Work Placement Standard for Colleges

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Summary: This guidance has been developed to provide direction and highlight best practice in the college sector. It sets the expectation that all college students will benefit from high quality work placements or other workplace experience in line with the Scottish Government’s Developing the Young Workforce strategy. The aim of this guidance is to significantly and consistently improve the future employment prospects of all students studying in colleges in Scotland.

Further information: Contact: Sharon Drysdale
Job title: Assistant Director
Department: Access, Skills and Outcome Agreements
Tel: 0131 313 6682
Email: sdrysdale@sfc.ac.uk
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College work placement guidance

Introduction

Over the last decade the college landscape has changed considerably in Scotland. Regionally based colleges of significant scale and influence are now delivering a broad range of subjects and qualifications - more focused than ever before on meeting local labour market demand - as set out in their Regional Outcome Agreements. They are also key partners in delivering senior phase vocational pathways for school pupils, and in providing employability support for jobseekers and workplace returners. As such, colleges work closely with local authorities and schools, and with Job Centre Plus - using labour market information from a variety of sources and partners - as well as their relationships with employers to inform their curriculum offer and delivery arrangements.

“The key message we have had from young people .... is their need for significantly enhanced quality work experience while at school and college.”

Sir Ian Wood, the Wood Commission

In response to the Wood Commission’s Report *Education Working for All!* (June 2014), the Scottish Government published *Scotland’s Youth Employment Strategy Developing the Young Workforce* (December 2014). The Strategy recognises the valuable role of colleges in future workforce development. Together with the related implementation plan, it sets out a seven year programme aiming to improve youth employment levels through a range of measures, including by improving outcomes for all students. It includes a commitment to providing a range of work-related opportunities for students, including work placements.

The Learner Journey

There are currently a number of ways students can experience the world of work in order to develop the necessary skills for future employment. Developing the Young Workforce promotes a progressive approach to providing such experiences, relevant to where a young person is on their learner journey and their career ambitions.

By the time a student is in the senior phase of their education they will have had various experiences to inspire and stimulate them about the world of work. They will also be entitled to continue to develop their skills for work by gaining relevant qualifications. In this context colleges have a well-established range of courses and activities which develop the skills, knowledge, competence and confidence required to progress towards and into sustainable work.
Colleges should continue to build on existing good practice across the sector, sharing knowledge and practical solutions, working in closer partnership with employers and other stakeholders. Colleges should deliver a range of activity – complimenting and adding value to course requirements so as to maximise opportunities for contextualised learning and practical skills development. This may include:

- Learning in simulated work environments, e.g. salon within a college with paying clients.
- Enterprise activities.
- Volunteering in a social enterprise or charity.
- Employer presentations.
- Practice interviews.
- Research tasks.
- Site visits.
- Personal skills analysis activities.
- Careers events.
- Paid part-time employment.
- Pitches to peers and expert advisers.
- Mentoring & coaching.
- In-house business start-ups.
- Presentations from previous students who have moved into employment.
- Employer led master-classes.
- Business competitions.

College work placements, or other employer related activity, should conform to all relevant Health and Safety regulatory requirements\(^1\) and it will be the responsibility of the college and the employer to establish and maintain these.

\(^1\) Details available at [http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/index.htm)
The Learner Journey

**Student**
- Engaging with a wide range of employers to interact with students in college
- Taking students to visit employers

**College**
- Attending college events, Talks and info sessions for students, staff and parents
- Hosting groups of students and staff for visits

**Employer**
- Careers events, Research tasks, Employer presentations
- Site visits, Personal skills analysis activities

**Inspiration**
- Learning in simulated work environments e.g. college salon with paying clients, Enterprise activities, Interview skills
- Arranging placements within college in any relevant department, Working with other FEIs/HEIs to organise placements on campus
- Hosting practice interviews or application sessions
- Running project based work in colleges

**Simulation**
- Arranging a wide range of tailored placements with employers, both locally and nationally across all curriculum areas
- Hosting work ready college students with one to one support, following placement plans drawn up in partnership with the college and student

**Placement**
- Work Placement with an employer
- Working in a Social Enterprise
- Working in a Charity
The purpose of this guidance

The guidance offers a flexible approach to assist colleges to deliver the right opportunity for individual students. It sets out the expectation that all college students will benefit from high quality work placements and other workplace experiences that build on prior learning and work related skills development. Colleges are well practiced at delivering experiential learning to enhance students’ courses and a wide variety of models should be considered in order to ensure a more personalised approach. Work placements and experiences provide rich opportunities for students to develop the vocational and technical skills required for a particular job. They also enable students to develop the essential soft skills they will need for a successful career and for life more generally.

