# WORK EXPERIENCE IN THE TRANSPORT, POSTAL AND WAREHOUSING

This module is about the Transport, Postal and Warehousing industries. It has been prepared to support teachers develop lessons for students with disabilities who will be undertaking work experience in this industry. The module provides information on occupational health and safety for this industry.

While undertaking work experience, students learn primarily through observing and assisting with simple tasks. They **must NOT** undertake activities that require extensive training or experience, or expose them, or others in the workplace, to unreasonable risks to health and safety.

Before commencing preparation of students with disabilities for work experience, teachers should review the Occupational Health and Safety requirements as outlined in the Work Experience Manual for Victorian Secondary Schools.

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/teachingresources/careers/work/wemanualrev.pdf>

## Key messages:

* Work experience is about observing the world of work in action
* Students on work experience must be under supervision at all times
* Students must complete A Job Well Done modules before undertaking work experience.

## General Information

The Transport, Postal and Warehousing industry provides passengers with transport by road, rail, sea or plane. It is also for the postal delivery and storage of packages and *freight*. Places you can work in this industry include; bus companies, airports, Australia Post, courier services and storage warehouse.

Many people are employed full-time with some part-time work available. Employment in the Transport, Postal and Warehousing industry has increased, and it is around 5% of the workforce in Australia[[1]](#footnote-1).

## Jobs in the Transport, Postal and Warehousing Industry

* Postal worker
* Truck driver
* Purchasing officer
* Bus, Tram or Train driver
* Courier
* Store person in warehouse
* Airport workers
* Delivery driver
* Mail sorter
* Motor mechanic
* Forklift driver
* Ticket salesperson.

**Further information on the types of occupations in this industry can be found on Job Outlook -** <https://joboutlook.gov.au/Default.aspx>

## What can students do to stay safe at work in the Transport, Postal and Warehousing industry?

Injuries can happen in the Transport, Postal and Warehousing industry if adequate care is not taken. Students must follow work instructions safely and do not put themselves or others at risk.

To stay safe, students with disabilities must:

* be under supervision at all times
* have proper training before undertaking simple tasks
* speak to their supervisor if they are unsure about how to perform a simple task safely
* have clear instructions about safety procedures
* be familiar with what to do in an emergency.

## Lifting and moving Items (Manual Handling)

In the Transport, Postal and Warehouse industries workers are often required to lift and move packages safely. Manual handling is work that involves carrying, pushing, pulling, lifting, or moving something. Examples are lifting boxes, loading and unloading a truck and pushing a trolley in a warehouse.

Lifting, pulling and pushing can cause injuries.

To stay safe students need to:

* have clear instructions from their supervisor on how to be safe at work
* know the correct lifting procedure
* never lift heavy objects
* take rest breaks to prevent muscle strain and feeling tired
* speak to their supervisor if they are unsure of how to do a simple task safely
* know how to use a trolley to move large items.

## Slips, Trips and Falls

Slips, trips and falls are some of the injuries in the Transport, Postal and Warehousing industry. Most injuries can happen when people are working in a warehouse or when they are loading or unloading a truck.

Injuries can occur in this industry and to stay safe students need to:

* follow all safety instructions and ask their supervisor if they are unsure of how to do a simple task.
* wear shoes which are comfortable and have rubber non-slip soles and check that their shoes are in good condition.
* let their supervisor know straight away if there is a spill on the floor.

## Transport Vehicles and Machinery

Students undertaking work experience **MUST NOT** use machinery or equipment as outlined in the Work Experience Manual. Please note that the list in the manual is not exhaustive and students must **never** use any machinery or equipment that:

* pose an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of the student, or
* require extensive training or experience to use safely.

There are many types of vehicles and machinery used in the Transport, Postal and Warehousing industry. Students on work experience will be able to observe the use of different transport vehicles and machinery. For example, they may observe how forklifts and hoist machinery are used for lifting heavy boxes in a warehouse, or how truck drivers use loading docks where they can load and unload their truck.

