



# Oakswood College

Empowering Through Education



## Student Employment Recognition Award

*(SERA)*

PROMOTING EXCELLENCE • ENSURING COMPLIANCE  
SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY



GOVERNANCE



QUALITY

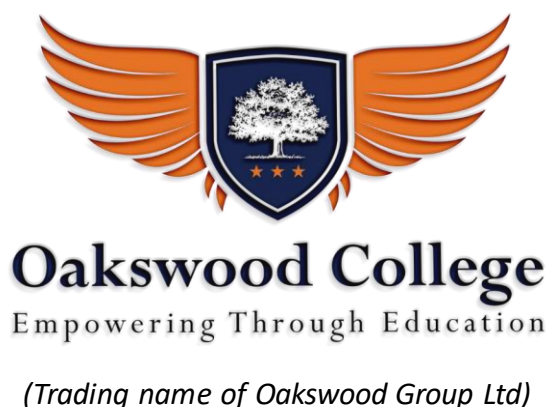


COMPLIANCE



EXCELLENCE

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## **Student Employment Recognition Award (SERA) Definition & Implementation**

***(Oakwood College Employability Framework Document)***

### **Document Control & Version History**

<b>Document Title</b>	<b>Student Employment Recognition Award (SERA) Framework</b>
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<b>Next Review Date</b>	18 March 2027
<b>Applies To</b>	All enrolled students participating in the Student Employment Recognition Award (SERA), Student Services staff, academic staff, employer partners, mentors, and assessors involved in the award scheme
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<b>Supersedes</b>	New Framework
<b>Related Policies</b>	Employability Policy & Framework; Student Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) Policy; Student Attendance and Engagement Policy; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy; Student Voice and Representation Framework
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<b>Regulatory Reference</b>	Office for Students (OfS) Conditions of Registration; UK Quality Code for Higher Education; Equality Act 2010; UK higher education employability and graduate outcomes good practice
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## **1. Background**

Oakwood College is pleased to propose the introduction of the Student Employment Recognition Award (SERA). The Award is designed to recognise and celebrate students who successfully balance their studies with meaningful employment and who can evidence learning, development and contribution arising from this experience.

As a student-centred institution, Oakwood College seeks to acknowledge not only academic success but also the skills, behaviours and professional attributes gained through employment, including part-time work, internships, placements, vacation roles and campus-based jobs.

## **2. Purpose and Aims**

**The SERA Award aims to:**

- Recognise students who demonstrate commitment and professionalism in voluntary projects & employment alongside their studies.
- Encourage students to reflect on and articulate the skills and competencies developed through work.
- Enhance student employability through structured reflection, skills workshops and engagement with employers.
- Strengthen relationships between Oakwood College, employers and students by showcasing positive student contributions in the workplace.

## **3. Scope and Eligibility**

**3.1 The Award is open to all registered degree students of Oakwood College who:**

- Are engaged in paid or unpaid employment during term time and/or vacation periods (including self-employment where appropriate).
- Have been employed for a minimum of 2 weeks within the current academic year or have completed a substantive internship/placement totalling at least 20 hours.
- The award mainly focuses on Level 5 & Level 6 students, however, other students can also participate.

**3.2 Eligible employment may include:**

- Part-time jobs (on campus or off campus).
- Internships and work placements.

- Vacation or seasonal work.
- Paid roles with current employer or within the student-led enterprises.

3.3 Students must be in good academic and disciplinary standing at the point of application.

#### **4. Award Structure**

**The SERA Award comprises three main components:**

##### **1. Employment Engagement**

Documented evidence of employment, including role, responsibilities, duration and typical hours.

##### **2. Skills Development and Reflection**

A reflective portfolio in which students identify, and evidence key employability skills gained through work (e.g. communication, teamwork, problem-solving, customer service, digital skills, leadership).

##### **3. Summative Assessment**

A short interview and/or presentation to an Oakwood College panel in which students articulate their learning, contribution to the employer, and how their employment experience links to future career plans.

Students will also have access to optional employability workshops (e.g. CVs, applications, interview skills, professional communication) which may be recognised as part of the Award.

#### **5. Application and Evidence Requirements**

**To be considered for the SERA Award, students must submit:**

- A completed SERA application form.
- Confirmation of employment (e.g. contract, letter or email from employer, or recent payslips).
- A reflective portfolio (recommended 1,500–2,000 words) covering:
  - Description of role(s) and responsibilities.
  - Key challenges faced and how they were addressed.

- Specific examples demonstrating employability skills.
- Reflections on balancing work and study.
- Future development goals.
- An employer statement or short reference commenting on performance, reliability and contribution (where feasible).

## **6. Assessment and Panel**

### **6.1 The SERA Award will be assessed annually by a Panel convened by Oakwood College, comprising:**

- A senior academic representative.
- A representative from Careers/Employability or Student Support.
- An employer representative or external partner (where possible).

### **6.2 Assessment will be based on:**

- Quality and duration of employment engagement.
- Evidence of skills development and reflective insight.
- Demonstrated contribution to the employer.
- Professionalism and clarity of communication in written submissions and at interview/presentation.

### **6.3 Shortlisted candidates will be invited to:**

- Attend a short interview with the Panel, and/or
- Deliver a brief presentation (e.g. 5–10 minutes) summarising their employment experience, key learning and impact.

## **7. Award Levels and Recognition**

### **The Panel may confer:**

- SERA Award (Pass).
- SERA Award with Merit.
- SERA Award with Distinction.

**Recognition may include:**

- A formal certificate issued by Oakwood College.
- Recording of the Award on the student's Oakwood College transcript or achievement record (where applicable).
- Inclusion in College communications and employability events to showcase student success.

## **8. Quality Assurance, Evaluation and Impact**

Oakwood College will monitor and evaluate the SERA Award annually, including:

- Number and profile of applicants and awardees.
- Feedback from students, employers and staff.
- Evidence of impact on student confidence, employability skills and career outcomes. Findings will inform future enhancements to the SERA Award, including potential expansion of recognised employment types, additional workshops, and deeper collaboration with employer partners.

## **9. Future Developments**

Over time, Oakwood College will seek to:

- Broaden employer engagement, including local SMEs and regional partners.
- Align SERA with other Oakwood College awards and recognition schemes.
- Explore digital badges or micro credentials to further evidence student achievement to external stakeholders.