency.

The Department is committed to protecting the privacy of personal and health information. For a copy of the Department's information privacy policy please see: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Pages/privacypolicy.aspx>

Commonwealth privacy legislation does not apply to the Victorian Government or Victorian Government funded services.

## WorkSafe insurance

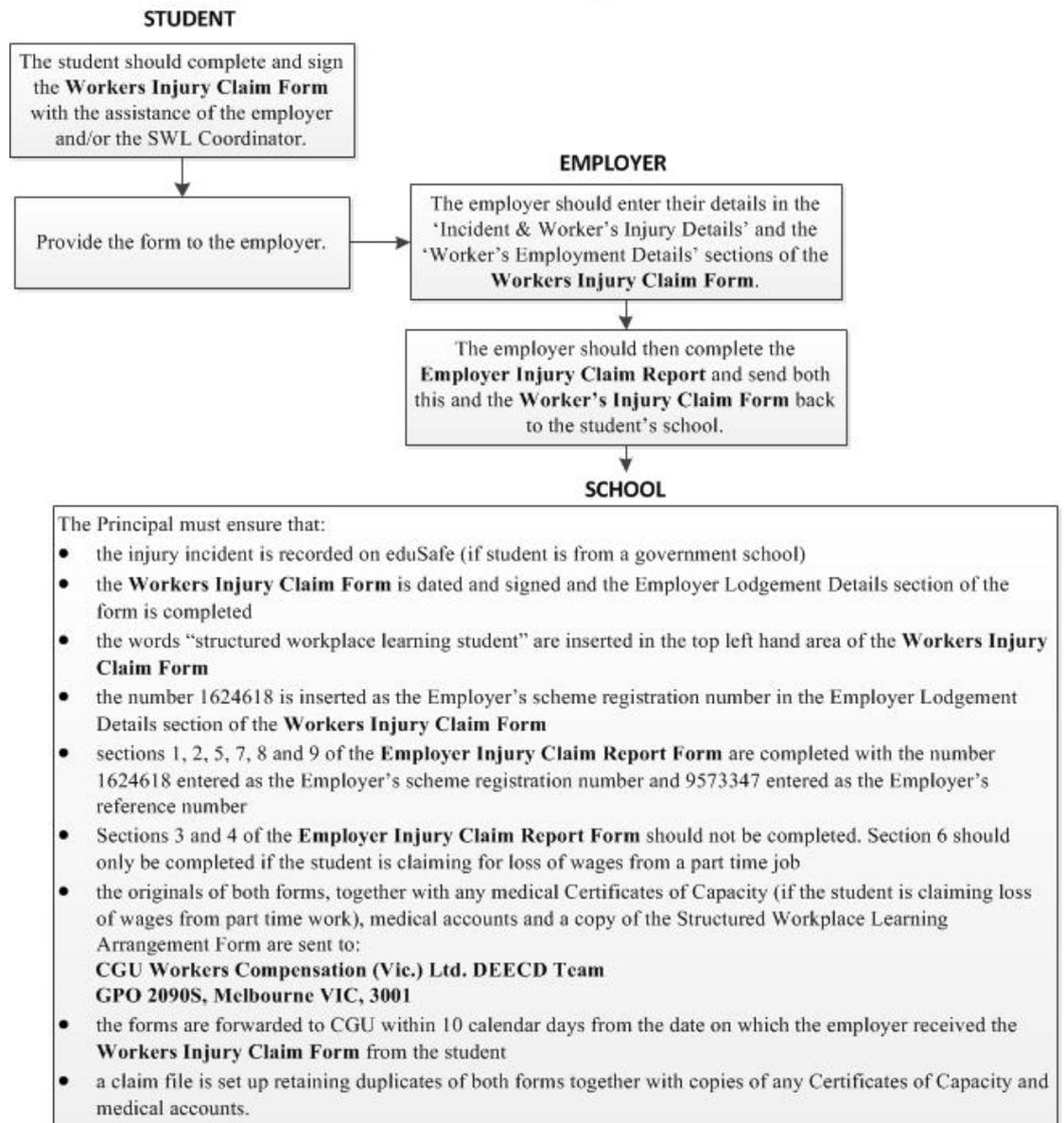
Students who suffer work related injuries or illnesses while undertaking structured workplace learning placements are entitled to compensation under the WorkSafe scheme. All structured workplace learning students are covered under the Department's WorkSafe Insurance policy.

Employers of structured workplace learning students are exempt from the normal employer obligations to provide suitable employment or plan for the return to work of structured workplace learning students who may be injured while undertaking a structured workplace learning placement.

Also, employers of structured workplace learning students are not liable for any claims costs or consequent premium costs that may be incurred as a result of a structured workplace learning student lodging a WorkSafe claim. Claims from structured workplace learning students are lodged against the Department's WorkSafe Insurance policy and the costs are met under the Department's policy.

**NOTE:** WorkSafe Insurance does not cover people travelling to and from work.

## Procedure for Lodging a WorkSafe Claim



WorkSafe claim forms can be accessed at:

- Workers Injury Claim Form

<http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/forms-and-publications/forms-and-publications/worker-s-injury-claim-form>

- Employer Injury Claim Report Form

<http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/forms-and-publications/forms-and-publications/employer-injury-claim-report>

## Public liability insurance

When a structured workplace learning arrangement is entered into by a Principal of a government school, it is the obligation of the Department to hold or take out public liability insurance to provide at least \$10 million cover per event. The parties to be insured are the student and the employer.

When an arrangement is entered into by a Principal of a non-government school, it is the obligation of that school to hold or take out public liability insurance to provide at least \$10 million cover per event. The parties to be insured are the student and the school.

When an arrangement is entered into by a Principal of a non-government school not covered by public liability insurance as set out above, the employer must be informed of this by the Principal of that school at least four weeks prior to the commencement of that arrangement. In this event, the employer will be obliged to hold or take out public liability insurance to provide at least \$10 million cover per event for any loss or damage which may be caused by any act or omission of the student while engaged under the arrangement. The parties to be insured are the student and the employer.

The Principal must specify in the area provided on the Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form the type of coverage for the student.

## Interstate placements

### **New South Wales and South Australia**

Reciprocal arrangements exist for Victorian students to undertake structured workplace learning in New South Wales and South Australia. These arrangements are primarily for students in those schools situated in regions adjoining the border Victoria shares with those states.

Students should be strongly encouraged to find work placements in their own state and interstate structured workplace learning should only be arranged as a last resort – i.e. where in the judgement of the Principal no suitable local placement exists or where there are special educational reasons for making such an arrangement.

A school's responsibility for its students undertaking structured workplace learning in New South Wales and South Australia is the same as if the student were undertaking their placement in Victoria.

Permission is no longer required from the New South Wales Department of Education and Communities or the South Australian Department for Education and Child Development for interstate structured workplace learning. These placements must be made using the arrangement forms attached to Ministerial Order 55.

All Victorian students undertaking structured workplace learning in New South Wales or South Australia are covered under the Department's WorkSafe Insurance and Public Liability Insurance policies.

**NOTE:**

- Victorian students are not paid while undertaking placements in New South Wales and South Australia. On the Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form, the line “Rate of payment” should be crossed out and the words “Interstate placement – payment not required” written.
- Placements should only be made within New South Wales and South Australia school terms.

### Other States and Territories

A Principal may only make a structured workplace learning arrangement with an employer in a State or Territory, other than New South Wales and South Australia, if the Principal is satisfied that it is appropriate for the arrangement to be made. The Principal should be satisfied that:

- it is in the interest of the student for the structured workplace learning to occur;
- that the physical and moral welfare of the student will be assured; and
- the student or the parent/guardian of the student (where the student is under 18 years of age) has made suitable insurance arrangements ensuring:
  - cover for the student for any injuries in the course of the arrangement at least comparable to that applicable in Victoria to a student under the *Accident Compensation Act 1985*, and
  - public liability insurance coverage of at least \$10 million cover per event in respect of any loss or damage which may be caused by any act or omission of the student whilst engaged under the arrangement.

