



THE UNIVERSITY
OF BIRMINGHAM

Health and Safety Guidance

Guidance on Work Experience Placements for Young Persons at the University

GUIDANCE/6/WEPYPU/98

The University takes many young persons every year on work experience placements. Whilst they are on placement the University is obliged to make arrangements to ensure their health, safety and welfare just as it has for its staff and students.

This guidance is issued to assist University staff who arrange work experience placements and who are responsible for supervising young persons when they are on placement.

Further information and advice may be obtained from the Health and Safety Unit.

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INTRODUCTION

Young persons on work experience placement are deemed to be employees of the University and as such the University has a duty to ensure their health, safety and welfare. Arrangements to ensure their health, safety and welfare may have to differ from that of other employees due to their lack of maturity and inexperience.

The University has duties placed on it under health and safety legislation, primarily *The Health and Safety (Young Persons) Regulations 1997*, when taking young persons on for work experience. Legislation also restricts or prohibits young persons from undertaking certain kinds of work or working with certain materials or substances.

A **Young Person** is defined as a person under 18 years old. It should be noted that additional requirements apply in respect to young persons under 16 years old; i.e. under the minimum school leaving age.

GUIDANCE

The guidance is aimed at School or Departmental staff who:

- arrange work experience placements;
- supervise young persons on placements.

Arrangements should be made before the placement starts. There should be liaison between the University and the school or college which the young person attends.

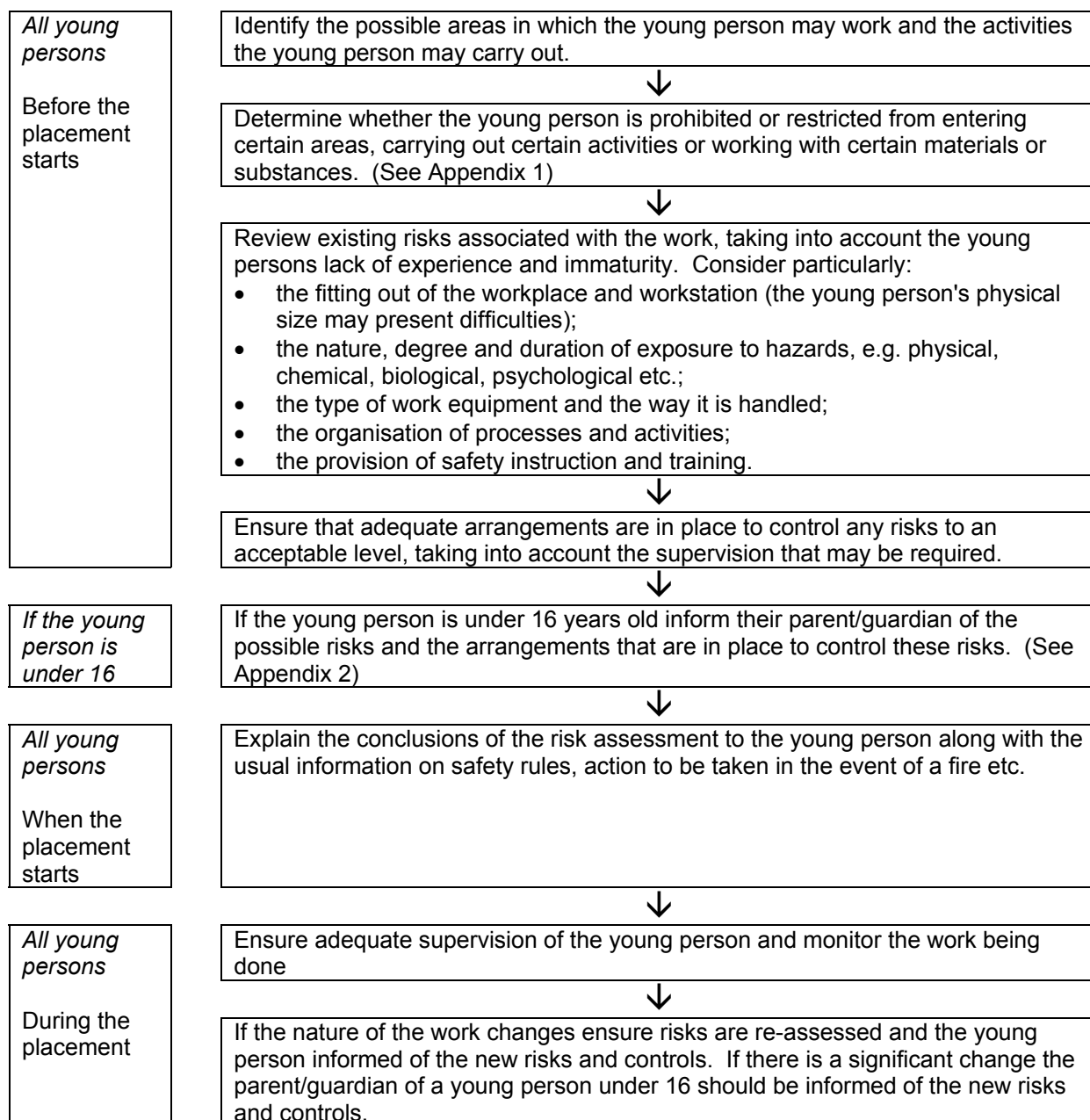
The guidance is based on a flow chart with accompanying Appendices.

