

Employing Young People
Internships, Work Experience &
Employment, including
Volunteers

Updated October 2024

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1. Introduction

There are a number of different ways you may wish to engage with young people in an employment capacity within your parish which will benefit both the young person and the parish. The options available to you range from:

- offering short 1 or 2 weeks Work Experience to 15-17 year olds;
- offering part time weekend/holiday employment to school children, for example in a community café;
- Work Placements for up to a year, or Day Release Placements for students who are studying; and
- Internships for graduates or school leavers entering the workforce.

Work experience is vital to young people at school, college and as they enter the labour market. It helps to make the transition from education into working life by giving them:

- first-hand experience of the workplace and an insight into different jobs and sectors;
- increased confidence and employability skills;
- experience to build their CVs and provide access to networks;
- an understanding of how recruitment works;
- insight into how their skills and abilities translate to the workplace; and
- opportunities to develop relationships and connect with others from different backgrounds.

For employers, offering work experience is beneficial for a number of reasons:

Recruitment opportunities and building talent pipelines:

Work experience placements enable employers to access a wider range of talent, while also making a useful contribution to strategic talent management and workforce planning.

Fresh ideas:

Young people offer new ideas and ways of thinking, reflecting the interests and needs of the next generation of customers and consumers.

Staff development:

Offering work experience placements can provide opportunities for existing staff to supervise and mentor a young person, therefore helping to develop their management and other professional and personal skills.

More engaged workforce:

Providing work experience sends a positive message to the wider workforce about the values of the organisation.

Work experience is the most popular way for employers to bring young people into their organisation. 85% of employers that take on young people on work experience and other similar schemes use these as a recruitment channel and offer employment opportunities to young people afterwards.

However, if you are in doubt at Parish level about what you need to do to set up a successful programme or want to improve your current offer, follow these basic guidelines for offering good-quality work experience placements.

2. When Can Young People Start Work

A young person can start full time work once they've reached school leaving age. Before school leaving age, the work they can do is restricted and depends on their local authority.

Between their school leaving age and 18, a young person in England must do one of the following:

- full time education or training, such as school or college;
- work based learning, such as an apprenticeship; or
- working or volunteering (for 20 hours or more a week) while in part time education or training.

3. Different Types of Work Experience/Employment

3.1 Work Experience

Work Experience placements are generally undertaken by secondary school/college students between the ages of 15 to 17. Placements can typically be arranged in a 2 week block or may be arranged on a day release basis throughout an academic year. These arrangements are usually unpaid. Often work experience may be used to provide an insight into a potential future career pathway.

The student themselves is usually responsible for organising their work experience and may approach the organisation directly. However, sometimes the school/college secure work experience spaces with various organisations for their students.

As work experience placements are generally unpaid, it is important to remember that students are not there to fulfil a role but to gain an overview of a department or organisation. With this in mind, you should consider planning a schedule for what they will do or observe (work shadow) while they are with you.

You can set them tasks to complete while they are on placement, again to provide insight into the working world, however, there should be guidance and supervision and you should ensure that any tasks you give them are appropriate to their age and level of experience.

- Supervision

You should assign an individual member the parish administration/staff to act as the student's mentor. They should be available to answer any questions and provide guidance and support. The mentor may be required to sign off paperwork and hours each week, or at the end of the agreement.

You should also consider what you will do when their work experience concludes. You may wish to get them to complete a review form that encourages them to reflect on what they have learned, what they would like to have done more or less of, and what knowledge they have gained about employment generally which will assist them in the workplace. Not only will this help the student when they return to school and reflect on their learning, but it will also help you to establish a more meaningful process for future work experience students.

What you need to know when employing young people aged under-18

Before introducing a work experience/work placement scheme, it is important to consider certain responsibilities including: Health & Safety; Risk Assessments; DBS checks and Lone Working policy.

- **Is a DBS check required for staff supervising young people aged 16-17?**

*The Disclosure and Barring Service, or DBS (formerly CRB), check is not compulsory for staff supervising work experience pupils aged 16–17. In the case of work experience, a DBS check may only be required if an employee's job purpose specifically includes looking after under-16 work experience students.