“Essential skills make individuals enterprising, adaptable and resilient. They are at the core of our entrepreneurs, our innovators and our critical thinkers. These are the types of skills that will make applicants stand out in today’s job market.”

June 2016

Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP, Minister for Further Education, Higher Education & Science

The guidance builds on what is already recognised as effective practice in the sector and highlights the importance of placing every student’s improved employability prospects at the heart of the learner journey. It applies to all college qualifications and takes account of work placements delivered as part of senior phase vocational pathways for school pupils. In some cases this will necessitate a change to current practices to ensure adequate support is provided to meet the career aspirations of all students – this will require a strategic focus at all levels of learning and teaching.

Who is a work placement for?

The purpose of this guidance is to ensure that all students gain the workplace skills and experience necessary to progress towards and into sustainable employment on completion of their course. It should help support them to reflect on, and choose, future career pathways.

Any student, who is studying in a college, should have a work placement or other workplace experience linked directly to their course, appropriate in nature, duration and location and tailored to their individual needs.

The college should support the student before, during and after the work placement to ensure prior knowledge and skills form the basis for further learning and skills development. In doing so, it will be important to allocate suitable and adequate resources to ensure
meaningful, high quality work placements for students at all levels of study and across curricula.

The guidance is also intended to support employers to understand the college’s approach to developing the future workforce; it will be important to fully utilise opportunities created through the Regional Developing the Young Workforce Groups to strengthen models of employer engagement in order to realise partners’ aims for improving youth employment.

Outdoor Leadership, West Highland College UHI

Students on NC Outdoor Leadership courses source their own placements anywhere in the world. They each find a placement which suits their individual career aspirations, with assistance from the college where necessary. The college has an agreement with an international outdoor education provider who provides placements for some students. However others independently organise travel all over the world to work in a wide range of settings.

There is already evidence of good practice in employer engagement in various forms in different colleges, including:

- Affording dedicated employer engagement time to all teaching staff to build and maintain their industry knowledge and networks.
- Using in-house custom built software to track and monitor all employer based activity and paperwork across the college.
- Establishing a single point of contact within a college to handle administration of work placements.

Colleges should, therefore, look across the sector to what works well, and consider opportunities for adapting and enhancing their approaches with a view to improving the experience for all concerned. The expectations for each participant involved in work placements – before, during and after – are set out in Appendix 1.
What does a good work placement look like?

A work placement should, in addition to other activity organised, be facilitated and directed by the college to provide access to the world of work. This might include bite-size experiences, perhaps more suitable for those at an earlier stage in their course, through to extended work placements, spanning several months for those studying at a higher SCQF level. Each model should provide mutual benefits for students, employers and colleges.

“Work placements should be just like real life, we need to know what to expect when we leave the college and be ready to get a job by ourselves – in the real world.”

*Student, Forth Valley College*

A consistent message from students is that they value the ‘real-life’ elements of work placements which can often best be experienced through block placements rather than a day release model. There is, however value in the day release model as it allows the student to continue to apply their developing knowledge and skills in the workplace over a longer period of time. Students also value the opportunity to experience the whole process from application to interview, and a working pattern as true to ‘real world’ as possible. It may be beneficial, therefore, for some students to experience both day release and block placements.

The duration of a work placement is not prescribed: the message from students, employers and staff is that the priority should be on the quality and outcomes for students rather than the number of hours.

Facilitating a high quality work placement for each student should be the primary aim of the college and employer, as duration alone is not an indicator of inherent value.

When should a work placement be undertaken?

Work placements may sit within the conventional college timetable or out with it; what matters is that the student’s placement takes place at a stage of their course that offers greatest opportunity and impact. The quality of a placement should not be compromised by the limitations of traditional timetabling patterns. It is recognised that the increased expectation from students at school and college who undertake work placements places increased demands on employers. It will be important, therefore, for colleges and employers to work together to facilitate opportunities in more flexible ways than previously.
SVQ Level 3 Hairdressing students from Ayrshire College have been working with female inmates at Gateside Prison in Greenock as part of the prison rehabilitation programme. Haircuts and hair treatments have been available every two weeks from the students in the fully functioning salon at the prison. The hairdressing classes work together to organise the visits. The project provides a confidence boost for students and challenges any preconceived ideas of what prison life is like. The prison encourages partnership working to further the students’ working knowledge and because the hairdressing visits and treatments are important to the inmates.

