



Work Experience Policy

2025-2026

1. Introduction

Work experience is one of the most important link activities between employers and schools/academies and learning centres. Exposure to work is a significant step in preparing young people for adulthood and working life by developing their personal and social skills as well as the key skills they will need for the world of work.

Shaftesbury School offers work experience to all year 12 students. We use the Somerset Work Experience Partnership database.

'Definition of meaningful work experience:

- Purposeful, substantial, offers challenge and is relevant to the young persons' study programme and/or career aspirations.*
 - It is managed well under the direction of a supervisor in order to ensure that the student obtains a genuine learning experience suited to their needs.*
 - It ensures that time is well spent: the employer has prepared a structured plan for the duration of the work placement that provides tangible outcomes for the student and employer.*
 - It provides up-front clarity about the roles, responsibilities and the expectations of the student and employer.*
 - It is reviewed at the end: the employer provides some form of reference or feedback based on the young person's performance during their time on the work placement'.*
- Department for Education (June 2013)

Work Experience can be classified as:

Block – the placement takes place over 5 or 10 consecutive working days.

Extended – the placement takes place on 1 or 2 days per week over a period of time.

Virtual – the placement takes place online.

What is a Virtual Experience of the Workplace?

Through the Gatsby Benchmarks, schools and colleges across England have been asked to provide every student with at least one experience of the workplace between the ages of 11-16 and another between the ages of 16-18 (Gatsby Benchmark 6).

The impact of Covid-19 has meant that many schools and colleges offer a 'hybrid model' of experiences of the workplace. Typically, Gatsby Benchmark 6 has been delivered through a week-long work experience placement. There are clear benefits to this approach to work experience, notably around employability skills. However, the Gatsby Benchmarks allow for alternative experiences of workplaces that are less time intensive and focus on giving students an insight into how a real workplace operates, the jobs that exist there and outlining how students can access those jobs.

Safeguarding Virtual Work Experience

Each school/college should adhere to their safeguarding policy. In some cases this may include:

- Their students are not on camera at any time.
- You present with your camera off throughout.
- Students only ask questions via the teacher so they can moderate them first.

2. Purpose

This policy provides a framework to ensure that students are able to access work experience placements that are carefully managed, monitored and provide a safe environment. This includes the organisation as well as health, safety, and safeguarding requirements of all work experience programmes for all age groups of students. Our role at Shaftesbury School is to help facilitate these placements.

3. Priorities

When preparing for work experience Shaftesbury School will:

- Ensure students are provided with a positive experience with an emphasis on learning.
- Ensure a Work Experience Co-ordinator is nominated within the school.
- Ensure that the potential risks to each student have been assessed by both the employer and parent and shared with the school for approval.
- Ensure that the placement chosen by the student is suitable for them and any additional safeguarding issues are taken into account and actioned.
- Provide a named contact (senior member of staff), who is available during the times when students are on placements. This will include the period between the School/Academy/Learning Centre closure and the start/end of the business day, weekend working and any holiday period.
- Obtain the consent of parents/carers and service provider before the placement takes place.

4. Legislation

Shaftesbury School has a range of legal responsibilities in relation to the organisation and delivery of work experience.

Education Act 1996

- Provide work experience in industrial and non-industrial settings but not on ships, for students who are in their final two years of compulsory schooling.
- Enables students in Year 10 and 11 to assume the temporary status of a Young Person in employment law.

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

- An employer has a responsibility to ensure that young people employed by them are not exposed to risk due to lack of experience; being unaware of existing or potential risks and/or lack of maturity.
- An employer must consider layout of the workplace; the physical, biological and chemical agents students will be exposed to; how students will handle work equipment; how the work and processes are organised; the extent of health and safety training needed; and risks from particular agents, processes and work. These considerations will be straightforward in a low-risk workplace, for an example an office. In higher-risk workplaces the risks are likely to be greater and will need more attention to ensure that they are properly controlled.
- A child must not carry out work if it is: beyond their physical or psychological capacity; involves harmful exposure to substances that are toxic, can cause cancer, can damage or harm an unborn child, or can chronically affect human health in any other way; involves harmful exposure to radiation; involves risks of accidents that cannot reasonably be recognised or avoided by students due to their insufficient attention to safety or lack of experience or training; has risk to health from extreme cold, heat, noise or vibration.

