

Skills Week FAQs

Q1: Can I do work experience/volunteering for four days or five days instead of just three?

A1: Yes. There are four options for Skills Week:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Comment
Option 1	Work experience/volunteering Minimum 16 hours			Careers Enrichment Day *	Reflection Day **	Minimum total 22 hours
Option 2	Work experience/volunteering Minimum 20 hours				Reflection Day **	Minimum total 22 hours
Option 3	Work experience/volunteering Minimum 22 hours (It will be necessary for students to complete the Reflection Day activities in their own time)					Minimum total 22 hours
Option 4	BHASVIC residential trip (including DofE) in this week (It will be necessary for students to complete the Reflection Day activities in their own time)					Minimum total 22 hours

* Careers Enrichment Day is organised by BHASVIC teachers and tutors and offers students a wide variety of careers-related workshops, trips, speakers and activities both on-site and off-site. Students are able to choose the activity which is of most interest to them. This process will be explained in future tutorials.

** Reflection Day will give students the opportunity to look back over Skills Week and keep a record of the skills they have developed.

See also A10.

Q2: Do I have to do it if I already have a job and if I work on those days of the week?

A2: Yes you do. Government rules about work experience mean that paid work does not count. Skills Week activities count as part of your study programme at college, so they are counted like lesson time and you are expected to participate.

Q3. Why is it necessary to do work experience on those particular days?

A3. Because Skills Week activities replace lessons for that week. So the hours spent on Skills Week activities count towards your study programme at college. Work experience outside of Skills Week is worthwhile, but the time does not count towards your study programme. The Thursday is set aside for Careers Enrichment Day which is a day where

students can choose from a wide variety of different activities organised by teachers. The Friday is a day for reflecting on your experiences and making note of your skills development.

Q4. Why does it have to be unpaid?

A4. Government rules about work experience mean that paid work does not count.

Q5. Can someone support me to find work experience in a particular field?

A5. We will help to support individuals to find suitable placements, through tutorial activities. We have produced a Student Guide to finding placements, which is a good starting point (it's accessible on the front page of BHASVLE). The front page of BHASVLE also has links to the BHASVIC Work Experience and Padlet Board where we post lots of opportunities. Subject teachers have been asked to provide information about any relevant contacts which students could make use of.

Work placements don't have to be career-related – and it will be easier to find a placement if you are open to a wide range of opportunities. The focus is on developing general employability skills rather than specific skills related to a particular career. So a wide range of placements should be suitable.

Q6. How do we choose what work experience we want?

A6. You can choose whatever placement you like which meets the criteria, which are:

- The placement needs to take place between Monday 3 July and Friday 7 July 2023
- The placement should be unpaid
- The placement should last for a minimum of 16 hours in total. If over three days, 20 hours over four days or 22 hours over five days
- The employer/organisation MUST HAVE valid employer liability insurance and will have to complete a risk assessment form to confirm this

See also A5 above.

Q7. Will the employer need to keep a record of our work experience?

A7. No – but they will be asked to verify your participation and you might want to ask them to validate your own record of what you did.

Q8. Why is this mandatory?

A8: In addition to formal qualifications, BHASVIC is required to provide an enriched curriculum which prepares students for the world of work and develops their employability skills. Skills Week is part of our strategy to deliver this. Because it is part of A1 students' programme of study, all A1 students are required to participate.

Q9: When do we need to have a definite placement proposal?

A9: The deadline is 31 March 2023. By this date you should have entered your proposal into the Connect app. This gives us enough time to validate employers and organisations and get the necessary permissions in place. If you are on a residential trip BHASVIC staff will be able to enter that information into the Connect app (see A10).

Q10: What about students who are going on BHASVIC residential trips (including DofE)?

A10: BHASVIC residential trips will take more time than Skills Week activities, so students who are on these trips do not need to do extra. However, they are expected to complete some of the reflection activities which students will be doing on the Friday of Skills Week. This will be explained by the trip organisers.

You should still download the Connect app. However, you don't need to enter any placement details. BHASVIC staff will use the app to record the fact that you are on a trip/DofE.

Q11: Are there opportunities open to me that I don't organise myself?

A11: We are planning to make provision in college for a small number of students with support needs, but in the main we need students to find their own placement as explained in A5. If you feel you have special circumstances which make it difficult to find a placement, please let your tutor know.

Q12: What will happen if I can't find a placement?

A12: You have until 31 March, so please don't give up yet! Make use of the Student Guide to generate a range of ideas you could follow up. See also A11.

Q13. Does it have to relate to subjects I study and if not does this affect what universities think?

A13: It does not have to relate to your subjects. The focus is on developing general employability skills rather than specific skills related to a particular career. So a wide range of placements is suitable. Universities will be interested to know you have developed your soft skills. Except for a few specialist subjects, such as medicine, they are not expecting you to have relevant work experience in a particular field.

Q14: How do I ask the employer/organisation about their employer liability insurance?

A14. When you ask an employer/organisation about a possible placement you should mention to them the criteria for Skills Week placements (see A6). Otherwise you might spend a lot of time trying to set up a placement which we cannot confirm if they don't have the employer liability cover. You don't have to know the details of the insurance yourself, but you could mention to them that as part of the confirmation process we will be asking them to show us that they have the necessary insurance cover. (It's employer liability insurance rather than public liability insurance which is required.)

Q15: Can I continue the service or work after the week has ended?

A15: Yes if that suits you and it fits in with your normal timetable. Please remember that timetables return to normal the week after Skills Week – so you will be expected back in your lessons. We won't count any further hours as part of your programme of study, but if it suits you and the organisation/employer then that is not a problem for us.