

Procedure for Work-Based Learning

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Date	Supersedes	Description of Change
22 January 2026	2018 Version 1.1	Update to Work-Based Learning title and update of content
1 May 2018.	2017 Version.	General update.

Document Owner	Approved By	Date Approved	Review Frequency
Registry: Quality & Standards	Senate Regulations and Special Cases Committee.	22 January 2026	Every three years.

Note: In exceptional circumstances, and subject to approval by the Chair of the Senate Regulations and Special Cases Committee, responsibilities assigned to Schools, Heads, of School, School Officers or School Committees in these Regulations may be assumed by the College, Head of College, College Officers or College Committees respectively, as appropriate.

Procedure for Work-Based Learning

This applies to all placements that are organised as a formal part of an undergraduate or postgraduate programme.



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Introduction

1. The Work-Based Learning (WBL) Procedure at Bangor University provides a framework for managing WBL opportunities within undergraduate and postgraduate taught programs. It ensures that students engage in supervised, meaningful work experiences aligned with their academic and professional aspirations while upholding safety, academic integrity, and quality standards. This Procedure establishes principles and procedures to ensure consistency, quality, and clear guidance for students, staff, and external partners involved in WBL activities.

Definitions and Scope

2. Work-Based Learning (WBL): Any formalised learning experience that takes place within a workplace setting, which is an integral part of a student's academic program. This can include placements, internships, and any form of practical work experience. WBL must align with academic objectives for the relevant programme, allowing students to apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings and enhance their professional skills specific to the programme discipline.
3. Apprenticeship: A formal programme in which an individual is employed by an organisation and undertakes an approved academic programme as part of, or alongside, their employment. The primary status of the apprentice is that of an employee, with academic study integrated to support occupational competence.
4. Apprenticeship Employer: An organisation that employs an apprentice and provides the workplace, supervision, and work-based training required for the apprentice to fulfil both their employment role and the academic requirements of the apprenticeship programme.
5. Placement: Specific period of work experience within a professional environment. Placements are structured opportunities where students or trainees work with an organisation to gain practical experience in their field of study.
6. Placement Providers: Organisations or entities that provide Work-Based Learning opportunities for students. These may include businesses, non-profits, governmental organisations, or internal university departments.
7. Four types of placements:
 - Professional Placement: Essential for the completion of the degree, aligned with professional body requirements. Students are typically working towards a specific career in a regulated profession, such as nursing or social work. Placement is mandatory because there is no way to complete the degree without the placement.

- Essential Placement: Required for degree completion but not tied to a specific career. Students gain experience across a range of roles within a particular field, enhancing their ability to work in various settings within that discipline. Placement is mandatory because there is no way to complete the degree without the placement.
 - Embedded Placement: Optional module placements that contribute to the degree but are not essential. Students can choose to do the optional module with a placement or can complete the degree with an alternative module which contains no placement.
 - Extra Placement: These placements are additional to the core requirements of the degree and provide extra credits or recognition. This may be a change to the degree title to recognise the placement (such as a "with placement year") or this may be additional credit on the degree transcript.
8. This procedure does not apply to the following:
- Study placements which do not involve 'work,' such as study abroad semester or year.
 - Extra-curricular activities outside the academic programme, irrespective of whether they are organised by or take place within the University (e.g., part-time work, internships, etc).
 - Research activities as part of a module, thesis, or dissertation, irrespective of whether they involve gathering data with an external company, school, healthcare provider, etc.
 - Fieldwork or field trips.
 - Activities completed during postgraduate research programmes.
9. Information relevant to WBL is also available in:
- The General Regulations for all Students.
 - The Regulations for Taught Programmes.
 - The Code of Practice for Programme Approval, Monitoring and Review.
 - The Code of Practice on Inclusive Provision for Disabled Students.
 - Suitability/Fitness to Practice Procedure
 - The UK Quality Code for Higher Education Advice and Guidance Work-Based Learning.
 - USHA Guidance on Health and Safety Placements for Higher Education Students

