Introduction

Work Based or Placement Learning can provide you with a valuable opportunity to develop your employability skills and gain vital professional experience, which will give you an advantage when you apply for jobs.

So why do a Work Placement or Work Based Learning?

- Graduate recruiters warn that graduates who have had no previous work experience at all are unlikely to be successful during the selection process and have little or no chance of receiving a job offer for their organisations’ graduate programmes.

- 90% of the country’s top graduate employers are offering paid work experience programmes for students and recent graduates during the 2016-2017 academic year, providing 13,917 places.

- Three-quarters of employers provide paid vacation internships for penultimate year students and at least half offer industrial placements for undergraduates (typically lasting 6-12 months as part of a university degree course).

- Substantial numbers of employers now also have work experience places for first year undergraduates over a quarter of organisations offer paid internships and two-fifths of employers run introductory courses, open days and other taster experiences for first year students.

This guide is split into 5 sections:

1. Different Types of Placement
2. Where to Look for Placements
3. Useful Websites
4. Information for International Students
5. Applying for Placements
1. Different Types of Work Based and Placement Learning

There are several different types of Work Based and Placement Learning available:

Company visits
Usually undertaken as a supervised, group activity either as part of the curriculum or outside, as an enrichment activity for students.

Insight days
Offered and advertised by employers, aimed at first or second year undergraduate students.

Internships / Vacation placements
A short term placement opportunity usually offered and advertised by employers although may also be secured through a speculative application. Taken by students at any level of study in a vacation time or part time during an academic year.

Elsewhere, the term “internships” is used in another context to describe opportunities for new graduates.

Practice placements
Governed by a formal agreement between the Higher Education provider and employers, these placements are usually undertaken on programmes where qualification leads to a licence to practice such as in health or education. Students will often do multiple practice placements as part of their programme of study and employers may be involved in the assessment of students.

Projects
Negotiated pieces of work, either group based or individual that may be sourced by the Higher Education provider or the student and can be located at the employers’ premises.

Sandwich placements
A placement equivalent of a year’s academic study (30-52 weeks depending on the Higher Education provider’s regulations). Typically taken by undergraduate students as the penultimate year of their programme.

Semester placements
If a full time placement, it would be equivalent of a semester’s academic study (12-15 weeks depending on the Higher Education provider’s regulations). May also be used to describe a part time placement where a student integrates spending 1 or 2 days a week throughout the semester on placement with their academic study.

Semester or Year Abroad
When a student opts to study at an overseas Higher Education provider which has collaborative / reciprocal agreement with their home Higher Education provider, this could include a period of work or may be study only. This may be part of, or additional to, their degree e.g. Erasmus, the EU educational exchange programme.
Work shadowing
This is short term, providing informal activities where a student will spend time on company premises but will have no contract or expectation of making a working contribution; it is an observation opportunity.

Work based award
A full programme where the employment setting is used as a contextual focus for the learning regularly throughout the degree; either retrospectively through reflection or prospectively through the setting of specific projects.

2. Where to Look for Placements

Your Placement Tutor
Your course may have a member of staff who has responsibility for work placements. They are usually known as the ‘Placements Tutor. Their role is to provide support and information about placements. If you do not know who they are, ask a member of staff in your department/ school office.

Careers and Enterprise

On-line Placement Opportunities
Careers and Employability advertise undergraduate and graduate placements, vacation placements, internships and voluntary placements on-line at https://www.salford.ac.uk/askus/work-and-careers/search-for-a-jobfind-a-placement/work-placements

Placement Publications
There are a range of placement-focused publications both web based and hard copies that you can pick up for free!


Target: Internships - https://targetjobs.co.uk/internships have up to date information on different forms of both assessed and Co-curricular Work Experience opportunities.

These publications contain lots of help and advice on searching for placements, and provide some helpful case studies of students who have been on placement.

Employer Directories
You can also pick up a free copy of Prospects Graduate employer directory and sector specific publications from Careers and Enterprise. These mostly contain adverts for graduate jobs, but are a good way of getting contact details for the major companies in your sector.
**Occupational Information**

There are lots of useful websites relating to different industries, which may help you search for a placement - [http://www.prospects.ac.uk/types_of_jobs.htm](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/types_of_jobs.htm)

For information on researching companies in specific sectors, please see our range of Careers Guides on Job Hunting - [https://www.salford.ac.uk/askus/work-and-careers/career-advice/resources/accordion/career-guides](https://www.salford.ac.uk/askus/work-and-careers/career-advice/resources/accordion/career-guides).

We also have information on local companies in a variety of sectors. Take a look at our website at: [https://www.salford.ac.uk/askus/work-and-careers/Career-advice/how-do-i-get-a-job](https://www.salford.ac.uk/askus/work-and-careers/Career-advice/how-do-i-get-a-job)

Many smaller companies may not advertise placement opportunities but you can still apply speculatively. Pick up our guides on Creating your CV & Writing a Covering Letter in our download zone: [https://www.salford.ac.uk/askus/work-and-careers/career-advice/resources/accordion/career-guides](https://www.salford.ac.uk/askus/work-and-careers/career-advice/resources/accordion/career-guides).

