

Student placements health and safety guidance

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1. Introduction

The aim of this guidance is to advise schools and departments on the requirements necessary to effectively manage the health and safety risks arising out of student placements. This guidance sets out generic reasonably practicable actions which if adhered to will help to ensure that the University of Bristol fulfils its legal duties under section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 to look after those not in its employment and to ensure they are not exposed to risks to their health and safety. The guidance outlines what is required to approve placements, prepare students for placement and support the health and safety of students on placement both in the UK and overseas.

The policy recognises that the statutory liability for the health and safety of a student on placement primarily lies with the Placement Provider. However, this guidance places duties on the school to ensure that the student is sufficiently informed, enabling him or her to question the Placement Provider in respect of health and safety provision in the provider's premises and also to be an integral part of the health and safety monitoring process.

2. Definitions and criteria for approval of placements

2.1 Definition of terms

A **placement** is defined as: -

A period of vocational or academic experience, paid or unpaid where: -

There is the transfer of direct supervision of a student to a third party and the placement is integral to the individual student's course and the student is enrolled at the university during the period of the placement.

A **Placement Organiser** is a member(s) of staff nominated by the Head of School at which the student is enrolled to ensure that the process set out in this guide is applied to each placement.

The International Office has the role of the Placement Organiser for Erasmus students and students whose study placement is organised by the Study and Work Abroad Placement team (SWAP).

The **Placement Provider** is any third party who provides the placement. During the placement responsibility for the direct supervision of the student is transferred.

2.2 Criteria for the approval of placements

The University expects that schools establish and maintain relationships with organisations whose missions and national or international standing are comparable with its own. Schools should determine that the Placement Provider is able to:

- Provide opportunities which enable the intended learning outcomes to be achieved. (Learning outcomes can include the acquisition of skills and competencies specific to a discipline or profession, general work related skills and changed personal attitudes and behaviours); Further details on learning outcomes is available from the Education Support Unit at: <http://www.bris.ac.uk/esu/studentlearning/esu/studentlearning/placements>;
- Fulfil their responsibilities as regards students' health, safety and security;
- Support students during their placement.

3. Information for university-based placement organisers and advisers

3.1 Assessment of risk

This guidance establishes the three main health and safety risks arising out of the placement of students as:

- a) Foreseeable injury or ill-health arising out of the undertaking of the Placement Provider or the management of placements by the university including visits to Placement Providers;

- b) Foreseeable injury, ill-health or loss to the placement student not arising out of the undertaking of the Placement Provider but as a direct consequence of the placement;
- c) The actions of the student could cause injury or ill health to others, damage to property, or loss of income to a business.

Details on the criminal and civil action that might be taken against the student, the placement provider or its employees, or the University or its employees are available in the UCEA document Health and Safety Guidance for the placement of Higher Education students¹.

3.2 Controls

The University's Health and Safety Organisation policy² states that the University has a duty of care towards students and that Heads of School need to provide for the health and safety of students as far as reasonably practicable. All schools must implement a sensible risk management approach where the requirements for low risk placements are minimised and greater resources are directed at placements that are of higher risk. The following approach is considered integral to a sensible risk management to ensure the health and safety of students whilst on placement;

- a) The Placement Organiser must implement a robust procedure to assess and approve where appropriate health and safety procedures in force at the placement. This may be achieved in a variety of ways and the method chosen is a matter for local management but this must be a risk based decision;
- b) Procedures to ensure all students are prepared before the placement commences;
- c) Training of staff to ensure that they are familiar with the process of approval and raising and resolving any health and safety issues that may arise during a placement;
- c) Procedure for the monitoring and review of placements as far as is reasonably practicable.

3.3 Appointment and role of Placement Organiser

The Head of School must appoint one or more Placement Organisers who are competent and understand health and safety legislative requirements. Organisers need to be able to identify from information provided from the Placement Provider any possible basic health and safety defects within a placement workplace or institution and make informed decisions and know where to access further advice if required.

¹ Health and Safety Guidance for the Placement of Higher Education Students which is available at; <http://www.ucea.ac.uk/en/publications/index.cfm/HSPlace>

² University of Bristol Health and Safety Organisation available at; <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/safety/media/gn/safety-organisation-gn.pdf>

The International Office together with departmental year abroad co-ordinators act as the competent organisers for Erasmus and the Work and Study Abroad Programmes.

3.4 Placement Organiser's duties

Appendix 1 outlines the process that placements should follow to ensure effective health and safety management systems are in place. Further information is outlined below;

Risk assessment and review

It is the role of the Placement Organiser to assess the placement and consider whether there are health and safety risks and also whether suitable controls have been identified to control those risks. The risks and controls will be linked to the course subjects, and the controls will have generic themes dictated by the school and the Placement Provider. School Safety Advisors (SSAs) and Safety and Health Services are a useful source of help and information regarding the expected health and safety standards that should be met in placement institutions and workplaces.

The identification of these risks and verification of appropriate controls must be done, so far as possible, prior to taking up the placement. Methods of identifying risks and verifying controls must be developed and owned locally. It is recommended that six health and safety factors are taken into consideration during the risk assessment process as outlined in the UCEA document Health and Safety Guidance for the placement of Higher Education students³. These six factors are;

- Work factors (these relate to the placement provider and to the work that the student will be carrying out);
- Travel and transportation (travel and driving whilst on business can involve risk as well as any associated travel to and from the placement);
- Location and/or region (location can have a considerable impact especially to an unfamiliar country);
- General/environmental health (the student may face significant health, safety and welfare issues associated with the local environmental conditions, accommodation, food and drink etc.);
- Individual student (each student is an individual and will have a variety of knowledge, skills, experience and their physical capabilities and personality will impact on health and safety);
- Insurance limitations (assessment required on the extent there are limitations to available insurance arrangements).

