

Renaissance College World of Work (WOW) Programme Employer Guidelines



The World of Work (WOW) programme is an exciting opportunity given to our Year 11 (15 to 16 years old) students in their final year of the MYP (Middle Years Programme) of the IB curriculum. It is equivalent to our Education Outside The Classroom programme in other year levels, and is intended to give students the opportunity to learn about the real “World of Work” and explore possible career options for their future.

These work placements involve working alongside professionals as they go about their daily business, and are, for many students, the highlight of their school year where they may have the opportunity to develop skills for future enterprise, and gain a real insight into the challenges and opportunities therein.

The intended duration of the work placement period is 7 to 10 working days in the middle of November each year.

The Focus of WOW Programme

The main focus of work experience is to help channel students’ subject choices and career aspirations, as well as develop students’ skills in a different way to normal classroom work. Students will be expected to find their own placement, create a CV, a cover letter of self-introduction, and on some occasions even attend an interview. Through the process of enquiring, searching, and procuring placement, students are provided with the opportunity to find out, learn, and practice the skills that are needed to be successful in the workplace.

In preparing students for a work placement, our school’s Head of Year 11 and the Career’s Counselor will work with the students to help them understand the purpose and expectations of the work placement, and different competencies that make someone employable and provide guidance on how students might improve on these competencies during work experience.

Students understand that due to the short nature of the placement the tasks assigned may be of a low level and routine in nature. However, it is important to ensure that during their work placement, students have the opportunity alongside the tasks they are assigned to observe as many processes as possible and to interact with staff and customers where feasible. This gives them the unique perspective in understanding how knowledge and skills they have learned in school can be transferred to a real workplace and what other “soft skills” are needed to be successful in a professional environment.

Benefits to Employers (source from www.careersportal.ie)

Work placements provide many opportunities and benefits to both employers and students. Those most commonly cited by employers are:

- Influencing the quality of future employees: employers can help improve the quality and preparedness of young people coming into the labour market;
- Development of recruitment channels: building links with local schools can help to attract school leavers into jobs and can reduce recruitment costs;
- Brand awareness: work placements are often formative for students and discussed frequently with peers. A work placement significantly impacts on their awareness of the brand and value of organisations, which will be shared with others;
- Influencing career choices: many employers report that work placements are the ideal way of raising the profile of career opportunities within their organisation and in some cases, of dispelling unwarranted stereotyped views;
- Raising the community profile: many employers attach importance to raising their profile in the community. Work placements provide a valuable means of creating a positive image amongst students, teachers, parents and employees;
- Creation of staff development opportunities: the process of policy development, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of work experience programmes gives scope for employees to develop their management and coaching skills, and widen their experience;
- Increased motivation of employees: companies participating in education-business link activities have found that such activities increase the motivation of their employees;
- Understanding changes in the education system: closer liaison with schools helps employers to improve their understanding of modern learning processes and current educational qualifications, and enhance their relationship with teachers.
- Monetary: students may provide fresh perspectives, as well as providing an additional resource.

Placement Supervisor

A supervisor/line manager should be allocated to the placement for the duration of the programme. This person is key to the successful completion of the placement, and other members of staff should also be informed of the placement and facilitate the student where appropriate. It is important that suitable tasks for the student are identified before the placement begins and that these are worked into a timetable. A tour of the workplace is highly valuable, as it shows the different elements of the business and can provide context for their particular position.

Types of Work Placement:

There are two common types of work placement opportunities sought by students: Work Experience and Work Shadowing.

Work Experience

This is the most common option and involves the student participating in the daily work of their chosen area. This is a hands-on placement, and students are expected to do some work, learn some skills, and contribute in some way.

Work Shadowing

Shadowing involves the student closely observing someone in the workplace doing a particular role rather than taking on the working role itself. It offers the student excellent insight into what a particular job involves and the skills it requires.

How the programme operates:

Applications:

At Renaissance College we approach the work placement in two stages. During the first stage, as a part of their learning experience, students work on their CV and letters of application, and are encouraged to be in charge of sourcing their own placement, based on their career aspirations and subject interests. At the same time, the College's Career Counsellor and the Head of Year 11 establish partnerships with local employers and build up valuable resources to reach out to students who might struggle to secure a placement during this process.

In the second stage, the College's Head of Year 11 and Career Counsellor will arrange drop-in sessions to offer one-on-one counsel and guidance to students who have demonstrated a clear effort in searching for the placement but were not successful due to no-response or rejection from the employer. During this stage, data collected from facilitating employers will be allocated to each student according to their personal subject interest and career aspirations.

Timescale:

Below is the intended timescale for the WOW programme:

TASK	BY
Write a covering letter and compose a curriculum vitae ready to send off to the work placement contacts.	From 19th Jun to 23rd June
Summer holiday placement searching	Mon, 14th Aug
Parent Information Session (Back to School)	Thu 7th Sep
Identify two possible placements.	Fri 15th Sep
Non-placement support meeting.	From 18th Sep to 19th Oct
Placement confirmation.	Tue, 31st Oct
Organise travel and logistics. Complete documentation.	By Fri 10th Nov
Final preparation and briefing.	Mon, 13th Nov
Reflections, presentations and peer sharing	Fri 24th Nov
Collect Employer Evaluation Form. Complete reflections from the WOW experience in your digital portfolio	From 24th Nov to 15th Dec

Paperwork:

Upon agreeing to take on the students for the stated period of work experience, the facilitating employer will be required to complete a form confirming the availability, nature of work, and contact details of the work place. Please see attached Letter to Employers at the back.