Responsibilities of the University

10. The Head of School has strategic responsibility for WBL in their School. This includes ensuring that the WBL Procedure is implemented effectively and in accordance with the Employability Strategy.
11. The Placement Lead has operational responsibility for WBL in their School. This includes supporting data collection and reviewing progress according to relevant KPIs, supporting the development of new opportunities, and overseeing the safe management of established WBL. On-the-ground coordination (e.g., arranging, approving, assessing, etc.) may be delegated to programme or module level Placement Coordinators or Apprenticeship Leads when subject-specific expertise is required.
12. Placements are managed through the School Placement Leads and University Administrative Teams.
- The Professional Placements Administrative Team have administrative responsibility for Professional Placements. They conduct relevant criminal records checks, update

placement paperwork, and ensure that all paperwork is completed correctly and stored safely.

- The Placement Lead or assigned Placement Coordinator has administrative responsibility for Essential, Embedded, and Extra placements. They will be supported by the Student Administrative Team for degree-management administrative activities such as processing degree changes, registering on placement modules, etc.
- Schools must conduct pre-placement briefings which cover essential topics such as professional conduct, health and safety, and the specific objectives of the placement.
- Students with a Personal Learning Support Plan (PLSP) should be provided with appropriate support from the School and Disability Services before, during, and after placement.
- Schools must maintain comprehensive records of WBL in accordance with the University's data retention policies. These records should include placement evaluations, incidents, outcomes, and any termination decisions with reasons and actions taken. This documentation will be used for future placement planning, continuous improvement, and the University's monitoring and evaluation process.

13. Apprenticeships are managed by the Apprenticeship Employer.

- The employer is responsible for the apprentice's employment, workplace supervision, role-specific training, and the management of day-to-day Work-Based Learning activities.
- The University's responsibility in relation to apprenticeships is limited to the delivery, management, and assessment of the academic programme associated with the apprenticeship. This includes ensuring that the academic provision meets regulatory and awarding body requirements, supporting apprentices in their academic studies, and assessing academic learning outcomes. The University does not have responsibility for arranging, supervising, or managing the apprentice's workplace activities, which remain the sole responsibility of the Apprenticeship Employer.

Responsibilities of Placement Providers

14. Placement Providers play a vital role in ensuring the success of Work-Based Learning (WBL) by providing a safe, supportive, and educational environment that enables students to achieve their learning outcomes through relevant and meaningful tasks.

15. Providers must comply with all applicable health and safety regulations and legal requirements, including employment law and data protection. For placements outside the UK, providers must meet both the health and safety standards of their country and the UK, with the higher standard applied.

16. Providers are responsible for conducting a risk assessment that comprehensively covers all activities in which the student will be engaged during the placement. This assessment can be general for all employees but must sufficiently address the specific activities of the student.

17. For remote or hybrid placements, providers retain responsibility for ensuring that the working environment is safe and appropriate. This includes undertaking a suitable display screen equipment (DSE) assessment where required, ensuring that students

have access to appropriate equipment, systems, and resources, and providing guidance on safe and appropriate home-working practices.

18. Providers must ensure that robust arrangements are in place for the secure handling of information during remote or hybrid placements. This includes providing secure access to systems and documents, clear instructions on the storage and transmission of confidential information, and provision for maintaining confidentiality when dealing with clients, customers, service users, or other external stakeholders, including during telephone or online meetings and calls.
19. Providers must have appropriate insurance in place to cover student activities and must provide evidence of this insurance upon request. If the provider does not have suitable insurance, they must inform both the University and the student so that alternative arrangements can be made.
20. Providers are required to deliver a comprehensive induction to students, including training on health and safety, safeguarding, and an overview of the organisation's operations.
21. Providers must assign a dedicated supervisor or mentor to each student to oversee their work, offer guidance and support, and assess performance based on agreed learning outcomes.
22. Providers must complete all necessary documentation, including placement agreements, risk assessments, and feedback forms, and cooperate with the University in any monitoring or evaluation processes.
23. Providers must promptly report any issues or concerns during the placement, including incidents, health and safety concerns, or breaches of conduct, to the University.

