

STRUCTURED WORKPLACE LEARNING (SWL) Frequently Asked Questions - Parents

Q. WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN BEFORE MY CHILD STARTS THEIR SWL PLACEMENT?

There are a number of things that need to occur before your child can commence their SWL placement.

The school will issue to your child a SWL Arrangement Form and a SWL Travel Form (if required). These forms need to be completed and signed by yourself, your child, the employer and returned to the school for the Principal to sign. This must occur before the first day of placement.

Your child will need to contact their employer and make a time to go and visit them with the above forms. At this meeting they should confirm start and finish times, what to wear, who to report to on the first day and any other things that will make their first day easier.

You and your child will need to work out how they are getting to and from work and make sure they know how they are getting there for the first day.

Make sure your child has completed or undertaken the relevant OH&S modules at school before they start their placement. The more awareness they have of their industry the better equipped they will be to be safe at work.

Q. ARE THEY COVERED FOR WORKCOVER WHEN THEY ARE OUT WORKING?

Yes, students are covered for WorkCover and Public Liability once the SWL Arrangement Form is fully completed and signed by all parties. You should get a copy of the fully signed form before the start of the placement.

Q. WHAT SHOULD I BE TALKING TO MY CHILD ABOUT BEFORE THEY START SWL?

If this is your child's first experience of work or this particular industry it will be very new to them and might feel quiet daunting. It is a good starting point to talk about the type of work they might be doing when they start and set realistic expectations for them.

They need to realize the days will be longer than school days and that they may be quite tired by the end of it.

Talking about what employer's value in an employee will help your child recognize what they can do to maximize their success in the placement.

Encourage your child to ask questions and seek clarification on tasks if they are ever unsure. Make sure they know it is quite alright to ask lots of questions.

Q. WHO DO I TELL IF MY CHILD HAS A MEDICAL CONDITION?

Your school and SWL employer should be notified of any medical conditions that may impact on the placement.

Q. IT'S THE FIRST TIME FOR MY CHILD AT THIS TYPE OF WORK SITE, WILL SOMEONE SHOW THEM WHAT TO DO AT THE WORKPLACE?

Your child should be given a workplace induction by their supervisor on their first day. This should include a tour, introduction to staff and OH&S / workplace procedures. They will be allocated a worksite supervisor who will be monitoring their tasks and duties at all times.

Q. WHAT HAPPENS IF THE PLACEMENT IS NOT WORKING OUT? WHO DO WE TALK TO?

Sometimes a SWL placement does not work out (this could be for many reasons). If problems start to occur your child needs to talk to their school as soon as possible.

Some problems can be worked out easily and the placement can continue. At other times the school may need to intervene and talk to the employer on your behalf. You should not at any time approach the employer yourself, the school should be your first point of contact.

Q. WHAT DO WE DO IF MY CHILD IS SICK OR RUNNING LATE ON THEIR PLACEMENT DAY?

If your child is sick on a SWL placement day, your or your child must ring the employer as early as possible to let them know they will not be attending. Your child's school should also be informed (in case they are planning a visit on that day).

If your child is running late to work, they need to ring the employer to let them know that they are on the way and give them an estimated time of arrival, this must be done before their normal start time.

Q. DO THEY GET PAID?

Students should be paid \$5 a day (minimum) whilst on SWL. However, some employers are exempt from having to pay at all, these employers include not-for-profit organisations, Commonwealth government departments and educational organisations.

Employers may pay students at the end of each SWL day or at the end of the SWL placement period.

Q. CAN WE STAY WITH THE SAME EMPLOYER ALL YEAR?

No, students must not exceed 20 days with the one employer during the school year. There may be exemptions to this rule, which you can discuss with your school. Please note, this has only recently been introduced.

Q. HOW LONG DOES MY CHILD NEED TO DO SWL FOR?

The duration of an SWL placement must not exceed 10 days a term (or 40 days each school year). There may be exemptions to this rule, which you can discuss with your school. Please note, this has only recently been introduced.