

# **EMPLOYABILITY SERVICE: EXTERNAL OPPORTUNITIES (PLACEMENTS) PROTOCOL**

## Related policies and supporting protocols

1 This protocol should be read in conjunction with the related Employability Service policy and protocols.

2 This protocol has been written in light of the UCEA Health and Safety Guidance for the placement of HE students 2009. A range of legislation and regulations also applies, including:

- 2.1 Equality Act 2010
- 2.2 QAA: Quality Code (Chapter Q10)
- 2.3 General Data Protection Regulation
- 2.4 Legal Services Act 2007
- 2.5 Solicitors Code of Conduct

## Definitions

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| 3 | Employability Service | The Employability Service comprises the Careers and Pro Bono departments. It also encompasses online services: the Student Employability Programme (StEP) accessible via the Future Lawyer Network ( <a href="http://www.law.ac.uk/employability/">http://www.law.ac.uk/employability/</a> ); JobSearch; and Employability information available on the 'My Employability' tab on the virtual learning environment. |
| 4 | External Opportunity  | Opportunities arranged by The University of Law with external organisations for students to gain experience of the law, the legal environment or legal skills.  |
| 5 | Opportunity Organiser | The individual at The University of Law working with the Opportunity  |

		Provider to arrange the External Opportunity.
6	Opportunity Provider	The organisation offering the External Opportunity.
7	Professional Conduct	The conduct expected of those operating in the Legal Sector as governed by the SRA Code of Conduct.
8	Risk assessment	The Assessment undertaken by the Opportunity Organiser to consider the risks to the student from undertaking any External Opportunity.
9	Supervisor	The Individual(s) responsible for supervising students while undertaking an External Opportunity.

## Introduction

10 The University of Law (the University) recognises that central to this protocol is the University's responsibility for the academic standards of all awards granted in its name and the quality of learning opportunities for students.

11 External Opportunities are provided by the University's Employability Service in order to help students gain practical experience in the legal sector.

12 Opportunities require the support of external organisations and members of the legal profession. Therefore the Employability Service has an obligation to arrange opportunities in a way that benefits University students whilst providing a professional standard of service to the public and working supportively with external organisations and members of the profession.

## Responsibility for implementing this protocol

13 Ultimate responsibility for the development of clear and effective processes and procedures associated with the quality assurance and maintenance of standards of academic provision and overseeing their application lies with the Academic Board.

14 All parties involved have responsibilities to ensure that opportunities run smoothly and in accordance with relevant policies and legislation. In particular, there are health and safety, equality, confidentiality and conduct obligations on all parties.

All those involved must be aware of these and must act in a way that ensures these obligations are met.

### **Scope of this protocol**

15 This protocol is limited to those External Opportunities arranged by or agreed with the Employability Service.

16 Where students make individual arrangements to gain experience, either through their own contacts or via Employability Service activities such as mentoring, the Employability Service may be able to offer assistance, but is not responsible for these arrangements.

17 The Employability Service arranges External Opportunities to help students gain practical experience in the legal sector. These opportunities may include:

17.1 shadowing

17.2 advice work

17.3 placements

17.4 insight days (LL.B)

17.5 public legal education (StreetLaw)

18 This protocol outlines the responsibilities of those involved in External Opportunities: the Employability Service and the Opportunity Organiser, students and the Opportunity Providers.

### **Opportunity Organisers**

19 The Opportunity Organiser gathers information about the Opportunity to assess whether it is appropriate for University students, meets the objectives of the Employability Service and complies with the relevant legislation.

20 The varied nature of the External Opportunities arranged means that there is no 'one size fits all' approach to the information sought from Opportunity Providers. However, when arranging an External Opportunity a number of factors need to be considered:

20.1 External Opportunities are arranged if they meet the objective of the Employability Service: to provide relevant experience in a legal environment;

20.2 External Opportunities are arranged with Opportunity Providers, which share the commitment of the University and the Employability Service to Equal Opportunities. All Opportunity Providers, or locations where External

Opportunities take place, have relevant policies and protocols in place which evidence this commitment;

- 20.3 the Opportunity Organiser seeks information from potential Opportunity Providers necessary to assess the health and safety risks to students undertaking an External Opportunity. This information is likely to include, among other things: details of relevant insurance, Health and Safety policies and procedures, and information about the nature of the clients with whom students are likely to work;
- 20.4 as most External Opportunities arranged through the Employability Service are within the legal sector, there are additional regulatory issues addressed by the Opportunity Organiser when arranging the External Opportunity. These include the relevant skills, qualifications and experience required of students undertaking an External Opportunity, and the nature of any legal work students would undertake;
- 20.5 the status of the Opportunity Provider (as a charity, voluntary organisation, statutory body, company, etc.) as this may have an impact on the volunteer relationship with the Opportunity Provider and with the terms on which students can participate in an External Opportunity.
- 21 Based on the information acquired, the Opportunity Organiser produces an External Opportunity Protocol detailing the arrangements for the External Opportunity.