Responsibilities of Apprenticeship Employers

24. Apprenticeship Employers are responsible for all aspects of the apprentice's employment and Work-Based Learning. This includes providing a safe working environment, appropriate supervision, role-specific training, and day-to-day management of work activities.
25. Employers must comply with all relevant health and safety, employment, and data protection legislation, including ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place for remote or hybrid working where applicable. This includes providing suitable equipment, secure systems, and clear guidance on confidentiality and the handling of information, including when apprentices are engaging with clients, customers, or service users.
26. Apprenticeship Employers are responsible for ensuring that the apprentice can undertake required Work-Based Learning and training, and for supporting engagement with the academic programme delivered by the University.
27. Employers must cooperate with the University as required to support programme delivery, assessment, and quality assurance, while retaining full responsibility for the workplace learning environment and employment relationship.

Responsibilities of Students

28. Students must engage proactively with Work-Based Learning activities relevant to their mode of study, whether through placements or apprenticeships. They are expected to prepare appropriately for their roles, reflect on their learning experiences, and demonstrate professionalism, responsibility, and a commitment to continuous learning.
29. Students undertaking placements must comply with the policies and procedures of both the University and the Placement Provider, including health and safety requirements, safeguarding obligations, relevant legislation, and codes of conduct. They must complete all required preparatory activities, understand the placement objectives, and familiarise themselves with the placement environment.
30. Students undertaking apprenticeships must comply with the policies and procedures of both the University and their Apprenticeship Employer. They are responsible for fulfilling their employment duties and engaging fully with the academic programme delivered by the University, in line with the requirements of the apprenticeship.
31. While disclosure is not compulsory, students are advised to inform the University and, where appropriate, the Placement Provider or Apprenticeship Employer of any individual learning needs or Personal Learning Support Plans (PLSPs), and to actively engage in discussions regarding reasonable adjustments and support arrangements.
32. Students are responsible for maintaining regular contact with the Placement Lead / Placement Coordinator / Apprenticeship Lead, providing updates on progress and reporting any issues or concerns in a timely manner. All required documentation (including learning agreements, reflective logs, and evaluation forms as applicable) must be completed as required to support assessment and quality assurance processes.
33. Upon completion of WBL, students must participate in any required debriefing or reflective activity to review their experience and learning outcomes achieved.

Approving, Monitoring, and Terminating Placements

34. Responsibility for finding placements may rest with either the student or the University, depending on the programme. If students are responsible for securing their own placement, they must be informed of this before starting the programme and provided with guidance on how to do so. Students should also consider the financial implications, including any impact on fees and loans.
35. Schools must assess placements for suitability, ensuring they align with the programme content and involve activities appropriate to the level of study. Placement Providers must meet all procedural requirements and any criteria set by professional bodies or sponsors. Schools must assess students for suitability, including health, wellbeing, and conduct, as outlined in the Suitability/Fitness to Practise Procedure.
36. Schools must ensure that all placements have adequate health and safety protocols in place, including relevant training and risk assessments conducted by Placement

Providers or students where applicable. Schools must retain documentation to demonstrate that these measures are completed.

37. Schools must verify that placements are covered by appropriate insurance, including overseas travel insurance when necessary. Any insurance questions should be discussed with the University Insurance Officer.
38. Additional considerations must be made for overseas placements, including risk, visas, insurance, inoculations, government advice, and local laws and customs.
39. Monitoring the quality and effectiveness of placements is essential to ensure students achieve their learning outcomes and gain valuable experience. Schools must implement a structured process that includes regular check-ins with students and Placement Providers, collecting feedback, assessing progress, and addressing any issues as they arise.
40. Schools must maintain consistent contact with students during their placement to review academic progress, evaluate professional competency, and verify health and safety arrangements. This can involve visits or virtual communication (e.g., video calls, telephone, or email). Emergency and local contact information for both the Placement Provider and the student must be obtained and retained for the duration of the placement.
41. Formal placement reviews should be conducted to evaluate the learning environment, level of supervision, and alignment with the academic program.
42. Student feedback is essential for effective monitoring. Students must complete an evaluation form at the end of their placement to provide insights into their experience and suggest areas for improvement.
43. Placement termination should be planned with proper monitoring and feedback to minimise disruption. Work should be completed to the satisfaction of the Placement Provider and School, and all reports, assessments, and debriefs should include feedback from the student, Placement Provider, and University.
44. If a situation poses a risk to wellbeing or safety, the student must contact the Placement Lead/Coordinator immediately. If the risk cannot be mitigated, the placement should be suspended until resolved. In cases of immediate danger, students may suspend their placement without prior approval but must justify their decision. Safety is a priority, but students should be aware of possible academic and financial implications, which may or may not be covered by the University.
45. A placement may need to be terminated before its scheduled end due to health and safety concerns, conduct issues, or failure to meet learning outcomes. The decision to terminate will be made by the University in consultation with the student and Placement Provider, prioritising safety and wellbeing.
46. If a compulsory placement is terminated or cancelled for reasons beyond the student's control, the School must provide an alternative placement or equivalent learning experience. If alternatives are unavailable, students should be given the opportunity to transfer to another University program.

