



Work Placement in Primary Industries

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Work Placement in Primary Industries

Work placement is a mandatory HSC requirement within the Primary Industries Curriculum Framework and appropriate hours have been assigned to each HSC VET course within the Framework.

Learning in the workplace will enable students to:

- progress towards the achievement of industry competencies
- develop appropriate attitudes towards work
- learn a range of behaviours appropriate to the industry
- practise and apply skills acquired in the classroom or workshop
- develop additional skills and knowledge, including the employability skills (refer to the [Employability Skills in Primary Industries](#) document).

Work placement requirements

Students must complete the following work placement for Primary Industries Curriculum Framework courses:

Primary Industries Framework course	Work placement requirement
Primary Industries (120 indicative hours)	35 hours
Primary Industries (240 indicative hours)	70 hours
Primary Industries Specialisation Study (60 indicative hours)	no additional hours required
Primary Industries Specialisation Study (120 indicative hours)	35 hours
Primary Industries Specialisation Study (180 indicative hours)	35 hours
Primary Industries Specialisation Study (240 indicative hours)	35 hours

Work placement is to be undertaken in an appropriate primary industries work environment.

Non-completion of work placement is grounds for withholding the HSC course. Schools and colleges are advised to follow the procedure for issuing 'N' determinations as outlined in the Board of Studies [Assessment, Certification and Examination \(ACE\) Manual](#).

Work placement and part-time work

Under some circumstances, students' part-time work in an appropriate workplace may be used to fulfil work placement requirements. For further details, teachers and principals should consult the [Assessment, Certification and Examination \(ACE\) Manual](#) or relevant Board of Studies Official Notices.

Work placement implementation

The scheduling of work placement should reflect student readiness and complement off-the-job learning programs.

Teachers should use their professional judgement in the selection of relevant work placements in related industry areas and the mix of primary industries-specific and more general workplace experience undertaken by each student.

Work placement should occur in appropriate workplaces within primary industries. For example:

- farms – both broadacre and intensive
- resorts
- nurseries
- parks and gardens
- landscaping enterprises
- veterinary practices
- animal studs
- rural merchandisers
- Landcare and other volunteer groups
- catchment management authorities
- rural land protection boards
- government research stations/agencies
- local councils.

For units of competency that must be assessed in a primary industries work environment, work placement provides an opportunity to collect evidence required for a student to be deemed competent.

The mandatory work placement requirements for courses in this Framework are not intended to indicate the time required for the achievement of units of competency. The amount of learning in the workplace that is needed to achieve a unit of competency will vary.

It is the responsibility of the school or college and/or RTO to determine how course outcomes are best achieved and to structure delivery accordingly. If additional work placement or classroom time is required to enable individual students or class groups to achieve the competencies, this will be determined by the deliverer, but it does not affect the indicative HSC hours.

Further information and advice on the implementation of work placement are contained in policy statements or guidelines available from the relevant school system or the RTO.

Work placement coordination

It will be essential that Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), schools or colleges and work placement brokers work collaboratively to maximise work placement opportunities to support students' access to particular assessment environments, learning experiences and opportunities for the gathering of evidence for assessment.

Principles underpinning work placement in the Higher School Certificate

The Board of Studies has formally endorsed the following principles relating to work placement in Higher School Certificate (HSC) VET courses.

Preamble

Industry curriculum frameworks have been developed to provide students with the opportunity to gain credit towards the NSW HSC and credit towards national vocational qualifications under the Australian Qualifications Framework.

Industry curriculum frameworks are derived from national Training Packages. Courses within the frameworks specify the range of industry-developed units of competency from the relevant Training Packages that have been identified as suitable for the purposes of the HSC. VET courses in industry curriculum frameworks are aligned to national vocational qualifications.

Although not all Training Packages mandate work placement, it is a mandatory HSC requirement of each course within the frameworks. Indicative hours have been assigned to the work placement requirement for each course.

The following principles should be read in conjunction with any school system's documentation relating to work placement, for example the Industry Curriculum Implementation Guidelines (ICIG) [formerly the Industry Curriculum Framework Information Package (ICFIP)].

Principle 1

Work placement must have a clearly articulated and documented purpose. The structure of the work-based learning experience needs to be planned and developmental.

A range and number of purposes are possible, including, for example:

- learning about a particular industry, workplace culture and career opportunities
- practising skills learnt off the job
- developing new skills
- improving work-related skills
- developing skills including employability skills such as teamwork, using technology and problem-solving
- achieving entry-level competencies

- achieving workplace performance of particular competency standards
- assessing in a realistic environment or allowing for holistic assessment
- providing opportunities to build skills in a developmental manner from the simple to the complex
- providing opportunities for the learner to reflect on the workplace learning experience in the context of individual current knowledge and understanding
- encouraging students to undertake further education and training.

Principle 2

The scheduling of the work placement should reflect student readiness and should complement off-the-job learning programs.

The scheduling of the work placement should take account of:

- whether or not students are workplace-ready in terms of the competencies they will need to develop and demonstrate in the workplace
- how the timing of the work placement links to overall course planning
- the degree of flexibility available at both the workplace and the school
- how the alignment of both on- and off-the-job competencies can be best achieved.

An individual work placement program focusing on a developmental approach should be negotiated with the workplace supervisor/employer. This approach should focus on students moving from simple to more complex tasks. Dependence on supervision should reduce over time as students move towards greater independence in the workplace. The ultimate goal of a work placement should be competence and autonomy in the range of tasks required for the job being undertaken.

Principle 3

Work placement should be relevant to the VET courses being undertaken.

The 'real' tasks being undertaken in the workplace should complement the tasks and learning being undertaken by the students in their VET courses at school. Work placement may also provide students with the opportunity of having learning outcomes/units of competency assessed in the workplace by accredited trainers and assessors.

Principle 4

Work placement can provide opportunities for work-based assessment.

Not all industry curriculum frameworks specify that it is mandatory for competencies to be assessed in the workplace. Assessment events should relate to overall course planning and the purpose of the work placement. In a competency-based course, assessment of competencies is criterion-referenced. This means that a participant's performance is judged against a prescribed standard – not against the performance of other participants.

The purpose of assessment is to judge competence on the basis of performance against the performance criteria set out under each element of competency. A participant is judged either competent or not yet competent.

Competency-based assessment is based on the requirements of the workplace. Competence incorporates all aspects of work performance, including problem-solving and the capacity to apply skills and knowledge in both familiar and new situations. Assessment of competence involves the assessment of skills and knowledge combined.

Assessors should adopt an integrated or holistic approach to assessment. This means that a number of elements of competency or even several units of competency are assessed together. This method of assessment is encouraged in line with the concept of competence as the integration of a wide range of skills, knowledge and attitudes.