The guidance should not deter Schools and Departments from planning interesting work for young persons. However Schools and Departments should be realistic in what can be done in the short period of time that the young persons are at the University.

The key to safe and successful placements is:

- **advanced planning and the avoidance of problems;**
- **good supervision.**

Chart of the process that Schools and Departments should follow when taking on a young person on work experience



APPENDIX 1

Prohibitions and Restrictions

The Health and Safety (Young Persons) Regulations 1997 sets out the following prohibitions and restrictions on the work young persons can undertake. The relevant ones are set out below.

1. All young persons are prohibited from carrying out work beyond their physical or psychological capacity.
2. All young persons are prohibited from carrying out work involving exposure to harmful agents which:
 - are carcinogenic;
 - may cause heritable genetic damage;
 - may cause harm to the unborn child;
 - may chronically affect human health.
3. All young persons are prohibited from carrying out work involving harmful exposure to ionising radiation.

Particularly:

 - persons under 16 years old are prohibited from entering controlled areas;
 - persons aged 16 to 18 years old should not enter controlled areas unless there is strict justification, supervision and an approved system of work;
 - no young person should handle radioactive materials.
4. All young persons are prohibited from carrying out work involving harmful non-ionising radiation.

Particularly:

 - no young person should operate apparatus that emits harmful radiations, in particular UV lamps and lasers;
 - no young person should be exposed to magnetic or electric fields in excess of the restrictions on human exposure published by the NRPB.

Additionally:

 - all young persons should be advised to reduce their exposure to sun light as much as possible when engaged in outdoor activities.
5. All young persons are prohibited from carrying out work which may involve the risk of accidents which it could be reasonably assumed cannot be recognised or avoided by a young person due to their insufficient attention or lack of experience or training.

For example:

 - work with fierce or poisonous animals;
 - work with compressed, liquefied or dissolved gases;
 - work on higher risk construction activities (e.g. demolition);
 - work involving high voltage electricity;
 - work with bulk hazardous substances.
6. All young persons are prohibited from carrying out work in which there is a risk from:
 - extreme heat;
 - noise;
 - vibration.

APPENDIX 2

Notification of risks to the parent/guardian of young persons under 16 years old

Legislation requires that the parent/guardian of a young person under 16 years of age is informed by the University of:

1. any risks associated with the work to be carried out by the young person; and
2. the appropriate control measures that have been put in place.

Departments/Schools who organise placements should do this. This may be done verbally or in writing. A record should be kept of any communication with the young person's parent/guardian.

Below is a suggested letter that could be used.

<p>Dear</p> <p>We are pleased to offer your child a work experience placement in the XXXXXX department. The University is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of your child. In order to do this the XXXXXX department has carefully planned the work that your child will be doing, assessed any potential risks and made arrangements to reduce any risks to an acceptable level.</p> <p>As your child is under 16 years of age we are obliged under the <i>Health and Safety (Young Persons) Regulations 1997</i> to notify you as their parent/guardian of the risks associated with the work your child will be carrying out and the appropriate control measures we have put in place. They are set out below.</p> <p>I hope you child enjoys their time at the University and finds it beneficial. If you have any questions or require further information please contact XXXXXX on tel XXX</p> <p>Yours</p> <p>XXXXXXXXXX</p>	
Name of child	
Date of placement	
Proposed work	
Associated risks	
Control measures	