

LSBU Work-Based Learning (WBL) and Placement Policy

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1. Introduction

The Work-Based Learning (**WBL**) and Placement Policy at London South Bank University (**LSBU**) provides a framework for the management, monitoring, and delivery of WBL and placement experiences. These experiences are integral to many degree programmes and contribute to the employability and professional development of students. This policy applies to all LSBU students, including international students with specific visa requirements, and ensures compliance with legal, academic, professional and regulatory standards.

1.1 UK Quality Code for Higher Education's Advice and Guidance

This policy is informed by the UK Quality Code (the **Code**) for Higher Education's Advice and Guidance for:

- **WBL:** as outlined in the Code, *“WBL opportunities enable students to apply and integrate areas of subject and professional knowledge, skills, and behaviours to meet course learning outcomes.”* It also states that *“parties understand and respect the respective roles, responsibilities, and expectations of the education organisation, employer, and student, and appropriate training and support is provided where required.”*
- **Partnerships:** the Code recommends that *“where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has effective arrangements to ensure that the academic experience is high-quality irrespective of where or how courses are delivered and who delivers them.”*

2. Scope of this Policy

This Policy applies to any student undertaking WBL, save for those in health-related areas (Nursing, Midwifery, and Allied and Community Health). These are covered by separate policies known as Practice Learning Guidelines, which outline specific requirements for professional practice placements in these areas. LSBU has specific Practice Learning Guidelines for Nursing, Midwifery, and Allied and Community Health programmes.

WBL refers to any structured learning experience that takes place in a professional setting outside of the traditional academic environment. These experiences can vary in length and format, but they are all designed to help students consolidate their academic learning through practical application. This policy covers:

- **Company visits:** Usually undertaken as a supervised group activity, either as part of the curriculum or outside, as an enrichment activity for students.
- **General Placements:** Formal work placements integrated into degree programmes, which may be compulsory or optional.
- **Insight days:** Offered and advertised by employers, aimed at students at an early stage of studies, typically ranging from a few days to two weeks.
- **Internships/Vacation placements:** Short-term work experiences, typically ranging from 6 to 23 weeks, undertaken during vacation periods or part-time during the academic year. These can be offered by employers or secured through speculative applications.
- **Practice placements:** Governed by a formal agreement between an HEP and an employer, these placements are generally undertaken on programmes where the

qualification leads to a professional registration, such as in health or education. These placements are usually subject to PSRB accreditation.

- **Projects/Work-Based Projects:** Negotiated pieces of work, either group-based or individual, sourced by the HEP or the student, which can be located at the employer's premises.
- **Virtual and Hybrid Work Placements:** Flexible arrangements that allow students to engage in work virtually or through a hybrid model, reflecting modern work practices.
- **Semester placements:** If full-time, equivalent to a semester's academic study (12–15 weeks depending on HEP regulations). May also be used to describe a part-time placement where a student integrates spending 1 or 2 days a week throughout the semester alongside their academic study.
- **Semester or Year Abroad:** Where a student opts to study at an overseas HEP which has a collaborative/reciprocal agreement with their home HEP. This could include a period of work or may be study only. This may be part of, or additional to, their degree.
- **Work shadowing:** Short-term, informal activities where a student will spend time on company premises but will have no contract or expectation of making a working contribution; it is an observation opportunity.
- **Sandwich Placement:** A placement equivalent to a year's academic study (30–52 weeks depending on HEP regulations). Normally taken between second and third year of study.

WBL can include varying durations of engagement, as set out below, and can be organised either by LSBU or the student. Regardless of format, all WBL must contribute to the learning outcomes of the student's programme or increase and develop skills. Recognition of prior learning is covered under LSBU Assessment and Examinations Procedure 2024-25.

- **1–5 days:** Insight days, work shadowing, company visits, short-term projects.
- **1–2 weeks:** Work shadowing, short projects, company visits.
- **3–15 weeks:** Internships, semester placements, study/work abroad.
- **15–30 weeks:** Practice placements, sandwich placements, extended projects.
- **30+ weeks:** Sandwich placements, year-long study/work abroad, work-based awards.

These activities allow students to gain diverse professional experiences, regardless of the length of the engagement, and all must be logged in [Career Hub](#) for monitoring and compliance purposes.

The central WBL team will provide comprehensive training for both staff and students on the importance and process of logging placements through Career Hub. The central WBL team is responsible for designing, delivering, and monitoring the effectiveness of this training, including step-by-step guides, videos, and in-person workshops to increase accessibility and understanding.

