

# **Work Placement in Bachelor's Degree Programmes**

Guideline

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Education Development Services

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# 1 Introduction

This guideline applies to work placements that are included in Häme University of Applied Sciences' (HAMK) Bachelor's degrees. Special features of work placements in the health care sector and deviations from this guideline are discussed in Chapter 7.

Bachelor's degrees obtained at universities of applied sciences must include a professional work placement (Government Decree on Universities of Applied Sciences 1129/2014, section 2). The scope of the work placement at Häme University of Applied Sciences is defined in the degree programme's curriculum.

The purpose of work placements is to familiarise students with the key practical tasks of their field and to teach them to apply their knowledge and skills to the work environment. The aim is to promote the student's competence and career development, familiarise them with the status of employees and with the work environment, and to improve their job prospects.

Feedback on the success of work placements is obtained from placement reports and AVOP questionnaires submitted by graduating students. Work placement feedback is also received directly from the labour market partners. The feedback is used by the degree programmes to improve the work placement process under the leadership of the Head of Degree Programme.

## 2 Objectives and timing of work placements

The objective of work placements included in Bachelor's degrees is that students

- gain the core learning outcomes described in the curriculum.
- familiarise themselves with the labour market from the perspective of their professional field.
- receive practice in working methods and entrepreneurship that help them to continuously develop themselves and their field.
- find employment in a national or international position at the end of their studies.

When drafting their personal study plan (PSP), students set objectives for their work placement in such a way that their studies, work placement and thesis as a whole support their professional growth and the development of expertise. The objectives are specified as the work placement and studies progress.

In each degree programme, work placements are designed to take place at an appropriate stage or stages in relation to the objectives of the degree. Students may deviate from the recommended schedule in the curriculum for a justified reason.

For the sake of target-orientation and the arrangement of supervision, HAMK recommends that work placement periods be at least 5 credits in scope. Work placements may also be conducted in part-time form when agreed with the placement organisation. In this case, 10–14 hours per week is the recommended minimum.

## **3 Work placement practices**

The main responsibility for acquiring a work placement position lies with the student. If necessary, they will obtain the placement supervisor's approval for their placement in advance. The aim is that the student completes the work placement in an employment relationship where possible, in which case responsibilities and liabilities are determined according to normal employment law and the student is paid for their work.

### **3.1 Work placement under an employment contract or as an entrepreneur**

Work placements included in a degree may take place in an employment relationship, i.e. the student has an employment contract with the employer. They can also be completed as an entrepreneur. Both forms of work placement consist of varied work tasks that match the learning outcomes of the work placement and support professional growth and the development of expertise. When students conduct work placements under an employment contract, they are covered by the employer's insurance policy. In entrepreneurial work placements, students are covered by the insurance policy for entrepreneurs. More detailed guidelines for completing work placements under an employment contract or as an entrepreneur are provided by the degree programmes.

### **3.2 Work placement under a work placement agreement**

When students are not in an employment relationship with the placement organisation, work placements are completed under a work placement agreement. The work placement agreement is made between the student, HAMK and the placement organisation in writing before the start of the work placement. If the student has an employment contract or conducts the work placement as an entrepreneur, a separate work placement agreement is not needed. Instructions for drawing up a possible work placement plan are provided on a degree programme-specific basis.

Work placements under a work placement agreement consist of varied work tasks that match the learning outcomes of the work placement and support professional growth and the development of expertise. When students conduct work placements under a work placement

agreement, they are insured by HAMK. A report on the work placement is prepared in accordance with the degree programme's guidelines.

### **3.3 Work placement supervision**

The aim of work placement supervision is to support students in their learning, in their professional growth and in becoming experts in their field. The placement organisation must appoint a supervisor to guide the student during the placement. Students are also appointed a work placement supervisor from their degree programme. For work placements under an employment contract, assigning a separate supervisor from the placement organisation or HAMK is not required.

### **3.4 Work placement reporting**

After completing the work placement, the student prepares a report as instructed by the degree programme. In the report, the student describes the workplace and the content of the work placement and reflects on their learning and competence development in relation to the learning outcomes set for the placement.

### **3.5 Recognition and accreditation of work experience (RPL)**

After gaining work experience from the work placement, the student can apply for a skills demonstration or credit transfer through the RPL procedure.

