CODE OF PRACTICE FOR WORK-BASED AND PLACEMENT LEARNING

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Contents

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http://policies.docstore.port.ac.uk/policy-151.pdf

Summary

What is this document about?

This Code of Practice sets out a series of principles that should be followed whenever work-based and/or placement learning is incorporated into academic provision. This Code aims to assure the standards and quality of such experiences for all students by providing procedural guidance that is proportionate to the nature and extent of the arrangements envisaged. It is intended to be facilitative and supportive and it builds upon existing good practice.

Who is this for?

This Code will be of most interest to Associate Deans, Heads of Department, Course Leaders, Unit Coordinators, Faculty Research Degree Coordinators, First Supervisors, Collaborative Partners and those staff involved in supporting and assisting work-based and/or placement learning.

How does the University check this is followed?

The University has various formal approaches to checking standards of good practice and implementation of this Code of Practice. This includes Academic Council and its sub-committees which oversee annual monitoring, periodic review and the review of policies, regulations and procedures.

Who can you contact if you have any queries about this document?

Please contact Academic Standards, Quality and Partnerships if you have any queries regarding this Code of Practice at asqp@port.ac.uk in the first instance .

This document is pending revision subject to the outcome of the University Academic Regulations review scheduled for 2021/22.

Section A: Introduction

1. Overview and scope

The University of Portsmouth is committed to working with employers and professional bodies to ensure its academic provision meets employer needs as well as being attractive to students. It looks to embed skills relevant to employability in its approach to learning, teaching and assessment and offer opportunities for students to learn through placements and work-based learning.

Integral to work-based learning and placement learning is the need to enter into arrangements for partnerships and foster collaboration.

This Code of Practice sets out a series of principles that should be followed whenever work-based and/or placement learning is incorporated into academic provision for both taught and research programmes. The Code applies to University of Portsmouth and, where applicable, to collaborative programmes it is expected that partner institutions will have an equivalent approach. It uses the **QAA UK Quality Code** Chapters B3, B4, B6, B10 and B11 as reference points along with **ASET** Good Practice Guide for **Work-based and Placement Learning in Higher Education**.

This Code aims to assure the standards and quality of such experiences for all students by providing procedural guidance that is proportionate to the nature and extent of the arrangements envisaged. It is intended to be facilitative and supportive and it builds upon existing good practice.

It is acknowledged that many other University of Portsmouth Policies and Codes of Practice, e.g. the University Curriculum Framework, the Examination and Assessment Regulations, the Code of Student Behaviour, the Collaborative Provision Policy, Equality Objectives and Health and Safety policies will be generally relevant to this Code.

This Code highlights the *specific* aspects that should be considered for all arrangements as defined in the following section.

As the Code may impact upon a very wide variety of types of arrangements, a risk-based approach is adopted when such arrangements are set up and subsequently monitored. The range of risks to be considered relate to: reputational risk; financial risk; risk to academic standards and quality; risk to the safety and well-being of the individual student or staff member. It is important that consideration of indemnity, insurance and Health and Safety risks are confirmed for all work-based, placement learning or fieldwork activities.

The final section, Section C, of the Code includes a range of checklists and exemplar material, including guidance on risk factors. These documents are useful for staff setting up arrangements for the first time or enhancing existing arrangements.

2. Definitions

In both work-based and placement learning, the intended learning outcomes of the activity are integral to the programme on which the student is registered.

The terms 'work-based' and 'placement' learning are sometimes used interchangeably but to assist with defining the scope of this Code of Practice, the University of Portsmouth uses specific definitions.

Work-based learning is referred to when the learner might be considered as employee first, student second, i.e. they came to the Higher Education experience by virtue of their employment or employer. Definitions adapted from the ASET Good Practice Guide for Work-based and Placement Learning in Higher Education.

Placement learning is referred to when the learner might be considered as student first, employee second, i.e. they came to the placement experience by virtue of their studies.

Examples of the variety of activities covered by this Code can be found in the taxonomy under Appendix A.