- There are other agents, processes and work that should be taken into account – refer to <http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/law/index.htm>

Education Act 2002

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people within the School/Academy/Learning Centre

Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009

- Encourage post 16 students to undertake work experience.

Other legislation that is adhered to includes:

Health and Safety at Work Etc Act 1974

Working Time Regulations 1998

Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999

Race Relations Act 1976 and Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

Disability Discrimination Act 2005

Gender Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2006

Human Right Acts 1998

Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003

Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

Equality Act 2006

Equality Act 2010

Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

5. Health and Safety

Shaftesbury School we will ensure:

- Employers have a risk assessment in place for the work placement for a young person that takes into account any restrictions and prohibited work aligned to age.
- Our students are matched carefully to the placement and support the student when they are on a placement.
- Our students are prepared and briefed about health and safety and understand how to identify hazards and the sort of control measures that can be put in place to reduce the risk of injury or accident.
- Our students develop a set of safe behaviours, so that they play an active part in the process and acquire practical, transferable skills from their experience.
- Students do not work excessively long hours, no more than 8 hours per day, 40 hours per week, 5 days per week with no unsocial hours and regular breaks are provided.
- Systems are in place to ensure the health, safety and welfare, so far as reasonably practicable, of placements, i.e. H&S Policy, Risk Assessments, communications and consents.

We will remain aware of legislation and guidance documents relating to work experience published by the Department for Education and the Health and Safety Executive and update this policy as appropriate.

In line with Health and Safety Executive guidance we will not offer work experience overseas except for post 16 Modern Foreign Language students (**Appendix 1**). We will be organising the placements ourselves/using an external company. In both cases we have the prime duty of care for each student on a European Work Experience Placement and therefore need to be confident that student health, safety and welfare have been safeguarded. An overseas

work placement is classed as an educational visit and all preparations will be completed in compliance with educational visit guidelines.

Any accidents/incidents on work experience will be reported to Dorset Council Health and Safety Team and the appropriate Social Care team. **(Appendix 2 and Appendix 3).**

The Health and Safety Team include a section on work experience within the SLA Health and Safety Audit to support schools/academies/learning centres meet work experience requirements **(Appendix 4).**

6. Safeguarding

We will:

- Consider the specific circumstances of the work experience, in particular the nature of the supervision, e.g. unsupervised and the frequency (at least once a week or 4 or more days in a 30-day period, or overnight) of the activity being supervised, to determine what, if any barred checks are required. If a person working with a child is unsupervised and in frequent contact, we will ask the employer providing the work placement to ensure that the person providing the instruction or training is not a barred person.
- Identify actions to be taken, when and by whom, if any child protection issues are raised prior to, during or after the placement.
- Provide students with clear advice and a point of contact at Shaftesbury School in case of problems.

We will consider any potential risks to students to see if any additional safeguards are needed in the case of

- Any young person who is vulnerable, e.g. special needs, immaturity, is known to have experienced abuse or neglect, substance misuse
- A student who is likely to be alone with an adult as part of the work placement, e.g. sole trader, journey person, self-employed person working from home
- The work placement having a residential component.

Employers no longer need to carry out a DBS check with barred list information on staff who are supervising young people aged 16 or 17 on work experience. If a 16-17-year-old student is on work experience at a school or college where they will have contact with children, we will consider whether a DBS enhanced check will be required. Young people on work experience are treated the same as employees of the same age under health and safety legislation.

(ref. Keeping children safe in education, Section 90-94, DfE, April 2014)

Shaftesbury School will arrange visits to the student and employer during the work placement. Any member of staff visiting a workplace will be provided with details of the job description, risk assessment and any specifics and restrictions.

The Dorset Council Safeguarding Unit includes a section on work experience within the annual Safeguarding Audit undertaken by schools/academies/learning centres.

