

UNIVERSITY OF WORCESTER GUIDANCE FOR PLACEMENT RISK PROFILING AND RISK REDUCING ACTIONS (July 2020)

Please note: the purpose of this guidance is to enable the person approving the placement to complete the ‘Risk Profiling’ section in the **University Student Placement Risk Assessment Record**. This guidance is based on the risk profiling for the six Risk Assessment Factors identified in the [Universities Safety and Health Association \(USHA\) Guidance on Health and Safety of Placements for Higher Education Students \(June 2018\)](#) and the [ASET Good Practice Guide for Health and Safety for Student Placements \(2016 Update\)](#). For further explanation refer to these documents.

Factor	Risk profile	Indications for risk profiling category	Examples of specific actions to reduce risk
<p>Work factors This should take into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Contractual status of placement provider b) Provider’s relationship with University c) Provider’s experience in providing placements d) any other information from the employer about what the student will be doing during the placement. <p>Also Refer to the completed Employer/Placement Provider Health and Safety Questionnaire (Appendix 2) and any specific requirements arising from the employer’s risk assessment and safe working procedures for Covid-19 safe workplaces and practice</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Office work or other low hazard environments and activities in larger, well-established organisations or in smaller organisations that have responded positively to questioning on health and safety processes.</p> <p>UK Government regulated public provider e.g. NHS, Schools, Colleges where standard documentation and agreements exist with good mutual understanding of obligations.</p> <p>Formal partnership or contractual relationship to provide placements and/or established provider with several years of experience of similar type of placement</p>	<p>Normally none. NB Covid-19 advice: Remind students at briefing to take account of current UK Government and Public Health guidance on Covid-19 and any regional/local restrictions and to observe the risk assessments and safe working procedures identified by the placement provider. This may include specific requirements for the use of PPE.</p>
	<p>Medium</p>	<p>New or recent provider with experience of providing similar placements with other organisations.</p> <p>Working in proximity to high risk factors (but not directly with them).</p> <p>Work involving more practical elements with moderate potential for harm, e.g. education and service sectors.</p> <p>Low hazard work in small companies (less than 6 employees) that do not have professional health and safety advice and have not responded positively to questions on health and safety processes on the</p>	<p>Includes Covid-19 advice above for low risk. Ensure written information about requirements and responsibilities provided and discussed. Ensure UW focused induction and briefing.</p> <p>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 details in the written communication with the placement provider.</p> <p>Ensure student is aware of the hazards of the placement as part of the briefing process.</p>

		<p>Employer/Placement Provider Health and Safety Checklist.</p> <p>UK or international large company or charity working within established jurisdiction under international law or private company or organisation not covered by above.</p>	<p>Standard documentation/agreements likely with reasonable mutual understanding of obligations. If not, consider need to request further information e.g. policies on health and safety, equality and diversity etc and/or provide more detailed information about requirements/responsibilities.</p> <p>Consider other risk factors.</p>
	High	<p>No formal relationship with University/partner college.</p> <p>Provider new to programme and to type of placement provision.</p> <p>Work with hazards that have potential to cause permanent injury or fatalities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction site with work at height, dusts, moving machinery, electrical systems • Operation of machinery with mechanical hazards such as high-speed rotating parts, crushing or entanglement risks • Laboratory work with toxic/hazardous materials • Community work with known high-risk groups of clients or locations (e.g. drug abusers, homeless, violent patients) • Work with animal bedding or large or dangerous animals. • Activities requiring specific licences or qualifications (e.g. diving, flying aircraft, crewing an aerial device) • Work involving significant hazards in small companies that do not have professional health and safety advice. <p>Work involving significant hazards in small/medium companies (less than 250</p>	<p>Includes Covid-19 advice above for low risk.</p> <p>Mechanism should be put in place to check and approve provider status and, if appropriate, audit placement opportunities for suitability. Ensure information about requirements/responsibilities received and agreed by provider in writing. Expect to provide detailed student induction and briefing.</p> <p>Seek confirmation from the placement provider about their expectations of student's prior competency in high risk activities, and ensure the student meets these.</p> <p>Confirm that appropriate training and supervision will be provided by the Placement Provider throughout the placement.</p> <p>Include details in written communication with the placement provider.</p> <p>Request evidence of adequate risk controls.</p> <p>Consider pre-placement site visit.</p> <p>Ensure student is aware of the hazards of the placement as part of the briefing process.</p> <p>Refer to the Head of School for approval of the placement if remains at high risk.</p> <p>Seek advice from Health and Safety if unsure about the health and safety risk associated with the placement.</p>

