



Guide to Work Experience for Secondary School Students

(Exposure to Professional Engineering Practice)

Introduction

The vast majority of secondary schools in Australia encourage their students to seek some form of work experience.

This is normally a one week activity in Year 10. Occasionally students will carry out their work experience for one day a week over a number of weeks. School student work experience is unpaid and the school covers all insurance and liability aspects.

Secondary school students have to make decisions in Year 10 about their future careers. These decisions enable them to make a choice about which subjects to study for their school leaving certificate examinations as well as a possible future career path.

Work experience is an *introduction* into the work force, or a *taste* of what a future career in a specific area might be like. This short period is not designed to train the student, or to teach the student any particular engineering skills.

How to Employ a Secondary School Student

Most schools will approach Council to see if students can be placed. This is an excellent opportunity to promote local government engineering, and may result in an employee at some time in the future. At worst, it will give your department excellent publicity in the local community.

Because the school work experience student is not paid, there is no need to make financial provision in the budget. The student comes to observe rather than learn specific skills, and therefore should be afforded such opportunities in an understudy role.

Take the student along to meetings, to site inspections or even let him/her loose on a drawing board. Try to allocate the student to different sections or departments each day to observe the different functions that are undertaken by local government engineering.

The student does not have to be supervised. Ensure the student remains at the workplace, is in the company of an employee and is safe at all times.