## **Recruitment for External Opportunities**

22 In most cases, External Opportunities are advertised to students who volunteer or apply. Collection of applications and selection of candidates may be undertaken by the Employability Service or the Opportunity Provider; these responsibilities are agreed in advance. Where this is carried out by the Employability Service, it is undertaken in line with the Employability Service policy and protocols. Where collection of applications and selection of candidates is undertaken by the Opportunity Provider, the organisation's own Equal Opportunity and Confidentiality policies govern the process.

## **Targeting groups**

23 The Opportunity Organiser and the Opportunity Provider may decide that an External Opportunity is restricted to certain students. This may be due to the level of skill or knowledge required to undertake certain tasks or to actively tackle barriers to entry into the profession. In all cases, the final decision rests with the Opportunity Organiser and is made in light of the Employability Service policy and protocols.

## Opportunity Provider

24 The primary responsibility for organising External Opportunities rests with the Employability Service of the University. However, in order to carry out this responsibility and provide safe and productive External Opportunities for students, Opportunity Providers have certain responsibilities.

25 In order to assess the suitability and safety of an External Opportunity, Opportunity Providers provide the necessary information about themselves and the location where the External Opportunity takes place. This information may include:

- 25.1 details of the work undertaken by the Opportunity Provider and that expected to be undertaken by a student;
- 25.2 information on the Opportunity Provider;
- 25.3 location of the External Opportunity;
- 25.4 expected application and selection process;
- 25.5 information concerning equal opportunities, health and safety and other relevant policies;
- 25.6 necessary insurances;
- 25.7 information on the supervision and training available from the Opportunity Provider;
- 25.8 the processes and procedures for supervision.

26 During the External Opportunity, the Opportunity Provider raises any concerns or reports any incidents to the Opportunity Organiser. After the External Opportunity has ended, or at regular intervals if it is on-going, the Opportunity Organiser seeks feedback, which the Opportunity Provider provides, to allow for the reviewing of the External Opportunity.

## Students

27 Prior to making an application to volunteer for any External Opportunity, students must read the details of any External Opportunities advertised carefully. Students must only apply for those External Opportunities to which they can fully commit.

28 Students must be aware that failing to carry out their obligations on the External Opportunity may reflect on the way they are regarded as future members of the legal profession, reflects negatively on the University and may affect the Employability Service's ability to offer the External Opportunity to other students in the future.

29 During the application and selection stage, students must provide the Opportunity Organiser with information necessary to arrange the External Opportunity. Students who may require reasonable adjustment must speak to the Opportunity Organiser who, with the permission of the student, liaises with the Opportunity Provider.

30 At all times, the Employability Service adheres to its Equal Opportunity and Confidentiality protocols.

31 Students offered an External Opportunity are asked to sign an External Opportunities Agreement, outlining their responsibilities and in particular reminding them of their obligations to Professional Standards of Conduct, Confidentiality and Equal Opportunities. By signing the agreement and returning it to the Opportunity Organiser, the student is accepting their place on the External Opportunity. Once accepted onto an External Opportunity, the student's name and, in some instances which are made clear beforehand, certain contact details are passed to the Opportunity Provider to allow for the smooth operation of the External Opportunity.

32 Students receive information from the Employability Service concerning health and safety on External Opportunities. This is supplemented, where necessary, by inductions or training either by the Employability Service or the Opportunity Provider. Students have a responsibility for their own safety, must read any information provided and must attend inductions or training if arranged. During the course of the External Opportunity, students must act according to the information given, raise any concerns immediately with their Supervisor, and provide information to the Organiser.

33 After the completion of the External Opportunity, students are expected to provide feedback to the Opportunity Organiser on their experience. This feedback includes how useful the External Opportunity was and any concerns the student has. This is important information for the on-going review and evaluation of External Opportunities.

**Version history:**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Amended by</b>	<b>Revision summary</b>	<b>Date</b>
V1.0	Learning Support Officer	Initial drafting	24/07/13
V1.1	Head of Careers Service	QA review	30/07/13
V1.2	External Consultant	Coherence activity amendments	28/08/13
V1.3	VP – AGQS	Review	23/09/13
V1.4	Academic Registrar	Review	24/09/13
V1.5	Academic Board	Approval	03/10/13
V1.6	VP – AGQS	Sign-Off	19/12/13
V2.0	Head of Employability	Full Review	05/10/15
V2.1	Registry Officer	Change to coding convention	23/03/20
V2.1	Registry Assistant	Extension approved for 3 years	October 2021