

Work Experience Policy

This policy sets out Thomas Armstrong Group's approach to engaging people on work experience. The policy covers both arrangements where the individual is undertaking work for the benefit of the organisation and "work shadowing", where the individual does not perform any work for the benefit of the organisation.

The organisation encourages work-experience placements and acknowledges the benefits that a work-experience person can bring to the organisation, such as enthusiasm, an extra pair of hands to help to complete projects and improved ties with the local community. Similarly, a work-experience person benefits from their placement with the organisation by gaining valuable career experience and enhancing their CV.

The HR department will be responsible for organising work placements with schools, colleges and universities.

While making arrangements for work experience placements, the organisation treats personal data collected in accordance with its data protection policy.

Schools, colleges and universities

Applications from schools, colleges and universities will be received positively and will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis, subject to each department's ability to accommodate such a placement.

Types of placement

Placements can be either:

- a work-shadowing placement of up to one week's duration, where the individual observes the work undertaken by the organisation's employees but does not perform any work for the benefit of the organisation, except for doing some work for illustrative or learning purposes; or
- a work-experience placement, where the individual is expected to perform some work or provide some assistance to the organisation or to its employees.

**Individuals aged 17 and under**

Work-experience placements for children aged 17 and under will last no longer than one week. It is not necessary to pay children who are of compulsory school age who are simply undertaking work experience. School children who are of compulsory school age will normally work for 30 hours per week, working six hours per day, with one hour for lunch each day.

If the individual has ceased to be of compulsory school age, they will be paid not less than £4.62 per hour. The individual must not be at work for longer than 40 hours per week.

Individuals aged 18 to 20

Work-experience placements for young adults aged 18 to 20 may continue for up to 12 weeks. They will be paid not less than £6.56 per hour. They will also be entitled to travel and subsistence expenses on production of receipts. They will not be at work for longer than 48 hours per week.

Individuals aged 21 and over

Internships are work-experience placements for individuals, including students and graduates, who have reached the age of 21. Such placements may be for up to 52 weeks. Interns will be paid not less than £8.91 if aged 23 or over and not less than £8.36 if aged at least 21 but under 23, per hour. They will also be entitled to travel and subsistence expenses on production of receipts. They will not be at work for longer than 48 hours per week.

Method of placement

The HR department will liaise with any departments that wish to offer work-experience opportunities to coordinate a list of available work-experience placements each year.

Induction and supervision

The HR department will arrange for an induction for the work-experience person on the first day of the assignment, during which they will be given essential information about the workplace. This will include the relevant health and safety procedures, such as the procedure relating to fire safety, and other practical information such as where the toilets and canteen are located.

The relevant line manager will be responsible for supervising people on work experience. Where an individual does work for more than one department, the person supervising will be the relevant line manager for that department.



Tasks

The relevant line manager will ensure that the work-experience person is given work that is commensurate with their skills and abilities. The work may cover a range of tasks and may be in one department or in different departments. Should there be insufficient work available in the department, the relevant line manager will make reasonable efforts to find the work-experience person suitable alternative work within the organisation by liaising with the HR department.

Disciplinary and capability issues

The organisation's disciplinary, grievance and capability procedures do not apply to work-experience personnel.

Where the relevant line manager has reason to believe that there are minor issues concerning the work-experience person's capability or conduct, they will raise it informally with the work-experience person. Where, in the opinion of the relevant line manager, the capability or conduct issues are serious, the matter should be brought to the attention of the HR department.

The organisation is not obliged to follow its disciplinary or capability procedures to the letter. Line managers and other personnel should observe basic principles of fairness in dealing with any issues of capability or conduct that may arise. In cases of capability, individuals should be informed of any shortcomings in their performance and given the chance to improve. In cases of misconduct, the line manager must have reasonable grounds for believing that the individual has been guilty of misconduct and should give them the opportunity to give any explanation/mitigation.

The organisation reserves the right to terminate a placement immediately, should the work-experience person be guilty of serious misconduct or any negligence resulting in loss or damage to the organisation.

Health and safety

The organisation must ensure that all those who are on work-experience or work-shadowing placements have the same basic training on matters of health and safety as other workers.

Data protection

The organisation must ensure that all those who are on work-experience or work-shadowing placements have the same basic training on matters of data protection as other workers.