

WORK EXPERIENCE POLICY

Preamble

Work experience for school students in Victoria began in the mid-1970s as a way of enabling students to explore and experience the world of work. The provision of between one or two weeks 'out' at a workplace has become part of many school programs over the last 40 years. It is generally undertaken in Years 9 or 10. The *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* requires that work experience is only to be undertaken during the official school year. This includes the first, second and third term holidays, but not the holidays at the end of the year.

Work Experience involves secondary school students in short-term industry placements, which broadens their experience and understanding of the world of work and career opportunities. Placements with parents and relatives are not recommended as the student gains more benefit from meeting new challenges in new environments. In general, students will observe different aspects of work within the industry and may assist with tasks allocated by their supervisor.

Rationale

Benefits of Work Experience:

Work Experience contributes to the provision of more flexible pathways for young people so that they are able to choose from a range of post compulsory education and training options.

Benefits for Students:

Work experience aims to:

- improve understanding of the work environment and employers' expectations
- provide an opportunity to explore possible career options
- increase self-understanding, maturity, independence and self-confidence, especially in the workplace
- increase motivation to continue study and/or undertake further training
- increase understanding of the relevance of the school curriculum in relation to preparing young people for work
- increase understanding of recruitment practices in the workplace
- enhance opportunities for part-time and casual employment
- provide the opportunity to include the employer's evaluation in job and course applications
- provide the opportunity to develop work-related competencies
- provide an opportunity to try out the workplace, prior to possibly undertaking a VET in Schools, VCAL or School Based New Apprenticeship program and Structured Workplace Learning in Years 11 and 12.

Guiding Principles

At Mount Ridley P-12 College we aim to develop in all students:

- the skills, experience and confidence to be able to source, secure, undertake and complete a five day Work Experience placement at an employer of their choice
- an appreciation of the value, place and significance of Work Experience in their College program
- an understanding and appreciation of the role Work Experience plays in terms of subject selection and choice across the final years of their secondary schooling
- an appreciation of the value of work in society
- an understanding that Work Experience can be a vehicle to securing their first casual and or part time employment opportunity
- an understanding and appreciation that Work Experience builds in students a strong work ethic, an appreciation of the adult world of work and the notion that an education is the key to higher order jobs and employment opportunities
- a sense of refining career decisions should they already be made by the student at this point in time

Implementation

At Mount Ridley P-12 College we commence the Work Experience program in Term 4 of Year 9 and work with students to develop in them the skills and confidence required to participate fully in the Work Experience. Our program is supported by the Victorian Government Work Experience program, the Education and Training Reform Act 2006- Ministerial Order No 382, the Victorian Careers Curriculum Framework and our Work Expo Database.

- All Year 9 students in Term 4 attend and participate in a Work Experience presentation where the program is outlined for students
- The Year 10 Work Experience program is a compulsory activity within the Senior School and students who do not undertake a placement will be deemed as an un approved absence, unless stated otherwise and the College has approved of it
- All students receive their Work Experience booklet which assists them with their preparation and planning
- All students can book in a one on one Work Experience/MIPS counselling session
- All students participate in the Mentor Program in Year 10 where the Work Experience program is embedded
- All resources in relation to the Work Experience program are available to staff on the shared drive
- Regular Careers Newsletters uploaded onto Compass and notices in the College Newsletter support and promote the Work Experience program
- Students that are deemed to be on an ILP or deemed at risk have further one on one support and assistance to engage in the Work Experience program. Assistance with phone scripts, recording contacts, researching potential Employers and so on form the basis of intensive assistance
- The Pathways Office in the Senior School is well resourced and allows students to work in a non-judgemental environment away from their peers and other students. Access to phones, computers and a conference room is also made available to our students
- Each year we build our employer database from the previous year and this will be made available to students to utilise in terms of their research into potential Employers
- Where students have significant issues in terms of attendance, mental health issues and or wellbeing matters then the Senior Mini School Assistant Principal will make a determination about the merit of Work Experience for this student
- Regular reports about the progress students are making in terms of their Work Experience are made to staff, parents, the College Community and the School Council
- Staff are trained in relation to visiting students whilst out on Work Experience and are provided with all documentation to ensure their visit with the student is successful and meaningful
- College Operations in partnership with the Director of Business Connections and Student Pathways release staff for their visits across the week of Work Experience
- A comprehensive database (Work Expo Database) supports the College processes and provides extensive documentation for the Employer, student and staff member
- All students are provided with a logbook whilst out on Work Experience and the expectation and requirement is that they complete this activity whilst on placement
- All students are provided with a laminated checklist and the mobile number of the Director of Business Connections and Student Pathways and Work Experience Coordinator to ensure that if an issue occurs it can be dealt with swiftly and with a minimum of fuss
- Post Work Experience when students return in Term 3, all students are provided with time in their Mentor class to further work on and complete their Work Experience log book. They are asked to write a reflection of their experiences and also complete a presentation to their class mates and peers. These pieces of work are then used in the following ways; to contribute to the College

Magazine at the end of year and used to form the basis of a PowerPoint presentation for the following year when the whole process is started again with a new year level

Evaluation

As part of the College review cycle, this policy will be reviewed every three years.

Date policy ratified: .2016

Date of next review: 2019