Insurance:

Each student is insured by English Schools Foundation's Group Personal Accident Insurance - Cover for Outdoor Activities for the duration of the work placement. This insurance does not cover overseas placements, therefore the work experience must be carried out in Hong Kong.

Payment:

The employer is not required to make any payment to the student during work experience.

Monitoring:

As part of the monitoring process, a designated teacher from the College will arrange to visit the student at the employer's premises during the work experience.

Recording:

During the course of the work experience, students will be required by the school to maintain some type of record/diary of his/her experiences so that they can reflect on the learning and share with their peers and other people in the school community when they return to school.

Feedback:

Upon completion of the work experience, the facilitating employers are encouraged to provide feedback to the student on their performance and there would be a short feedback form to be completed and returned to the school. Please see Employer Evaluation Form at the back.

The Role of the Student

As the aim of the week is to expose students to the adult workplace they are expecting to get an insight into the routines and demands of their chosen employer. They should therefore be expected to mirror the demands of a typical employee, including working hours and breaks, attire and expectations. The more that they can be exposed to meaningful and relevant tasks that are relevant to their employer's field of work the more effective the placement will be.

Students should be punctual and maintain 100% attendance during the week. In the event of illness they have been instructed to contact their supervisor appointed by their employer.

Health & Safety

While our school continues to have responsibility for students on work experience, the employer has the same responsibilities for their health, safety and welfare whilst the student is on an employer's premises.

In general in taking steps to ensure the safety of students while on work experience an employer should:

Assess the Risks

In advance of any work experience student starting, identify any risks associated with the placement and minimise these where possible. Take into account that these young people are likely to be inexperienced, unaware of health and safety risks and physically or mentally immature. They should not be required to operate any hazardous machinery or work in hazardous environments as their short placements would not allow sufficient training.

Appropriate supervision:

Young people will be facing unfamiliar risks from the job they will be doing and from their surroundings and are therefore likely to need more supervision than adults. Good supervision will also help the employer to get a clear idea of their progress in the job and to monitor the effectiveness of their training.

Induction:

Ensure any initial briefing/training that the student receives on commencing their work experience covers the important elements of the company's health and safety policy including:

- Identify any risks associated with their work experience or their presence on the company's premises
- Ensure that the students receive appropriate instructions about the tasks they are to perform and company safety regulations including the wearing of protective clothing or equipment.
- Advise on systems for dealing with accidents and emergencies.

Exit Meeting

At the end of the work experience the student and organisation's placement supervisor should have an exit meeting to discuss the experience from both points of view. Alongside the feedback provided to the student's daily work and routines, it is useful to give them some observation and advice with regard to the "soft skills" that are often needed in a professional workplace. An employer evaluation form is provided at the end of this document to facilitate this.

Appendix 1:

Letter to Employers

Dear Sir / Madam,

We are writing to express our thanks for your consideration of the RCHK Year 11 'WOW' World of Work Program placement, to be held 14th – 23rd November 2017. This is an essential part of the preparation of our students for the world of work and is the culmination of a series of sessions that we have offered for students with the aim of enabling them to make effective choices in the future. It is an important partnership between the College and the wider community in producing effective employees of the future. Students will receive a visit by an RCHK staff member during the placement.

The Role of the Student

As the aim of the week is to expose students to the adult workplace they are expecting to get an insight into the routines and demands of their chosen employer. They should therefore be expected to mirror the demands of a typical employee, including working hours and breaks, attire and expectations. The more that they can be exposed to meaningful and relevant tasks that are relevant to your field of work the more effective the placement will be.

Students should not be asked to complete tasks that require specific training or qualifications, involve dangerous substances or machinery or are hazardous.

Students should be punctual and maintain 100% attendance during the week. In the event of illness they have been instructed to contact you as the employer.

Insurance

Students are covered under the English Schools Foundation's Group Personal Accident Policy. Should you require any details regarding this, please contact us at the College.

Health and Safety

You will share our desire to ensure the Health and Safety of the students during the placement. Please take the time to brief the student as to the specific requirements and expectations of your workplace.

Confirmation and Contact with RCHK

Should you have any concerns or queries about the student placement during the week, please contact us via email at dentrj1@rchk.edu.hk or shenw1@rchk.edu.hk. Alternatively, you can also reach us via telephone 3556-3556.

If you are happy to offer a placement, please could you email us with the following details:

- **Name of Student**
- **Placement Address**
- **Placement Employer Contact name, telephone number, and email.**

Yours faithfully,

Jen Dentry

dentrj1@rchk.edu.hk

Wilma Shen

Shenw1@rchk.edu.hk

Appendix 2:

Employer Evaluation Form

Dear 'WOW' Placement Supervisor,

Many thanks for accommodating a Renaissance College student for their 'WOW' Work Experience week. Please complete and return the evaluation sheet below.

STUDENT NAME			
NAME OF COMPANY			
NAME OF SUPERVISOR			
Please tick the table below on the comment which best suits the work experience student			
	ALWAYS	SOMETIMES	NEVER
The student is punctual and has good attendance.			
The student has good personal appearance.			
The student is enthusiastic.			
The student has good attitude.			
The student is cooperative.			
The student is keen to learn.			
The student communicates well.			
The student shows initiative.			
The student relates well to other staff.			

<p>Please add a comment about the response of the student to this type of Work Experience.</p>
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<p>Would you be willing to take another Renaissance College student for Work Experience in the future? (please circle one) YES/NO/MAYBE</p>

Please post this form to:
 Mr. Alex Broome or Ms. Wilma Shen
 Renaissance College
 5 Hang Ming St
 Ma On Shan

or email to dentrj1@rchk.edu.hk and shenw1@rchk.edu.hk