



Health & Safety, Edinburgh Napier University

**Health & Safety Guidance
for the
Placement of
Higher Education Students**

Edinburgh Napier University has a responsibility to all students going on placement to ensure that the placement provider will offer a safe working environment.

This **Health and Safety Guidance for the Placement of Higher Education Students** is provided to help you with this. It provides simple checklists and examples of letters, which can be altered as appropriate. This guidance and its appendices are available on the Health and Safety Outlook Public Folder and website.

Student Placements

This guidance is introduced following publication by UCEA/CVCP of Health and Safety Guidance on the placement of higher education students. Edinburgh Napier University accepts that:

- Universities have a statutory duty not to expose students to risks to their health and safety so far as is reasonably practicable and this extends to students on placement in industry, commerce etc. The Health and Safety Executive encourages the practice whereby arrangements are formal and written and include the University guidance about Health and Safety on Placement and guidance on the selection of placements.
- Schools/Services will put in place procedures for placement approval and the provision of relevant health and safety information and adequate training and supervision. Each stage of the procedure will require to be backed by written records and kept by the School/Service.
- The provision to students of relevant health and safety information, instruction, training and supervision are particularly important aspects, given the youth and experience of students in placements.
- Placement organisers must take reasonable care of themselves and of other people who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work. This means individual placement organisers must be confident in carrying out their tasks in accordance with statutory requirements and any other relevant guidance. The School/Service will therefore assess their staff training needs and arrange for any necessary training.

Students on placement must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of other people who may be affected by their actions. They must also co-operate with the employer in complying with their legal duties.

The following guidelines are provided to assist Schools in achieving health and safety standards for student placements. (For student placements or students travelling abroad, please refer to the **Health and Safety Guidance for Travel Overseas**).

- A placement health and safety checklist (**Appendix 1**) must be sent to each employer who has agreed to offer a placement. Any “no” responses would require further consideration, possibly with the involvement of the Safety Adviser or, if necessary, by specific assessment to ensure that the placement is suitable.
- Where special arrangements are needed for students with disabilities, placement organisers should ensure that employers are given full information and any necessary advice well in advance of the placement.
- The student will not start work until they have received the authority to start placement and the placement has been given approval.
- A compulsory health and safety briefing for students must cover items as laid down in the student induction checklist (**Appendix 5**) and Schools/Services will ensure that their

students are adequately briefed on health and safety prior to going out into the placement and ensure health and safety instruction and training is also provided by the employer.

- An effective debriefing session at the end of the placement will take place.

Further information is contained in the Guidance Section (appendices with standard forms are available on disk for customising to meet School requirements).

Guidance Section

The package includes:-

APPENDICES

*Code*¹

Appendix 1	Placement Health and Safety Checklist	(Univ)
Appendix 2	Example of Letter to Employer	(Emp)
Appendix 3	Example of Letter to Student	(Stud)
Appendix 4	Example of Record Sheet	(Univ)
Appendix 5	Student Induction Checklist	(Stud)
Appendix 6	Briefing Notes for the Preparation of Students Prior to Going on Placement	(Univ)
Appendix 7	Guidance Notes for Students on Placements (Health and Safety)	(Stud)

¹ **Note:** Coding of pages denotes final recipient:

(Univ) University
(Emp) Employer
(Stud) Student

In addition, there is a Health and Safety Training package on all computers called **Cardinus Health and Safety Essentials**, which students can access. It covers the main areas of health and safety and is a good induction tool.

To access the package:

Go to Start - All Programs – Applications - Health & Safety - Cardinus Online Safety Training

Appendix 1

PLACEMENT HEALTH AND SAFETY CHECKLIST

Name of Employer

Address

.....

Telephone Email.....