Students and parents/guardians are at liberty to approach any insurance company to obtain details of insurance that will provide this cover.

**NOTE:** International structured workplace learning placements are not allowed under any circumstances.

## Overseas students

All overseas students enrolled in Victorian schools can undertake structured workplace learning as part of their learning program. When a structured workplace learning arrangement is being made for an overseas student, all of the terms and conditions of the visa held by the student must be complied with, as must all the requirements of Ministerial Order 55.

As workplace learning is an important component of the school curriculum and a student’s learning program, structured workplace learning undertaken by overseas students does not count towards work entitlement hours of the visa held by the student.

For further information, please contact the Department's International Student Programs Unit on (+61) (03) 9637 2990.

### 3. Section C: Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities outlined in this Section should be read in conjunction with those described in Ministerial Order 55 – Structured Workplace Learning Arrangements. The Ministerial Order sets out in detail the responsibilities and duties which are broadly outlined here. Ministerial Order 55 can be accessed at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/careers/work/Pages/structuredlearning.aspx>

#### Principal

The Principal has a pivotal role in the organisation of structured workplace learning programs. Although the Principal will rely on the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator to organise the arrangements for the placement, it is nevertheless very important that the Principal is aware that all relevant guidelines and procedures are followed.

Principals should ensure that Structured Workplace Learning Coordinators and other relevant staff are familiar with the conditions laid down in Part 5.4 of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* and Ministerial Order 55 – Structured Workplace Learning Arrangements. Failure to abide by these conditions may render the arrangement null and void, and leave the student vulnerable.

The Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form must be signed by the Principal or Acting Principal. This authority cannot be delegated to a Deputy Principal or other member of staff.

#### Before the placement

The Principal should ensure that:

- the health, education and moral and material welfare of the student will not suffer under the arrangement;
- the student will not be subjected to any form of exploitation, harassment or unlawful discrimination during the course of the arrangement;
- the proposed structured workplace learning will provide workplace learning suitable to the needs of the student, within the time frame specified and according to the student's capabilities;

**NOTE:** It is important that the Principal is aware of the needs and requirements of students with special needs (and in particular, of students with disabilities) and that the structured workplace learning undertaken by these students is within their capabilities.

- the proposed placement will provide structured workplace learning suitable to the needs of the Accredited Course of Study for which the arrangement is proposed and within the time frame specified in that arrangement;

- appropriate procedures are established and applied for making and recording assessments of the student's performance as required for the Accredited Course of Study;
- both the employer and the nominated supervisor/s of the student in the workplace are aware of their obligations to the student under the arrangement, as outlined in the Employer Acknowledgment section of the Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form;
- the employer, student and parent/guardian (where the student is under 18 years of age) have completed the relevant sections of the Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form;
- the distribution of structured workplace learning days during the school year under the proposed arrangement, or any other arrangements which have occurred or are likely to occur, does not disadvantage the student with regard to the rest of his/her educational program at school;
- the student has the capability to undertake the structured workplace learning as specified within the arrangement and to do so without exposing themselves or others in the workplace to any unacceptable risk;
- the student is undertaking occupational health and safety training that is part of their Accredited Course of Study, or has completed the required occupational health and safety program (safe@work, A Job Well Done, or Work Related Skills Unit 1) prior to the commencement of the structured workplace learning. For further information about this requirement, please refer to Section D;
- appropriate arrangements have been made for the student to travel to and from the workplace;
- where it is proposed that the student may be required to undertake vehicle travel with the employer that the student and parent/guardian (where the student is under 18 years of age) have given consent;
- where required, appropriate arrangements have been made for the student to stay at accommodation other than his or her normal place of residence;
- the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator has arranged with the student an appropriate time to contact the student at least once during the placement;
- the student has the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator's contact details to report any incidences of harassment, bullying or violence; and
- the employer has been provided with any necessary health information in relation to the student, including any information relating to any medical condition which may require treatment during the placement.

### **After the placement**

The Principal should ensure that arrangements are in place to ensure that:

- a debriefing session is held for the student (the student could present a report and feedback may be provided on the student's performance in the workplace),

- assessment is undertaken and results communicated to the appropriate people in a timely manner; and
- a letter of thanks is sent to the employer.

## Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator

The Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator provides the link between the student, the school and the employer and is the key figure in any structured workplace learning program.

The role of the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator is to assist students to find structured workplace learning positions, liaise with employers, ensure students are prepared for structured workplace learning, provide support during the placement to both the student and the employer, be the main point of contact between the student, employer and the school, and promote structured workplace learning programs to employers.

**NOTE:** It is imperative that the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator is familiar with the conditions laid down in Part 5.4 of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* and in Ministerial Order 55 – Structured Workplace Learning Arrangements.

### Before the placement

The Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator should:

- assist students to identify employers interested in structured workplace learning and arrange contact with those employers;
- where possible, arrange a meeting or contact with employers to explain the procedures and processes related to structured workplace learning;
- ensure students are undertaking or have completed the required occupational health and safety preparation;
- where possible, prepare the students to be conscious of potential risks and give them strategies to deal with these risks, such as the need to report perceived hazards or concerns to their supervisor without delay;
- ensure students are aware of equal opportunity and unlawful harassment and discrimination and have been given strategies to deal with these, e.g. discuss with the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator;
- ensure that supervisors have been allocated for each student and that there are adequate levels of supervision of the student to ensure their welfare and safety in a discrimination and harassment free working environment;
- ensure the Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form for each student is completed correctly and signed by all relevant parties, and that copies of the form have been given to the employer, the student and the parent/guardian (where the student is under 18 years of age);

- ensure the employer and student have clear expectations about the skills and competencies which the student is expected to gain in the workplace, and that the student will be given the opportunity to acquire these skills and competencies;
- ensure that the student and the employer/supervisor are aware of assessment procedures and the timing of assessment;
- ensure the student is 'work ready' and understands workplace behaviour and etiquette, including ensuring that students understand that they should not use the internet or other electronic communications for accessing illegal, offensive or inappropriate material; and
- ensure that the student knows what to do in case of lateness to work, absence and/or an accident.

### **During the placement**

The Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator should:

- make contact with the student at least once during the placement;
- provide support to the employer/supervisor if required;
- organise for assessment of the student to take place where required and appropriate; and
- be available as the first point of contact in case anything goes wrong and ensure that all correct procedures are followed if anything does go wrong.

### **After the placement**

The Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator should:

- follow up with the employer upon completion;
- conduct a debriefing session which allows the student to evaluate and reflect on the placement;
- finalise assessment and communicate results to the appropriate people; and
- ensure that letters of thanks are written to the employer by the student and the school.

## **Employer**

The employer must acknowledge on the Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form that he/she has read the Structured Workplace Learning Guidelines for Employers provided by the school.

The employer will:

- ensure the student is directly supervised throughout the placement;
- ensure the student has access to their supervisor(s) and knows how to report any problems or concerns;

- ensure that the student can readily contact the school if required during the placement;
- consult the Principal if it is deemed necessary to terminate the arrangement before the agreed time;
- undertake to pay the student a minimum of \$5 per day;
- provide feedback about the student's performance, i.e. complete a student evaluation and/or provide a student reference;
- liaise immediately (or as soon as possible) with the school Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator regarding any issues arising in the workplace;
- immediately contact the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator if the student is absent without notification; and
- immediately contact the Principal or the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator if the student becomes ill or is injured in the course of the placement.

#### **Before the placement**

The employer should ensure that:

- the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator and the student are aware of any special requirements (for example, starting and finishing times, special items of clothing, the need for confidentiality);
- a supervisor has been allocated to the student and that this person is aware of what is required of them during the placement; and
- they familiarise themselves with Ministerial Order 55 – Structured Workplace Learning Arrangements as it relates to them.