3. Who is responsible for this Policy?

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Framework) has the overall responsibility for this Policy but has delegated the responsibility for its day to day operation and implementation to The Head of Employability and Placements.

This Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis and at least every two years by The Head of Student Futures or their nominee and the University Solicitor to ensure it continues to meet our legal obligations and reflect best practice.

4. International Student Considerations

For international students on a Student Visa, specific requirements must be adhered to under UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) regulations. These include:

- **Full-Time Study Requirement:** Only full-time students are eligible for a Student Visa, and their course must be taught on-site.
- **Work Placement Limits:** Work placements cannot exceed 33% of an undergraduate and 50% of a postgraduate programme unless the placement is mandated by regulatory bodies (such as PSRBs).
- **Visa Compliance:** All work placements must be integral to the course and formally assessed as part of the student's qualification.
- **Check-ins:** Students and employers will provide regular evidence that the WBL is ongoing.

International students should receive additional support from LSBU's immigration and compliance team to ensure they meet visa requirements while benefiting from WBL opportunities. All students must ensure they meet the visa requirements and course requirements for their WBL. All WBL activities for these students must be logged in [Career Hub](#) to ensure compliance with visa conditions.

5. Key Principles of WBL

5.1 Employability as a Core Outcome

WBL experiences are designed to improve students' employability by giving them practical exposure to professional environments. These experiences must be recognised as key to developing the skills and competencies students will need in their future careers.

5.2 Collaboration in Planning and Management

WBL is a collaborative process involving students, LSBU, and placement providers. Effective partnerships ensure that students have access to high-quality, supportive work environments that align with their academic goals.

5.3 Clear Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of students, LSBU staff, and placement providers must be clearly defined. Students should understand the expectations placed on them, and LSBU must ensure that placement providers offer suitable work environments that meet health, safety, and welfare standards.

5.4 Inclusivity and Support

LSBU will ensure, where reasonably practical, that placements are accessible to all students, regardless of background or specific needs. LSBU is committed to supporting students during their placements, ensuring they have access to appropriate wellbeing, disability, and academic support.

5.5 Structured Learning and Development

WBL must provide structured opportunities for learning and professional development. Clear learning outcomes should be established, and students should be given the opportunity to reflect on their experiences and integrate their learning into their academic progress.

5.6 Monitoring and Feedback

Continuous feedback and evaluation of WBL experiences are essential to ensure quality. Students, placement providers, and academic staff must engage in regular check-ins to assess progress and address any concerns that arise during the placement. All feedback and progress must be logged in [Career Hub](#).

- Intervals for **Monitoring and Feedback**:
 - Before placement starts, periodically during, and after completion.
 - Evaluations must be completed within one month after placement ends.
 - The Career Hub system will send up to three chaser emails for evaluations.

5.7 Integration with Academic Programmes

WBL is deeply integrated with academic programmes to ensure a seamless connection between professional and academic development:

- **Alignment with Academic Learning Outcomes:** Placement experiences are mapped to module and programme learning outcomes, providing practical contexts for applying theoretical knowledge and enhancing critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- **Connection to Employability Objectives:** WBL bridges academic learning and career readiness by helping students develop transferable skills, build professional networks, and gain industry-specific experience.
- **Integration with Assessment Strategies:** Assessment of WBL outcomes is embedded within academic programmes through tasks such as reflective portfolios, placement reports, and case studies. Employer feedback is incorporated into assessments, ensuring alignment with both academic and professional standards.

6. Health and Safety

Before the start of any WBL experience, LSBU must ensure that placement providers meet all relevant health and safety requirements. A Health and Safety Questionnaire must be completed for all UK and international WBL and placements, and risk assessments must be conducted where necessary. Students should receive appropriate training and induction to ensure they understand their health and safety obligations.

Health and Safety issues should be addressed following the placement provider's Health and Safety policy. If the issue is not resolved then the issue should be escalated to the academic area providing pastoral care. LSBU and the placement provider will endeavour to ensure reasonable adjustments for specific student needs.

7. Management of WBL Opportunities

7.1 All WBL opportunities must be:

- Logged in [Career Hub](#), including details of the placement provider, student information, and learning outcomes.
- Approved by the relevant academic department, where appropriate, to ensure that they align with the programme's academic requirements and learning outcomes. This includes ensuring, after a compliance check from the central WBL team, that the experience is fit for purpose.
- Supported by clear contractual agreements between LSBU, the student, and the placement provider to define roles, legal obligations such as liability insurance, expectations, and responsibilities.
- Monitored regularly by academic staff or the central WBL team, to ensure that students are progressing and that any issues are addressed promptly.