	Yes	No
1 Do you have a written Health and Safety policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Do you have a policy regarding health and safety training for people working in your undertaking, including use of vehicles, plant and equipment, and will you provide all necessary health and safety training for the placement student?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Is the organisation registered with:		
a - the Health and Safety Executive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b - the Local Authority Environmental Health Department?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Insurance		
a - Is Employer and Public Liability Insurance held?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b - Will your insurances cover any liability incurred by a placement student as a result of his/her duties as an employee?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Risk Assessment		
a - Have you carried out risk assessment of your work practices to identify possible risks whether to your own employees or to others within your undertaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b - Are risk assessments kept under regular review?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c - Are the results of risk assessment implemented?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 Accidents and Incidents		
a - Is there a formal procedure for reporting and recording accidents and incidents in accordance with RIDDOR?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b - Have you procedures to be followed in the event of serious and imminent danger to people at work in your undertaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c - Will you report to the university <i>all</i> recorded accidents involving placement students?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d - Will you report to the university any sickness involving placement students which may be attributable to the work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Contact Personnel

Who is your nominated contact for compliance with the requirements of health and safety legislation?

Name and position..... **Tel**.....

The above statements are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signed.....

Position..... **Date**.....

Thank you for completing the questionnaire. Please return it as soon as possible to:

..... **Placement Organiser**

School/Service..... **Edinburgh Napier University**

Appendix 2

EXAMPLE OF LETTER TO PLACEMENT PROVIDER

(Please alter as appropriate)

Our Ref:

Date:

Dear Sirs

Supervised Placement

We are very pleased that you have been able to offer a placement. We regard the "year out" as a three-way partnership between the employer, the student and the university. Although we are not a party to the contract of employment, students on placements are enrolled as our students and we would expect to take any action necessary to ensure that a student is proving to be an effective, safe and reliable employee. Please do not hesitate to let us know if there are any problems with which you think we could help.

We have found that health and safety training for students has sometimes been neglected, perhaps because students are temporary employees and are sometimes forgotten when instruction is arranged. Although current legislation places primary responsibility for health and safety training and equipment on the employer, we recognise that the University also has a duty of care. We have given information on health and safety as part of the student's course and further information is contained in the placement documents issued to students. However, this is of a general nature and does not include the specific information needed for any particular job.

The Health and Safety Executive has recommended that we ask formally for assurances on health and safety so, as part of the approval process, we should be grateful if you would complete and return the enclosed checklist. We are sorry to burden you with yet another piece of paper but hope that you will not find the questions too onerous and will understand our reasons for asking them. We have told students that they must not start work before the placement is approved. If there is a change in location or working practice which would cause you to amend your answers as indicated in the enclosed "*Health and Safety Checklist*", we would be grateful if you could notify the university accordingly.

Each student will be given written guidelines which clearly describe the various documents which he or she needs to produce to satisfy the course requirements. These include a "*Student Induction Checklist*" which the student should complete within a week of starting work.

We expect every student, within their level of competence and training, to have their ability stretched, once you have confidence in it, and hope that your workload and available supervision will allow a varied programme of experience, as you would offer to any other employee.

We would welcome joint talks with you and the student to construct a programme of learning to be achieved while on placement with your organisation, compatible with the needs of your organisation and those of the student and the university. Through this we could all identify and be assured of health and safety issues which might be met, or for which training is needed.

If a student is doing a real job (i.e. a job which needs doing) within the industry they will receive useful experience. It is right that the experience comes naturally, after training and as a result of doing the job **safely**, rather than experience being somewhat falsely acquired in the role of an observer. Each student has full details of the course syllabus which will tell you what they should already know and what they will be covering in their Final Year. Offering experience which makes use of the knowledge they have is probably of most benefit to both you and the student.

As well as the course syllabus, the training scheme of the appropriate professional institution is a good guide to useful experience. We encourage students to record their experiences in terms of these schemes (although this is not part of the course and so is voluntary), particularly because the experience gained on placement is accepted by the institutions as valid for professional training. If you are not familiar with the requirements, the student may have the details (if they have asked for them) but otherwise we should be happy to let you have them.

