

The potential benefits and costs of industry placements in the Agriculture, Environment and Animal Care skill area

The generic costs and benefits that employers have been reporting as they start to offer industry placements across all skill areas are described in [The Potential Benefits and Costs of Industry Placements](#) information sheet. This document explores some of the more specific benefits and costs that employers have been reporting in the Agriculture, Environment & Animal Care skill area.

BENEFITS

FOR AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND ANIMAL CARE

Enhancing diversity

Industry placements offer an opportunity to increase the diversity of the industry in under-represented groups. For example, farming is heavily male-dominated, compared with animal conservation in which men are underrepresented.

Grow your own / talent pipeline

There are acute skills gaps in several agriculture, environment and animal care occupations that could make recruitment in the future a significant challenge. Almost half of farming businesses globally admit they are facing a lack of expertise and staff. The European agricultural workforce is expected to decline by 28% by 2030. The need to market this industry to a new workforce is important, to show that the jobs offer so much variety and no day has to be the same. Industry placements are an opportunity to show young people the range of jobs on offer in these industries, especially those that are becoming harder to fill. You can assess student competence first-hand and progress young people that fit your needs, directly into an apprenticeship or entry-level job opportunity.

Partnerships with local colleges

Developing your relationships with your local college or school will allow you to work with them to shape and develop the workers of the future and make them more “work-ready”. For some industry placements, agreeing particular content to be covered beforehand with the college or school will add value to the student’s understanding and their contribution to your team.

Understanding the industry

Young people need to understand the challenges of working collaboratively in a physical environment. Helping young people appreciate this style of working and develop the team-working skills that you need will better prepare them for work in these industries.

Developing management skills in your team

Assigning staff that you want to move into management positions as supervisors or mentors to industry placement students can develop valuable management skills and behaviours.



COSTS

FOR AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND ANIMAL CARE

Work in these industries is often time critical and dependent on other factors such as weather, animal behaviour etc. Careful assessment is needed of the impact of supervising students on deadlines and productivity.

Time to supervise

You could consider alternatives such as introducing students gradually at first before becoming fully involved; starting students on low-risk tasks; or offering self-contained projects away from mainstream activities, giving the student confidence and the satisfaction of learning and helping.

Payments to students for travel to rural locations

Rural sites in these industries are often remote and difficult to travel to. Talk to your college or school – they have experience of students travelling long distances and may have creative solutions, including local initiatives and schemes. You might find that the student is already being compensated for travel.

You could also offer students an allowance or travel payment to help them access your workplace, although you are not obliged to. Click on the [this link](#) to have a look at the [Providing placements in rural and remote areas](#) information sheet for some ideas and possible solutions.

Specific training

Typically, your induction for industry placement students will be very similar to your regular recruits. However, some students may be using and learning about different machinery and equipment on their course. You may need to invest additional time and resources in training students if you want them to use specific machinery and equipment. Students may bring knowledge of new and emerging technologies and equipment, from their course, that could potentially improve the productivity or give you food for thought when investing in new machinery or equipment.

Insurance

You will need to hold-up-to-date Employers Liability Insurance and Public Liability Insurance and you must notify your insurer about the placement. This cover needs to be in place before the placement begins and for the full duration of the placement. Please click [here](#) for further information.



COSTS

Health and Safety

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Most organisations in these industries are aware of their Health and Safety obligations and give all new staff a site induction. As this is standard practice, it isn't usually an additional cost. However, you may wish to take the time to check your health and safety policy and induction to understand if it needs adapting for students on placement e.g. you may have specific requirements that need additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). It is worth talking to the college or school you are working with, as in some cases they can provide the equipment the student needs or tell you the sizes of the student, so you can make sure your spare PPE will fit.