For more information, visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

Important! please check with your Safeguarding Officer or Diocesan Safeguarding team for advice if you have any questions or concerns.

***It is important to follow the Church of England's guidance when the placement/work experience is happening on church grounds/setting.**

- **Employers Liability Insurance cover work experience students**

Individuals on **work experience** are now covered by the employer's existing employers' liability insurance policy, provided the insurer is a member of the Association of British Insurers.

Find out more at:

<https://www.abi.org.uk>

- **Employers can use existing arrangements for assessments and management of risk to young people**

If you have already conducted a general risk assessment for your workplace a further one is not required. Furthermore, employers that have fewer than five employees are not required to have a written risk assessment at all. However, if you have not taken on a young person in the last few years or are taking on a work experience student for the first time, it is important to take care to identify the particular needs of the individual and review risk assessments before they start.

More information about risks affecting young people can be found at:
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/law/index.htm>

- **Restrictions on type of work permitted**

You should carefully consider the tasks you ask a young person (under 18) to carry out and always check whether there are any legal restrictions. For example, they should not be alone for any length time; they should not carry out any tasks involving lifting or ladders; machinery; etc.

- **Health and safety responsibilities**

It is important to remember that, as an employer, you have primary responsibility for the health and safety of the young person, just as employers do with all other staff, and should be managing any significant risks.

It is easy to do this, by:

- explaining the risks and how they are controlled when inducting any individual undertaking work experience, checking that they understand what they have been told and know how to raise health and safety concerns;
- relying on past or pooled experience when thinking about health and safety; and
- keeping checks in proportion to the environment the young person will be working in.

For further advice on health and safety, visit:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/placeprovide.htm>

3.2 Part Time Employment

When employing school children to do paid work (for example: to work part time at weekends / school holidays), you should follow the normal recruitment guidance as set out in this document. However, you must always firstly check with your local council, as there are different local bylaws covering the recruitment of children (see below, 'Work Permits').

- **Restrictions on child employment**

Children remain of '**compulsory school age**' until the last Friday in June of the school year (1 September to 31 August) in which their 16th birthday falls.

There are several restrictions on when and where children are allowed to work if they are of compulsory school age. Work must be limited to 'light work only'.

They are not allowed to work:

- unless they are over the age of 13;
- without an employment permit issued by the education department of the local council, if this is required by local bylaws;
- during school hours;
- before 7am or after 7pm;
- for more than one hour before school (unless local bylaws allow it);
- for more than 4 hours without taking a break of at least 1 hour;
- in any work that may be harmful to their health, well-being or education;
- without having a 2-week break from any work during the school holidays in each calendar year.

- **Work permits**

If children are of '**compulsory school age**' they are not permitted to be employed without the employer first obtaining a **work permit** issued by the education department of the Local Authority. Unless a child is registered with the Local Authority prior to employment they may not be covered under the employer's liability employment.

- **Hours of work and rest breaks:**

Under the laws and regulations relating to child employment, hours of work are restricted as set out below according to age.

AGES 13 and 14

TERM TIME	Maximum of 12 hours per week and under
Weekdays	Maximum of 2 hours per day, one of which may be worked before school starts
Saturdays	Maximum of 5 hours
Sundays	Maximum of 2 hours
SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	Maximum of 25 hours per week subject to the following daily limits

Weekdays/Saturdays	Maximum of 5 hours per day
Sundays	Maximum of 2 hours per day

AGES 15 and 16

TERM TIME	Maximum of 12 hours per week and under
Weekdays	Maximum of 2 hours per day, one of which may be worked before school starts
Saturdays	Maximum of 8 hours
Sundays	Maximum of 2 hours
SCHOOL HOLIDAYS	Maximum of 35 hours per week subject to the following daily limits
Weekdays/Saturdays	Maximum of 8 hours per day
Sundays	Maximum of 2 hours per day

OVER Compulsory School Leaving Age

Once someone reaches 16 you may need to pay them through PAYE	Young workers aged 16 to 17 are entitled to at least £6.40 per hour
Once someone reaches 18	Adult employment rights and rules then apply

3.3 Work Placements

A work placement is generally undertaken during a degree or other course and can last between 3 months and 1 year.