Most of the information in this letter will be of use to the student's immediate supervisor within your undertaking so we should be grateful if you would forward a copy, once you know who this will be. We aim to visit students twice during the year and so look forward to meeting the supervisor then. Some students will not be visited until they have worked for around six months or unless a risk assessment dictates otherwise, but we hope that you will not be at all reluctant to contact us if you feel that an earlier visit would be desirable.

Thank you once again for offering a placement. The vast majority of previous placements have worked very well and proved to be of great benefit to both student and employer. We trust that this year will be no exception.

Whilst writing, it may be of interest to you to know that we still have some students without placements so if you are able to make use of any, please let us know. We shall continue seeking placements and will be able to contact students if there is any offer forthcoming.

Yours faithfully

Appendix 3

EXAMPLE OF LETTER TO STUDENT

(Please alter as appropriate)

Name.....

Course Title.....

Supervised Placement Authority to Start Placement

This authority enables you to begin your placement immediately, or on the date agreed with your employer, whichever is the later.

It is valid for the whole of your employment with the employer named below, unless circumstances change sufficiently to warrant its withdrawal.

This authority is valid for employment with:

Employer's name

Attended health and safety briefing Date.....

Received health and safety pack Date.....

Received placement pack Date.....

Authorised: Date.....
(Placement Organiser)

Authorised: Date.....
(University Safety Officer when appropriate)

Before starting work you should have read the information provided in the health and safety pack, particularly the section "Health and Safety Guidance Notes for Students on Placements".

Appendix 5

STUDENT INDUCTION CHECKLIST

NAME OF STUDENT..... START DATE.....

COURSE/PROGRAMME

EMPLOYER

The following items should be included in your induction into the organisation, preferably on your first day. Please check off the items below when they occur and inform your placement organiser of any items not covered within one week of the start of your placement. This list is not exhaustive and other topics may be covered, which you may note if you wish:

TASK	Date
Introduced to key staff members and their roles explained	
Location of toilet facilities	
Location of rest room, canteen (if relevant) etc	
Lunch, tea and coffee arrangements	
Place of work	
Dress code	
Work space	
How to answer the telephone, transfer calls and make calls both internally and externally	
Post arrangements	
Car parking	

HEALTH & SAFETY ISSUES	Date
Emergency procedures	
Safety policy received or location known	
Location of First Aid box	
First Aid arrangements (including names of first aiders)	
Fire procedures and location of fire extinguishers	
Accident reporting and location of accident book	
COSHH regulations	
Display Screen Equipment regulations/procedures	
Manual handling procedures	
Protective clothing arrangements	
Instruction on equipment participant will be using (list equipment)	
Other issues	

Signed.....

Date.....

Appendix 6

BRIEFING NOTES FOR THE PREPARATION OF STUDENTS PRIOR TO GOING ON PLACEMENT

ALL PLACEMENTS

- Their health and safety responsibilities.
- Health and safety responsibilities of the placement provider.
- Health and safety induction:
 - The importance of receiving this.
 - When it must be given (emergency arrangements, reporting of incidents etc).
 - Topics that must be covered.
 - Action to take if not given.
- Health and safety information, instruction, training and supervision as the placement progresses.
- Assessing and managing risks for activities they will undertake.
- Monitoring and providing feedback.
- Action to take if they have any health and safety concerns.

EU AND INTERNATIONAL PLACEMENTS

- **Risk Assessment:**

Risk Assessment(s) must be made for all work taking place overseas. However, the nature and complexity of the risk assessment will vary with the type of activity intended and should be commensurate with the actual risk that the identified hazards pose in the particular circumstances.

In many cases the work itself will not be unusually hazardous and consideration will only need to be given to local conditions. Where hazardous work is to be undertaken, some assumptions may need to be made based on the work as it would be undertaken in the UK and it may be possible to utilise a university's general risk assessment form when evaluating the risk. The assessment should be based on previous knowledge, information from the Foreign Office, travel agents and contacts in the place being visited.