Risk Management, Health and Safety, and Safeguarding

47. The University applies a risk-based approach to Work-Based Learning, ensuring thorough assessments of health, safety, and legal risks.
48. Agreed procedures for managing risks, including health and safety protocols, emergency contacts, and contingency plans, must be documented and reviewed regularly. All WBL must comply with statutory, regulatory, and professional body requirements, including enhanced DBS checks for students in regulated professions.
49. The University maintains a comprehensive database of WBL, covering risk assessments, placement agreements, and incident records to monitor and inform future risk management strategies. Health and safety compliance is ensured through regular checks and audits, with WBL suspended or terminated if standards are not met.
50. Students must be briefed on health and safety, safeguarding policies, and relevant procedures as relevant to their WBL. Placement Providers / Apprenticeship Employers are responsible for providing health and safety training, necessary protective equipment, and incident management procedures.
51. For Placements involving work with children or vulnerable adults, enhanced DBS checks must be completed and cleared before the start. Placement Providers must be informed of DBS statuses, and safeguarding policies must be clearly communicated.
52. For international WBL, additional risk considerations include travel safety, local laws, and cultural factors. Appropriate travel insurance is mandatory.

Managing Concerns

53. Concerns related to student conduct during Work-Based Learning may be managed under the University's disciplinary procedures, Academic Integrity Procedure, or any relevant programme-specific procedures.
54. Concerns regarding a student's fitness or suitability to begin or continue a placement must follow the Suitability/Fitness to Practise Procedure. Informal resolutions should be attempted first, with suspension or termination of the placement considered only in cases of high risk or after due process.
55. If a student has a concern about their placement, they should first discuss it with the Placement Provider. If the student feels unsafe or the issue remains unresolved, they should contact the Placement Lead/Coordinator. If an urgent concern arises out of hours, students should contact University Security.
56. Student concerns must be handled in line with the Student Complaints Procedure.
57. If a concern is raised about a placement, the School must review whether the placement should be withdrawn and assess the future use of the Placement Provider.

58. The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) operates an independent scheme for the review of student complaints. Bangor University is a member of this scheme. Where a student remains dissatisfied with the outcome of a complaint or appeal following completion of the University's internal procedures, the student may be eligible to request a review by the OIA. Further information about submitting a complaint to the OIA, including the matters it can and cannot consider and the remedies it may offer, is available at: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students>.

Students are normally required to have completed the relevant University procedures before a complaint can be considered by the OIA. Bangor University will issue a document known as a Completion of Procedures Letter when internal processes have been exhausted and no further internal review is available. Where a complaint or appeal is not upheld, a Completion of Procedures Letter will be issued automatically. Where a complaint or appeal is upheld or partly upheld, a student may request a Completion of Procedures Letter from the University if required. Further information about Completion of Procedures Letters, including timescales for issue, is available at: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/providers/completion-of-procedures-letters>.

To submit a complaint to the OIA, a completed OIA Complaint Form must be received by the OIA within twelve months of the date of the University's final decision, which is normally the date shown on the Completion of Procedures Letter. A copy of the Completion of Procedures Letter is normally required as part of the submission.