#### **During the placement**

The employer should ensure that:

- the student is inducted into the workplace on their first day of structured workplace learning;
- opportunities are provided for the student to acquire or enhance the skills and competencies required by their Accredited Course of Study;
- formal assessment takes place and the results are communicated to the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator;
- the student understands the tasks and activities they will undertake during the placement;
- where required, the student is provided with appropriate clothing and protective equipment and instructed in its use;
- the student is given adequate support and directly supervised at all times while undertaking work related activities;

- if the student becomes ill or is injured, the correct procedures are followed; and
- if any problems arise, the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator is contacted immediately so the problems can be addressed promptly.

### **After the placement**

The employer should ensure that:

- an employer evaluation is completed, discussed with the student and forwarded to the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator or given to the student;
- the workplace learning experience is discussed with the student to find out if the student was satisfied with the placement; and
- appropriate reimbursement has been paid to the student.

## **Student**

Students must be aware that they are representing their school while on structured workplace learning and must continue to observe school policies and codes of conduct.

Students should also follow general workplace rules and understand protocols regarding the internet. **In particular, students must not use the internet or other electronic communications for accessing illegal, offensive or inappropriate material.** They should be aware that some work placements might use sensitive information that must remain private and confidential.

### **Before the placement**

The student should:

- ensure they understand their obligations in relation to occupational health and safety in the workplace;
- complete and sign the Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form under the guidance of the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator;
- call or meet with the employer/supervisor on site before commencing the placement to discuss:
  - starting and finishing times;
  - arrangements for meal breaks;
  - clothing requirements;
  - tasks/activities to be performed;
  - workplace assessment;
  - any equipment or tools that the student may be required to bring; and
  - any special requirements the student may have;

- remind the employer at least two weeks prior to commencement of the upcoming placement; and
- ensure they have the contact details of the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator.

### **During the placement**

The student should:

- behave like an employee and follow requirements of the workplace and instructions given their employer/supervisor;
- be polite and courteous, wear clothing appropriate to the workplace and be punctual in attendance;
- perform tasks which will enable their skills and competencies to be assessed where appropriate;
- ensure that the skills and competencies being assessed are recorded, signed off, dated and the results communicated to the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator;
- show enthusiasm and initiative and be willing to learn;
- inform the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator and employer of expected absences from work, or necessarily late arrivals;
- inform the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator and employer if any unexpected absence or lateness occurs;
- immediately report all accidents, 'near misses' and hazardous situations in the workplace to their supervisor and the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator;
- immediately seek advice from their supervisor when unfamiliar with workplace procedures in regard to occupational health and safety, or uncertain about how any task should be done;
- report any concerns or issues to the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator;
- reflect their school's expectations with regard to courtesy and politeness while on structured workplace learning; and
- keep contact numbers of their parent/guardian, school and employer with them at all times during their placement so that they can inform these parties about any changes to working times or other issues which may arise.

### **After the placement**

The student should:

- discuss the placement with the employer;
- evaluate and reflect on the placement, and discuss the suitability of the placement with the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator;

- keep a copy of the employer evaluation for use in personal portfolio and future placements; and
- complete a letter of thanks to the employer.

## Parent or guardian

Parents/guardians have an important role in the successful delivery of structured workplace learning for their children. They play a vital role in discussing suitable structured workplace learning placements with their children and assisting them to understand roles and responsibilities in the world of work.

### Before the placement

The parent or guardian should:

- discuss information about occupations and industries that their child could consider for a structured workplace learning placement;
- assist their child to find a structured workplace learning placement;
- sign the Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form;
- make appropriate arrangements for their child to safely travel to and from structured workplace learning;
- make appropriate arrangements if their child is required to stay at accommodation other than their normal place of residence and complete the Structured Workplace Learning Travel and Accommodation Form;
- provide consent to any proposed vehicle travel that their child may undertake with the employer by completing the Structured Workplace Learning Travel and Accommodation Form; and
- provide any necessary health information relating to their child, including details of any medical condition which may require treatment during the placement.

### During the placement

The parent or guardian should:

- discuss the day's activities with their child and, if any problems are identified, encourage them to follow correct procedures to deal with the problem; and
- keep details of the workplace with them in case they need to contact their child.

### After the placement

The parent or guardian should:

- assist in the debriefing process on completion of structured workplace learning and encourage their child to reflect upon his/her experiences in the workplace; and
- encourage their child to continue their exploration of careers and occupations.

## 4. Section D: Student Safety and Welfare

### Occupational health and safety

Safety in the workplace is important to everyone. The Department considers the safety of students undertaking structured workplace learning of paramount importance. Any workplace hazard not effectively managed could cause injury to the student and/or other persons.

A Principal must be satisfied that a student is either undertaking or has completed occupational health and safety (OHS) training prior to commencing structured workplace learning as follows:

- Where a student is undertaking structured workplace learning as part of a VET program within an Accredited Course of Study, the Principal must be satisfied that the student is undertaking OHS training relevant to the workplace where the student will be engaged.
- Where a student is undertaking structured workplace learning as part of a non-VET program (e.g. a Foundation VCAL student who is using a VCE Technology study to meet the Industry Specific Skills Strand), or a work placement that is not related to their VET program within an Accredited Course of Study, the Principal must be satisfied that the student has completed an OHS program required by the Department as follows:
  - If the student is undertaking VCE Industry and Enterprise, they must complete *safe@work* or, for students with disabilities, *A Job Well Done*.
  - If the student is undertaking VCAL, they must complete *Work Related Skills Unit 1* and *safe@work*.

Before a student undertakes structured workplace learning, it is vital that the student is made aware of the OHS requirements and arrangements in place at their workplace.

A responsible employer will also conduct regular workplace hazard inspections and implement a program of effective risk controls, understood by everyone in the workplace. Warning signs should be displayed prominently wherever they are required, and the meaning of the signs must be made known to employees and visitors, including students.

As part of induction into the workplace, the employer should explain to the student what hazards are present in the workplace, why risk controls are in place and how they are put into practice.

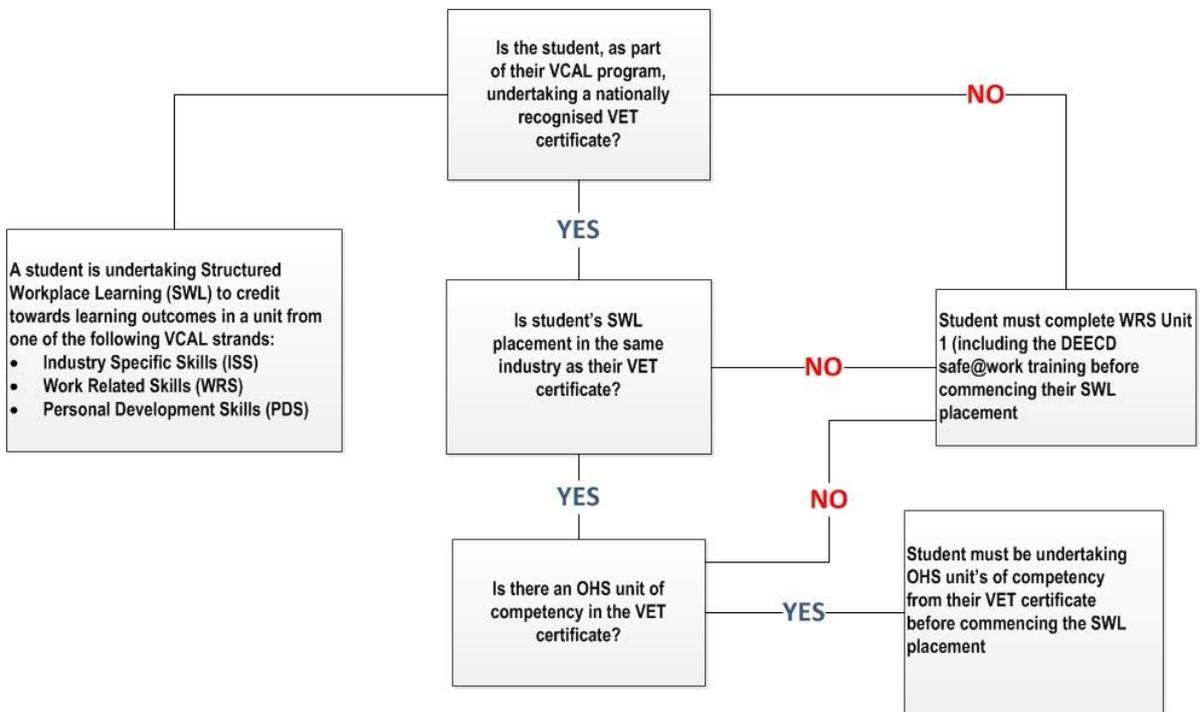
Students should be told that if they have any concerns, such as not knowing how to use equipment or feeling that a task may involve a risk to their safety, they must speak to their supervisor before proceeding. Safety must always be the employer's, and the student's, first priority.