Appendix 2 provides guidance on assessing the level of risk associated with each factor and examples of the risk reduction actions that might be available. Appendix 3

³ Health and Safety Guidance for the Placement of Higher Education Students which is available at; <http://www.ucea.ac.uk/en/publications/index.cfm/HSPlace>

is an example of a risk assessment form that can be used to record the significant findings of the risk assessment, any necessary actions and their implementation.

Clarification of expectations

The appropriate mechanism to verify Placement Providers control measures will vary between courses and schools. For some placements, it may be appropriate to set out the University requirements relating to the health and safety of the student in writing to the Placement Provider in advance of the placement. If this method is used, it is important that the placement does not go ahead unless the Placement Provider accepts in writing or electronically the University's requirements for the management of the student's health and safety by the Placement Provider.

Where a Placement Provider is used for several students at once or over the year, the document can be amended to reflect this and to avoid duplication. It is recommended that the document should be issued and signed annually.

Appendix outlines what should be contained if appropriate in a student placement health and safety agreement, in the form of a template letter, this must be amended to suit an individual school's requirements.

Pre-placement visits

For other schools/courses a visit by the Placement Organiser to the provider prior to the placement that includes a health and safety review may be more appropriate. In most cases these are not required unless there are specific concerns that are best resolved by a visit and inspection. If this method is used documentation to record the findings as regards health and safety needs to be developed Schools may wish to visit the placement with any disabled student prior to the start to ensure any support mechanisms are in place.

3.5 Preparing the student

Students should be prepared as far as practically possible for their placement including information on health and safety risks and control measures. The aim is to ensure that the student is sufficiently informed, enabling him or her to make informed judgements and where necessary question the Placement Provider in respect of health and safety provision in the provider's premises.

The preparation must outline the student's duties during the placement including;

- Their health and safety responsibilities;
- The health and safety responsibilities of the Placement Provider;
- Assessing and managing risks for activities they will undertake;
- Monitoring and providing feedback to the Placement Organiser;
- Informing the Placement Organiser immediately if they have any concerns regarding their health and safety at the placement.

It is the responsibility of schools to ensure that all students going on placement are effectively prepared – ideally this will be achieved on a one to one basis or in a group session. Ideally a written copy of the information imparted must be given to all students that are going on placement. Topics to be covered are contained in Appendix 5 including additional information for overseas hazards.

The International Office SWAP team has the responsibility for briefing on health and safety those students that are going overseas under the Erasmus and Work and Study Abroad schemes and to monitor student understanding.

Risk assessments for each course cohort should be made. This assessment will help identify if any particular or specific guidance should be added to the standard information outlined in Appendix 5. For example, certain types of placements more detail will need to be provided especially where there will be particular health and safety issues. For example, work may require vaccinations such as Hepatitis B or work with children may require clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). For high risk placements, it may be appropriate to test the student's understanding of all essential information provided.

It is essential that all placements are the subject of a formal process. If a placement is self-generated by the student then they must inform the Placement Organiser immediately of the prospective placement to ensure the correct procedure for that department is followed. The School must have a means of ensuring that all students are made aware of this requirement.

3.6 Monitoring of placements

Monitoring of a placement can take the form of:

- Regular feedback from the student including information received following contact by the Placement Organiser;
- Feedback from the Placement Provider including information received following contact by the Placement Organiser;
- Observations and discussions during periodic tutor visits;
- Other contact by the Placement Organiser with the student.

Negative feedback received during the placement must receive the appropriate level of investigation by the Placement Organiser. This will involve discussions with both the student and the Placement Provider, and could include seeking advice from the School Safety Adviser and/or Safety and Health Services.

The Placement Organiser or other visiting tutor should consider visiting the Placement Provider. A risk-based approach must be used to determine whether a visit is required during the placement and to determine the frequency of such visits. Account should also be taken of factors including the nature of the work experience of the student, any special vulnerabilities of the student, duration of the placement, nature of the employer and feedback received from previous students or other

sources. There are resource implications for schools if they decide to send a Placement Organiser or tutor to every student placement (even just in the UK).

The visiting Placement Organiser or visiting tutor is not expected to be an expert in health and safety but should be aware of, and understand their health and safety monitoring role. Staff visiting students on work placement have a duty of care to observe the health and safety practices and take any action that they consider to be necessary. Higher risk placements may warrant more specialist placement visitors. Schools must clarify the expectations of any visiting tutors and provide guidance and training as appropriate.

Schools must ensure that action is taken to ensure the health and safety of visiting tutors and that any risk is reduced to the lowest level reasonably practicable. Training for Placement Organisers or visiting tutor on risk assessment or the health and safety aspects of a placement can be arranged via Safety and Health Services.

Study placement students must be monitored by the Placement Organiser or by an appropriate member of university academic or administrative staff ensuring that the partner Universities are assessed and regular constructive student feedback is received. The frequency of monitoring partner institutions will be risk based and it is the responsibility of the International Office to coordinate this approach.

3.7 Terminating the placement

Most placements run smoothly. When minor issues do arise, they can usually be sorted out to mutual satisfaction through diplomatic dialogue between all parties. However, there are a few situations that may result in the termination of a placement. For example, personal circumstances may mean a student is unable to continue with their placement or commercial circumstances may arise that mean a Placement Provider is no longer able to host a student.

More importantly, there may be concerns about the quality of a particular placement in terms of the learning the adequacy of its health and safety provision.

