



17th October 2025

Work Experience July 2026

Dear parents/carers of Year 10 students,

It is time to launch the year 10 Work Experience (WEX) programme taking place from **13th - 17th July 2026 (Activities week)**. Year 10s have had their WEX assembly, explaining to them about how beneficial the activity is and how to go about setting it up. Last years' successful programme was well received by students and parents alike, with many students enjoying it more than school! We have heard firsthand how students valued the experience, and in many cases, it has given them new ideas or career fields to explore further, with some students even being offered employment in the future! The Oriel WEX in year 10 (and in year 12), are part of our drive to help students be prepared for the world of work. These opportunities for Oriel students in term time, comply with the government's desire to ensure all students have the opportunity to gain experience of work, before the end of Year 11, and Oriel believes that the addition of a WEX programme in lower school, to be of significant value to our students.

This year, in a change to previous years, Oriel is adopting the new framework of guidance from the government, which requires students in KS4 to have workplace experience totalling one week. Therefore, we are extending the placement to **5 days** for July 2026. This opportunity will give students longer to gain vital experience in the workplace, allow them to learn key employability/soft skills, receive a reference from the employer and could help to guide them in making decisions about their future pathways.

In addition to WEX, in the days leading up to the WEX, we hope to be able to run face-face mock interviews in school with employers as we have previously. The students that take part in the mock interviews, whilst nervous before the event, afterwards are all very enthusiastic about the experience, and can appreciate the advantage this gives them over others without the experience. Some of the students make such a good impression, they secure further WEX in holidays, and some of the companies would have happily given them a job there and then!

To be able to do facilitate this huge task of organising a WEX for 270 students, we need to ask parents and carers to utilise their networks and help to arrange either a placement within their workplace, with a family member or friend of the family. Any students unable to find a placement for themselves can **seek assistance from Mr Thornton our Careers Administrator**, who will be available to help suggest companies (that we have worked with or know have offered placements previously), for the student to contact. **Should your student not be able to secure any WEX placement, then students will be expected to be in school and undertaking a programme of careers and subject related activities, including a 'Virtual WEX programme'**, which will enhance their key employment skills.

We would like you to start the process now, knowing that it may take some time to set up a placement for your student. We ask that the process is completed by **May 22nd 2026**. Each year, we have students who put off this task until the last minute and ultimately cannot complete the required documents in time to secure a placement. If a placement request is made after the 22nd of May, we cannot guarantee that all the necessary paperwork will be completed in time. Obtaining documents can be very swift, or slow, depending upon the company involved. Parents, students and businesses will utilise an online method of registering the placement and completing the required documents. This system will be automated and there will be tasks that both yourselves and the employers needs to do, prior to any placement starting. Mr Thornton our Careers Administrator will be managing the process, and he has put together instructions

(attached to this email) on how to use the online system and begin the process of registering your placement. **Mr Thornton** is your student's contact/co-ordinator, and his name should be used when required, so that he receives all updates into his inbox.

We will set up the WEX using Unifrog. Unifrog is an outstanding online platform that all our students have access to and can be used at any time to help with future planning. It will also be the location students should record key competencies they have developed, which will be spoken about in the accompanying WEX booklet given to students nearer the time. The login details are their school email address. If your student hasn't logged in before, then please go to the login page and click on reset password. Enter their school email address and click on reset. An email will be sent to their school email address with instructions to set a new password. If your child is relatively new or having trouble getting on the site, please contact us directly to ensure their profile is set up on Unifrog correctly. If your student needs some help to find a placement themselves, attached to this email is some information to help them. If a placement is still proving to be difficult, then Mr Thornton will be happy to help students and may even be able to find them one with our business partners. If this is the case, I would urge students to contact Mr Thornton at school sooner rather than later, to give him as much time as possible to help.

For students, WEX can be quite a daunting prospect, but one that they will remember for the rest of their lives. Whilst some students may know what they would like to do in the future, many will not have made decisions like that yet. Students should be reassured that this is normal! They should also be reminded that careers change over time, and statistics now show that the work force of this country typically have many different types of career during their working lives. This needs to be reflected in their approach in finding a placement and their attitude towards being part of it. If your student knows what they are interested in, then finding a placement within that field will obviously be of benefit, however for all of those not in that position, then a more generic WEX can be equally valuable, teaching them key employability and organisational skills that will serve them well in the future.

The students will take part in the WEX completing full working days as the company prescribes. It is important that prior to the WEX the student has spoken with the contact at the company who will be responsible for them, initially to introduce themselves and then to check what jobs and tasks they are likely to be involved in. The student should also take this opportunity to ask their contact if there is a dress code or required clothing, if there any security/safety concerns or requirements, the timings of the day and finally, lunch and break arrangements.

When commencing the WEX, students will be given a pack to fill out containing essential information. This pack will also be the place the student will keep a record of their tasks and link them to key employability skills. This will help in the future when they are asked to apply for jobs, are at interview or applying for sixth form, helping them to demonstrate where they have displayed these skills previously.

Many employers are often reticent about taking on work experience students for fear of extra work. However, there is no need for an employer to feel this way and included in this pack is information that you can provide to the employer to allay any fears. In short. If an employer takes on a work experience student, then their duty of care is no different to that of any other employee, depending upon the nature and risk of the business. No extra insurances need to be taken out, with the company's current employers liability insurance being sufficient. If there are any risks at the placement, then the company should mitigate these with PPE and supervision, and at no times is a student allowed to do certain jobs where additional training is required. Companies will be contacted by Mr Thornton if required, to discuss placements and discuss any requirements or needs of the student or company, to ensure both have a productive and enjoyable experience. Also attached to this email are extracts from the HSE regarding some 'Myth Busting' which may be of interest to you and the employer that relate specifically to taking on a WEX student.

Good luck finding your placements! Should you have any queries, Mr Thornton will be happy to assist you, so please do get in contact if you have any.

Yours sincerely

Owen Svoboda: Director of Learning Careers- Careers Leader

Telephone: 01293 880350 | Facsimile: 01293 880351

Student Absence Telephone: 01293 880363 (24 hours)

Email: office@oriel.w-sussex.sch.uk | Website: www.oriel.w-sussex.sch.uk