## Structured workplace learning and VCAL

VCAL students may undertake structured workplace learning to satisfy some or all the learning outcome requirements in the VCAL Work Related Skills Strand units and VCAL Personal Development Skills Strand units of their VCAL certificate.

VCAL students may also undertake structured workplace learning as part of their Vocational Education and Training (VET) certificate in the Industry Specific Skills Strand of their VCAL certificate.

The diagram below has been prepared to assist VCAL providers in preparing VCAL students at Foundation, Intermediate and Senior Certificate levels for a structured workplace learning placement.



## Safety and young workers: things employers should consider

In 2009–10, workers under 25 years of age (young workers) accounted for 20% of work-related injuries experienced by all Australian workers<sup>1</sup>.

Employers must pay special attention to the needs of young workers, who lack experience and may know little of workplace hazards or the procedures established to

<sup>1</sup> Safe Work Australia (2013), *Work-related injuries experienced by young workers in Australia, 2009–10*, Safe Work Australia, Canberra

manage them. They are also likely to feel they should try to carry out any job allocated to them, even if they don't feel confident about their ability to do so safely.

Employers should take time to plan a student's program, evaluating the potential for harm in each task and each environment. They must also make sure the student is supervised throughout their placement by someone who understands the job and the hazards of the workplace.

Tasks which require training in safe work procedures should be assessed with particular care. For example, if the training is simply how to lift an object safely, the task may prove to be acceptable, providing the object is not too heavy or awkward and that it can be lifted without risk. However, if the training requires close supervision and repeated practice before the task can be performed safely, it may not be suitable for structured workplace learning.

## Induction

Induction must be provided for students on the first day of their placement. Students are inexperienced, and will not be familiar with the workplace or the way things are done. Like any new starter, it will take them a few days to remember names and find their way around. Don't expect the student to remember everything after hearing it just once!

Induction should include supervision arrangements, layout of the work location and 'no-go' areas.

### Responsibilities

Inform the student that safety is the most important consideration during their placement. The employer has a legal duty of care for the student during the placement, and in turn the student must follow the health and safety procedures in which they have been instructed.

### Explain supervisory arrangements

The student may be directly supervised by more than one person during the week. Introduce those who are available, and make a note of the ones the student will need to catch up with later. Explain what the student should do if their supervisor is not present at any time – who should they notify if they need to go to a different part of the building, or leave the building altogether?

Students are not 'substitute employees'. They are not at a workplace to boost productivity or carry out unpleasant, dirty, repetitive or boring jobs that employees don't want to do.

### Introduce the Health and Safety Representative

If there is a Health and Safety Representative at your workplace, arrange a time for them to discuss their role with the student.

### Explain first aid and emergency arrangements

Show the student where the first aid kit is located and introduce them to the first aider for the area where they will be working. Outline emergency arrangements and show

the evacuation plan including designated assembly points. Explain that in the event of an emergency, the student must follow direction from identified wardens.

### **Explain reporting requirements for incidents, accidents and near misses**

Incidents and accidents must be reported without delay. Explain that incidents include 'near misses', where no-one was injured but the potential for injury was apparent.

### **Provide an orientation tour of the workplace**

At induction, assist the student to build a mental picture of the workplace layout. You should explain what happens in each part of the building, and point out locations where the student may be working during the week.

### **Confirm any medical information provided**

Confirm any medical information provided by the student, parent/guardian or school. Does the student have any medical condition (e.g. asthma) that may require treatment? Is the student taking any medication?

Such information must be treated as confidential and only disclosed to other parties if treatment is required for a known medical condition or in the case of an emergency.

## **Supervision**

Structured workplace learning students must be provided with appropriate supervision while in the workplace. This means that the supervisor:

- is within sight and sound of the student at all times while they are undertaking work related activities; and
- is aware of what else is happening nearby – what employees are doing, what machinery or equipment is in operation.

Employees who are nominated as supervisors must understand that an important part of their responsibility is to provide instruction and training to the student throughout the placement.

It should be made clear to the student that they must report directly to their supervisor when entering, leaving and returning to the workplace.

## **Planning**

It is useful to put together a timetable before the student arrives. While this may need to be altered during the placement, a planned program is likely to be more rewarding for the student, and reduces the chances of exposing them to risks arising from unplanned activities.

Things to take into account	Questions to ask before the placement
The student's attitude, behaviour and maturity.	Does the student appear physically mature enough to safely undertake planned tasks?  How closely should they be supervised?
The student's previous experience or training.	Has the student worked with adults before?  Does the student already have some of the competencies required?
The student's understanding of the industry and the kind of jobs people around them will be doing.	What does the student know about your industry and its hazards?  Does the student have an understanding of the work environment, processes and tasks?
The student's confidence to raise problems with their supervisors (this includes problems with the tasks they are given and possible problems arising from interaction with employees at the workplace).	Would the student feel confident to tell their supervisor they are having difficulty performing a particular task?  Would the student feel comfortable to make a complaint if necessary about another person's behaviour towards them?
The student's ability to make judgements about their own safety and the safety of others.	Would the student be able to recognise an unsafe item of equipment or a dangerous situation?  Would the student act on their concerns by reporting them to others without delay?

## Unacceptable behaviour in the workplace

Under Victorian law (*Equal Opportunity Act 1995*, *Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001*) and Commonwealth law (*Racial Discrimination Act 1975*, *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* and *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*) it is unlawful for employers and educational authorities to sexually harass, victimise or discriminate against employees and students. There should be an adequate level of supervision to ensure the safety and welfare of the student in a non-discriminatory and harassment free working environment.

Bullying, harassment and violence must not be tolerated in the workplace. Structured Workplace Learning Coordinators and other relevant staff should familiarise themselves with issues related to harassment, bullying and occupational violence. The information which follows aims to guide practitioners towards identifying forms of workplace harassment and bullying, and offers strategies and guidance to assist in the development of appropriate policies in this regard.

Employers have legal responsibilities to do as much as is reasonably practicable to eliminate or reduce risks to employees' health and safety. Employees also have legal responsibilities about how they behave toward others in the workplace. Unfortunately, harassment of different kinds does take place in some workplaces, as does bullying in various forms.

Harassment and bullying are acts connected to the abuse of power: the less power a person has in a workplace, the more likely the chance of harassment. A structured workplace learning student is often the least powerful person in a workplace and therefore could be highly vulnerable.

### **Forms of harassment, bullying and occupational violence**

Harassment (including sexual harassment) can take many different forms. It can be physical or verbal abuse, requests for sexual favours or assault. It can be behaviour which offends, humiliates or intimidates the victim. Forms of harassment include (but are not limited to) sexual innuendo, comments about looks or body parts, asking for dates, enquiries into a person's sexual activities, displays of pornography or material of a sexual nature, posters, magazines, photographs or screen savers on computers.

Bullying is generally defined as repeated unreasonable behaviour directed toward an employee (or group of employees) and creating a risk to their health and safety.