The purpose is to provide some relevant work experience which perhaps supports their degree, studies, or chosen career path. Given the length of a work placement is longer, it is recommended that this be a paid placement. Therefore, you will need to adhere to the *National Minimum Wage applicable to the individual, or you may choose to pay expenses.

The nature of a work placement is aimed towards enhancing young person's employability skills and therefore they can be treated more as an employee, by being given tasks to complete, but should be provided with constant support and supervision due to their limited experience.

You should allocate an appropriate mentor and, for the duration of the placement you should consider how the mentor will maintain contact and provide feedback to the placement student, for example: a weekly one-to-one with them to touch

base on how they are getting on, reviewing and giving feedback on work undertaken so far, etc. It would also be a good idea to hold a mid-point review and a final review at the end of the placement.

3.4 Internships

Internships are often undertaken by graduates entering the labour market for the first time, but this could also apply to school leavers. Many organisations offer 'graduate schemes' which offer a fixed term contract, usually a year, with the opportunity to gain paid experience within their chosen field or profession.

Internships are usually paid and, although the candidates filling the role will be new to the labour market, they should be treated as an employee by being encouraged to bring ideas and display their skills and experience gained during their studies. It is imperative that the intern is given as much responsibility and diversity in their work as possible. From your perspective, you want to make the most out of having them on board.

However, it is important that you develop an internship scheme which incorporates an induction, training and development, time spent with various departments or key staff, and specific tasks or projects to undertake. This will allow them the opportunity to gain some well-rounded experience.

- **Safeguarding**

Although most interns will be over the age of 18, it is important to remember that anyone below the age of 18 is classed as a child and therefore a risk assessment, DBS and safeguarding guidance will need to be put into practice alongside Lone Working if the mentor is an adult and the intern/work placement is a child (under 18).

- **Recruitment Process**

Interns should be recruited in broadly the same way and manner as any other employee and, for this reason, the main bulk of this employing young people guide can be used although there are some key details for recruiting interns.

An internship is about professional development of a young person and therefore it is important to give proper consideration to the specific skills and potential qualifications that may be needed by you and which the intern is expected to deliver against and in what timescale. It is always useful to remember that recruitment should be conducted in an open and honest way, in order to ensure that there can be fair and equal access to the internship. Job adverts or any discussions should give a clear indication as to how long the internship is expected to last. At any interview the intern should be told quite clearly where there is any expectation of more permanent status.

It is also very useful for them to have experience in the processes and demands that job applications require. By openly advertising the position rather than just relying on family and friends, you can also widen the talent pool available and

make a real difference. Bear in mind that a poorly devised internship programme might mean that you have to put in extra time, effort, and resources at a later date.

- **Job Advert for an Internship**

The following details are recommended for inclusion in your advertisement:

- the length of the internship, the expected working hours and the start date;
- the main duties of the intern (the more specific you can be, the better-suited applicants you are likely to get);
- salary or expenses;
- qualifications and previous experience required or beneficial for the application; and
- a clear statement about whether there is a realistic possibility of the internship developing into a permanent position.

- **Interviews for Internships**

Consideration should be given, when devising interview questions, to the fact that many young people may have limited experience and much of the relevant experience they do have might be from their school and university education, in addition to extracurricular activities. It is recommended therefore to focus on interview questions around employability skills, (for example, problem-solving skills, teamwork, communication, their enthusiasm and commitment to the values of the parish and life in general), rather than strict qualification and technical requirements. You could however ask them to draw on their experiences gained at school or university to demonstrate specific skills or competencies.

In addition, if you intend to have your intern working on a particular project, the interview is a good opportunity for you to ask questions about how they would approach it and what ideas they might have about it. You could even place these sorts of project-based questions in an application form or advertisement.