It is also important to consider other commitments and additional support needs which students have to factor into their lives. Caring, employment, travel or other responsibilities and needs should be fully considered when developing work placements to ensure a positive experience for the student and employer. Where a student is already engaged in volunteering or paid employment, efforts should be made to give evidence of relevant activity in this role (where it is aligned with the curriculum and meets Health & Safety requirements) rather than duplicating the activity through an additional placement. Equally, students should be encouraged to develop and use their own networks in order to secure an appropriate opportunity – particularly those studying at higher SCQF levels.

**Where should it take place?**

The ideal work placement will involve a student, who is ready to undertake a placement in the employer’s working environment, shadowing other staff members, undertaking real world tasks and learning through participation in the workplace. This should be the aim for all students. However it is recognised that this will not always be possible. In some cases a work placement such as this may not be suitable for the student and in such circumstances alternative work based learning experiences should be developed, e.g. working in-house in a college salon or refectory. As flexibility of delivery will be fundamental to the successful expansion of student workplace activity, the college’s ability to work in innovative ways to meet the demand will determine the success in sourcing and facilitating positive work place experiences for all students.
Professional Cookery, Perth College UHI

Following a summer long work placement, Fraser, an HND Professional Cookery Student, was awarded a placement at the 2 Michelin starred Andrew Fairlie Restaurant at the Gleneagles Hotel and a £1,000 Andrew Fairlie Scholarship to cover travel and accommodation costs. Subsequently he was offered employment and set up his own Personal Chef business, catering for Canapé parties and private dinner parties while he completed his studies.

Perth College UHI offers around 30 different kinds of scholarships to students seeking to continue studying, or successful in gaining work experience, with a range of employers in Scotland. These are offered through the college’s development trust which works with alumni, friends and benefactors of the college, helping to increase opportunities for their students.

How should placements be delivered?

Partnership working is key to a successful work placement – involving the student, college and employer. Feedback between the employer, student and the college should be an integral part of the experience for all concerned. This is critical to the student’s continued learning, to the employer’s ability to support the student effectively and to the college’s ongoing development of placement activity as well as curricula. Constructive feedback between the partners should also inform continuous improvement in their approaches to work placements.

Colleges should make every effort to assist all students with additional costs associated with work placement or other work related activities. For students in receipt of a bursary or EMA, these costs are covered by student support funding. Costs may include additional travel expenses, additional childcare, uniforms, PVG, regulatory requirements etc. Examples of resourceful funding approaches already in place in the sector include business sponsorship, alumni donations, scholarships or funding mechanisms such as The Erasmus Programme. Innovative solutions should be sought which further strengthen college-employer relations. Further information can be found in Appendix 2.

2 National policy for further education bursaries: 2016-17
Senior Phase Vocational Pathways

Where a school pupil is undertaking a work placement as part of a senior phase vocational pathway delivered through school-college partnership activity, it will be the responsibility of the relevant local authority / school to facilitate and support the placements. This may not be appropriate in all cases as schools may not have developed the industry standard knowledge that would be required to support such a placement. In these circumstances a partnership approach should be developed between the school and college to develop and facilitate a successful placement. In such cases, it will be important to draw on the vocational expertise of college staff to ensure vocational relevance, and that any specific course requirements can be achieved through the opportunity. Any arrangements for the college to facilitate and support a placement for a school pupil should be through prior agreement between the partners. Partners should take account of any specific arrangements in relation to placement, e.g. the contractual arrangements for work placements as part of foundation apprenticeships require that colleges manage and support placements.

Project SEARCH, New College Lanarkshire

Sophie was studying at New College Lanarkshire as part of their Project SEARCH transitions course for students with additional support needs in 2013-14. The partnership project supports a cohort of students who each complete 3 work placements over the duration of the academic year, with dedicated support from college staff, a job coach and employers. In Lanarkshire this is delivered with a range of partners including NHS Lanarkshire, SERCO and ISS.

After completing her placement at Wishaw General Hospital, Sophie was offered a permanent position with SERCO as a hospital porter and continues to work in this fast paced and challenging environment providing support to patients, health professionals and other support staff.

Enterprise and entrepreneurship

Another element of work-related learning lies in enterprise and entrepreneurial education, from enterprise training to scaling up existing business ventures. This can play a critical role in laying the foundations for students who wish to pursue future entrepreneurial careers, particularly in regions where the economy is largely made up of micro and small enterprises.