2.1. Work-based learning

Work-based learning is achieved and demonstrated through engagement with a workplace environment. It usually involves some element of reflection upon the learning in this environment and may or may not involve negotiated learning or project work. It may range from a single unit within a programme or to an entire programme and typically it is focused around an occupation either paid or unpaid.

Work-based learning will include:

- Any engagement with a workplace environment that focuses upon the development of specific professional competencies or general skills directly related to employability. Usually this will occur in voluntary or employer organisations whether or not this is termed a 'sandwich' or 'professional' placement.

- Learning by a registered student of the University that draws upon and requires engagement with learning in the work environment as either an employee, volunteer or in a self-employed capacity. It may include students on Foundation degrees, students studying for degrees designed to incorporate substantial elements of work-based learning, e.g. the Learning at Work programme and research students whose projects involve substantial involvement in a work-based activity.

- Students who study units that require them to engage in real work-based tasks. These may arise from negotiation and consultation with off-campus organisations without a formal placement arrangement. Alternatively, the tasks may derive from work activity offered on campus. Examples are computer systems projects, design briefs, journalism assignments, dentistry clinic etc.

- Research degree programmes where the student will be drawing upon the resources and/or support of a third party for work-based research intermittently or for a minor part of their studies for example, the organisation that employs them. For more substantial arrangements a Memorandum of Agreement may be required, please refer to your Faculty Research Degree Coordinator or Associate Dean (Academic)

- Any work-based learning involved in non-award bearing programmes would also be expected to follow these principles where relevant.

The term 'work-*based* learning' here is not used to cover that aspect of 'work *related* learning' that may well derive from the context of work but which is wholly campus based and encompasses strategies such as simulation, role play, case studies or reports arising from visits, field trips and short periods of data collection.

2.2. Placement learning

Placement learning is the learning achieved during an agreed and negotiated period of learning that takes place outside the normal learning environment. The placement will not necessarily incorporate substantial periods of work-based learning (as defined in the section above) as the focus may be upon study or more general experience of an employment context through work related learning. All placement learning must be implemented in accordance with this Code of Practice.

Placement learning will include:

- The 'sandwich' year of a degree and this is likely to involve working in a business or organisation.

- The 'year or teaching block abroad' whether this is studying at another education or training institution, working as a Language Assistant, volunteering, working for an organisation or any combination of these. The placement may be organised under the Erasmus+ scheme or through some separate or broadly equivalent contractual arrangement.

- The time spent in an environment that enables essential professional competences to be developed and/or demonstrated, e.g. a hospital, school, social work department. Such placements will generally be arranged in accordance with the requirements of a Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) and may involve week(s) blocks or parts of a week over a period of time.

- Placements based across a very wide range of organisations and forming part of a unit(s) designed to broaden experience and develop graduate skills. e.g. 'LIFE' units.

The term 'placement' is not normally used to cover the following situations:

- Where students, typically studying part time, undertake tasks within an organisation where they have an ongoing relationship with that organisation as an employee or equivalent.

- Field trips, educational visits and short periods of data collection outside the University for research purposes, including external research training. (For activities such as these, please refer 'other activities' under the taxonomy in Appendix A.)

- Where students take a 'year out' to work or volunteer in an area relevant to their studies but where there is no recognition within the programme structure of the learning derived from the experience nor is University support offered.

Section B: Principles

1. Academic infrastructure

Work-based or placement learning should have been approved through the procedures that are appropriate, relevant and proportionate to the arrangements proposed and risks identified through the use of a risk assessment tool and be incorporated in annual and periodic review reporting cycles. Templates can be found at the Finance Department's Student Placement site at or contact your Faculty Placement Office for local guidance/variations

Where this learning is part of a credit-rated programme of study it should:

- have intended learning outcomes that contribute to the overall aims and outcomes of the programme and be clearly identified in the programme specification and in the unit learning outcomes in the relevant unit description(s);

- have a level and volume of credit consistent with the University Curriculum Framework that recognises the complexity and amount of learning students are expected to demonstrate;

- be assessed appropriately and in accordance with the Examination and Assessment Regulations *(or equivalent as approved by the University for a partner institution)*;

- on satisfactory completion contribute to the award although not necessarily to the grading or classification of the award;

- have academic standards and comparability of student achievement overseen by competent external examiners.

