



KING EDWARD'S SCHOOL
BIRMINGHAM



KING EDWARD VI
HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

WORK EXPERIENCE POLICY

Committee	
Policy Type	KES/KEHS School
Policy Owner	HEAD OF CAREERS
Statutory	No
Published on website	Yes
Last review date	September 2026
Next review date	September 2027
Review Cycle	Annual
Expiry date	This policy will not expire but will be reviewed as per its designated cycle. This policy remains effective whilst the review is taking place and will become non-applicable once the updated version has been approved.
Version	V2.0

Work Experience Policy, Procedure and FAQs

Summary

Government guidance on work experience was updated in [May 2025](#) following a review of the Gatsby Benchmarks. Schools are encouraged to be 'preparing for the future introduction of a guarantee of 2 weeks' worth of work experience for every young person' from September 2026. At KES and KEHS students are encouraged to undertake two weeks' worth of work experience placements during the holidays from Year 10 to Year 12, this can be made up of virtual and in person placements, and shorter employer visits or days of shadowing.

There is an allocated school work experience week in Year 11 at the end of the summer term, usually in the last full week of term, during which all students are expected to take part in an in-person work experience placement. Support and information are given in school throughout the year, **but it is the student's responsibility to apply for a range of placements**, so that they have at least one confirmed place by the end of the Spring Term. Parents must ensure they are happy with the arrangements their child has made. School provides the [Unifrog Work Experience Placement Tool](#) to administer the placement arrangements and collect Health and Safety and Safeguarding reassurances.

Introduction

KES/KEHS provides students with an incredible array of opportunities and activities with which they can become involved. Whilst all of these experiences will be developing students' skills and helping them understand what strengths and interests they have, none is the same as the uniqueness of an in-person Work Experience placement.

The government recommends that all young people should have up to two week's work experience by the time they leave school. Early encounters with employers and employees, are key for supporting students in their future career journey and decision-making. Placements help students to get to know themselves and their preferences, as well as introducing them to various roles, tasks and industries.

Some Higher Education pathways require relevant work experience, including Medicine, Veterinary, and Dentistry. Many employers, and some higher education institutes, will look for evidence of work experience in the UCAS/ job application, as it shows that a student is motivated, has commitment, and has been proactive in seeking out opportunities to develop their skills and interests.

Aims of Work Experience

By undertaking work experience students will:

- Learn skills related to: applying for placements; researching opportunities; writing letters and CVs; and networking; and dealing with some of the challenges of job-hunting.
- Gain valuable experience of a workplace setting.

- Have encounters with employers and employees and grow in their awareness of different careers and sectors.
- Have opportunities to practice and develop their employability skills.
- Test out their interests, skills, and strengths, in order to come to a better understanding of themselves.
- Experience work tasks and work environments, which are different to those at school, and assess which they enjoy.
- Develop networks and networking skills for the future and meet people who inspire and interest them.
- Gain confidence when relating to the adult world of work.

Safeguarding and school permissions relating to work experience placements

School provides every student with a Unifrog account. This portal should be used to record all work experience placements, to complete all of the required safety checks with the employer, and to obtain school permission for your placement. It is the responsibility of the parent and the student together to [use the Unifrog platform](#) and to ensure that the employer completes all of the required form. If the forms have not been completed by all parties, then school permission cannot be obtained and thus the placement and any absence from school will be unauthorised. If an employer refuses or is unable to complete the forms, please contact the Head of Careers at least a fortnight before the start date.

Procedure and Timeline for Year 11 Work Experience Week

1. Autumn Term – Year 11s will be given an assembly on the importance of the placement and how to go about finding a placement. Support is given on resources to use, including CV and letter templates, video links etc. Parents are sent a letter to outline the process.
2. Spring Half Term - By the end of February half term, students should have applied to at least 4 placements. It is recommended that they start their research and applications in December, as some are competitive and allocated on a 'first come first served' basis.
3. End of Spring term - Deadline for confirming one of their placements. Students should [upload the placement information to the Unifrog portal](#) by the end of the Spring Term. (The student will need the name of the placement contact, business name, and email. Mrs Cuthbert is the School Placement Coordinator.)
4. March/April - Employers should fill out the Unifrog form and parents should review the details sent to them by Unifrog. They will be asked to give their consent. If an employer does not populate the form, parents and students will need to check and chase them for the information. Please contact Mrs Cuthbert if you need support with this.
5. End of Summer Term - Work Experience Week will follow after GCSE examinations have finished.

6. Summer Break 5ths – Reflection of placement to be written and uploaded to Unifrog. Feedback received from employer.

Frequently Asked Questions - FAQs

Please Read through our FAQs and if you need more information or clarification do not hesitate to contact our Head of Careers, Mrs Cuthbert

- **What about placements that don't fit into the school Work Experience Week?**

All students need to find a placement during the Year 11 school work experience week. If additional placements are secured, we encourage you to take these during the school holidays.