Reference will be made to the Pan Dorset Interagency Safeguarding Procedures

<https://www.dorsetlscb.co.uk/site/advice-for-people-working-with-children/local-inter-agency-procedures/>

7. Quality Assurance

In order to offer a quality work experience programme, we will:

- Ensure the employer and the workplace is suitable for a work experience placement.
- Carefully match students to placements and support them throughout the experience.
- Pursue a policy of equal opportunities that considers the needs of the six equality groups – Race/Ethnicity to include Gypsies/Travellers, Disability, Religion and/or belief, Sexual orientation, Age, Gender.
- Counter gender stereotyping, take cultural issues into account, increase student confidence and challenge under achievement.

8. Responsibilities

Shaftesbury School will provide a work experience opportunity following the guidance in **Appendix 6**. We will also implement and/or monitor the responsibilities for students and young people, parents/carers, employers, and the work experience organiser in line with Health and Safety Executive guidance (June 2013) –

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg364.pdf>

Students and young people

- Have a duty to take care of their own health and safety, and that of others who may be affected by their actions.
- Must listen carefully, follow instructions, use any safety equipment that has been provided and take part in any relevant training.
- Raise any concerns about health and safety and any work-related accidents or illness with the school/college work experience organiser.

Parents and carers

- The employer must inform the parents of any significant workplace risks and how they can be controlled (This may be done through the School/Academy/Learning Centre/Work Experience Organiser).
- There are a few work activities that a student cannot do due to health and safety law. If a parent/carer is advised that a placement is not suitable due to health and safety, they can contact HSE's Myth Buster Challenge Panel for further information.
- If the student has any medical or behavioural conditions the work experience organiser must be informed.

Employers

- Under health and safety law, work experience students are treated as employees and no differently to other young people employed.
- An employers existing Employers' Liability Insurance Policy covers work placements as long as the insurer is a member of the Association of British Insurers.
- Employers will use their existing arrangements for assessments and the management of risks to young people.
- Discuss with organisers and take into account the student's physical and psychological capacity and any other particular needs, e.g. Health conditions or learning difficulties.
- Additional work required by the employer should be kept in proportion to the environment and the level of risk.
- Explain to parents of students the significant risks and how they can be controlled. This may be done through the work experience organiser/school.

- Induct students explaining the risks and how they are controlled and check that they understand what they have been told.
- Check students know how to raise health and safety concerns.

Work Experience Organisers Schools/Academies/Learning Centres

- The employer has primary responsibility for the health and safety of the student and should manage any significant risks but the organiser must take reasonable steps to satisfy themselves that this is being done.
- If a new employer is used, talk through what the student will do and any relevant precautions. Share a written record of this conversation with employee.
- Where an employer is known to you and has a good track record and the student needs are no different to past placements rely on this past experience, no further assessments are required.
- Work with parents to ensure employers know in advance about students who might be at greater risk.
- Keep checks in proportion to the environment – low risk, less familiar risks, higher risk environments.
- Discuss with the employer what work the student will be doing or observing, the risks involved and how these are managed.
- Check that the instruction, training and supervisory arrangements have been properly thought through.
- Check employers understand the specific factors relevant to employing young people.
- Check that students know how to raise any health and safety concerns.

9. Guidance Documents

- HSE website : <http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/index.htm>
- Keeping Children Safe in Education Statutory guidance for Schools and Colleges DfE 2023
- Working Together to Safeguard Children DfE 2013
- Working Together to Safeguard Children DCSF 2010

This policy will be monitored and evaluated annually, and as new legislation and guidance becomes available.

Appendix 1

Post 16 European Work Experience

1 Introduction

Post 16 learners studying a Modern Foreign Language often enhance their study through work experience in other European countries.

Usually, any provider offering a vetting service to check employer premises for suitability for students, will not offer this service for European Work Experience due to the complexities of organising the required health, safety and welfare checks of employer premises.

There are therefore two options available to schools who wish to support Post 16 learners accessing European work experience.

- Organise the placement themselves.
- Use an external company.

In both cases the Governing Body and the Head Teacher have the prime duty of care for each student on a European Work Experience Placement and they therefore need to be confident that learner health, safety and welfare have been safeguarded.

An overseas work placement is classed as an educational visit and as such all preparations must be completed in compliance with the relevant educational visit guidelines.