Where this learning is not part of a credit-rated programme of study (i .e . Postgraduate Research(PGR)) it should:

- provide appropriated learning opportunities relevant to the Research Degree Programme.
- be located at a recognised research institute or organisation that is considered appropriate for the individual research project by the First Supervisor/supervisory team;

- provide the opportunity to gain skills or experience that have been identified and agreed by the Postgraduate Research Student (PGRS) and First Supervisor/supervisory team;

- support continued contact between the PGRS and First Supervisor/supervisory team in line with guidance provided within the Postgraduate Research Student Handbook;

- include appropriate ethical review prior to research activity being undertaken.

2. Information for students

2.1. Students will be fully informed about their responsibilities and entitlements relating to their work-based and placement learning and be given appropriate and timely information, support and guidance prior to, throughout and following their work-based and placement learning.

2.2. Heads of Department will ensure that appropriate support is in place for students registered on courses based in their Department. The use of standard University-wide, and/or research specific and/or Faculty-wide documentation is recommended where possible. This guidance should be in a written format and may take the form of a dedicated handbook or be incorporated into relevant unit or course supplements. The information must be accessible by students through Moodle or the University website.

2.3. In addition to the normal expectations for information relating to learning outcomes, learning, teaching and assessment methodologies including as appropriate the negotiation of learning agreements, communication with tutors, deadlines for submission of work and consequences of non-submission or failure, the guidance will also include relevant information about:

- professional conduct and behaviour, cultural orientation, work expectations and ethical considerations;
- legal issues including visa requirements;
- opportunities for languages or skills preparation;
- applicability and procedures for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance;
- health and safety issues including immunisation;
- confidentiality and/or data protection and copyright issues;
- precautions that should be taken to maximise personal safety;
- nature of insurance cover provided by the University and whether additional personal insurance is required;
- financial information including access to specific financial support and allowances;
- responsibilities towards the employer/provider and any tutors/or mentors at the placement/workplace;
- entitlements with respect to support from the University both during and on return from the placement including feedback;
- Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB);
- complaints procedures;
- disciplinary procedures.

3. Information for partners

3.1. Partners providing work-based and placement learning opportunities will be fully informed of their responsibilities, and be given appropriate and timely information, support and guidance prior to, throughout and following the students' work-based and placement learning . Partners must confirm agreement. This might be through a provider agreement letter or, where circumstances are higher risk; there should be a more detailed contractual arrangement. A PSRB might require a specific type of agreement.

3.2. Partners offering relevant provision should have access to the information provided to students as in section 2 normally through a web link. In addition they should be provided with information drawing attention to their specific roles and responsibilities and opportunities for training and development in this role.

3.3. Where partners are involved in negotiating the structure or nature of the placement or work-based learning or in monitoring or assessing student work, relevant induction and training in these matters should be available to all involved.

4. Training and support for University staff involved

4.1. Heads of Department will ensure that staff for whom they are responsible and who are involved in work-based and placement learning will be appropriately qualified, competent and resourced to fulfil their role(s).

4.2. Heads of Department will ensure that the duties associated with the arrangement, approval and monitoring and assessment of work-based and placement learning in courses based in their Department have been allocated to named individuals and that this information is communicated to students, partners and other sections of the University as relevant.

4.3. Heads of Department will ensure their staff have opportunities for additional training and support and access to information relevant to their role. In addition to having knowledge of the particular scheme and its operation, this is likely to include:

- professional conduct and cultural communication
- PSRB requirements
- approval requirements and ways of assessing risk
- legislative requirements: accessing information about areas such as duty of care, implications of Equal Opportunities such as requirements for reasonable adjustment under the Disability Discrimination Act, University insurance limitations, data protection, intellectual property rights, Disclosure and Barring Service, conflicts of interest or impropriety, visa issues
- expectations of student support
- awareness of the importance of and local arrangements for the audit, monitoring and evaluating of work-based and placement learning
- awareness of the contracts that may be appropriate and the procedures required for their set up and approval.