It may also be necessary to terminate a placement in the rare event that a student is exposed to significant health and safety risks without effective adequate controls in place. The Placement Organiser or a visiting tutor must discuss any concerns identified with the Placement Provider to seek immediate improvements. Concerns may be identified by the visiting tutor or Placement Organiser or from the student themselves. It may be necessary to withdraw the student if there are any unresolved health and safety concerns. The School Safety Advisor and Safety and Health Services will be able to provide support and advice to the Placement Organiser in reaching the major decision to withdraw a student. Once a student has been removed from a placement the Placement Organiser should arrange a debriefing session with appropriate members of staff and the student. Consideration must be given to not sending another student to that particular placement in the future.

Terminating a placement could have serious implications affecting the student's course and this therefore emphasises how important it is to ensure initially that Placement Providers have adequate standards of health and safety.

4. Other relevant considerations

4.1 Insurance

The University of Bristol has both employers' liability and public liability insurance policies, which are dealt with by the Office of the University Secretary. Detailed insurance guidance is contained in Appendix 7, schools should address any additional questions regarding insurance to the University Insurance Officer.

Where students are working or studying outside the UK, Placement Organisers should insist that students take out adequate travel insurance to cover them for the whole period of the placement. Travel insurance can be arranged via the Insurance Officer. Students should be asked to sign before leaving, confirming that appropriate insurance is in place. Placement Organisers where possible should aim to obtain details of the cover arranged – name of the insurance company, policy number and the insurer's emergency helpline number.

Medical students on electives should also ensure that appropriate arrangements have been made to cover professional liability (e.g. through the MDU). Where this is not possible they may only observe medical activity and may not take part.

4.2 Equal Opportunities

With the placement of students under the age of 18, there may be additional specific legislative that will need to be considered. However, this does not imply that students under the age of 18 years should be subject to unlawful discrimination by such additional requirements.

4.3 Disabled Students

Schools should encourage students with a health condition or a disability that may require adjustments or support whilst on placement to disclose this, or to agree for the Placement Organiser to disclose information on this when identifying possible providers. Advice for managing placements for disabled students is available in the DfES publication 'Providing Work Placements for Disabled Students'⁴

⁴ Providing Work Placements for Disabled Students. A good practice guide for further and higher education institutions (DfES) available online at <http://www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/placements/>

4.4 Placements where the Placement Provider is the University of Bristol

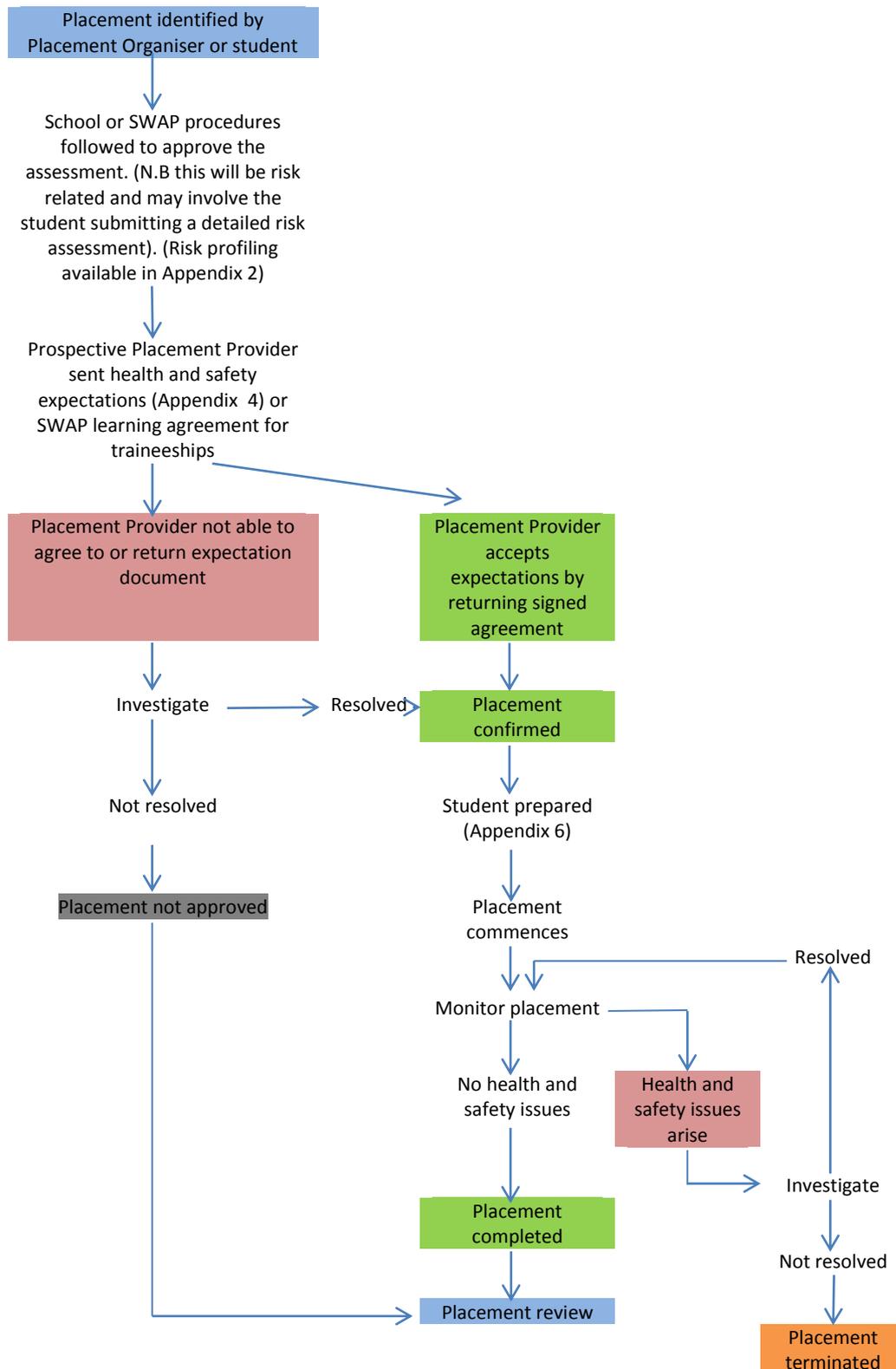
Students can come to the University of Bristol either as work or study placements. Those students that are on work placements are considered as employees for the duration of the placement and the same controls must be in place for those students as are in place for the University of Bristol employees.