		employees) that do not have professional health and safety advice and/or have not responded positively to questions on health and safety processes on the Employer/Placement Provider Health and Safety Questionnaire	
<p>Travel and transportation factors Travel to and from the placement or accommodation, or travelling as part of placement activities.</p> <p>The Employer/Placement Provider Health and Safety questionnaire will provide information on specific travel associated with a work placement.</p> <p>For travel abroad see the Overseas Travel Risk Assessment Form and https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/</p> <p>NB Covid-19: Remind students at briefing to check current Government and public health guidance on CV-19 safe travel.</p> <p>For particular advice from the FCO about travel during the coronavirus pandemic see: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus</p>	Low	<p>No significant travel, comfortable daily commute.</p> <p>No driving associated with placement.</p>	Normally None.
	Medium	<p>Night travel.</p> <p>Long daily commuting requirement.</p> <p>Student required to drive a familiar vehicle in reasonable conditions.</p>	<p>Brief student on travel arrangements to ensure risks are considered and confirm that these are acceptable to them.</p> <p>Professional bodies may define the commuting requirement differently.</p> <p>Advise students to ensure, they have an appropriate driving licence and, if using their own vehicle, that it is roadworthy, and they have business use insurance.</p> <p>Where relevant check the employer's insurance and driving policy.</p>
	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>Student required to drive others in unfamiliar vehicles.</p> <p>Student will be driving their own or unfamiliar vehicles overseas.</p>	<p>Discuss travel arrangements and implications with student.</p> <p>Consider the student's driving experience.</p> <p>Obtain confirmation that students have the relevant driving licence and insurance.</p> <p>Advise students to ensure if using their own vehicle, that it is roadworthy, and they have business use insurance.</p> <p>Check the host employer's insurance and driving policy.</p> <p>If using own vehicle for travel abroad, advise students to ensure they have appropriate driving licence and insurance (for Country they will be working in) and of</p>

			<p>need to be familiar with local driving legislation. They may need to arrange a service and MOT before leaving the UK. Advise that they should consider arranging emergency breakdown cover. Consider reducing risks by providing accompanied travel where practicable.</p> <p>Specify regular contact times.</p>
<p>Location and/or regional factors</p> <p>This will have considerable impact if the placement is overseas (see above)</p> <p>NB Covid 19 Advice: Remind students at briefing to take account of current UK Government and public health guidance on Covid-19 and any local/regional restrictions, including travel (and European/in-country guidance on CV-19 and any restrictions as appropriate)</p> <p>For particular advice from the FCO about travel during the coronavirus pandemic see: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Placements in the UK with no significant local risks. Fully meets UK legislation with respect to health and safety and equality legislation, including for people with disabilities and those with protected characteristics.</p> <p>Fully meets EU legislation with respect to health and safety and equalities legislation, including for disabled people and consideration of gender, sexual orientation and race (Low/Medium risk)</p>	<p>Normally None.</p> <p>May have different approach/requirements regarding accessibility and learning differences, so may need specific checks and specifications; need to brief and induct students/provider staff.</p>
	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Higher than normal risk of civil disorder, crime or comparable danger.</p> <p>Placements abroad in areas identified as low/medium risk by the FCO and the University's travel insurer.</p> <p>Placements in international locations with significantly different legal frameworks.</p> <p>Delays likely in communicating with tutors and others.</p>	<p>Liaise with the School's International Coordinator and 'International Student Experience' at internationalexperience@worc.ac.uk for advice on all placements outside the UK including placements within the EU / EEA.</p> <p>For travel abroad see the Overseas Travel Risk Assessment Form, the Overseas Flowchart (available on University Finance pages) and liaise with the University's Insurance Officer</p> <p>Advise students to research their destination and ensure students review the British Foreign Commonwealth Office for (FCO) travel advice, restrictions and recommendations (including any pertaining to Covid-19). Encourage students to consider potential risks as part of pre-departure information and training.</p>