The RPL procedure is described in the RPL guideline. The student must fill out an RPL application and attach a certificate and any other supporting documents to the application. If the application is accepted, the student will give a skills demonstration as agreed (e.g. report or presentation).

If the student has completed a corresponding work placement at another higher education institution and have received credits for it, they can apply for work placement substitution through the RPL procedure.

## **4 Responsibilities related to work placements**

### **4.1 Student's responsibilities**

- Find a placement according to the given instructions
- Plan personal goals for the work placement in accordance with the objectives of the degree
- Conclude an employment contract or work placement agreement before the start of the work placement
- Complete the work placement following the degree programme instructions
- Notify the work placement supervisor of any changes in the work placement
- Write a work placement report immediately after the work placement
- Hand in all placement-related documentation to HAMK's placement supervisor to get the work placement approved and entered into the credit record database
- Hand in the work placement report and certificate to HAMK's placement supervisor, also for international placements

### **4.2 Placement supervisor's responsibilities**

- Act as a contact person between the workplace and HAMK
- Ensure that work placements are implemented according to the set goals
- Take care of the supervision and monitoring of work placements
- Help students in finding a placement when necessary
- Receive demonstrations according to RPL procedures
- Assess the work placement and enter placement credits into the register

### **4.3 Head of Degree Programme's responsibilities**

- Take overall responsibility for the learning outcomes of work placements in the curriculum
- Take overall responsibility for the placement-related division of tasks in their degree programme
- Take overall responsibility for developing the work placement process

#### **4.4 HAMK International's responsibilities**

- Guide students in issues related to international work placement



## **5 Statutory issues related to work placement**

The statutory obligations related to work placements are set according to the contractual status of the student's placement. When students conduct work placements under an employment contract, the employer and the student are bound by the same statutory obligations that apply to other employees.

For work placements in the social and health care sector, students are instructed by their degree programme to present an extract of their criminal record.

Non-contractually employed students are insured by HAMK.

### **5.1 Working hours and occupational safety, non-disclosure obligation**

Students' working hours during the placement period are based on the Working Hours Act (605/1996), any collective agreements that may apply in the workplace and the degree programme's guidelines.

The employer takes care of and is responsible for the occupational safety of students training at the workplace in accordance with the provisions of sections 3 and 4 of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (738/2002). Students must observe the safety rules and regulations of the workplace.

Students are obligated to maintain secrecy regarding the business and customer relations of the workplace. In the case of placements in the social services and health care sector, students must comply with the stipulations of the Data Protection Act (1050/2018) when handling personal data.

### **5.2 Insurance cover and liability**

When students conduct work placements under an employment contract, the statutory insurance is the employer's responsibility.

When students are not under an employment contract, HAMK's insurance policy covers them against accidents that occur during work placements (Act on compensation for injury or illness occurring in education-related conditions comparable to work (460/2015)), and compensations

are paid accordingly. The insurance is only valid if a work placement agreement has been concluded.

For work placements abroad, HAMK's insurance policy covers journeys in both directions between Finland and the destination country.

Liability for any damages lies with the party on whose account, for whose benefit or under whose supervision the student works (Tort Liability Act 412/1974, chapter 2, section 1 and chapter 3, section 1). Employment contracts contain vicarious liability.

Intentional damage is the sole responsibility of the employee.

If the student does not have an employment contact, the liability for damage lies with the company for which and under whose supervision the student works (chapter 3, section 1(3)).

An unpaid trainee student is covered by a liability insurance policy that is valid for the work placement period both in Finland and abroad, excluding the US and Canada. The insurance terms and amounts are described in the student insurance summary. The placement organisation's liability insurance policy is, however, the primary policy, and HAMK's liability insurance policy covers deficiencies in or the lack of the placement organisation's policy.

## **5.3 Rights to the results of the students' work**

### **Copyright**

As a rule, the person who has created the work shall have copyright therein (Copyright Act 404/1961, section 1). Students who conduct work placements without an employment contract retain the copyright of work which meets the originality requirements for copyright, such as computer programs and designed items (Copyright Act (404/1961), section 40b (34/1991)).

When students complete work placements under an employment contract, the copyright of computer programs and work directly associated therewith that have been created in the course of duties is transferred to the employer (Copyright Act, section 40b).

When students conduct work placements as independent teachers or researchers at a university of applied sciences, the copyright of tele informatic products will not be transferred to the university of applied sciences, even if there is an employment relationship (Copyright Act, section 40b(2)).