5. Useful links

The following organisations and websites contain information which may also be helpful to Placement Organisers, particularly those new to the role:

1. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office. <http://www.fco.gov.uk>
2. The World Health Organisation. <http://www.who.int/en/>
3. The Department of Health website on health abroad includes a country by country guide
<http://www.nhs.uk/Healthcareabroad/Pages/Healthcareabroad.aspx>
4. Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA)
<http://www.ucea.ac.uk/>
5. University of Bristol Safety and Health Services
<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/safety/>
6. University of Bristol Secretary's Office (Insurance details)
<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/insurance/>
7. University of Bristol International Office
<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/international/>
8. UCEA document Health and Safety Guidance for the placement of Higher Education Students which is available at;
<http://www.ucea.ac.uk/en/publications/index.cfm/HSplace>

Appendix 1 – Placement health and safety flow diagram



Appendix 2 – Risk profiling and specific actions matrix

Factor	Rating Profile	Risk Indicators	Examples of Specific Actions Necessary
Work Factors	High	<p>Work with hazards that have potential to cause permanent injury or fatality, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction site work with work at height, dusts, moving machinery, electrical systems. • Operation of machinery, with mechanical hazards such as high speed rotating parts, crushing and entanglement risks. • Laboratory work with toxic / hazardous materials. <p>Community / social work / with known high risk groups of clients or locations (e.g. drug abusers, homeless, violent patients).</p> <p>Work with animal bedding or large or dangerous animals.</p> <p>Activities requiring specific licenses or qualifications (e.g. diving, flying aircraft, crewing an aerial device).</p> <p>Work involving significant hazards in small companies that do not have professional health and safety advice.</p>	<p>Seek confirmation from Placement Provider about expectations of student's prior competency in high risk activities, and ensure student meets these;</p> <p>Confirm that training and supervision will be provided by the Placement Provider throughout the placement. Include details in the written communication with the Placement Provider.</p> <p>Consider pre-placement site visit.</p>
	Medium	Working in proximity to high risk factors (but not directly with them).	Seek confirmation from the Placement Provider that the student will not be expected to participate in high risk activities, and will be appropriately supervised in medium risk activities. Include in the written communication with the placement provider.
	Low	Office based type activities or other low hazard environments and activities.	None
Transportation Factors	High	<p>Significant travel to reach placement, prolonged or on local transport facilities known to be high risk (poor driving or vehicle safety standards).</p> <p>Demanding travel during placement.</p>	<p>Brief student on travel arrangements, discuss implications with them.</p> <p>Consider their experience.</p>

		Student required to drive others or in unfamiliar vehicles.	Get confirmation from them that they have relevant driving licence and insurances. Consider reducing risks by providing accompanied travel where practicable. Specify regular contact times.
	Medium	Travel at night. Long daily commuting required. Student required to drive a familiar vehicle in reasonable conditions.	Brief student on travel arrangements. Confirm that these are acceptable to them. Advise them to check that they have the necessary driving licence and insurances.
	Low	No significant travel, comfortable daily commute. No driving associated with placement.	None
Location / Region Factors	High	Significant risk of civil disorder, crime or similar danger (e.g. placement in war zones, countries where the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) advises against travel). Unavoidable lone or remote working in proximity to significant risk (e.g. medical student elective in a refugee camp). Medical & rescue services not available quickly or locally. Means of communication likely to be difficult or compromised.	Check Foreign and Commonwealth Office restrictions and recommendations. Provide information to students on guides on appropriate behavior, clothing etc. Supplement general briefing with information about medium risk factors.
	Medium	Higher than normal risk of civil disorder, crime or similar danger. Delays likely in communicating with tutors / others. Placements abroad in areas identified as low risk by FCO.	Check Foreign and Commonwealth Office restrictions and recommendations. Provide information to students on guides on appropriate behavior, clothing etc. Supplement general briefing with information about medium risk factors
	Low	Placements in the UK with no significant local risks.	None

General/ environmental health factors	High	<p>Regional/local health risks require mandatory and specific health protection measures e.g. inoculations</p> <p>Very hot or strenuous working conditions (e.g. manual working outdoors in the sun).</p> <p>Very cold working conditions (e.g. catering placement in a food cold storage/cook chill or freeze facility).</p>	<p>Consult the Occupational Health Service or medical/health professional for advice regarding immunisations and other preparations.</p>
	Medium	<p>Regional/local conditions require some precautionary measures, e.g. optional inoculations against diseases, medical travel kit is a sensible precaution</p>	<p>Consult the Occupational Health Service or medical/health professional for advice regarding immunisations and other preparations.</p> <p>A medical travel kit is a sensible precaution.</p>
	Low	<p>No significant environmental health risks.</p>	<p>None.</p>
Individual Student Factors	High	<p>The student has personal factors (e.g. health disability linguistic or cultural) which may increase the risk of accident or illness during placement related activities even following reasonable adjustments.</p> <p>The student has personal factors (e.g. health disability, pregnancy, linguistic or cultural) which may require specific adjustments or support if living away from home, or makes them susceptible to episodes of illness.</p> <p>The student's knowledge, understanding, and skills are low for the type of work involved.</p>	<p>Discuss activities of high risk with the student, try to eliminate or reduce them where possible.</p> <p>Engage with the Occupational Health Service/ disability support professionals to develop reasonable adjustments. Confirm these in the written communication with the placement provider.</p> <p>Consider pre-placement site visit.</p>