The findings and conclusions drawn from the Risk Assessment should be made familiar to all participants, any significant factors being relayed in writing whenever possible.

The Foreign Office, Reuters or the travel agent dealing with the booking will be able to provide information on the necessary vaccinations, local politics, areas to avoid etc. Travel agents are obliged to provide this information. The information will normally be obtained by the group or section arranging the travel and passed on *in writing* to the individual(s) concerned. However, it is advisable for individuals to check personally to

verify the details, especially if there is a significant time lag between the booking and the travel or if the area is politically or geographically volatile.

If access to the internet is available, the following pages can provide some or all of this information:

<http://expedia.msn.com>

<http://news.yahoo.com>

<http://www.overseastravel.com>

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com>

- **Travel arrangements:**
 - Scheduled flights, travel to and from placement location.
 - Accommodation.
 - Health effects of long haul travel (jet lag, very fatigued) and how to avoid.
- **Personal safety:**
 - “No-go” areas, areas of high crime.
 - Safe use of public transport, taxis etc.
- **Climatic conditions:**
 - Normal weather for area (e.g. higher temperatures, arid conditions, extreme winters) and precautions to take.
 - Difference with those experienced in the UK.
- **Health risks and up to date vaccinations:**
 - Venomous animals and insects.
 - Contagious diseases.
 - Vaccinations up to date.
 - Contaminated drinking water and food.
- **Cultural differences:**
 - Accepted behaviour.
 - Local laws and religions.
 - Likely communication difficulties.
- **Obtaining medical or other emergency assistance:**
 - Correct insurance in place.
 - Local healthcare arrangements.
 - Local emergency services contact number(s).
- **Contacts back in UK**

HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDANCE NOTES FOR STUDENTS ON PLACEMENTS

1. Your Responsibilities as a Student

Each School, depending on the type of placement, will give suitable and sufficient health and safety information, training and supervision to cover the health and safety risks pertinent to that placement. Please make yourself aware of these local School/Service guidelines.

It is important that all placement students make every effort to avoid risks to themselves and to others by acting in a safe and responsible manner.

1.1 Introduction

Placements provide an opportunity for you to apply skills acquired whilst at your institution to “real life” situations. Many qualities can also be learned and developed during a placement that could improve your employment prospects. However, there are health and safety aspects to every placement, namely:-

- Being under the supervision of a third party.
- Being involved with, or undertaking, activities where you have little or no experience.
- Working in and visiting environments and locations that you are unfamiliar with.

This Guidance provides you with an awareness of the health and safety aspects of placements.

Health and Safety Responsibilities:-

Placement providers – organisations providing placements

- A general duty to ensure your health and safety whilst on placement.
- Take account of your potential inexperience for activities you will be expected to undertake and put into place appropriate controls.
- Provide you with information, instruction, training and supervision.

1.2 Placement Preparation

There are many aspects to placements that you have to prepare for, health and safety included. It is important that you:-

- Attend briefings prior to placements commencing as health and safety will be covered.
- Familiarise yourself with the health and safety aspects of placements, particularly you and your placement provider’s responsibilities, and what you should receive, particularly in the initial period.

1.3 Information, Instruction, Training and Supervision

These form the “backbone” of ensuring your health and safety whilst on placement and can include: classroom-type situations; health and safety notices and signs; safe working procedures.

As soon as possible after commencing a placement you must receive a health and safety induction. If you do not receive an induction then raise this with your placement provider.

As your placement progresses so will the information, instruction and training you receive. Never undertake an activity or go into an area unless you have received appropriate information, instruction and training for you to feel competent and confident to carry on.

Levels of supervision will vary from placement to placement and at points within a particular placement. Don’t be afraid to ask questions of your supervisor and if you feel there is a lack of supervision, then raise this concern.

