

Safeguarding Young People on Work-related Learning including Work Experience

Disclosure and Barring Service Checks

What is the role of the Disclosure and Barring Service?

The Disclosure and Barring Service Checks (DBS) provides access to criminal record information through its Disclosure Service. This service enables organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors to make safer recruitment decisions by identifying candidates who may be unsuitable for certain work, especially that involves children or vulnerable adults.

Do employers need to have been DBS checked to offer work experience to young people?

In the vast majority of placements - as the employer / employees involved will not have regular unsupervised access to young people at work - there is no need for DBS checks to take place. Around 550,000 work experience placements take place each year and it is estimated that DBS checks take place for just 1% of these.

However, DBS checks must be **considered** in all of the following cases:

- 1) students identified by the school as vulnerable for educational, medical, behavioural or home circumstance reasons
- 2) students on placements lasting more than 15 days over an extended time-frame, especially where these involve -
 - regular lone working with an employer over long periods (rule of thumb would suggest anything over half a day at a time)
 - placements located in particularly isolated environments with 1:1 working
 - placements involving a high degree of travelling on a 1:1 basis
- 3) placements which include a residential element.

The fact that a particular placement falls into one of the above categories does not necessarily mean that a DBS check will be required. Such a decision will depend on an assessment of the overall potential risks posed to a young person and will take into account any systems in place to minimise these risks.

A DBS check has no official expiry date. Any information will be accurate at the time the check was carried out. It is up to an employer to decide if they think a new check is needed. Applicants and employers can use the [DBS update service](#) to keep a certificate up to date or carry out checks on a potential employee's certificate.

Where a DBS check is required, does each member of an employer's staff involved in the work experience have to have a DBS check?

There is no requirement to DBS vet all staff who may come into contact with a student on placement. The only person who should ever be considered as requiring a DBS check is the person having day-to-day responsibility for the student – this could be the manager, a supervisor or a mentoring employee.

Who will advise an employer whether or not a check is required?

Most schools use Education Business Partnership Organisations (EBPOs) or other specialist third party organisations to arrange placements with employers. EBPOs and school work experience organisers are able to advise on individual placements and help risk assess the situation in order to determine whether or not a DBS check is required on behalf of the student.

How much does a check cost and who will pay for it?

Where a check is required and a cost is involved, this may be met either by the employer or by the school. The DBS website states that the current cost of a standard check is £26.00 and £44.00 for an enhanced check: - <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

In cases where someone is already employed by a company and has a contractual responsibility for training young people, then this cost would be the responsibility of the company concerned. In all cases where no such contractual responsibility exists, it is possible to have the DBS check carried out for free on the basis that the staff member concerned is acting in an essentially voluntary capacity and is therefore carrying out what might be described as a volunteer mentoring role. Advice on this, and on the processes involved, should be sought from the EBPO or an equivalent specialist organisation.