

Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap

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Secondary Vocational Education

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Our reference

40300949

Date

Re Letter from Robbert Dijkgraaf about the MBO Work Placement
Pact 2023-2027 (*Stagepact*)

Dear work placement provider,

In offering work placements to secondary vocational education (MBO) students, your company plays an important role in training tomorrow's skilled professionals. I would like to express my appreciation for this work. The Netherlands needs skilled professionals, now and in the future. For this reason, it is important that we work together to improve secondary vocational education. By providing work placements and apprenticeships, you are not only helping students develop as professionals, but also to become the best version of themselves.

Learning on the work floor is an essential part of education. For many MBO students, it is also their first encounter with the world of work. The MBO Work Placement Pact, agreed by representatives of schools, businesses, employees, students and government, sets out how we can all ensure that this first encounter is a safe, valuable and positive experience.

Goals

The parties to the MBO Work Placement Pact have set out four main goals, which I have described in brief below – together with their implications for you as a work placement provider.

1. Proper supervision

Students must be supervised properly during their work placement or apprenticeship. Both the school and placement provider are responsible for this, so it is essential for them to maintain close contact. This means that the student's supervisor will speak with you at least three times, including at least once in person. This will give you a better idea of the student's abilities and needs. If you would like more information on how to supervise students more effectively, you can do an online course, or attend a session for work placement providers. You will find more information on the website of the [Centre for Cooperation Between Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market \(SBB\)](#) or the websites of sector organisations and regional placement provider partnerships (partner organisations). If a student has special needs, this [SBB leaflet](#) has some useful tips on providing tailored supervision (information in Dutch).

2. Eradicating discrimination

Discrimination in any form is unacceptable. No student seeking a work placement should be discriminated against on the basis of their origin, beliefs or gender. In a major effort to eradicate work placement discrimination, we are now introducing

'matching'. First-year students doing school-based vocational training (BOL) can be allocated a work placement by the school if they prefer that to finding a work placement company themselves. A good work placement aligns with the student's learning goals and the knowledge and skills they already have. To ensure good matches, it is important that schools and placement providers get to know each other better. And that they look closely at what works and what doesn't. Our aim is to offer students a safe start in what is often their first encounter with the world of work. For this reason, I am asking you to cooperate if a school approaches you with a request for matching.

You yourself can ensure recruitment and selection procedures in your own organisation are objective, aimed at finding the best candidate. For more information, go to www.talentsbelangrijker.nl (in Dutch) or www.ser.nl.

3. Enough places

It is important for enough work placements and apprenticeships to be available, both now and in the future. And it is important that students can find them. You can help by providing up-to-date information on the work placements and apprenticeships your company offers on www.stagemarkt.nl and www.leerbanenmarkt.nl. For more information, go to MijnSBB.

4. Work placement allowance

Every student on work placement deserves an appropriate allowance, whatever field they are training for, their level of education or weekly working hours. Under the MBO Work Placement Pact, placement providers are required to cover all of the costs students incur in order to do their work placement. These are costs that are not reimbursed by any other means, for example travel costs or the costs of applying for a certificate of conduct (VOG). Currently, many placement providers also pay students an allowance. This is often required under their sector's collective labour agreement. If this is not yet the case in your organisation, I would urge you to pay an allowance to students doing a work placement in your company. If you provide apprenticeship training for students on day release (BBL), you must conclude an employment contract with them, with an agreed wage.

Above, I have given a brief description of the four goals set out in the MBO Work Placement Pact. It is our intention to achieve these four goals together, each of us playing our own specific role. That applies not only to you, but also to me. I will issue tangible guidelines to help schools combat work placement discrimination, ensure that SBB has sufficient resources to support you as a placement provider, and set the right example as an employer of MBO graduates and students. Together we will move towards an appropriate work placement for every MBO student. That also means that we will take account of what work placement providers like you need in order to fulfil their role.

Financial support

You can, for example, apply for a grant under the [practical learning grant scheme \(subsidieregeling praktijkleren\)](#) (website in Dutch), which covers certain costs for companies that provide apprenticeships for BBL students. Some sectors, municipalities or provinces also offer specific schemes or grants. Go to the [SBB website](#) for an overview.

Further information

If having read this letter you would like further information, please go to the [MBO Work Placement Pact \(Stagepact\)](#) website (in Dutch) or send an email to [SBB](mailto:SBB@stagepact@minocw.nl) or stagepact@minocw.nl.

I recently had an inspiring conversation with a work placement provider and I would like to end this letter by sharing their motto with you: 'Our aim is to make a success of every student.'

Onze referentie
40300949

Kind regards,

Robbert Dijkgraaf
Minister of Education, Culture and Science