Bullying or harassment can take the form of assigning inappropriate duties, name calling, threatening behaviour, shouting or general intimidation such as exclusion or isolation.

Occupational violence is generally defined as any incident where a person is physically attacked or threatened in the workplace. Occupational violence can include the physical acts of pushing, hitting, slapping or grabbing of clothing.

All harassment and bullying should be treated in the same manner by schools, whether the harassment or bullying is prohibited by law or not. Some incidents of bullying and harassment may be illegal under criminal law. If so, students have the right to involve the police.

### **How does harassment and bullying occur?**

A student may be harassed or bullied in a number of ways: by a manager or supervisor, by other employees, by contractors, by customers – or in cases where more than one student is employed, by other students. The incidence of structured workplace learning students harassing other workers is quite rare. The school and the employer are responsible for taking all reasonable steps to protect structured workplace learning students from harassment.

The most common form of harassment is male to female sexual harassment, but this is not the only kind. Sexual harassment can also take place male to male, female to male and female to female.

### **Where can harassment, bullying and occupational violence happen?**

Harassment, bullying and occupational violence can take place in any setting, potentially anywhere that work takes place and are not necessarily more likely in some workplaces than others.

Particular care should be taken when placing a student in a residential situation, i.e. students working on distant farms where residential accommodation may be the norm, or when the student has an employer who works from the relative privacy of a home office.

If the Principal has permitted the employer to engage more than one student for every three employees, the Principal must be satisfied that the placement will not be detrimental to the health or welfare of any student in that workplace and the student must be visited as frequently as is reasonably practicable.

Students should be instructed to never drink alcohol while on a placement, even in social situations.

### **Responsibilities to protect students**

Schools have a responsibility to 'take all reasonable steps' to protect students on structured workplace learning from harassment and bullying. 'All reasonable steps' may include:

- ensuring that the whole school community understands the school's policy and procedures on sexual harassment and bullying;
- organising the structured workplace learning to protect students from possible harassment and bullying; and
- visiting the workplace where possible, and discussing the school's policy and procedures with the employer.

**NOTE:** Structured Workplace Learning Coordinators and other relevant staff should note that taking 'all reasonable steps' may involve actions before, during and after structured workplace learning.

Should a structured workplace learning student report harassment, bullying or occupational violence the school must be able to demonstrate that it has clear policies and a working set of written procedures to deal with these matters. These documents should be forwarded to each party involved in the student's structured workplace learning prior to the placement commencing.

Procedures for dealing with harassment, bullying or occupational violence should include step-by-step instruction on what is required to protect students on structured workplace learning, and should include the written endorsement of the Principal. Employers can also be vicariously liable should a sexual harassment complaint be made. This should be pointed out at interviews with prospective employers.

Wherever possible, the workplace should be visited. Discussions should occur with supervisors and observations made about the culture of the workplace, including

language, the way people relate to each other, and the suitability of posters, magazines, screen savers that students may see while on placement.

It is not safe to assume that workplaces do not change from year to year. A new supervisor may change the workplace culture. Among the issues discussed with potential employers should be the prevention of harassment and bullying of the student. Discussion should include the standards the school expects of the workplace and processes to deal with harassment and bullying should they arise. It is understood, of course, that this possibility should be raised with tact and sensitivity.

All school staff involved in administering structured workplace learning programs and students should receive information about harassment and bullying, in particular as it relates to structured workplace learning. This information should include the many different forms that harassment and bullying can take, where it may occur, who it happens to, how it affects victims, and how it should be dealt with. The role of the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator and the school in dealing with these matters should be clearly outlined to the student. The Workplace Learning Toolbox contains a video about bullying and sexual harassment which can be used to support students preparing to undertake structured workplace learning. This resource can be accessed at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/careers/work/Pages/teachers.aspx>

Schools should have a process that empowers the student to deal at the time with harassment and bullying if it occurs. The student must understand that if they are made uncomfortable during their structured workplace learning, they have the right to leave the workplace immediately. Bags and other belongings can be collected at a later time. If the student does leave the workplace, they should notify their school immediately.

### **Handling incidences of harassment, bullying or occupational violence**

Strategies that students may use in response to incidences of harassment, bullying or occupational violence include:

- expressing dislike of their treatment to their harasser(s);
- reporting their treatment to other people at the workplace – co-workers, supervisors or managers;
- reporting their treatment to parents/family;
- reporting their treatment to their Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator, Principal, or other relevant school staff; and
- in matters of sexual harassment, making a complaint under the *Equal Opportunity Act 1995*.

**NOTE:** Under no circumstances should a student be expected to deal with incidences of harassment, bullying or occupational violence by themselves.

Schools should have a process for dealing with structured workplace learning students who report incidences of harassment, bullying or occupational violence. This process should involve the following elements:

- Each complaint should be accepted at face value.
- Concerns and/or complaints must be acted upon without delay.
- In the first instance, care should be taken to address the welfare of the student rather than the facts of the matter – “Are you OK?” is a better response than “Were there any witnesses?”
- If appropriate, conciliation may take place between the employer, the student and the school. This should not involve the parties necessarily being in the one room at the same time. If agreement can be reached between the parties, this should be recorded and followed accordingly.
- Where conciliation is inappropriate or not possible, the school should attempt to investigate the complaint to the extent possible.
- All evidence relevant to the complaint should be given to the Principal for assessment. If the Principal is of the belief that the evidence sustains the complaint, a decision should be made about the on-going relationship with the employer. In some cases, further placements will need to be closely monitored, while in others the relationship will be suspended or terminated.

At the completion of the structured workplace learning program, the school should conduct a debriefing process wherein each student has opportunity to comment on their experiences during their placement. Each student should also have the opportunity to raise any issues privately with the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator or other relevant staff member without other students being present.

Each student must be contacted while on their placement to ensure that they are experiencing no difficulties as a result of the behaviour of other people.

## Students with disabilities

The process for preparing students with disabilities for structured workplace learning should be the same as for other students, but with some important additional aspects.

When organising structured workplace learning, the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator should:

- know exactly what the student can and cannot do, and communicate this to the employer;
- be honest with the employer about the student’s abilities and not promise anything the student cannot deliver;
- suggest a trial before starting the placement if an employer is hesitant;
- indicate some examples of strengths of a student which an employer may value, including:

- a strong desire to work in the industry
- a good history of punctuality and reliability
- a capacity to learn well when shown how to do a particular task
- ability to concentrate and work on repetitive tasks
- the knowledge that parents are supportive and encouraging of the placement
- prepare a letter to the employer clearly explaining what you are trying to achieve for the student and what the employer may expect from you;
- visit the workplace to generate creative ways of dealing with any problems;
- ask to speak to the supervisors and co-workers to prepare them. Encourage them to voice any concerns, and respond to these if raised. Talk about how the student will be prepared for the duties and about any modifications to work arrangements which may have to be made; and
- have emergency contact numbers and, if required, a medical management plan clearly set out for the student.

Structured Workplace Learning Coordinators should utilise the advice of the Student Support Group or Program Support Group when setting up structured workplace learning. These people will probably already have encountered and solved many of the issues that may arise. Visiting teachers for vision and hearing impaired students can also visit workplaces and assess the issues for the school, as well as providing advice on borrowing equipment for structured workplace learning if it is needed.

### **Inspecting a workplace before a placement**

When inspecting a workplace before the commencement of a placement, the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator should:

- discuss all aspects of the placement and what the student will be asked to do;
- clarify the skills required to perform the tasks required;
- check the accessibility of the workplace and equipment to see if physical considerations will be catered for e.g. wheelchair access if required;
- establish the degree to which the employer will allow any school support systems to operate e.g. on the job assistance with an aide or signing interpreter;
- determine the accessibility of the workplace by public transport, roads to be crossed, steps, heavy doors and other potential constraints;
- check the workflow and pace of work, as the extra demands on a student with a disability may mean that they become fatigued earlier than might be expected; and
- consider the consequences of making errors in each task, and reconsider assigning any task to the student where major damage can occur through minor error.