3 http://www.nclanarkshire.ac.uk/projectsearch/
Enterprise and entrepreneurial activity should enable students to be more opportunity-focused, self-aware and attuned to the business environment and can be delivered in collaborative and engaging ways to meet the criteria for graded units. For example, interactive media students participating in an in-company project, developing a website for small business start-up, will allow students to acquire the necessary commercial skills in the ‘real world’.

**Gender and equalities**

A suitable work placement can help to address gender imbalance in some college courses, if managed well. It will be the responsibility of all partners to address the issue of equality, with a particular emphasis on gender balance. With this in mind, the Scottish Funding Council’s [Gender Action Plan](#) should be fully considered when supporting students to gain meaningful placements. All stakeholders involved in a work placement should provide advice, guidance and opportunities that contribute to:

- Eradicating discrimination.
- Promoting mutual respect.
- Equality of opportunity across genders, social background, disabilities, ethnicities, sexual orientation and religions.

**Quality Assurance**

The application of this guidance and subsequent increased activity in this area will be reviewed through Education Scotland’s Quality Framework and monitored as part of the Regional Outcome Agreement process.

**Paul, NC6 Hair student, Ayrshire College**

“The work experience part of my course has been an invaluable experience. Not only have I gained industry knowledge, but have secured myself a full time job after I have graduated.

“The work placement has enabled me to hone and further refine my hairdressing skills. The invaluable knowledge I have learned from industry professionals has helped me immensely throughout the year. It has given me a brief glimpse into the professionalism, patience and team work that is required when working in a salon environment.

“It allows students a chance to develop the skills they are learning in college and in their future work life”
Continuum of Skills Development

Expectations

Building on the range of work preparation activities which each student should have received in their broad general education, students at college can expect to prepare for work placement through a continuum of these activities aligned with their own personal situation. As each student’s needs vary, a personalised approach may include the following activities, dependent on the individual:

**Inspiration**
Student is not yet sure of their career direction,
Has yet to develop the soft skills or practical skills required to successfully complete a placement
Student requires additional support to successfully complete placement

**Simulation**
Student is interested in a career path but has not yet refined the skills or lacks the required confidence to undertake a successful placement
Demands on industry mean placement unable to take place in 'real world'

**Placement**
Student is confident in their chosen career path, has all the necessary skills and abilities and is fully prepared for what a placement involves
A suitable, tailored placement is available with an employer and the student can access it.
What makes a good work placement in College?

1. **Tailored** - Different courses and levels of study require different workplace experiences. Learners may require tailored experiences dependent on their individual needs and abilities.

2. **Real and Meaningful** – Every workplace experience should include meaningful, real-world tasks and activities which are commensurate with their ability and qualifications, while offering the opportunity to ‘stretch, challenge’ and learn on the job. Where possible this should include an accurate replication of workplace shift patterns.

3. **Mutually beneficial** – Whilst benefitting the student, each experience should also benefit the employer, challenging them to invest time and knowledge transfer in the future workforce. Placements within any industry should offer the employer reason to engage and to devote time to supporting a student.

4. **Meets expectations** – Each student and employer should be suitably prepared for what the experience will offer. This should include a period of research for the student, potentially an application and interview process and a suitably detailed induction schedule to clarify expectations.

5. **Roles & Responsibilities** – of all participants should be clearly identified and communicated. Similar to a contract of employment, this should lay out clearly each party’s roles and responsibilities.

6. **Supported** – college staff are required to establish and maintain strong links with employers in the local area, and more widely where appropriate. They should also support students while on placement.

7. **Feedback** – is a key component of every workplace experience. Constructive feedback, either strengths or development needs, is important, both in the form of ongoing feedback and as an appraisal or exit interview when the experience has concluded. This should feed into placement and curricula development.

8. **Enjoyable** – to fully benefit from a work placement, each student and employer should find it both enjoyable and challenging. At this crucial introduction to the world of work, a positive experience for all will strengthen employer-college relations and improve students’ employment prospects.

9. **Resourced** – sufficient college resource should be given to employer engagement and staff allocated adequate time to conduct this and business development activities in order to meet the increased demands of work placements and other activity.

10. **Followed up** – colleges should routinely evaluate work placements – involving the employer and student to ensure continuous improvement.
Guidance and support

SFC will work with colleges and the College Development Network to support the guidance for work placements for colleges. This will include co-producing and sourcing toolkits for employers and students to test and adopt new approaches. These toolkits will reflect practice in different regions and will enable colleges to utilise what they need to meet their own contexts.