- **Induction**

Even though interns may have excellent qualifications or some previous experience, it will still feel like a very new experience for them when they start. In addition, because internships can be relatively short compared with a full-time position, it is essential that interns settle in as quickly as possible. Some sort of induction process can make an intern's transition into the world of work disciplines a smooth and enjoyable experience, as well as helping by integrating them as quickly and effortlessly as possible. Even though the internship may only last for a few months, you must still prepare for their arrival.

You may wish to consider the following elements in any short induction programme:

- an introduction to the parish, including its history, service patterns, and values;
- how your parish and PCC is structured (providing the intern with photos and names of key people is always very helpful, if you can manage it);
- a brief introduction to the senior members of the parish, as well as the people that the intern will be working with on a regular basis;
- a tour of the premises, including work area;
- health and safety information (this is a legal requirement); and
- a clear outline of the job/role requirements.

At the beginning of the internship the line manager or mentor should have a discussion with the intern about which day-to-day duties they will be responsible for in addition to any short-term and long-term objectives that are relevant (for example projects that the intern will be working on).

Depending on the nature of the parish organisation, you may also need to inform colleagues of the intern's arrival on their first morning, set up computer login details that they will be able to use and provide them with any documentation that they need to read before they can begin work. Try not to overburden the intern on their first morning, so give them plenty of time to digest any information or forms that you pass over to them.

It may also be helpful for you to arrange dates and times during the intern's first couple of weeks for them to have short individual meetings with everyone that they will be working alongside as well as any relevant senior parish staff. This saves you having to go into too much detail during the induction.

- **Managing and Mentoring**

As interns may be relatively new to the world of work, the way that they are managed is crucial. Just like any other employee, good management and supervision will make the intern more productive and develop more quickly. Although interns will become more self-sufficient as the internship progresses, it is recommended that someone local with line management experience acts as a mentor for the intern throughout their time with you.

It is recommended that mentors are tasked with the following duties:

- building a supportive working relationship with the intern;
- meeting the intern for lunch each day during their first week;
- acting as a point of contact for any concerns that the intern might have; and
- discussing career options and the intern's plans for the future.

Ideally, an intern will be working with a range of people in the parish. In any case, it is not essential for the mentor to work alongside the intern throughout the working day. That said, they should maintain regular contact with the intern,

particularly in their first few weeks, to help them settle in and give them any informal help and guidance.

The mentor should have regular conversations about the intern's performance in terms of their achievements, conduct, and development as well as discussing what they will be concentrating on in future.

- **Final Review Meeting**

As the internship draws to a close, regardless of how long it has lasted, it is good practice to arrange a final review meeting with the intern to discuss a number of issues. It is suggested that this review meeting is carried out by the intern's line manager. During the review, you can discuss:

- what has the intern learned and how have they developed over this internship;
- how well you think they have met their objectives (set either at the beginning of or during the internship);
- what have been their biggest/proudest achievements;
- what projects have they completed or contributed to;
- ways in which they are they better prepared for the jobs market after completing this internship (this can include 'soft' skills as well as specific projects);
- how well they have performed (in general and/or on specific projects);
- their strengths and weaknesses;
- areas of development you suggest that they concentrate on in future jobs; and
- what did they most and least enjoy about the internship?

Remember to write down the intern's responses to these questions, as this will form the basis of any reference letters that you provide for them (discussed below). To help the flow of the conversation, it might be easier to give the intern the review questions in advance to give them time to think about the topics that you will be discussing. Always make sure that the conversation is constructive and focuses as much as possible on positive elements of the intern and the internship.

- **Providing a reference**

A reference letter is the best way that an intern can demonstrate to a future employer what skills they have developed and what they have achieved. In terms of content, it is easiest to use the content of the review meeting as the basis for a reference letter, seeing as this will include what the intern has learned, achieved, developed and undertaken during the internship. It is also helpful if you can include positive comments, if appropriate, regarding their punctuality, attitude and any exceptional skills or aptitude that they showed.