	Medium	The student has relevant person factors (e.g. health disability, pregnancy, linguistic or cultural) which may require specific adjustments or support during placement, or in social interactions at work.	Engage with the Occupational Health Service/ disability support professionals to develop reasonable adjustments. Confirm these in the written communication with the placement provider.
	Low	The student has no long-term medical conditions or disability likely to cause episodes of illness or require specific adjustment whilst on placement. The student has relevant knowledge, understanding, and skills for the type of work involved.	None.
Insurance Factors	High	Locations, activities and/or circumstances are excluded from University of Bristol insurance and other insurance cover. Locations where the Placement Provider's insurance or third party liability associated with the work of the student.	If locations, activities and/or circumstances are excluded from the University of Bristol travel and other insurance cover, consider alternative placements. If placement is to proceed, additional specific insurances may be available. Consult the University Insurance Officer Brief students on the limitations of insurance cover (the small print).
	Medium	Locations, activities and/or circumstances that require prior acceptance from the University of Bristol's insurers before being covered.	If locations, activities and/or circumstances require prior acceptance from the University of Bristol travel insurers, ensure notification and acceptance is given. Brief students on the limitations of insurance cover (the small print).
	Low	Locations, activities and/or circumstances that are automatically included in the University of Bristol's insurance cover. UK locations (where the placement provider must have employers' liability insurance cover).	None

Appendix 3 – Risk assessment for student placement

Placement provider		Student or student group	
Address		Start and end dates	
Placement provider contact		School Placement organiser	
General control measures	Yes/No	Action required before approval	Date action completed
Has the placement provider confirmed receipt and acceptance of written communication?			
Has the placement provider identified any specific skills/knowledge requirements of the student?			
Has the placement provider been used before and been reviewed with regard to health and safety? If 'yes', do any concerns remain unresolved?			
Does the placement provider have a health and safety advisor?			
Has the student(s) received sufficient information?			
Risk assessment and further specific actions necessary	Risk profile (H, M or L)	Action required before approval	Completed
Work factors			
Travel and transportation factors			
Location and/or regional factors			
General/environmental health factors			
Individual student factors			
Insurance limitations			
Conclusions	Yes/No	Action required before approval	Date action completed
Is a site safety visit required before the placement is approved?			
Are the risks tolerable such that the placement can be approved?			
Prepared by:		Date:	
Signed:		Dated:	

Appendix 4 – Specimen letter

Purpose

The purpose of the written communication is

- to clarify expectations with regard to health and safety related issues for the student, the placement provider and the HEI, and
- to seek responses to specific questions raised by your risk assessment and control measures.

The following provides an example letter that can be used for this purpose. It should be adapted to suit the circumstances of the placement and be based on risk assessment.

From: *Name* (Placement Tutor)

Date:

To: Host employer's representative

Position,

Company name

Company address (registered)



Re: Work Experience Placement for:

Thank you for agreeing to accept (*student name*) on the work placement programme at your (*placement site address*) starting on thefor (*time period*).

Quality work experience is vital to equip our students for their future careers and the university is grateful for your offer of this placement opportunity. We hope our student will learn from this placement skills and competencies specific to their discipline or profession as well as more general work-related and employability skills (time management, team working, communications skills etc).

Both the University of Bristol and you as Placement Provider have a role to play as regards in students' health and safety whilst on placement. As part of this role the University of Bristol will: -

- Prepare the student for the placement and ensure they are aware of general health and safety aspects. This however is of a general nature and cannot include the specific information needed for the particular job or workplace with you;
- Give the student an opportunity to feed back to us as regards any problems they have experienced with regard to health and safety whilst on placement;

- Respond to this by informing you;
- Give you the opportunity to feedback to us any concerns that you have regarding the student or the placement arrangements.

During the placement, we expect (student name) to prove to be an effective, safe and reliable individual. However, you will appreciate that during this period the student is under your control and therefore the primary duty of care and consequent liabilities must rest with you.

As the student's Placement Provider, the University of Bristol requests you to treat them in the same way as your employees with regards to their health and safety.

The University therefore requests that you as Placement Provider will;

- Plan the work or study programme and associated health and safety training to be undertaken by the student.
- Provide the student with a full and clear induction to your organisation and its working practices, including health and safety arrangements, fire precautions and emergency evacuation arrangements, risk assessment programme as it affects activities undertaken by them, how to report accidents, incidents and unsafe conditions.
- Nominate a supervisor who will conduct or make arrangements for day-to-day supervision of the student including instruction regarding hazards and health and safety precautions.
- Comply with applicable local health and safety legislation
- Confirm to the University the liability and other insurance cover provided by you that covers the activities of the student with your organisation: both with regard to the student and to others who could be affected by the student's actions or inactions.
- Facilitate access to the student for visits by the visiting tutor.
- In cases of serious accidents or incidents involving the student or breaches of discipline by the student to advise and consult with specified contacts at the University of Bristol.

If there are any specific technical or professional skills/competencies which you require please provide us with further details. If you have any questions or problems, please let us know at the earliest possible date on *telephone number* and ask to speak to *name*.

Please can you confirm that you accept the above responsibilities by contacting..... details above.

Yours sincerely

Head of School / Placement Organiser

Appendix 5 – Health and safety information for students

Introduction

Placements provide an opportunity for you to apply skills acquired whilst at the University of Bristol to 'real-life' situations. Many qualities can also be learned and developed during a placement that could improve your employment prospects. However, there are health and safety aspects to every placement, namely: -

- being under the supervision of a third party;
- being involved with, or undertaking, activities where you have little or no experience; and
- working in and visiting environments and locations that you are unfamiliar with.