			<p>Provide information about risk factors and signpost to relevant information, including guides on appropriate behaviour, clothing, etc. Ensure student understands the implications of differences in legal frameworks</p> <p>Advise students to sign up to regular email travel alerts for the Country they are visiting.</p> <p>Agree strategy for keeping in touch. Ensure students are aware of what to do in an emergency and have in-country and UK emergency contacts.</p> <p>Supplement general briefing with information about medium risk factors.</p>
	High	<p>Significant risk of civil disorder, crime or similar danger (e.g. placement in countries where the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) advises against travel or where the University's travel insurers advises travel risk is high or extreme</p> <p>Unavoidable lone or remote working in proximity to significant risk (e.g. medical student elective in a refugee camp).</p> <p>Medical and rescue services not available quickly or locally.</p> <p>Means of communication likely to be difficult or compromised.</p>	<p>In addition to the examples given under Medium above: Formal risk assessment and approval will be needed in accordance with University of Worcester procedures (see Overseas Travel Risk Assessment Form, the Overseas Flowchart and liaise with the University's Insurance Officer)</p> <p>Check Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) restrictions and recommendations.</p> <p>Also consider arranging briefing/information to be provided in conjunction with someone with local experience or knowledge of conditions (e.g. student on previous placement or a placement practitioner at a local HEI in the overseas country).</p>
<p>General/ health and environmental factors Normally mainly an issue for overseas placements. Covers risks from natural hazards (e.g. earthquakes), health hazards and poor standards of health, safety and hygiene. Also cultural issues.</p>	Low	No significant environmental health risks.	Normally None.
	Medium	<p>Regional/local conditions require some precautionary measures e.g. inoculations/medication against diseases.</p> <p>Differences in cultural norms and laws in overseas locations (e.g. dress, attitudes to</p>	<p>Advise students to consider potential risks as part of pre-departure information and briefing.</p> <p>Advise students to check health requirements (including advice on their pre-existing health conditions) and to arrange appropriate health protection via their GP or a travel clinic at least 8 weeks prior to departure.</p>