If a student is offered a placement during term time - this should be discussed with the Head of Careers and Head of Year who will seek approval from the relevant Senior Leader. Placements are not encouraged during critical exam preparation and revision periods. Assuming approval is given, the placement will ONLY BE CLASSED AS AN AUTHORISED ABSENCE IF THE UNIFROG FORMS HAVE ALL BEEN COMPLETED and all permissions collected.

If a student is offered a placement during the holidays but not during the official work experience week -

Students can add more than one placement to Unifrog and are recommended to use it for the safety assurances and valuable record keeping that it provides, even if they are arranging the placement informally and during holiday time.

- **Will the school find a placement for the students?**

No, students are responsible for finding their own placement. This provides them with an opportunity for developing their employability skills. Students can ask the Head of Careers about previous placement providers and contacts relating to their preferred sector. The school may be able to suggest certain employers that could be approached, but it does not find placements for students.

- **Why do students need to think about this so early, if they are not doing the placement until after GCSEs?**

The timings are carefully chosen to support students, so that they can focus on Mocks and GCSE examinations at the allotted time. Students will be expected to have secured a work placement by the end of the Spring term. Furthermore, some placements are highly competitive and students need to apply early, starting in December with applications.

- **What if a student can't find a placement?**

If a student is struggling or unable to find a placement, they should contact the Head of Careers in the first instance. The onus is on the student to do this, as this proactivity is a crucial part of developing their employability skills. The Head of Careers will support them to create an action plan to search for appropriate placements. If a student has not been able to find a placement, or if a placement has fallen through, they are expected to come into school during Work Experience Week and develop their careers skills by taking part in a mix of virtual work experience, online courses, and jobs around the school site, such as in the canteen and grounds.

- **Where can students find out about Work Experience?**

Students are expected to do their own research. Students should use a three-pronged approach:

1. Use personal contacts of friends and family;
2. Make speculative applications to local organisations and businesses they are interested in. Visits can be made in person, or emails, letters, and CVs sent. TOP TIP: Companies who offer apprenticeships may be more likely to offer work experience. (Use Unifrog to search for apprenticeships).
3. Research big businesses and well-established providers of work experience placements with online application processes. You may find it helpful to use prospects.ac.uk and [Unifrog.org](https://unifrog.org) for more ideas.

Students should also be checking their digital classrooms/ noticeboards and emails, where Work Experience information, assemblies, templates, and any work placements offered by Old Edwardians will be advertised. There are also resources on Unifrog. [Springpod.com](https://springpod.com) and The Forage also do fantastic virtual work experiences.

- **How does the Unifrog Work Experience Placement Tool work?**

Students will need to upload a placement contact name, address, email, and telephone number to the Placements tab on their Unifrog account (visit [Unifrog.org](https://unifrog.org) and click Microsoft SSO to log in). School provides this Unifrog Work Experience Placement Tool to administer the placement arrangements and collect Health and Safety and Safeguarding reassurances. Once the employer has filled out the form, it will be sent to the parent for consent. It is up to the parent to ensure that they are happy with the placement arrangements, before they allow it to go ahead. All Unifrog forms must be completed before school permission can be granted.

- **What if the employer doesn't fill out the Unifrog form with their information?**

Students should chase the placement provider with nudge emails, or a phone call. If a placement provider requires a paper copy of the Unifrog form, or alternative paperwork, please contact the Head of Careers. Please ask employers to check their junk mail for Unifrog forms. Parents must ensure they are happy with the arrangements their child has made, before they allow them to go on the placement. The placement will not be considered an 'authorised absence' until all of the forms are complete and permission granted on Unifrog.

- **What if a student is ill or has a problem on the placement?**

In instances of illness, the placement provider and school should be notified of the absence at the earliest possible opportunity. If a student has a serious concern, or feels unsafe during their placement, they should speak to their placement contact immediately. If the circumstances make it difficult to do so, they should immediately remove themselves to a safe place and contact a parent and school as soon as possible.

- **What if a student does not engage with the process and does not complete a work experience?**

Work Experience Week is a valuable part of our students' education and all are strongly encouraged to participate and offered the support outlined. Any student who does not engage with a placement is missing

an opportunity for their own personal development and, ultimately, this may have a negative impact on university or job applications and at future interviews. In recent years students have been very successful with finding in-person work experience placements. Occasionally a few have supplemented a shorter placement with virtual work experience in a preferred sector or a day of volunteering in school.

- **Can a student do work experience in Year 10 or Year 12, or is it only in Year 11?**

The official school work experience week is in Year 11 but we encourage students to do as much work experience as possible, especially if they are hoping to pursue a career where work experience is an essential entry requirement. We encourage multiple placements and will provide any references, or application support that is required. Students find that the year 10 summer holiday and the Year 12 October half term holiday are good times to do additional work placements, virtual work experience, work visits and volunteering.