



# FAQ - Transition Year Work Experience

## **What is Work Experience?**

Work Experience in Transition Year (TY) is a valuable opportunity for students to gain insight into a workplace or career path of interest. At Blackrock ETSS, TY students are scheduled every Friday during the school year to attend a workplace they have arranged for work experience. Students are expected to organise their own placements and may be required to submit a CV, cover letter (also called a work experience letter), and occasionally provide an insurance letter from the school to the employer.

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## **If a work placement offers a one-week opportunity, can you apply?**

Yes, you can apply for a full-week placement, even if it takes place during a regular school week. You must get approval from your Work Experience Coordinator beforehand. Permission is generally granted if the placement is educationally valuable and aligns with your interests or goals.

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## **Can you get paid for a work experience placement?**

Typically, work experience placements are unpaid. The primary aim is educational—to observe and learn about a profession, trade, or work environment. Most schools advise employers not to pay students. However, some employers may offer small tokens of appreciation such as gift cards or vouchers. You should approach your placement expecting it to be unpaid.

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## **Do you need a Cover Letter to get work experience?**

Yes. A cover letter—also called a work experience letter—is usually required when applying for a placement. While it's less detailed than a job application cover letter, it should still express your interest and what you hope to learn. Even if a particular placement doesn't require one, creating one is excellent practice for future applications. A template is available on the school website.

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## What should I put on my CV?

Your CV should include:

- Full name and address
- Age and date of birth
- School email and phone number
- Educational background (past and current schools)
- Skills and hobbies
- Awards or achievements
- References (if available)

Further guidance is available on the Microsoft Work Experience Teams page.

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## How many hours can I work for during Work Experience?

**Under Irish law**, young people aged 15 to 17 are protected by the **Protection of Young Persons (Employment) Act 1996**. Here's a summary of the rules:

- **15 years old:**
  - Can only do **light work** during school holidays (maximum of 35 hours per week or 7 hours per day).
  - Cannot work during school term time except for work experience approved by school authorities.
  - Cannot work before 8am or after 8pm.
- **16 and 17 years old:**
  - Can work up to **8 hours per day** and **40 hours per week**.
  - Cannot work between **10pm and 6am**.
  - Must have a **30-minute break** every 4.5 hours worked.
  - Must have **2 days off per week** (which should be consecutive if possible).

Employers must ensure these rules are followed. Work experience through school is exempt from some restrictions as long as it is educational and supervised.

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## Do I Need to Keep a Report of My Work Experience?

Yes, keeping a record of your work experience is strongly encouraged. Use your TY journal to note what you did each day, who you interacted with, and what you learned. These notes will help you:

- Reflect on your experience
  - Complete your TY Portfolio
  - Write reviews or reports required by your school
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## **Can I Do Work Experience in My Parent's Workplace?**

While it's technically allowed, it's best to avoid choosing a parent's workplace unless you have a genuine interest in that field. Work experience is meant to help you explore new environments and broaden your perspective, so challenge yourself to find a placement that matches your personal interests or career aspirations.

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## **What should I do if I can't find a placement by September?**

If you're struggling to find a placement, speak with the TY Coordinator as early as possible. There is a list of employers who regularly accept TY student. This list is located on the Microsoft Teams Work Experience Folder. Consider reaching out to family friends, local businesses, community organisations, or public services (like libraries or schools) where you have an interest.

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## **Can I do multiple different placements throughout the year?**

Yes. You are encouraged to explore different industries or roles by completing a range of placements on your assigned Fridays or during other agreed times. The school encourages students completing 4 different work placements throughout TY. The school also recommends you do volunteering as one of your work experience placements. Just ensure each placement is approved by your Work Experience Coordinator and is safe, educational, and compliant with Garda Vetting procedures if working with young children.