This guidance assists in providing you with an awareness of the health and safety aspects of placements.

Health and safety responsibilities

(a) Placement Providers – organisations providing placements a general duty to ensure your health and safety whilst on placement and must:

- Take account of your potential inexperience for activities you'll be expected to undertake and put into place appropriate controls.
- Provide you with information, instruction, training and supervision including an induction.

(b) Students must;

- Not to do anything that puts your or other people's health and safety at risk.
- Follow health and safety instructions, information and training.
- Never intentionally misuse equipment or anything provided for health and safety reasons.
- Bring any health and safety concerns to the attention of your Placement Provider and your placement tutor/organiser at the university as soon as possible. **Do not wait for their next visit or contact with you.**

Placement preparation

There are many aspects to placements that you must prepare for, health and safety included. It is important that you:

- attend briefings prior to placements commencing as health and safety will be covered;
- familiarise yourself with the health and safety aspects of placements, particularly you and your Placement Provider's responsibilities, and what you should receive, particularly in the initial period.

Information, instruction, training and supervision

These form the 'backbone' of seeking to ensure your health and safety whilst on placement and can include: classroom-type situations; health and safety notices and signs; safe working procedures. Upon commencing a placement, you must receive a health and safety induction. If you do not receive an induction then raise this with your Placement Provider. The induction should include:

- Emergency information

Whilst on placement it is essential that you receive information and instruction on what action to take should an emergency situation arise. Such situations include: -

- hearing the fire alarm;
- discovering a fire;
- requiring first aid assistance;
- threat to personal safety;
- spillage of a dangerous substance.

If you are not made aware of what correct actions to take raise this with your Placement Provider. Such information must be given at the induction stage and where a change of work location or activity occurs.

- Assessing and controlling risks

Your Placement Provider is expected to determine the risks encountered with the activities you'll be involved with and put into place measures to control these risks. Such measures may be no different to those already in place for any of their employees. However, because of your potential inexperience, or other factors, a higher level of measure may be required, especially in the early periods of the placement.

Measures to control risks can include:

- providing information, instruction, training and supervision;
- having in place guarding, ventilation systems etc. to control risks at source;
- ensuring equipment used is appropriate and in safe condition;
- providing, and ensuring the use of, personal protective equipment and clothing.

It is important that you are made aware of the risks associated with the activities you will be involved with and what is in place and required of you to control these. As your placement progresses so will the information, instruction and training you receive. Never undertake an activity or go into an area unless you have received appropriate information, instruction and training for you to feel competent and confident to carry on. Levels of supervision will vary from placement -to-placement

and at points within a particular placement. Don't be afraid to ask questions of your supervisor and if you feel there is a lack of supervision then raise this concern.

- Reporting accidents, incidents and health and safety concerns

It is important that your report accidents and incidents – whether injury has resulted or not – that you are involved in. This will enable your Placement Provider to investigate the circumstances and take any necessary action. Reporting a 'near miss' incident could ensure that nobody is injured next time. At induction, you must be made aware of the reporting procedures.

If you do have any health and safety concerns during your placement the first action is to raise these with your Placement Provider i.e. injury, training, pregnancy. Where you believe these concerns are serious also make your placement tutor aware. Don't wait to the next scheduled visit or conversation. Never undertake an activity, using equipment or go into an area unless you are competent and confident to do so.

- Monitoring and feedback

You are an essential element in the monitoring of health and safety performance of your Placement Provider. Ensure you discuss health and safety aspects with your placement tutor and complete any necessary paperwork that is required of you.

At the end of your placement give thoughts on how you feel the Placement Provider approached health and safety.

This information is very useful to the university as a means of reviewing the health and safety arrangements of the Placement Provider and deciding whether or not the placement is suitable for other students.

(The following information is to be included where this guidance is being given to those students who are undertaking EU and international placements)

EU & International Placements

Whilst types of work and activities undertaken during overseas placements may vary from country-to-country there are also other aspects that can have potential health and safety implications. These include:

- long-haul travel (jet-lag, difference in local hours, effect on body – initially more fatigued);
- unfamiliarity with, and little knowledge of, placement locations and surrounding areas (personal safety, no-go areas, areas of high crime, safe use of transport);
- different climatic conditions (higher temperatures, more extreme winters);
- contracting illnesses, receiving injuries and obtaining medical treatment (venomous animals, contagious diseases, vaccinations, contaminated drinking water, local health care arrangements, and contacting emergency services).

- cultural and language differences (accepted practices, local laws and religions, communication more difficult).

These will also affect you during your own time whilst on placement. It is important that prior to undertaking any EU or international placement you discuss the necessary arrangements that need to be in place and what you require to do in preparation.

EU & International Placements (Include following hazards as they apply to the placement)

Hazard list taken from UCEA/USHA document “Health and Safety Guidance when working overseas”

Climatic extremes	Dry/desert (high humidity, hypothermia) monsoon/storms, oxygen deficiency/rarefied air, sunburn/skin cancer, tidal and other water considerations, unusual winds (e.g., tornado, hurricane).
Contact with animals (wild or domestic)	Allergies, asthma, bites (and other physical contact, dermatitis, rabies).
Contact with insects	Bites/stings (e.g. Lyme's disease, malaria, yellow fever, other). Availability of antidotes/medical back-up.
Contact with reptiles (snakes, scorpions)	Poisoning, remoteness, shock, etc. Availability of antidotes/medical back-up.
Contaminated food	Allergies, food poisoning, Hepatitis A.
Contaminated water	Bilharzia, diarrhoea, legionella, leptospirosis.
Contaminated (drinking) water	Cholera, polio, typhoid.
Dental care	Standards may vary, so a check-up prior to travel may be advisable.
Electricity	Compatibility of equipment and supply, safety standards (higher/lower/different).
Emergencies (including fire)	Arrangements and procedures (first-aid provision, "Help" numbers/contacts).
Environment (local)	Culture (customs, dress, religion)
Evacuations/confined spaces/tunnelling	Permits to work (risk appreciation, safety systems). Training.
Hazardous substances/chemicals	Antidote availability (spillage arrangements, transport requirements).
Legal differences	Local codes/guidance (local standards, local statute - staff informed and trained).
Language	Understanding information, instruction, training procedures
Natural phenomena	Avalanche, earthquake, volcano.
Needles (contaminated/sexual)	Blood borne viruses e.g. HIV, Hepatitis B.