In all the above-mentioned cases, the copyright can be transferred from the student to the employer/university of applied sciences either in full or in part with a separate written

agreement. In such case, the name of the student shall be stated when the product is used, as required by the principles of proper usage.

## **Patents**

Students who conduct work placements without an employment contract are entitled to any inventions that meet the Finnish originality requirements for inventions (Patents Act (550/1967), section 1).

When students conduct work placements under an employment contract at a workplace, any inventions they may make within the scope of their duties associated with that employment relationship shall pass directly to the employer (Act on the Right in Employee Inventions (656/1967), section 4).

When students conduct work placements under an employment contract at HAMK, the university of applied sciences is entitled to inventions made by the students during collaborative research. The students are entitled to inventions made in open research. If the student's invention was created in work other than collaborative research or open research, HAMK has the exclusive right to start negotiations with the inventor regarding the rights to the invention (Act on the Right in Inventions Made at Higher Education Institutions (369/2006), sections 1, 3, 6, 7 and 8).

## **5.4 Termination and cancellation of work placement agreement**

The period of validity of the work placement agreement will expire at the end of the placement or if the achievement of the objectives set for the work placement has otherwise been substantially compromised. The work placement agreement may be cancelled during the contract period under the grounds provided in chapter 8, section 1 of the Employment Contracts Act.

## 6 Regulations and guidelines related to work placement

- Government Decree on Universities of Applied Sciences (1129/2014, section 2)
- Act on the Right in Inventions Made at Higher Education Institutions (369/2006)
- Act on the Right in Employee Inventions (656/1967, section 4)
- Act on compensation for injury or illness caused in circumstances comparable to work (460/2015)
- Patents Act (550/1967, section 1)
- Copyright Act (404/1961, section 40b (34/1991))
- Working Hours Act (605/1996)
- Act on compensation for injury or illness caused in circumstances comparable to work (460/2015)
- Tort Liability Act (412/1974, chapter 2, section 1 and chapter 3, section 1)
- Directive on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications (2005/36/EC)
- Data Protection Act (1050/2018)
- Health Care Professionals Act (559/1994)
- Health Care Professionals Decree (564/1994)
- HAMK Degree Regulations
- Guidelines for student and staff mobility
- RPL guideline
- HAMK assessment of studies guideline

## **7 Special features of work placements in the health care sector**

The purpose of work placements in the health care sector is to gain the core learning outcomes described in the programme's curriculum. Supervised work placements in the nursing degree programmes (Bachelor of Health Care) are governed, in addition to the competence description of the curriculum and the degree, by the EU Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications.

Work placements in the field of health care are an integral part of the studies. They are implemented as part of larger modules and linked to theoretical studies. The objectives of individual placement periods are determined according to the goals set in the curriculum and the students' personal goals.

Work placements in the health care sector are reserved through the Jobiili system. Alternatively, students can find a placement from outside the Jobiili system. Generally, students carry out work placements in locations approved by HAMK and agree to work under supervision, knowing the extent of their responsibilities.

If the work placement includes working with minors, the student must present an extract of their criminal record to the Head of Degree Programme. In addition, section 48 of the Communicable Diseases Act obliges the student to ensure that they have adequate vaccination protection before the start of the work placement.

The work placement consists of practical clinical studies, other cooperative projects with the labour market and related written and operational tasks. The work placement meets the requirements of valid national legislation and education-related directives, which state that the student may, once their degree has been completed, be entered into the central register of the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health Valvira. The unit director sees to it that the requirements set by the authorities are known to all and taken into consideration when carrying out work placements.

The supervising teacher is responsible for the supervision, assessment and documentation of the placement. They support the student's learning process in cooperation with the employer's placement supervisor and the entire working community.

The work placement coordinator is responsible for coordinating the placements. They act as the main user of the Jobiili system, map out possible placements in HAMK's operating area and are responsible for work placement agreements.

The placement organisation and HAMK enter into a work placement agreement that is organisation-specific and valid until further notice, or student-specific and valid for a fixed term. By signing the agreement, the representative from the placement organisation undertakes, together with the workplace community, to fulfil the obligations of the agreement and to take care of the supervision of the student in collaboration with the supervising teacher.

The Workseed learning environment is utilised in work placements. Objectives related to the work placement, work time monitoring, interim and final reporting and possible tasks are recorded and stored in Workseed.

## Appendices

Work placement agreement

Work placement plan template