They will include information on:

- Duration and type of work placements.
- Work placements at the core of the learner experience – timetabling case course.
- Monitoring and tracking of work placements including management information systems.
- Workplace learning plans.
- Accreditation and certification.
- Improvement planning and policy development.
- Professional learning resource – maximising work placement for staff and students.
- Equal opportunities including gender and disability participation.
- Investors in young people accolade.
- Enterprise and entrepreneurship.

Employer support, including developing project-based work placement information on the toolkits and other sources of support will be regularly updated on the [SFC website](http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/index.htm).
SFC will work with colleges and the College Development Network to support the guidance for work placements for colleges. This will include co-producing and sourcing toolkits for employers and students to test and adopt new approaches. These toolkits will reflect practice in different regions and will enable colleges to utilise what they need to meet their own contexts. The following appendices will be part of that toolkit.
Appendix 1

College

In advance of a work placement we:

1. Identify how the work placement aligns with the student’s course, career aspirations abilities, and capabilities.
2. Ensure that the duration and timing of the work placement is mutually agreeable to the student, and the employer.
3. Devote sufficient appropriate resource to establishing and maintaining strong links with a wide range of employers, including national and international opportunities if appropriate.
4. Identify staff to support the student throughout the work placement.
5. Are satisfied that the employer has arrangements in place to manage health and safety risks including insurance and valid PVG paperwork where appropriate. [http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/organiser.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/organiser.htm)
6. Prepare students for their work placement, including providing information on health and safety in the workplace and how to deal with any issues which may arise whilst on work placement.
7. Have robust record keeping in place to monitor and track where and when each student participates in a work placement.
8. Pass to the employer any information relating to the physical, social and emotional wellbeing and specific support needs of the student (in compliance with data protection).

During a work placement we:

1. Work with the student and the employer to resolve any issues that may hinder a successful work placement.
2. Monitor and track the success of the work placement with the student and employer, taking account of the length and nature of the placement, and the needs of the student.

After a work placement we:

1. Support the student to maximise the learning from the work placement and retain evidence from the work placement learning plan.
2. Give feedback to the employer on any aspects of the work placement that were particularly strong or might be enhanced – from both the student’s view and the college’s.
3. Explore ways for the whole college community to identify ways of sharing knowledge of the workplace with staff and students and benefit from the work placement.
4. Grow and strengthen relationships with employers to develop and sustain a good range of work placements, and to support career-long professional learning for staff.
5. Evaluate employer feedback and apply learning for future placement activity.
**Employer**

*In advance of a work placement we:*

1. Ensure that risks are controlled before the work placement starts, including insurance and valid PVG paperwork where appropriate and health and safety: [http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/index.htm)
2. Ensure that the work placement will take place at a time that is mutually suitable for the organisation and the student.
3. Identify staff from the organisation to support the student throughout the work placement.
4. Know who the participating student’s supporting college link person is.
5. Will ensure that the college has provided relevant information relating to the student undertaking the work placement (in compliance with Data Protection).
6. Will ensure that the college has provided relevant information relating to the student’s career ambitions, particular interests, skills and any specific support needs.
7. Have agreed the targets with the college and the student for their learning plan and begin to induct the student into the organisation.

*During a work placement we:*

1. Support the student by providing appropriate training and guidance, including a health and safety briefing, to enable them to both undertake essential tasks and explore areas of particular interest as we would with any new employee.
2. Provide ongoing feedback to the student.
3. Offer a rich and varied experience which enables the student to both understand the organisation’s culture and practices, and to develop practical skills whilst on the placement.
4. Ensure the student has the opportunity to undertake meaningful tasks in line with their abilities and academic level of study.

*After a work placement we:*

1. Take the opportunity to share views on the student’s performance relating to their personal goals / targets with the student.
2. Receive and reflect on feedback from the student and the college regarding the work placement.
3. Take the opportunity to provide feedback to the college on the work placement.
Student

In advance of a work placement I will:

1. Agree a mutually convenient time to undertake a placement reflecting on my needs, the needs of the employer and college.
2. Agree the duration of my work placement with my employer and college. This will be flexible in order to give me maximum value from the experience.
3. Be clear about how my placement supports me in achieving my course aims and qualifications.
4. Take ownership of my work placement and have the opportunity to consider whether it is appropriate for my course and my career aspirations, my ability and capabilities, and to ask for an alternative if appropriate.
5. Agree with my college and employer the goals I will aim to achieve during the work placement; understand the conditions of the work placement regarding the period of time, the expectations of the employer and the location along with dress and behaviour codes. This information will be available through my college and my own personal research. I will also know who my main employer contact is.