### **Preparing students**

Students should be prepared for the type of work and the nature of the tasks they will be undertaking. They should be made aware that workplace procedures and arrangements, including occupational health and safety requirements, must be observed. Students must undertake or complete relevant occupational health and safety training prior to commencing their structured workplace learning.

Students need to have the employer/supervisor/employee relationship clearly explained, so that they can accept constructive criticism, follow instructions and know who to ask for help. They need a good understanding of what the work is and what is expected of them in the workplace.

It is a good idea to give students some hints on acceptable conversational topics such as sport, the weather, films or music and to stay away from religion, politics or other controversial topics. They should also be given clear instructions on what to do and who to contact if they need any help.

Photographs of the student at work will be useful for a resumé in the future. Prior consent from the student and/or parent must be obtained.

### **Preparing parents/guardians**

Parents can help prepare their child for structured workplace learning by discussing the differences between school and workplace expectations and sharing their own work experiences.

Parents/guardians should be made aware that the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator is the appropriate contact if they have any queries or concerns relating to their child's structured workplace learning placement, and that they should not contact the employer about these matters, nor go to the workplace. If their child is sick and unable to attend structured workplace learning, the student is responsible for notifying their employer and school as soon as possible.

The level and nature of support will vary from student to student and workplace to workplace. Good matching of students to placements should eliminate many problems and records should be kept so that each new placement will become easier to organise.

### **Guidance for employers to support students with disabilities**

#### **Autism spectrum disorder**

To support structured workplace learning students with autism spectrum disorder, employers could consider:

- giving instructions in clear terms, supported with visual or written checklists and practical demonstrations;
- providing students with timetables prior to the placement so that daily routines are understood, and notifying students in advance for changes to the daily routine;
- making workplace adjustments where the student has sensory issues i.e. ear muffs for a student sensitive to loud noises;
- incorporating a student's specific interest into their work duties i.e. data entry for a student who is interested in computers; and

- ensuring co-workers are provided with information about key features of autism spectrum disorder and, in consultation with parents/guardians/carers and relevant school staff, information about the way it presents for the individual student.

Further information about on-site training techniques and tips can be obtained at <http://jobaccess.gov.au/content/how-support-job-seekers-autism>

### **Hearing impairment**

To support structured workplace learning students with hearing impairment, employers could consider:

- providing a swivel chair so students can turn easily for lip reading;
- giving instructions face-to-face and using visual cues where possible
- avoiding speaking from behind the student;
- trying to speak in quiet periods or giving written instructions to avoid the impact of background noise on students' comprehension of instructions;
- ensuring the student is concentrating on what is being said;
- avoiding standing with their back to strong light or a window as the student will not be able to see their face;
- speaking slowly and clearly; and
- use of a TTY – a telephone for the deaf to assist with office skills.

### **Vision impairment**

To support structured workplace learning students with vision impairment, employers could consider:

- trying to provide well lit surfaces with minimal glare;
- avoiding standing with their back to a window as the student will not be able to see them through the glare;
- providing all written material in at least a 16 point font, particularly safety instructions;
- looking for good contrast e.g. yellow on green or black on white and avoiding instructions written in pale colours or pastels;
- setting up the workspace in a quiet spot outside traffic flow;
- ensuring projections at head height or eye level do not present a hazard;
- remembering that the student can't see but they can hear perfectly well, and trying not to speak loudly and slowly to them;
- ensuring that their 'left and right' matches the student's 'left and right' when giving instructions; and

- painting bright yellow lines along the edge of dark steps, which will assist the safety of all workers.

### **Cognitive impairment**

The employer should be aware that the student's communication skills may be very literal, and that they may not realise when a supervisor or co-worker is making a joke. They may need instructions given in slow clear terms and with practical demonstrations.

To support structured workplace learning students with cognitive impairment (brain injury, learning disability or intellectual disability) employers could consider:

- using simple and clear instructions;
- demonstrating processes and modelling appropriate behaviour;
- monitoring students on a regular basis;
- being prepared to repeat instructions several times;
- not assuming that the student will transfer knowledge gained in one task to another;
- using visual cues to break each task into steps and illustrate each step; and
- providing lots of encouragement.

### **Dizziness, fainting or seizures**

If a student is susceptible to these, then activities that may bring the student into the proximity of risks such as heights, dangerous equipment, moving machinery, cooking with hot oil, or using sharp knives should be identified and avoided.

It should also be remembered that a seizure may only last a few minutes and that for the majority of the day the student will not be affected. The possibility of seizures should therefore not dominate attitudes to planning the student's activities.

### **Coordination or movement impairments**

There are many aids available to assist people with these impairments, such as tools with wider handles, non-skid mats or grips, weighted handles, large print scales, talking calculators, voice operated computers and strategically placed mirrors. Employers should find out what the student already owns or uses.

Examples of work adjustments, such as modified equipment, can be found at:

[http://jobaccess.gov.au/work\\_place\\_adjustment\\_tool](http://jobaccess.gov.au/work_place_adjustment_tool)

## 5. Section E: Sample Forms

Index of forms provided in this Section:

- Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator Task Checklist
- Structured Workplace Learning – Student Evaluation
- Structured Workplace Learning – Employer Evaluation
- Record of Contact Form

## Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator Task Checklist

Task	Completed	In progress	Action
<b>1. Set dates for SWL program.</b>			
<b>2. Induct students:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>outline the SWL program</li> <li>explain student tasks and responsibilities and</li> <li>arrange for appropriate VET OHS module to be undertaken prior to placement commencing</li> </ul>			
<b>3. Inform staff of SWL program and their tasks.</b>			
<b>4. Inform parents/guardians:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide information about the SWL program through an information evening, school newsletter, or letter.</li> </ul>			
<b>5. Set up a database or spreadsheet to record placements, employer contacts and dates.</b>			
<b>6. Ensure employers have been contacted about the program. Check:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>correct Arrangement Form, Ministerial Order 55 and SWL Guidelines for Employers have been received</li> <li>employers have an induction program prepared for students on their first day</li> </ul>			
<b>7. Organise a system for Principal to receive, review, sign and return SWL Arrangement Forms.</b>			
<b>8. Send copy of completed Arrangement Form to employer, student and parent/guardian (if students under 18 years of age):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure Arrangement Forms are filed at the school as per time period specified in the <i>Public Records Act 1975</i></li> </ul>			
<b>9. Schedule times to contact or visit students:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>arrange this in discussion with both employers and students</li> <li>liaise with employer regarding assessment of students</li> </ul>			
<b>10. Collate and send assessment results to all relevant parties.</b>			
<b>11. Organise debrief for students at conclusion of placement.</b>			
<b>12. Provide students with evaluation of placement as evidence for their personal portfolios.</b>			

## Structured Workplace Learning – Student Evaluation

The following sample evaluation form has been developed to allow Structured Workplace Learning Coordinators to gather information on students' workplace experience and to assist in the future development of structured workplace learning programs.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Year Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Placement: \_\_\_\_\_

Course of study: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Using the Table below give some brief examples of tasks you completed which demonstrated your workplace learning. Then rate yourself according to the scale provided.

Workplace Learning	Examples of workplace learning skills	Tasks completed	Assessment
<b>Collecting, analysing and organising information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>gather and assess information</li> <li>organise and record information</li> <li>check information for accuracy</li> </ul>		<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
<b>Communicating ideas and information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>speak clearly and confidently at the workplace</li> <li>translate instructions into action</li> <li>check communication for accuracy and effectiveness</li> </ul>		<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
<b>Planning and organising activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>manage time effectively</li> <li>plan a range of activities</li> <li>be persistent and complete tasks</li> </ul>		<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
<b>Working with others in teams</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>accepted by others in the workplace</li> <li>work with others to complete tasks</li> <li>able to meet deadlines</li> </ul>		<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

<b>Using mathematical ideas and techniques</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• able to use mathematics effectively in the work</li> <li>• work accurately and check that work is accurate</li> </ul>		<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
<b>Solving problems</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify problems in the workplace</li> <li>• solve problems effectively</li> </ul>		<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
<b>Use technology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use technology in the workplace</li> <li>• use technology within accepted safety standards</li> </ul>		<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

2. Describe how you were able or not able to apply the theory knowledge from your course work to a practical application in the workplace:

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3. Explain how your employer delivered the OHS induction program for your work placement:

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4. Rate your placement on a scale of 1 to 5. (1 = Unsatisfactory, 5 = Outstanding):

**1    2    3    4    5**

Give reasons for your ranking. Would you recommend this placement as a future training option?