1.4 Your Responsibilities

In particular you must:

- Ensure you are aware of the emergency procedures
- Pay attention to instructions from staff with regard to safety
- Work safely, for your own sake and others
- Take care as you go about the premises
- Report any accident and get first aid treatment at once
- Report any hazard you spot to a member of staff
- Wear any personal protective equipment you are issued
- Think before you act – carelessness causes many accidents
- Take care and ask staff for advice with lifting heavy objects
- On no account should food be eaten in a laboratory environment

1.5 What to do in the event of a fire or emergency

Because of the wide variety of work which is carried out and the possible complex layout of the various buildings, it is not possible to produce a set of valid and detailed emergency instructions to cover every situation which may arise. For this reason each employer has its own emergency instructions relating to particular buildings. There should be in every building a notice setting out the procedure to be adopted in case of fire.

You must familiarise yourself with the workplace fire procedures. In particular, check the green and white directional arrows to the fire exits from your workplace. If you have any doubts, please ask your supervisor.

1.6 Fire Extinguishers

Do not attempt to use an extinguisher unless you have received appropriate instruction and training and it is safe to do so.

2. General Safety

2.1 Introduction

The prevention of accidents in laboratories, stores, workshops and all other places of work is a duty of every individual using or entering them. Ensuring the safety of others is as important as the avoidance of personal injury.

Everyone should make it his or her first task to become familiar with any **special instructions** issued for dealing with emergencies peculiar to the place in which he or she is working.

2.2 General Safety Rules

Eating, drinking, smoking and the application of make-up in laboratories or when handling or working with chemicals is prohibited. Smoking may also be prohibited in many other areas as well.

You should familiarise yourself with

- the layout of the building
- the location of fire-fighting appliances and how they work
- ways of getting out of the building in an emergency which may be different to the way you came in
- the siting of telephones
- and first aid arrangements.

Remember, it may be too late to find out very much when an emergency actually happens. If you have any queries on safety matters consult your supervisor or safety representative.

2.3 Lone Working

Many companies have their own rules about working outside normal hours, eg 0800 to 1800 hrs, Mondays to Fridays. Saturdays, Sundays, Bank Holidays and other official holidays are also usually regarded as outside normal hours.

Extreme care should be exercised when working outside these times and then only with the explicit authority of the management of that organisation. It should be forbidden to perform operations deemed hazardous by the employer, or his/her nominee, unless a full risk assessment has been carried out and authority has been given.

2.4 Electrical Hazards

One of the main potential sources of accidents, indeed fatal accidents, in the workplace is the use of electricity. You should take great care and never interfere with any electrical apparatus or equipment.

Two of the worst electrical hazards are careless or unskilled workmanship and faulty or worn out equipment. Neither of these hazards need arise. Electric and electronic supplies and equipment, including batteries and electrolytic capacitors, can be responsible for personal injury and even death. They can also cause fires and explosions. Remember, some foreign colour coding of electrical leads differs from British practice. IF IN DOUBT ASK.

Electricity and Fire

All portable electrical appliances should have a current PAT Certificate. This involves a mechanical and visual check that all socket outlets, switches, flexible leads and electrical appliances are in good condition. In case of fire involving electrical equipment, the first action to take must be to switch off the power supply to that equipment.

DO NOT use, and report, any damaged equipment to your supervisor.

2.5 Personal Protective Equipment

2.5.1 Protective Clothing and Equipment

At the placement you may come into contact with some form of materials – liquid, solid or gas – which can cause injury if protective clothing or equipment is not worn.

If so, always use the protective clothing and equipment that is supplied for performing your work and make sure that it is the correct type of protection for the job. If in doubt, get advice from your supervisor.

You should at all times take good care of clothing and equipment provided for your safety, otherwise it may become a danger to yourself or others. If after use you find that clothing or equipment is contaminated, make sure that it is cleaned at once. Any defects should be reported to your supervisor immediately.