2 School/Academy arranged placements

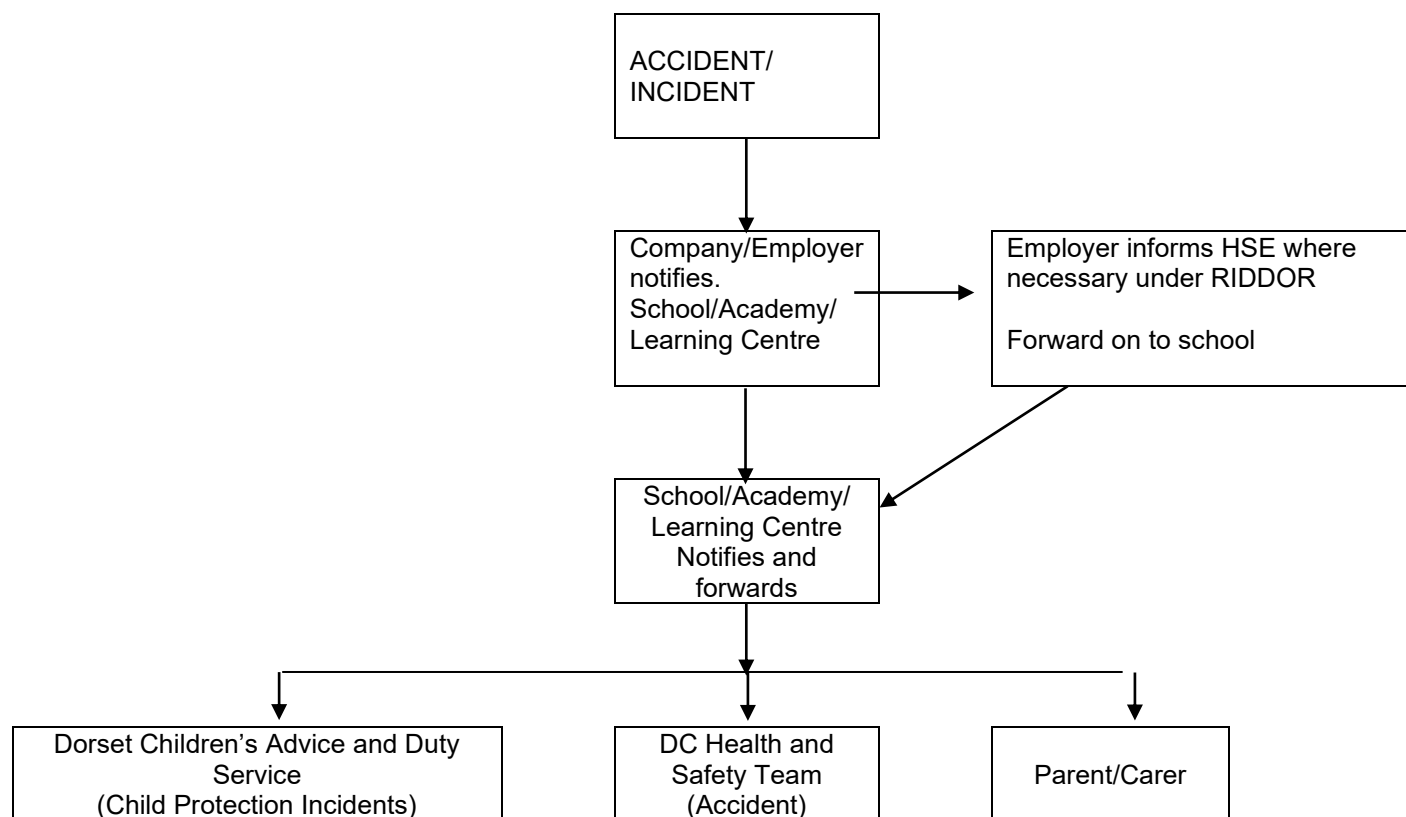
- The member of staff organising the placements must be competent in checking health, safety and welfare.
- This may require specialist training to cover **child protection** and **health & safety** checks.
- All employers, workplaces and accommodation must be checked prior to the start of the placement and risk assessments completed.
- Risk assessments for each placement must be produced and shared with learners and parents/carers. It is **recommended** you gain written evidence of this having taken place.
- It is **recommended** a hostel or hotel is used for accommodation where the member of staff is also resident.
- It is **not recommended** families be used for accommodation unless part of an exchange visit.
- A member of staff must accompany learners to the country/town during the work experience period.
- Clear guidance and action documents must be prepared for learners, parents/carers and employers regarding insurance, health & safety and child protection.
- It is **advisable** to promote Personal Accident Insurance as an extra insurance for learners involved in this form of activity. Learners/Parents/Carers will need to deal directly with an insurance company of their own choosing.