contact)	
Personal safety	Local political situation
Stress	Accommodation problems, civil unrest, crime, vandalism and violence, extremes of heat/cold, fatigue, language/communication problems, lack of support (especially family/peers), loads/expectations excessive, loneliness/remoteness, sickness, unfriendly environment.
Transportation	Competent driver(s)/pilot(s), properly maintained and equipped vehicles, transport suitable for terrain, accident and record of transport companies such as private airlines.
Vaccination/prophylaxis	Appropriate vaccinations depending on country visited e.g., Tetanus, yellow fever, malaria, polio, Hepatitis A.

Appendix 6 – Insurance for student placements

Section 1: Guidelines for Placement Organisers

Insurance needs to be considered from the various perspectives of what could go wrong and who can be adversely affected.

There are 5 aspects to consider, depending on whether the placement is in the UK or overseas.

1. Injuries to the student during the course of work on placement - UK

Within the United Kingdom the Placement Provider is responsible for the health and safety of the student whilst on placement as if the student were their employee⁵.

Most employers are required to hold Employers Liability (EL) insurance⁶ and there is an agreement among the UK insurance industry that work experience persons will be regarded as employees by all UK insurers and covered by EL policies.

Placement Organisers should require Placement Providers to hold Employer's Liability insurance.

However, some employers are exempt from the compulsory insurance requirement. Notably these include government bodies and family operations. This particularly affects placements by the Vets school as some small farms are still run as family operations and may have no EL cover; equally some vets still operate as one-person businesses with a family member providing administration. To allow veterinary students still to be placed with such businesses the University's EL insurance policy has been specifically extended to indemnify the farmer/vet where they have no EL cover of their own. This extension only applies as regards farmers or vets so other departments seeking to place students with one-person or family businesses should contact the Insurance officer for advice.

Government departments may seek to contract out of their legal responsibility for the health and safety risk to placement students and transfer the risk (and the need for EL insurance) to the University. Another example from the Vet School is the Veterinary Laboratories Agency in Northern Ireland (for abattoir visits) where the VLA insists that the University indemnify them for the EL risk to our students on placement. Our insurers are prepared to cover these placements on an individual basis **subject to prior notification**.

Important Note

What this means is that a student injured during the course of work within the UK may be entitled to compensation if the injury is due to someone's negligence or breach of health and safety regulations. However, this is not automatic and depends

⁵ Health and Safety (Training for Employment) Regulations 1990.

⁶ Employer's Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969

on the circumstances of the accident. Also, students may have to bear their own legal costs.

The University does **not** arrange any Personal Accident type cover for students in the UK whether on placement or otherwise. Some students may have their own insurance and others may have limited protection under Personal Accident schemes provided by affiliation groups (e.g. The British Veterinary Association).

2. Injuries to the student during the course of work on placement – overseas

When students are placed overseas the position becomes more complex. In France for example, placement students are subject to a “stage” agreement under which they are regarded as employees and the Placement Provider generally accepts *responsabilité civile* for them under French legislation. However, some non-French organisations providing placement opportunities in France may refuse to accept this responsibility and attempt to transfer the risk to the University. Our liability insurers may be able to cover these placements on an individual basis **subject to prior notification and depending on the specific terms of the individual “stage” agreement**. Placement Organisers should seek information as regards the Placement Provider’s insurance arrangements to cover injuries or sickness suffered by placement students attributable to their duties with the Provider (see Appendix 5) (Any queries should be referred to the University Insurance Officer with details of the placement.

In countries with little legal protection for workers or where Placement Providers refuse to take responsibility for accidents occurring during work activities, students may want to take out their own Personal Accident insurance but the University cannot offer advice about this.⁷

A few countries may require EL type insurance (generally known as Workman’s Compensation insurance) to be placed locally. A notable example is Australia but this is also the case in certain states of the USA (e.g. Colorado) This will be cost - prohibitive so unless the Placement Provider will offer the necessary cover, the placement **cannot** go ahead.

3. Students’ liability for injuries and/or property damage that they may cause – UK placements.

Within the UK, employers are vicariously responsible for the negligent acts of their employees including students on placement, if such acts cause injury to others. This liability will be covered by the Placement Provider’s EL policy – see 1 above.

Vicarious liability does not apply if the student acts in a wholly unpredictable and irresponsible manner – “on a frolic of their own” is the memorable legal term - in which case the individual student may be held personally liable.

⁷ We are not authorised to offer financial advice under the Financial Services Authority rules.

In most circumstances, as the Provider is responsible for supervising the placement student during their duties, then there is no liability on the part of the student or the University in the event of damage to the provider's property or that of any third party where the student is working under the supervision of the provider. As above the exception is where the student is on a frolic of their own.

The University hold Public Liability ("third party") insurance to indemnify the University in the remote eventuality that we are held legally liable for a student's actions (e.g. we tell a Placement Provider that a student has certain skills or training that in fact they do not have) and such actions cause injury or property damage. This insurance also indemnifies students – but only at our request and in circumstances where the University would have been responsible had the case been brought against it rather than the individual student.