Personal Protective Equipment should only be worn in the work area which requires it.

You may require extra personal protective equipment if you have a skin complaint which could be irritated by chemicals/substances. Please indicate any problems to your supervisor.

DRESS FOR THE PART

2.5.2 Eye Protection

Your eyes are undoubtedly the most vulnerable part of your body and the simplest of injuries to them can have drastic consequences.

You must always wear goggles or eye shields when provided to protect your eyes from dusts, flying particles, molten materials, liquids, fumes or harmful light and heat. Make sure you have the correct protection for the work you are doing and wear it properly.

Never watch welding or brazing work without wearing the correct type of goggles. Whenever possible, welders must screen their work to protect others from the harmful rays of the welding arc.

Whenever you are doing work involving chipping, grinding or sanding, remember the passer-by and where possible erect a screen.

YOU CAN LOSE YOUR SIGHT ONLY ONCE – SO PROTECT YOUR EYES

2.5.3 Noise

Excessive noise in the workplace can have a serious effect on your hearing. It creates stress which can affect your physical and mental well-being. Accidents can result from where you cannot hear instruction or warnings.

The University will make all efforts to reduce noise levels to comply with statutory regulations and codes of practice. Where noise levels are at or above those outlined in such statutory regulations or codes of practice, the areas will be clearly marked and you must use the hearing protection supplied.

LIKE EYESIGHT YOUR HEARING IS PRICELESS – WEAR THE PROTECTION PROVIDED

To ensure your own safety, as far as reasonably practicable, you should employ the age old maxim

"If in doubt, ask"

2.6 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

The COSHH Regulations require the University to identify substances used or generated in the premises which are hazardous to health. These substances may be in the form of dusts, mists, gases, vapours, solids or liquids. An assessment of health risks created by work involving these substances is then made and measures instituted to control the risk involved.

Students are instructed to:

- Take part in company safety training programmes
- Read container labels (telling you about health risks and precautions to take)
- Use personal protective equipment properly and at all times when required.
- Follow laid down safe systems of work, codes of practice and experimental procedures.
- Report any hazard or defect to your supervisor.
- Use COSHH control measures.
- Co-operate with monitoring and health surveillance.
- Label and dispose of waste chemical material according to departmental rules.

Remember, container labels provide important information including the identity of the substance, possible hazards, safety precautions, emergency action in case of spills, fire or ingestion.

Further information:

- COSHH assessment record and material
- Hazard data sheet should be available

2.7 Housekeeping

HOUSEKEEPING IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY – THAT INCLUDES YOU!

Advantages of good housekeeping

- Less clutter and rubbish (these are the most common causes of fire and accidental injury)
- You can find what you are looking for quicker (improved efficiency and production and less frustration)
- Neat work area (more enjoyable and comfortable to work in)

Key steps to good housekeeping

- Machines (keep clean and follow maintenance routines, check machine guards, power cables and switches – report any defects immediately).
- Tools (clean off dirt and oil, store in appropriate area, repair or report defects)
- Storage (materials, substances must be clearly labelled, store in designated areas, keep containers secure)
- Floors/aisles/access areas (keep clear of debris and rubbish, do not store materials etc where they could create a hazard)
- Personal Protective Equipment (keep clean and store correctly)

2.8 Pregnancy, New Mothers and Nursing Mothers

Pregnant women, new mothers and nursing mothers are particularly sensitive risk groups and need to be protected against hazards. It is essential that if you fall into these risk groups that you inform your supervisor as soon as possible, so that any necessary precautions can be taken.

Health and Safety computer packages are available on Edinburgh Napier University computers.

***To access these packages go to the Start menu → All Programs → Applications → Health & Safety → Cardinus Online Safety Training
→ Health and Safety Essentials
→ Workstation Safety Plus
→ Manual Handling***