3 Using an External Company

- The School/Academy needs to be confident that the external company has carried out all the required health, safety and welfare checks regarding employers' premises, accommodation and supervision.
- The insurance cover provided must be checked with the Dorset Risk Management Department at County Hall – 01305 224358 to ensure adequate cover is provided.
- Academies should check their insurance with their provider.
- The School/Academy must check the suitability of any supervisors provided by the external company. They must be appropriate for the activity with regard to age, gender and competence, and be Disclosure and Barring Service checked.
- Accommodation arranged by the external company needs careful checking. It is recommended that a hotel or hostel, where the member of staff also stays, is used. Staying with families is not recommended.

Appendix 2

Work Experience Accident/Incident Reporting Procedure



Dorset	H&S	Dorset Council Health & Safety Team 01305 225019 healthandsafety@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
	Child Protection Incidents	Notify The Dorset Children's Advice and Duty Service on 01305 228866

Appendix 3

Accident / Incident /Near Miss Form

H&S Team use only:

		F2508:
--	--	--------

Details of Affected Person				
Surname:	Click here to enter text.		Forename	Click here to enter text.
Date of Birth:	Click here to enter text.	Male: ☐	Female: ☐	Prefer to self-describe: ☐
Does your gender differ from that at birth?		Yes: ☐	No: ☐	
Job Title:	Click here to enter text.		Place of Work	Click here to enter text.
Home Address	Click here to enter text.			
Telephone No.:	Click here to enter text.			
Employers name, address & telephone no. (if not DC)		Click here to enter text.		
Was more than one person injured in the same incident?		Yes ☐ No ☐		

Type of Incident: ☐ Accident ☐ Violence (Actual) ☐ Violence (Threat) ☐ Work Related Disease ☐ Potential Hate Crime ☐ Near Miss	Injured/Affected Person: ☐ Employee ☐ Service User ☐ Contractor / Agency ☐ Volunteer ☐ Member of Public	Directorate: ☐ Corporate Development ☐ People - Adult ☐ People - Children Place Directorate - ☐ Place Services ☐ EGI ☐ Customer services / Archives & Libraries	To whom was the accident first reported? Name: Click here to enter text. Post Held: Click here to enter text. Date: Click here to enter text. Time: Click here to enter text.
---	--	---	--

Does the affected person consent to share information with Dorset Council recognised Trades Unions	YES ☐	NO ☐
--	------------------------------	-----------------------------

Location of Incident: If incident happened away from establishment/base, give details. (eg. service users house/public place/at someone else's premises) Click here to enter text.
Precise place of incident (e.g. stairs, corridor)

Incident details	
Date of incident: Click here to enter text.	Time of incident: Click here to enter text.
What was the incident & how did it happen? (If insufficient space attach details on separate sheet) Click here to enter text.	



Injury - What injury resulted (state cut, bruise, fracture. Indicate left/right)

Click here to enter text.

Time lost - Did incident result in injured/affected person's absence/inability to **undertake normal duties**

YES ☐ NO ☐

Inform the County Health & Safety Team by phone to report any lost time, other than on the day of the accident –
01305 2 2 5 0 1 9

Details of any witness (s)

Details of assailant(s), if known (in case of violent incident/hate crime)

Name, address, telephone no. (if not DC employee)

Click here to enter text.

Click here to enter text.

Action taken

☐ No action required

☐ Attended Doctor or Health Centre

☐ First aid on site

☐ Sent or taken to hospital

☐ Sent or taken home

☐ Detained in hospital over 24hr

☐ Police informed

Report completed by:

Name

Click here to enter text.

Job title

Click here to enter text.

Date

Click here to enter text.

What action has been taken to prevent a recurrence: (Line Manager to complete, use separate sheet if necessary)

Click here to enter text.

Name:

Click here to enter text.

Signature:

Click here to enter text.

Date:

Click here to enter text.