The University will not indemnify students for the consequences of any deliberate malicious or irresponsible acts on their part.

4. Students' liability for injuries and/or property damage that they may cause – overseas placements.

As the insurance situation is so variable overseas the University has arranged an extension to our Public Liability insurance to provide personal liability insurance cover for students during University-authorized overseas placements, including liability arising during the course of work.

However, this will not indemnify students for the consequences of any deliberate malicious or irresponsible acts on their part.

Neither does it include professional risks (see 6 below).

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5. Health insurance

Students on overseas placements should be advised to take out appropriate and adequate health insurance, whether by way of Travel insurance or Medical Expenses coverage.

Travel insurance policies typically provide for:

- Emergency medical expenditure – an emergency in this context means anything that is unexpected (as opposed to regular treatment for an existing condition); it does not have to be a serious or life-threatening event;
- Emergency repatriation costs;
- Loss of baggage/money;
- Cancellation costs;
- Limited Personal Accident benefits.

However, the extent of the protection varies widely from one insurer to another and many policies contain small-print exclusions such as:

- Exclusion of cover if the insured person is working (this is evidently not appropriate for students on placement);
- Life-style exclusions (claims arising whilst under the influence of drugs/alcohol);
- Activity exclusions (excluding claims arising from “dangerous” activities – the definition of “dangerous” will vary from one insurer to another but may include motor cycling as well as winter sports);
- Health exclusions (excluding any health conditions not notified to the insurer prior to taking out the cover);
- Pregnancy exclusions (policies may not operate if the insured person is travelling out or back within, say, 3 months of the baby’s due date or, worse, may not cover the baby if it is premature).

Students travelling on overseas placements authorised by the University may take out insurance under the University’s travel insurance scheme. The student needs to pay the premium. Placement Organisers must inform students that they should read the small print of any insurance policy since it is their (the student’s) responsibility to make sure it is suitable for their needs.

Details of the University travel insurance arrangements can be found at:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/insurance/>

Some Universities and other organisations in the USA providing longer term student placements (more than 3 months) insist that travel insurance is not sufficient and require the student to pay for US medical healthcare insurance. Prices vary from institution to institution but typically will not be less than \$500. This should not be regarded as an alternative to adequate travel insurance but as an additional requirement.

Placement Organisers need to make sure they have details of the health insurance arrangements made by individual students so that:

- The University is satisfied insurance is in place;
- The organiser is aware of the insurance arrangements in the event of an emergency overseas.

6. Professional liability

Students training for a profession – doctors, dentists and veterinary students – may be held legally liable for professional risks (this can be known as professional indemnity, clinical negligence, malpractice or errors and omissions insurance).

The position is slightly different for the 3 professions.

Medical and Dental students

Students working within the NHS are covered for professional risks under the Clinical Negligence Scheme for Trusts.

The GP practice’s medical malpractice cover will cover students placed in GP practices in the UK.

If the placement is in a private hospital, hospice or nursing home, the Placement Organiser needs to ask the provider the following question:

Will your insurance cover the liability of the student for injuries to third parties, including clinical errors, or property damage arising from their duties within your organisation?

Yes/No

If the provider answers “No” to this question the placement should be referred to the Insurance Officer for further advice.

Medical and dental students are encouraged to join the appropriate branch of the MDU or MPS. This provides them with free world wide medical/dental malpractice protection during most electives upon application to the MDU/MPS. Placement Providers need to check that students have cover for their electives before authorising any overseas placement MDU/MPS may not be able to offer elective coverage in some countries due to local regulations (e.g. Australia).

It may still be possible to place students in Australia but Organisers need to make sure that the Placement Provider accepts responsibility for any professional errors or omissions or clinical injuries *arising from the placement*.

Veterinary students

The BVA does not provide any veterinary malpractice cover for its members.

For placements with UK vets, due to the rules of vicarious liability mentioned above, it is probable that students will be automatically included under the provider’s Veterinary (Mal) practice insurance but the Placement Organiser should seek confirmation that this is the case.

Placement Providers overseas should be asked the following question:

Will your insurance cover liability incurred by the student for damage, including injury to any animal, arising from their duties within your organisation?

Due to insurance requirements in Australia it is not possible for students to be placed there unless the provider answers “yes”.

Veterinary students placed in the USA can purchase economical Veterinary Practice insurance by joining SAVMA. See:

<http://www.avma.org/savma/about.asp>

Other “No” answers should be referred to the Insurance Officer with full details of the placement as the University’s insurers may be prepared to cover these placements on an individual basis **subject to prior notification**.

Appendix 7

Revisions to the student placement health and safety guidance (of the previous 2009 version)

Update number	Section	Page number	Brief summary of update
1			Update of the document. Minor updates on name changes of key functions including Safety and Health Services and Study and Work Abroad Placement team. Also changes of titles of courses including CRB checks to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
2	3.2	4	Controls. Description added of a sensible risk management approach to health and safety controls for student placements.
3	3.4	6	Placement Organiser's duties. Removal of requirement to issue questionnaire and answer form. Replaced with clarification of expectations. Removal of appendices 2 and 3.
3	3.5	7	Student information. Change of student briefings to preparing the student to take into account different ways of briefing students that are not just face to face training.
4			Information for placement providers. Removal of Section 3, not deemed necessary for the guidance note.
5			Information for students. Removal of section 4, moved to appendix 5.
6	Appendix 1	12	Flow diagram. Addition of flow diagram for ease of showing recommended process to be followed.
7	Appendix 2	13	Risk profiling and action matrix. Addition of this information for placement organisers to assess levels of risk. This information is from UCEA document and was previously linked to only.
8	Appendix 3	17	Risk assessment form. Example of risk assessment form that can be used. This information is from UCEA document and was previously linked to only.