

ANGUS COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE - 25 JANUARY 2000
PERSONNEL AND PROPERTY SERVICES COMMITTEE - 1 FEBRUARY 2000

WORK EXPERIENCE - HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

JOINT REPORT BY THE DIRECTORS OF EDUCATION AND PERSONNEL

ABSTRACT

This report outlines some of the Health & Safety requirements relating to Work Experience, and recommends the establishment of an additional part time post of Training Assistant.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Education Committee notes, and approves for its interest, the contents of this report.
- 1.2 It is recommended that the Personnel and Property Services Committee approves the creation of an additional part-time post of Training Assistant (0.5 fte - Grade AP1) as part of the permanent staff complement of the Education Department.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 For several years now, Work Experience has formed a significant and integral part of the school experience of secondary school pupils - normally but not exclusively at the S4 stage of their education.
- 2.2 For some time, TVEI (the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative) provided substantial additional monies to support a range of activities in secondary schools - including Work Experience.
- 2.3 Since the cessation of TVEI funding in the mid 1990s, schools and education authorities have attempted to maintain as much as possible of the TVEI agenda using existing resources. In Angus, for example, additional substantive Guidance posts were created in all secondary schools in 1996 (Education Committee - 15 October 1996, Article 8).
- 2.4 Significant and successful efforts have been made by staff to ensure that the school experience of all pupils is as enriching as possible, and in particular to ensure that Education for Work forms a meaningful part of that experience.
- 2.5 Arranging Work Experience for large numbers of pupils is a complex, time-consuming and responsible task. Quite apart from the significant logistics, there are very specific and understandable legislative requirements which demand a thorough Health & Safety risk assessment be undertaken of any premises within which a pupil is to be located during a Work Experience placement. Such a risk assessment of premises requires to be repeated periodically if the premises continue to be used as a location for Work Experience placements.

- 2.6 A small number of Council staff have been fully trained and now have the expertise to undertake these risk assessments. However, all these staff are already fully occupied undertaking other duties within their respective remits and in practical terms the only person currently available to undertake a systematic programme of risk assessments is the seconded EIL Projects Officer. This in turn makes it impossible for the EIL Projects Officer to devote as much time as is required to his many other duties associated with Education Industry Liaison - duties which have grown as a direct result of the Excellence Fund.
- 2.7 It has become increasingly clear over the last few years or so that the work involved in risk assessment for Work Experience justifies the appointment of a permanent member of staff on a part-time basis.
- 2.8 Staff working within the Training Services Section of the Personnel Department currently undertake very similar risk assessments to those required for Pupil Work Experience Placements. There is potential for more effective co-operation between this section and the Education Department in this area of work, and the appointment of an additional part-time member of staff to the Education Department would enable that co-operative effort to become more effective.

3 CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1 An additional part-time member of staff would enable the Council to put the process of Work Experience Risk Assessments on a more systematic basis.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The cost of appointing a part-time (0.5 fte) Training Assistant on an AP1 grade is likely to be £7,770 in a full financial year, including employer's costs.
- 4.2 This can be funded from the Education Department's anticipated Revenue Budget for 2000/2001, which includes an allocation from The Excellence Fund.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 In accordance with the Standing Orders of the Council, this report has been the subject of consultation with the Chief Executive, the Director of Finance and the Director of Law & Administration.

Jim Anderson
Director of Education

Janice Torbet
Director of Personnel

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

JAA/CJ