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## Structured Workplace Learning – Employer Evaluation

School Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Student Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 School Contact \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dates of Structured Workplace Learning \_\_\_\_\_  
 Employer's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Industry/Type of Work \_\_\_\_\_  
 Assessed by \_\_\_\_\_  
 Employer's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**When assessing each attribute, choose the point on the scale that most closely describes the student being assessed and mark it with a tick in the relevant box.**

1. Attendance and punctuality				
1. Comes in late and leaves early. Late back from breaks. Sometimes absent without reason. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. Attendance and punctuality were not consistently up to workplace expectation. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. Attendance and punctuality were satisfactory. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. Rarely absent, always punctual. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. No absences, always punctual. Often arrived early, prepared to stay back if a task had to be completed. <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Appearance and presentation				
1. Poor personal hygiene and grooming. Required dress standards were not met. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. Appearance, personal presentation and dress standards could be improved. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. Dress standard and personal presentation were acceptable for the work environment. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. Above average appearance and presentation. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. Takes pride in appearance and presentation; sets an example to others. <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Working with others (how well the student interacted with others while at work)				
1. Uncommunicative. Resists suggestions. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. Could have been more communicative or cooperative at times. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. Satisfactory communication; cooperative with others at work. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. Communicates well with others; contributed to conversation and exchange of ideas. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. Excellent communication; actively helped others, showed responsibility and ability to lead. <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Communication and interpersonal skills (skills face to face with co-workers, clients, suppliers)				
1. Poor listener; difficulty expressing him/herself or maintaining eye contact. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. Communication and interpersonal skills need to be improved to meet normal workplace standard. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. Generally communicated effectively while on placement. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. Good communication and 'people skills'. Clear self-expression. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. Excellent communication and 'people skills'. Confident and articulate; listens well. <input type="checkbox"/>

5. Time management (how well the student managed their work and effort to complete tasks on time)				
1. Unable to carry out tasks with the focus and application required for timely completion. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. Required some prompting to complete tasks on time. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. Generally reliable without needing excessive levels of supervision. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. Generally capable of working independently to complete tasks assigned. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. Works well independently. Able to set goals, prioritise tasks and achieve objectives in good time. <input type="checkbox"/>
6. Attitude and motivation (the student's level of interest and motivation regarding the job)				
1. Seemed uninterested and lacking in motivation. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. Worked with variable commitment, needing to be 'pushed' at times. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. Generally a steady worker who met standards expected by the workplace. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. Did what was required well. Prepared to make extra effort when asked. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. Highly motivated and keen to take on tasks assigned. Attitude was consistently excellent. <input type="checkbox"/>
7. Ability to follow instructions and use initiative				
1. Often ignored or failed to understand instructions. Did not seem to pay attention. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. Too often needed instructions or directions to be repeated, suggesting lack of attention. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. Generally followed instructions as required, but needed ongoing supervision to complete tasks. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. Capable of working independently after initial instruction. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. Absorbed instruction well. Inventive, resourceful, able to solve problems. <input type="checkbox"/>
8. Ability to learn (the student's willingness and ability to pick up new skills)				
1. Did not appear to want to learn new skills. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. Slow to pick up new tasks but eventually acquired the skills needed. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. Willing to be trained and achieved an acceptable learning rate. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. Learns what is required quickly and easily. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. Learns quickly; keen to achieve new skills and to enhance knowledge of workplace tasks. <input type="checkbox"/>
9. Positive self-attitude (the extent to which the student is confident in their attitude and behaviour)				
1. Lacks confidence. Nervous or anxious and tended to give up easily at times. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. Confidence and self-attitude fluctuated; not always positive in approach to work. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. In most cases appeared confident and achievement orientated. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. Always appeared confident, self-assured and achievement orientated. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. Confident, enthusiastic, energetic and persistent in achieving outcomes. <input type="checkbox"/>
10. Quality of work (the accuracy, care and standard of work quality the student demonstrated)				
1. Makes a lot of mistakes. Seems careless and seldom met required standards. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. Inconsistent. Occasionally inaccurate and careless. <input type="checkbox"/>	3. Work was acceptable and usually met the standards required by the workplace. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. Work was of good quality and showed care and attention to detail. <input type="checkbox"/>	5. Work was of consistently high quality; appeared to take pride in completing work well. <input type="checkbox"/>

Any other comments:

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## Record of Contact Form

<b>Date</b>	
<b>Student name</b>	
<b>School name</b>	
<b>Employer</b>	
<b>Contact person name</b>	
<b>Orientation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you had any problems getting to the workplace? [If so, how did you resolve them?]</li> <li>• How are you settling in to the workplace?</li> <li>• Are you clear about the things expected of you at the workplace?</li> </ul>	
<b>Planned school tasks:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you talked to your supervisor about your assessment requirements [and have they been scheduled into your experience?]</li> <li>• What have you learned, and what tasks have you performed? (This question is intended to elicit potential high risk industry issues with regard to use or operation of equipment)</li> </ul>	
<b>Satisfaction level:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How would you describe your experience so far?</li> <li>• What have you done so far that you feel you have done well?</li> <li>• Was there anything you thought you could do better or improve?</li> </ul>	
<b>Feedback:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you have any worries or concerns about any aspect of your workplace, or about any individual at the workplace? (This question is intended to give the student the opportunity to raise any discrimination, harassment or bullying issues)</li> </ul>	

Is follow-up contact required? YES  NO

Contact person signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## 6. Section F: Frequently Asked Questions and Useful Websites

### Frequently asked questions

#### **Do age restrictions apply to students undertaking structured workplace learning?**

Students undertaking structured workplace learning must be 15 years of age or older.

#### **What occupational health and safety training are students required to complete before commencing a structured workplace learning placement?**

A Principal must be satisfied that a student is either undertaking or has completed occupational health and safety (OHS) training prior to commencing structured workplace learning as follows:

- Where a student is undertaking structured workplace learning as part of a VET program within an Accredited Course of Study, the Principal must be satisfied that the student is undertaking OHS training relevant to the workplace where the student will be engaged.
- Where a student is undertaking structured workplace learning as part of a non-VET program (e.g. Foundation VCAL student who is using a VCE Technology study to meet the Industry Specific Skills Strand), or a work placement that is not related to their VET program within an Accredited Course of Study, the Principal must be satisfied that the student has completed an OHS program required by the Department as follows:
  - If the student is undertaking VCE Industry and Enterprise, they must complete safe@work or, for students with disabilities, A Job Well Done.
  - If the student is undertaking VCAL, they must complete Work Related Skills Unit 1 and safe@work.

Every workplace has site and industry specific OHS requirements. Before a student undertakes a structured workplace learning program, it is vital that the student is made aware of the OHS procedures and practices at the workplace.

#### **Are students required to complete construction induction training?**

Under the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007*, an employer must ensure that anyone employed to do construction work (including students placed with an employer under a workplace learning arrangement made under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*) has completed construction induction training before they start work. Construction induction training aims to provide people new to construction work with an understanding of:

- their rights and responsibilities under OHS law;
- common hazards and risks in the construction industry;
- basic risk management principles; and

- the standard of behaviour expected of workers on construction sites.