Print or save and send one copy to Dorset Council Health and Safety Team healthandsafety@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, County Hall, and retain one copy in the workplace.

Health & Safety Team Use Only

Click here to enter text.

Appendix 4

SLA Health & Safety Audit Work Experience Section	
1. Is there a current work experience policy?	
2. Is a competent contractor used for vetting work placements?	
3. Do all students receive a briefing which includes health and safety prior to the placement commencing?	
4. Are there systems to ensure all checks are in place before a student commences work placement?	
5. Are all students monitored whilst on work placement?	
6. Are relevant employees briefed prior to them carrying out a monitoring visit?	
7. Are all relevant employees given a copy of the job description prior to carrying out the monitoring visit?	
8. Are all relevant employees given a copy of the risk assessment prior to carrying out the monitoring visit?	
9. Are all relevant employees made aware of any restrictions and/or prohibitions prior to carrying out the monitoring visit?	
10. Does the school have an emergency contact (including out of school hours) for students whilst on work placement?	



- 1 We will provide a protocol to deal with the following issues:
 - ◆ Student absence from the work placement including days of religious observance.
 - ◆ If the employer signifies that they wish to terminate the provision on offer.
 - ◆ If a student appears to be receiving some form of payment.
 - ◆ If the employer's and/or student's attitude to health & safety appears to have become slack.
 - ◆ If the student appears to be treated as an adult.
 - ◆ If the student is offered a full-time job and wishes to leave (Name of School/Academy/Learning Centre).
 - ◆ If the student is attending the work placement but is playing truant from (Name of School/Academy/Learning Centre).
 - ◆ If the employer offers to place the student on a training scheme.
 - ◆ If an incident occurs at the work placement, e.g., theft, accident, misbehaviour etc.
- 2 We will identify the students for whom an extended placement is appropriate and will ensure that all interested parties are informed of the specific and often diverse needs of the student concerned.
- 3 Any placement should take place within the context of a curriculum programme in which the employer has a role in setting learning targets that have been arrived at in negotiation with (Name of School/Academy/Learning Centre).
- 4 An induction, which enables a student to understand the world of work and health & safety requirements, as well as develop skills and personal qualities, will be negotiated with the employer. The employer will need to understand:
 - ◆ the aim and purpose of the placement.
 - ◆ its anticipated duration.
 - ◆ the means of monitoring the student's progress and attendance.
 - ◆ the process of assessing the student's achievement during and at the end of the placement.

Briefing before the placement

- 1 The student will be made aware of:
 - ◆ Health & safety and their responsibility in the workplace.
 - ◆ What to do if unable to attend or if ill.
 - ◆ How to record achievements whilst on the placement.

- ◆ Things to do in certain situations ('What if?' scenarios, particularly in relation to Safeguarding issues).
- 2 The employer will be made aware of the student's:-
 - ◆ Medical conditions
 - ◆ Learning difficulties
 - ◆ Physical disability
 - ◆ Behavioural needs
 - ◆ Ethnic background, culture, and language

All the above have implications for the induction process, supervision arrangements, control measures and prohibition put on student activity, the sort of tasks given to the student and training for the use of machinery.

During the placement

- 1 We will monitor the progress made by an individual student on a placement.
- 2 A suitably briefed member of school staff will make contact with the student during the first few days and thereafter visit the student. A visit will ensure contact with the employer and enable us to record student achievement and monitor progress toward learning targets. It will also assist in checking the suitability of the placement for both student and employer. Any member of staff visiting a workplace will be provided with details of the job description, risk assessment and other details regarding the work placement before the visit to inform of specifics and restrictions.
- 3 We are responsible for the student's attendance on the placement although the employer will need to monitor it for us.
- 4 In the event of any accident/incident we will contact Dorset LA Health and Safety team or appropriate Social Care Team immediately (**Appendix 2 and 3**).

After the placement

- 1 There will be a formal review between us and the employer to:
 - ◆ Consider the success of the placement.
 - ◆ Identify the student's achievements.
 - ◆ Suggest the next stage for the student within the programme.
 - ◆ Consider how the placement might be improved in the future.
- 2 We will ensure all evaluations are received and provide feedback to the student, which will assist in formulating new learning targets.