During a work placement I will:

1. Complete my workplace learning plan and work toward achieving my agreed goals and targets.
2. Demonstrate the behaviours and attitudes that my employer would expect to see in an exemplary employee.
3. Follow training and instructions provided by my employer including in relation to my health, safety and wellbeing whilst on placement http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/students-and-youngpeople.htm
4. Take full advantage of the opportunities available to me to develop my skills, gain knowledge and develop a positive attitude.
5. Reflect on the support provided by my employer and other partners to allow for adjustments that would enhance my placement experience.

After a work placement I will:

1. Reflect on my learning, including feedback, as I continue with my course, using the work placement to support my ongoing learning and skills development.
2. Add relevant details of my work placement to my CV and (if applicable) to my social media profile.
3. Share my experience with college staff and my peers, highlighting the skills I have acquired and opportunities that were available to me within my specific work context.
## Examples of good practice

This table provides examples of different types of employer interventions in Scottish colleges:

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<th>Course</th>
<th>Example</th>
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<td><strong>Inspiration</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>NC Early Education and Childcare</td>
<td>Parent and Toddler group is held within the college offering students with no compulsory element to their course the chance to work with children in-house with teaching staff and parents present.</td>
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<td>Access to Vehicle Body Repair and Maintenance</td>
<td>Guest lecturers from local and national businesses attend sessions with students to talk about their work and career path.</td>
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<td>Access to Engineering Technology</td>
<td>A series of 6 work place visits throughout the academic year to different Engineering environments, exposing the students at this early stage in their course to a broad range of different types of engineering. This should fully inform them about a career in engineering and the options before them.</td>
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<td><strong>Simulation</strong></td>
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<td>Level 5 Hair</td>
<td>Students attend their local prison and using the on-site salon facilities provide regular hairdressing services to female inmates, assisting them also in their own learning and employability.</td>
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<td>Foundation Apprenticeship in Engineering</td>
<td>Industry Challenge Project conducted on campus with local engineering company providing materials and staff to provide teaching and guidance.</td>
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<td>Business Skills for Tourism</td>
<td>Students support other groups of students who are travelling anywhere in the world to arrange and coordinate their placements.</td>
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<td><strong>Placement</strong></td>
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<td>HNC-HND Professional Cookery</td>
<td>Between HNC and HND years the student completes a work placement, which they have sourced themselves lasting the duration of the college’s summer break. This allows them to undertake the experience during peak season for the hospitality sector. The placement should be in a suitably challenging environment, aligned with the student’s career goals and full consideration should be given to locations, including looking nationally and internationally.</td>
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<tr>
<td>NC Outdoor learning</td>
<td>Students source their own placement anywhere in the world that suits their career aspirations. This may include working in any continent.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Consultation overview

We have consulted widely during the development phase of this guidance and sought to listen to students, teaching and support staff, employers and senior college representatives throughout the process. Here is an overview of that activity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Joint Skills Committee</th>
<th>Consulted on 4 February 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principals Steering Group</td>
<td>Ongoing consultation throughout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working group</td>
<td>Ongoing consultation through a working group with representation from: Scottish Funding Council Skills Development Scotland Education Scotland Scottish Qualifications Authority College Development Network New College Lanarkshire Borders College Perth College UHI Scottish Government</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Employer Consultation | Online consultation on SFC website in November and December 2015, link was emailed to Businesses via Business Gateway, Scottish Enterprise, Job Centre Plus, Federation of Small Businesses, Sector Groups and other contacts, it was also sent directly to:  
  - 77 Public bodies  
  - 106 Largest Scottish companies of 2014  
  - 196 Scottish SMEs  
  - 21 NHS Boards  
  - Representative bodies including Federation of Small Businesses Scotland, The Federation for Industry Sector Skills and Standards and Chambers of Commerce.  
  - Employer representatives on the Joint Skills Committee |
| Focus Groups | Focus groups were held with college students and staff from a range of curriculum study areas and SCQF levels in 8 colleges between January and May 2016. The colleges involved were:  
  - Borders College  
  - Perth College UHI  
  - New College Lanarkshire  
  - Dundee & Angus College  
  - Forth Valley College  
  - Glasgow Kelvin College  
  - Ayrshire College  
  - West Highland College UHI |