7.2 The central WBL team will monitor students required to log placement hours and identify those who have not done so. Non-compliant students will receive correspondence one week after failing to log their hours, with notifications also sent to the employer and academic area. For international students, the UKVI team will be informed as well.

7.3 Academic areas provide the pastoral care for students and students have full access to well-being support whilst on their WBL.

7.4 Periodic audits will be conducted by the central WBL team to ensure accurate reconciliation of placement reports.

7.5 These audits will cross-reference data from Career Hub and departmental records to identify discrepancies.

8. Data Handling and Privacy

LSBU is committed to ensuring that all personal data related to WBL opportunities is handled in compliance with current data protection legislation. Placement providers agree in their contract to comply with data protection legislation.

9. Student Responsibilities and Code of Conduct

Student Responsibilities

Students participating in WBL must:

1. Engage Fully in the Placement:

- Commit to the agreed terms of their work experience and actively engage with the tasks and responsibilities assigned by the placement provider.

2. Complete Pre-Placement Training:

- Attend and complete any training or induction sessions provided by LSBU or the placement provider before starting their placement.

3. Maintain Regular Communication:

- Keep in contact with their academic supervisor and report any issues or challenges encountered during the placement promptly.

4. Reflect and Demonstrate Learning:

- Reflect on their placement experiences and articulate how their learning has contributed to their academic progress and professional development.

5. Log WBL Experience in Career Hub:

- Accurately log hours and experiences in Career Hub as required. Students are responsible for ensuring all placement activity is recorded within the system. Automated reminders through Career Hub will regularly prompt students to log their placements.

6. Comply with Visa Requirements:

- Adhere to all applicable visa regulations and ensure their placement is in line with legal requirements.

7. Consequences of Non-Compliance:

- Failure to log placement hours or activities in Career Hub may lead to:
 - Withheld academic credits or restrictions on assessment submissions.
 - Delays in graduation or visa renewals, as applicable.

Code of Conduct

1. Professional Behaviour:

- Students must uphold the highest standards of professionalism throughout their placement, including punctuality, respect for colleagues and clients, and adherence to workplace policies and procedures.
- Behaviour should reflect positively on the student, LSBU, and the employer.

2. Confidentiality:

- Students are required to maintain confidentiality regarding sensitive information accessed during their placement. This includes, but is not limited to, client data, organisational practices, and intellectual property.
- Breaches of confidentiality are treated as serious matters and may result in disciplinary action.

3. Compliance with Workplace Norms:

- Students must adhere to workplace health and safety regulations, dress codes, and other operational guidelines as set by the employer.

4. Consequences for Violations:

- Violations of the Code of Conduct may result in:
 - Formal warnings.
 - Termination of the placement.
 - Notification to LSBU for potential academic consequences.
- Employers are encouraged to report any concerns promptly to LSBU for appropriate follow-up.

10. Termination of Placement

1. Conditions for Termination:

- A placement may be terminated in accordance with the contractual agreement that governs it, which will set out the notice periods required. This may occur under the following circumstances:
 - By the Student: Due to personal, health, or academic reasons, with prior discussion and approval from LSBU and the employer.
 - By LSBU: If the placement environment is deemed unsafe, inappropriate, or misaligned with the student's learning objectives.
 - By the Employer: If the student's performance or behaviour fails to meet professional standards despite adequate support and warning.

2. Impact of Termination:

- Students may need to repeat the placement or complete alternative assessments, depending on the timing and circumstances of termination.
- LSBU will work with the student to minimise disruption to their academic progression and support their next steps.

11. Complaints:

- If a student complains to LSBU about a placement, the Provider, the student and LSBU will co-operate to enable LSBU to conduct an investigation, including discussions with all parties involved, to ensure fairness and transparency.

12. Post-Placement Evaluation

Upon completion of the WBL experience, students, WBL and placement providers, and academic staff will engage in a thorough evaluation process. Feedback will be logged in [Career Hub](#), and students will reflect on their experiences as part of their academic assessment. The data collected from these evaluations will inform future WBL practices and help to continuously improve the quality of placements offered by LSBU.

For further guidance, consult LSBU's Career Hub or the Student Futures Service.