Typically, employer reference letters for interns are no more than one side of A4. Combining the outcomes of the review meeting with standard reference information (for example the dates that they worked for you and their main duties) is normally sufficient.

4. Payment and Keeping Records:

- **Workers**

If someone is expected to undertake 'work' for any organisation (contributing to your parish, has a list of duties, and is working set hours), they count as a 'worker' and are entitled to be paid National Minimum Wage (NMW) – even if there is no written contract in place.

- **National Minimum Wage rates**

The National Minimum Wage is the minimum pay per hour almost all workers are entitled to by law – regardless of the size of the organisation offering internship placements – and covers almost all workers in the UK. However, workers must be of school leaving age (typically 16 years old or over) to receive the minimum wage.

There are currently four age based National Minimum Wage rates which may apply to individuals undertaking an internship placement, and they are usually updated in April each year.

The rates that apply from *1 April 2024 are as follows:

- For workers aged 21 and over £11.44 per hour
- For workers aged 18-20 years £8.60 per hour
- For workers aged under 18 years £6.40 per hour
- Apprentices £6.40 per hour

- **The "Real Living" Wage**

Whilst the National Minimum Wage is a mandatory employment requirement, the **Church of England have chosen to adopt the Living Wage for those over the age of 21.**

From 23 October 2024 the Real Living Wage for 2024/25 is £12.60 (U.K.) and £13.85 (London).

***NB: Always check the applicable NMW and Real Living Wage rates applicable at the time of recruitment:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/minimum-wage-rates>

<https://livingwage.org.uk/what-real-living-wage>

- **Exceptions**

There are a number of circumstances where the NMW does not apply. These include:

- students undertaking work experience as part of a UK-based further or higher education course;
- young people of compulsory school age;
- a volunteer or doing voluntary work; or
- an individual on a Government or European programme, or work shadowing.

- **Interns**

It makes no difference whether an intern works part time or full time. They are still entitled to receive the NMW. It is recommended that interns receive travel expenses for any journeys they undertake on behalf of the parish, such as travel to and from external meetings and events. When making decisions about how much to pay interns, it is essential to adhere to the relevant legislation at all times.

- **Keeping records**

By law, employers must keep records of any young worker's:

- working hours – to make sure they are not working more than they are permitted; (See 'Hours of Work and Rest Breaks')
- night work, if they do any – to show they're not working during restricted hours;
- health assessments offered before starting any night work and throughout their employment.

These records must be kept for 2 years from the date they were made

5. Volunteers

Volunteers are an essential part of voluntary organisations and can provide a motivated and flexible work force to those struggling with limited resources looking to achieve their charitable objectives. However, it is important not to blur the distinction between volunteers and paid employees, and this includes interns.

According to the National Council for Voluntary Organisations, (NCVO), <https://www.ncvo.org.uk>, volunteers do not have a contract of employment and can come and go as they please. As volunteers are under no formal or contractual obligations they are not paid for their time, whereas interns undertake regular paid work for an employer and are bound by a contract of employment and are entitled to receive the National Minimum Wage.

Whilst employers are not legally required to pay volunteers, they should agree to cover any expenses, such as food and drink, as well as any travel the individual undertakes as part of their role. Not only does this help improve people's access to opportunities, but it shows that you appreciate the volunteer's time and expense, which will help individuals remain engaged and committed.

Being clear about the expectations and intentions of both parties is essential when beginning a volunteering arrangement. To do this, Gov.UK and NCVO recommend putting your intentions in writing in the form of a **Volunteer Agreement** which should clearly set out the nature and scope of the volunteer role, how it benefits the organisation, time commitments, what training and support may be provided, arrangements for expenses, and legal obligations such as confidentiality, data protection, safeguarding, DBS checks, health and safety etc.

Volunteer agreements can further help to reinforce the distinction between interns and volunteers.

For further information please visit:

<https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance>, or contact the HR team at the Diocesan Office.