5. Organisation and administration

5.1.   Overall, the administration of work-based and placement learning should be efficient and effective and facilitate communication that is timely and accurate.

5.2.   Accurate and up-to-date records as to student participation in work-based and placement learning should be available and readily accessible to any person authorised to know . As well as allowing appropriate statistics to be produced, additional detailed information will need to be kept in accordance with requirements of any group or individual risk assessment. Records should be retained according to the University Retention Policy .

5.3.   Feedback should be elicited from both students and partner providers in order to identify areas for enhancement . Normally the optional section from the standard University course feedback form and/or unit questionnaires should be used but other forms or methods may be more appropriate in some instances.

5.4.   Monitoring and review should be incorporated into the standard University annual and periodic review cycles.

5.5.   Unless alternative arrangements are specified in a contractual agreement, monitoring and review of postgraduate research student progress will take place at the University of Portsmouth.

5.6.   Each Faculty has a Faculty Placement Office, which lead on the administration and have an oversight of work-based and placement activity in conjunction with relevant academic staff and course leaders.

5.7.   First Supervisors lead on the administration and have an oversight of work-based and placement activity for PGRS they are supervising in conjunction with Faculty and Departmental Research Degree Coordinators.

5.8.   The Exchange and Study Abroad Team, in conjunction with Faculty/Departmental Exchange Coordinators, lead on the administration and have an oversight of placement activities undertaken outside the UK under Erasmus+.

Section C   Operational guidance and exemplars

This section refers to the checklists and operational guidance available that contribute to the implementation of the principles in Section B. It includes examples of good practice.

1. Internal contacts

Various Departments and sections of the University have specific responsibilities relevant to this type of provision and to maintain the currency of templates and associated advice.

Academic Standards, Quality and Partnerships:

[Code and Guidance](#) –

Work-based and Placement Learning Code of Practice Queries re the Implementation of this Code

Related documentation/templates/exemplar:

- Risk assessment tool (general and for course approval purposes)
- Risk assessment tool (research degree programmes – general – where local variations are not available)
- Visit considerations
- Provider Agreement Letter Template for taught programmes
- Research Work-based/Placement Agreement Template for research degree programmes
- Roles and responsibilities (for both students and placement providers)
- Programme specifications templates
- Work-based and Placement Learning guidance for Research Degrees
- Examples – SCI mentor/training

Memorandum of Agreement required for Student Exchange and Study Abroad for non-EU/non-Erasmus+ – **www.port.ac.uk/ departments/services/academicregistry/qualitymanagementdivision/collaborativepro grammes/documentation/**

Partnerships and Contract Guidance – **www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/academicregistry/ qualitymanagementdivision/collaborativeprogrammes/documentation/** or contact **cpo@port.ac.uk** for further advice

Department of Curriculum and Quality Enhancement:

www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/dcqe/

- Developing your academic practice
- Listening to student feedback
- Signposting to key policies and documents including:

- Student handbooks
- Grading criteria
- Policy for assessments of students
- Curriculum framework, including credit
- Generic assessment criteria of specific relevance to work-based learning*

    *Related resources located outside DCQE

Department of Employability:

- Help in developing course curricula and assessments to include opportunities for Work Related Learning
- Advice regarding the development of work experience placements and live employer projects
- Advice on developing work related simulations including case-studies
- Advice on researching and targeting employers
- Access to a wide range of research reports, resources and tutor activities at the intranet website: **www.port.ac.uk/ careersandrecruitment/servicesforyou/**
- Via Purple Door/Staff: **www.port.ac.uk/careersandrecruitment/toplinks/staff/**

Finance Department:

Insurances are managed within the Finance Department by the Insurance Officer, advice and guidance can be sought from the Insurance Team –
www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/finance/universityinsurancepages/insurancecontacts/

University insurance –
www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/finance/universityinsurancepages/insurancehomepage/

Insurance – Student Placements Guidance and Checklists –
www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/finance/ universityinsurancepages/insurancehomepage/studentplacements/

Travel Insurance – Students –
www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/finance/universityinsurancepages/ insurancehomepage/travelinsurance/

Human Resources Department:

Advice and guidance can be sought from the Health and Safety Team –
www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/ humanresources/healthandsafety/healthandsafetyteam/

Management Staff Development (MSD) –
www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/humanresources/ managementandstaffdevelopment/

Mentoring

Learning and Development Toolkit – Via
www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/humanresources/ or direct at
https://app.goodpractice.net/#/uni-portsmouth-tfl/s/7d56b9e4

International Office (Exchanges and Study Abroad Team):

www.port.ac.uk/studyabroad

Erasmus+ and Study Abroad: Procedures and advice, including
permission to travel overseas
**www.port.ac.uk/special/studyabroad/outgoingstudents/practicali
nformation/permissiontotravel/** E: **studyabroad@port.ac.uk**

E: erasmus@port.ac.uk

Faculty Offices:

Contact the Faculty Associate Dean (Academic), Faculty Associate Dean (Student) and/or
Faculty Placement Office. For advice related to Research Degree Programme arrangements
and partnerships please contact the Faculty Research Degree Coordinator/ Associate Dean
(Academic) or Quality Management Division.

Faculty of Creative and Cultural Industries Placement Office

Email: cci.placements@port.ac.uk

Portsmouth Business School Placement Office

Email: pbs.placements@port.ac.uk

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Placement Office

Email: hums-placements@port.ac.uk

Faculty of Science Placement Office

Email: sci.placements@port.ac.uk

Faculty of Technology Placement Office

Email: tech.placements@port.ac.uk

Director of Corporate Governance:

Email: **corporate-governance@port.ac.uk**
www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/corporategovernance/

Information on the following topics is available at
www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/corporategovernance/ and www.port.ac.uk/
accesstoinformation/policies/:

- Complaints

- Contracts and licences

- Data Protection

- Disclosure and Barring

- Freedom of Information
- Information Governance
- Legal advice
- Management, Organisation and Committee Structures
- Policies and Procedures
- Records Management
- Register of Interests

2. External guidance

QAA The UK Quality Code

ASET Integrating Work and Learning

ASET Good Practice Guide for Work-based and Placement Learning in Higher Education

Making it work: a Quality Assurance Agency guidebook exploring work-based learning

3. Glossary

Placement learning

Is when the learner might be considered as student first, employee second, i.e. they came to the placement experience by virtue of their studies.

Placement visit

Visit undertaken by an academic member of staff who is responsible for the student while on placement.

Sandwich year, placement year, industrial placement, year in industry

Year away from the university in full-time employment, linked to a four year course.

Semester or year abroad

When a student opts to study at an overseas provider which has a collaborative or reciprocal agreement in placement with the University of Portsmouth. This could include a period of work, study or a combination of the two.

Staff

University of Portsmouth staff.

Volunteering

Where a student engages in activity that is in addition to their studies at the University of Portsmouth and is for their own benefit and experience.

Work-based learning

Is when the learner might be considered as employee first, student second, i.e. they came to the Higher Education experience by virtue of their employment or employer.

Work related learning

That may well derive from the context of work but which is wholly campus based and encompasses strategies such as simulation, role play, case studies or reports arising from visits, field trips and similar.

Also see **ASET Good Practice Guide** Terminology, page 8.

Appendix A

Taxonomy grid for work-based and placement learning

This table provides a quick reference guide as the types of work-based and placement learning provision with University of Portsmouth and what should be considered, and completed in each scenario. The latest version of this can be found at
http://www2.port.ac.uk/departments/services/academicregistry/qmd/workbasedandplacementlearning/