To stay safe students need to follow all safety instructions and ask their supervisor if they are unsure of how to complete tasks

## Electricity

Students undertaking work experience **MUST NOT** be asked to do any electrical work or repairs while on work experience.

Machinery and equipment used in the Transport, Postal and Warehousing industry use electrical power. Examples of electrical equipment are computers in a warehouse, electric tools, battery chargers and forklift chargers.

Damaged electrical cords, faulty equipment, stretched cords and water leaking onto electrical equipment can be very unsafe. Injuries from electricity includes electric shock.

To stay safe students need to:

* always follow clear instructions from their supervisor
* make sure they do not use machinery or tools (computers are permitted)
* know how to speak to their supervisor if they are unsure about a task.

## Poisons and Dangerous Materials

Students undertaking work experience **MUST NOT** handle chemicals or poisons.

Poisons and dangerous materials are different chemicals that can be in packages and containers for delivery in the Transport, Postal and Warehousing industry. Poisons are often called Hazardous Substances. Common examples of these are paint thinners and petrol which are flammable and can cause a fire. Dangerous materials such as gas can cause explosions. Pesticides used for killing insects are also poisonous, and corrosive liquids such as acid which can burn.

Poisons and dangerous materials must have signs and labels on the container or boxes to show they can cause serious injuries.

To stay safe students need to always follow clear instructions from their supervisor if they are unsure of how to do a task.

## Fatigue

Fatigue (feeling very tired), can affect how people work. It can make workers less focused, slow them down or even cause them to fall asleep. A person can suffer from fatigue in the Retail Trade industry if they must stand up for a long time.

All workers can suffer from fatigue if they do not have a rest or proper breaks during the day or when they work at night.

Injuries can occur if students are feeling fatigued.

To be safe students need to:

* take regular rest breaks during the work day and sit down when they can
* wear comfortable shoes
* make sure they have a good night’s sleep
* tell their supervisor if they feel very tired and cannot work.

## Noise

There are many different noises in a workplace. In the Transport, Postal and Warehousing industry noise can come from large trucks, airplane noise at the airport, and tools or machinery used in a warehouse.

There are laws for what noise levels must be in the workplace and the employer must follow these laws. Loud and non-stop noise in the workplace can cause partial hearing loss, tinnitus which means ringing in the ears, or permanent hearing loss.

To stay safe students need to:

* follow all safety instructions and ask their supervisor if they are unsure of how to do a simple task
* know how to tell their supervisor if noise from the workplace is too loud for them
* wear protective hearing equipment if required by their supervisor to complete simple tasks.

## What should the employer do to make the workplace safe for the student?

The Occupational Health and Safety Act is a written law to protect the health, safety and welfare of employees and other people at work. The employer is responsible for the safety of all employees and must provide a high standard of health and safety at their workplace.

To make the workplace safe employers must:

* be aware of the laws and regulations and follow these laws to protect their employees
* supervise work experience students, or have another qualified employee supervise work experience students at all times
* provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). This is any equipment used or worn to keep employees safe in the workplace. PPE includes safety shoes, earplugs, goggles, hard hats, high visibility clothing, face masks, gloves and sunscreen
* provide training for the simple tasks students undertake while on work experience.

### More information about the Transport, Postal and Warehousing industry is located at:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/students/beyond/Pages/manufacturingmodule.aspx>

### LeadWest – Transport, Postal and Warehousing industry in Victoria

<http://www.leadwest.com.au/Melbournes-West/The-Regional-Economy-in-Melbournes-West/Transport,-Postal-Warehousing>

### safe@work

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/students/beyond/Pages/swguide.aspx?Redirect=1>

### Workplace Learning Toolbox

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/careers/work/Pages/teachers.aspx#link39>

1. <http://lmip.gov.au/default.aspx?LMIP/GainInsights/IndustryInformation/TransportPostalandWarehousing> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)