The construction induction training must be provided by a registered training organisation (RTO). Construction induction cards are issued by WorkSafe Victoria following receipt of evidence of satisfactory completion of the course from the RTO and proof of identity. Construction induction cards issued by WorkSafe Victoria are recognised nationally.

For further information about construction induction card requirements, please contact WorkSafe Victoria Advisory Service on 1800 136 089 or [info@worksafe.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@worksafe.vic.gov.au)

Additional information can also be located in Part 5.1 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007*.

### **Can we obtain hardcopies of the Structured Workplace Learning Manual?**

This resource is only available on the Department's website and can be accessed at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/careers/work/Pages/structuredlearning.aspx>

### **Where can the Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form be obtained?**

The Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form can be downloaded from the Department's website at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/careers/work/Pages/structuredlearning.aspx>

### **Who has to sign the Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form?**

This Form must be completed and signed before structured workplace learning can commence. It must be signed by:

- the employer;
- the student;
- the parent/guardian of the student (if the student is under 18 years of age); and
- the Principal (an Acting Principal may sign, but the Principal cannot delegate this responsibility to a Deputy Principal or other school staff member).

If there are any variations or amendments to the Form, it must be signed again by all parties to confirm that the changes are understood and agreed.

### **Can a student use one SWL placement to complete requirements in both Industry and Enterprise and a VET program?**

Yes. The same SWL placement can be used to satisfy requirements for a VET program and other VCE studies.

### **What are the working hours for SWL students?**

Students are not permitted to work between 11.00 pm and 6.00 am. They are also not permitted to work beyond a time which is ten hours before the start time of the next

structured workplace learning day, or a school day which a student is expected to attend.

However, a student may work beyond the hours referred to above, where the Principal determines that working beyond those hours is necessary for the purposes of the relevant Accredited Course of Study, and is not detrimental to the health, education and moral and material welfare of the student.

#### **What is the maximum length of a structured workplace learning placement?**

The number of days or hours for an arrangement must not exceed the number of days or hours which:

- are set out in the relevant Accredited Course of Study; or
- are set out by the Principal in approving an arrangement where no days or hours are established by the relevant Accredited Course of Study; and
- can be reasonably undertaken by the student within a school year

#### **Does a student have to be contacted by the school while on structured workplace learning?**

Yes. The Principal or the SWL Coordinator must contact the student at least once during the structured workplace learning.

#### **What should a student do if they suffer harassment, bullying or occupational violence at the workplace?**

The student must not be expected to deal with harassment, bullying or occupational violence themselves. They should report any concerns immediately to other people at the workplace and to the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator or Principal. The employer and the school should have a process established for dealing with such occurrences.

#### **Do employers have to pay students for structured workplace learning?**

Yes. The minimum rate of payment for students undertaking structured workplace learning in Victoria is \$5 per day, except:

- If the structured workplace learning placement is with a Commonwealth Department or a body established under a Commonwealth Act, no payment will be made. If the student or the parent/guardian is not prepared to accept this condition, then it is their choice not to proceed with a Commonwealth placement. On the Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Form, the line "Rate of payment" should be completed with the words "Commonwealth establishment – exempt from paying".
- If the structured workplace learning placement is with an organisation that is engaged wholly or mainly in an educational, charitable or community welfare service not conducted for profit, the student may determine that the whole of his or her payment will be donated back to that organisation. If the student determines that the whole of his or her payment will be donated back to that organisation, the parent/guardian (where the student is under 18 years of age) must provide written consent to the proposed donation.

### **Is payment for structured workplace learning taxable?**

Students aged 18 years and over will be required to provide a Tax File Number (TFN) declaration to the employer. The employer will be required to withhold amounts in accordance with the tax tables (where applicable), issue payment summaries and report these payments to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO), as they would do for their employees.

Where the student is under the age of 18, if the payment made to the student is \$356 or less per week, the employer will not be obliged to:

- make any withholding
- collect tax file number declarations
- issue payment summaries
- report payment details to the ATO.

### **Are students covered by WorkSafe Insurance while on structured workplace learning?**

Students undertaking structured workplace learning have the same status under WorkSafe as employees. All structured workplace learning students are covered under the Department's WorkSafe Insurance policy.

If a student is suffers a work related injury or illness during their placement, the employer must contact the school (either the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator or the Principal) and the student's parent/guardian as soon as possible. The Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator should assist the student to complete a WorkSafe Insurance claim (refer to Section B for more information).

WorkSafe Insurance does not cover accidents that occur on the way to or from the workplace.

### **If a student is sick and did not attend structured workplace learning, does the student have to disclose information to the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator about why he/she was absent?**

No. The Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator doesn't need to know the medical details of why the student was not on structured workplace learning on a particular day. The Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator simply needs to know that the student was sick and unable to attend.

## **Who to contact for assistance**

For assistance with queries relating to structured workplace learning arrangements, please contact the relevant organisation as outlined in the following table:

School sector	Organisation	Contact details
Government	Training Participation and Facilitation Division, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	<a href="mailto:youth.transitions@edumail.vic.gov.au">youth.transitions@edumail.vic.gov.au</a>
Catholic	Catholic Education Commission of Victoria	Jenny Wilson <a href="mailto:jwilson@ceomelb.catholic.edu.au">jwilson@ceomelb.catholic.edu.au</a> (03) 9267 0253
Independent	Independent Schools Victoria	Pam Hargreaves <a href="mailto:Pam.Hargreaves@is.vic.edu.au">Pam.Hargreaves@is.vic.edu.au</a> (03) 9825 7246

### Workplace Learning Coordinator Services

Workplace Learning Coordinator (WLC) Services work with secondary schools, VET providers, Learn Local adult community education providers, LLENs and local employers to coordinate work placements for School-Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships, structured workplace learning and work experience.

For WLC Services contact details, please see <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/pathways/pages/coordinators.aspx>

### Regional Careers Networks

Victorian regional careers networks can provide important professional development and “best practice” advice and support to Structured Workplace Learning Coordinators. Many networks coordinate their block dates for release on an annual basis to minimise clashes, thus maximising placements with employers in their region.

Many networks also pool resources and knowledge to develop and print forms and resources for distribution to their members.

Regional careers networks are a good source of information about which employers to approach for structured workplace learning, and how to go about liaising with business and industry. For assistance with identifying your local regional careers network, contact the Career Education Association of Victoria (CEAV) on (03) 9810 6400 or [admin@ceav.vic.edu.au](mailto:admin@ceav.vic.edu.au)

## Useful websites

### ACTU – Worksite for Schools

<http://worksite.actu.org.au/>

This site provides information for students about jobs, rights at work and the role of unions in Australia.

### **Australian Bureau of Statistics**

[www.abs.gov.au/](http://www.abs.gov.au/)

This site is useful for employment figures.

### **Career Education Association of Victoria – CEAV**

<http://www.ceav.vic.edu.au/>

The Career Education Association of Victoria is a not for profit association that represents school-based careers practitioners and related professionals.

### **Department of Education**

<http://education.gov.au/>

This site provides information about national policies and programs that help Australians access quality and affordable childcare; early childhood education, school education, post-school, higher education, international education and academic research.

### **Jobsearch**

[jobsearch.gov.au/](http://jobsearch.gov.au/)

This site has been developed to help job seekers find jobs and employers find staff.

### **JobWatch**

<http://www.jobwatch.org.au/>

This site offers information for Victorian workers about their rights at work.

### **myfuture**

<http://www.myfuture.edu.au/>

myfuture is Australia's national career information and exploration service, helping people to make career decisions, plan career pathways and manage work transitions.

### **School Policy and Advisory Guide**

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/Pages/spag.aspx>

Provides Victorian government schools with quick and easy access to governance and operational policies and advice.

### **Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA)**

<http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/index.aspx>

The VCAA website contains the latest information on the requirement for the delivery of all VCE, VET and VCAL programs.

### **Wages**

<http://www.wages.com.au/>

Information on career and employment opportunities with some of Australia's major companies along with Australian wages, employment law and taxation.