<p>Gov.UK will provide some information on environmental and health risks, as will the NHS fitfortravel website</p> <p>NB Covid-19 Advice: Remind students at briefing to take account of current UK Government and public health guidance on Covid-19 and any regional/local restrictions as well as those for travel abroad.</p>		<p>women and LGBT travellers) may put certain students at greater risk.</p> <p>Standards of safety/hygiene can be poor.</p> <p>The placement may involve work that puts student at increases risk of infection (e.g. tetanus, blood borne infections).</p>	<p>A medical travel kit is a sensible precaution. Students should have training in how to use the medical kit or be able to demonstrate competence.</p> <p>Advise student to research cultural norms and laws. The Gov.uk site also has some specific advice for disabled and LGBT travellers.</p> <p>Check proposed accommodation arrangements. If concern about suitability provide guidance on choosing safe accommodation.</p> <p>Where an employer has specified health protection measures, confirm requirements with student. NB: Employer may require evidence of inoculations as condition of placement.</p>
	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>Standards of safety/hygiene very low</p> <p>Significant differences in cultural norms and laws (e.g. dress, attitudes to women and LGBT travellers) may put certain students at greater risk.</p>	<p>Includes information given under Medium factor guidance above.</p> <p>Complete formal risk assessment and seek Head of School advice on approval in accordance with University procedures if Gov.UK has advised against travel due to health risks or natural disasters.</p> <p>Medical travel kit may be required if medical/health standards are poor.</p>
<p>Individual student factors</p> <p>Factors that can affect the success of a placement, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their knowledge, skills and experience, 	<p>Covid-19 Advice:</p> <p>Ensure student has signed the Student Placement Conduct and Health and Safety Agreement. Prior to signing their Agreement, ensure students are aware of their responsibilities for their own health and safety on placements, including in identifying individual factors that may increase personal risk (and those with whom they live). Remind students at briefing to take account of current UK Government and Public Health guidance on Covid-19 and any regional/local restrictions and to observe the risk assessments and safe working procedures identified by the placement provider. This may include specific requirements for the use of PPE.</p>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • level of maturity, general health or existing health conditions. • Reasonable adjustments may be needed if a student has disclosed a disability. • If a student is pregnant or becomes pregnant during a placement a risk assessment may be needed. 	<p>Ensure the Employer/Placement Provider Health and Safety Questionnaire has been completed and any identified specific control measures related to Covid-19, e.g. provision of PPE, have been addressed.</p>		
	Low	<p>The student has not advised the University of any personal factors likely to cause episodes of illness or require specific support whilst on placement.</p> <p>Student has relevant knowledge, understanding and skills for the type of work.</p>	<p>Normally None.</p> <p>Ensure student has completed the Student Placement Conduct and Health and Safety Agreement. Prior to signing their Agreement, ensure students are aware of their responsibilities for their own health and safety on placements, including in identifying individual factors that may increase personal risk.</p>
	Medium	<p>The student has disclosed personal factors (e.g. mental or physical health conditions, disability, pregnancy, linguistic or cultural) which may require specific adjustments or support during the work placement, or in social interactions at work.</p>	<p>Engage with student, host employer and health professional/other support professionals (e.g. disability support) to agree reasonable adjustments or other support.</p> <p>Confirm these in the written communication with the placement provider and student.</p> <p>Seek further guidance if a student identifies they are pregnant prior to or during placement.</p> <p>Advise student of University support and counselling services, including the Student Support and Wellbeing Team and the University's Counselling and Mental Health Service.</p>
High	<p>The student has personal factors (e.g. mental or physical health conditions, disability, pregnancy, linguistic or cultural) which may increase the risk of illness or incident during specific work-related activity even following adjustments.</p> <p>The student has significant personal factors (e.g. mental or physical health conditions, 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>In addition to examples under Medium risk above :</p> <p>Discuss activities that give rise to risk with the student to try to eliminate or reduce potential risks where possible.</p> <p>Engage with occupational health professional/disability support professionals to develop reasonable adjustments. Confirm these in the written communication with the placement provider.</p> <p>Take account of impact of other risk factors identified in the risk profiling table (e.g. location) when determining suitability of placement.</p>	

		<p>Other risk factors identified in the risk profiling table (e.g. location) may also impact on the risk.</p> <p>The student's knowledge, understanding, and skills are low for the type of work.</p>	<p>Consider a pre-placement site visit</p> <p>Agree with student and host employer how gap in student's knowledge, understanding, and skills is going to be addressed and by who (e.g. through training or limiting work activities).</p> <p>Confirm arrangements to reduce risk in the written communication with the placement provider.</p>
<p>Insurance limitations (see Annex 2 of the University Policy on the Management of Placement and WBL for more detailed guidance on insurance)</p> <p>See the Employer/Placement Provider Health and Safety Questionnaire for details of insurance cover.</p>	Low	<p>UK locations (where the placement provider has confirmed Employers' Liability and Public Liability insurance cover).</p>	None.
	Medium	<p>Locations, activities and/or circumstances that require special consideration before the placement proceeds.</p> <p>There may be cover in place, but not in the format we would expect in the UK or at a lower level than expected.</p>	<p>The location or activities being undertaken may be more high risk, therefore specific insurance or the limit may need to be increased to accommodate the placement. NB Sole Traders are unlikely to hold Employers Liability Insurance.</p> <p>Consult the University's Insurance Officer if you are in doubt for further advice.</p> <p>See advice below.</p>
	High	<p>Locations where the placement provider's insurance does not cover the student for personal or third-party liability associated with the work by the student.</p> <p>Locations, activities and /or circumstances that are excluded from the HEI's travel and other insurance cover.</p>	<p>Consult the University's Insurance Officer for further advice.</p> <p>If locations, activities and/or circumstances are excluded from the University's travel and other insurance cover, consider alternative placements.</p> <p>If placement is to proceed, additional specific insurances may be available.</p> <p>Brief the student on the limitations of insurance cover (the small print)</p>