**Meet Employers on Campus**

Careers and Employability work with Schools to organise a number of school-specific placement fairs throughout the academic year. We also organise presentations by employers throughout the year. Details of upcoming fairs and presentations can be found at [https://www.salford.ac.uk/askus/work-and-careers/career-events/meet-employers](https://www.salford.ac.uk/askus/work-and-careers/career-events/meet-employers)

Your placement tutor should also know about any upcoming placement-related events.

You can also find out information about placement opportunities and events on your school web-pages and Blackboard. For more information on visit: [https://www.salford.ac.uk/askus/work-and-careers/search-for-a-job/find-a-placement/workplacements](https://www.salford.ac.uk/askus/work-and-careers/search-for-a-job/find-a-placement/workplacements)

You might find it useful to book onto a Careers workshop, which looks at key areas of job seeking, application, interviews and how to utilise work experience. To find out more about workshops visit: [https://www.salford.ac.uk/askus/work-and-careers/career-events](https://www.salford.ac.uk/askus/work-and-careers/career-events)
3. Useful websites
The following are a selection of useful websites which will help you get started in your search for a placement:

Careers and Enterprise website
On the Careers Service website you will find advice on placements, placement vacancies, details of news and events and electronic copies of our hand-outs and placement guides: https://myadvantage.salford.ac.uk/students/jobs

Graduate Prospects
You can use the Prospects website to research types of job and find employer information, and also search for details of Work Experience fairs: http://www.prospects.ac.uk/work_experience.htm

Target jobs
You can find sector specific advice on placements, research employers and find placement opportunities on this site: http://targetjobs.co.uk/internships

The Year in Industry
A scheme that places students in engineering, science, technology and business on yearlong paid placements: http://www.etrust.org.uk/year_in_industry.cfm

Rate My Placement
The UK’s definitive website for undergraduate work experience.
RateMyPlacement is the UK’s leading website for undergraduate work experience. Receiving 2 million student visitors each year, we work with over 350 clients across a wide range of industries to promote their brand and undergraduate opportunities to our audience of career-conscious students: http://www.ratemyplacement.co.uk

Graduate Placements
Knowledge Transfer Partnerships
These placements enable recently qualified graduates (known as KTP Associates) to work in companies managing challenging projects central to the development needs of participating companies. They last between 12 and 36 months. http://www.ktponline.co.uk

The National Association of Student Employment Services (NASES)
Employment advice for students: https://www.nases.org.uk/main-menu/useful-links

Shell STEP
Shell STEP organise 8 week placements in small and medium sized businesses. You must be a second or penultimate year student to take part: http://www.step.org.uk/
### Overseas placements

**International Exchange Programmes**  
The University’s webpage for International Work Placements provides contact details for the International Placement Tutors and details of the Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci schemes.  
http://www.salford.ac.uk/study-abroad-and-exchange.

**AIESEC**  
AIESEC arrange work abroad programmes for students lasting between 2 and 18 months in a wide range of countries.  
http://www.aiesec.org

**Council in International Educational Exchange (CIEE)**  
Internships and Work & Travel programmes around the world for students.  
http://www.ciee.org

**International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience (IAESTE)**  
IAESTE UK provides paid course related summer placements abroad for science, engineering and applied arts penultimate year students: http://www.iaeste.org.uk

### Diversity placements

This is a selection of the Diversity placement schemes available. For details of other schemes visit our website:  

**Disability Advice**  
Advice and information for students with disabilities who are looking for/ taking up Work Experience.  

**Diversity Programme**  
Summer placements in government departments for students of Black or Asian origin and for students who have a disability.  

**Windsor Fellowship**  
Two year leadership programme for Black and Asian undergraduates which includes a six week work placement.  
http://www.windsor-fellowship.org

**Employ-Ability**  
Opportunities for disabled and dyslexic students & graduates  
http://www.employ-ability.org.uk

There are several Graduate Placement schemes for unemployed graduates across the country. For more details view or pick up a copy of the booklet: Job Hunting for Graduates  
4. Information for International Students

There are specific regulations relating to International students taking up sandwich placements and internships. Detailed guidance is available on the UKCISA website: https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Working/Can-you-work

If you have a ‘prohibition’ passport stamp or visa sticker, it is important that you check your status with an authorised University Adviser.

Authorised Advisers include the International Advisers in the Student Assistance Office, tel. 0161 295 0023 or the International Student Adviser at the Students Union, tel: 0161 295 3379.

5. Applying for Placements

Application for placements is usually formal and can be very competitive. Make sure you are organised and meet any deadlines given. By using Careers & Employability in the ways detailed below you can make sure that you are prepared and make the best application you possibly can.

A Pre Placement Guide for students is available here: https://www.salford.ac.uk/askus/work-and-careers/search-for-a-job/find-a-placement/work-placements.

You can find copies of all our online career guides here - https://www.salford.ac.uk/askus/work-and-careers/career-advice/resources/accordion/career-guides. These include:

- Creating your CV,
- Writing a Covering Letter
- Successful Application Forms,
- Preparing for Interviews.

Improve your CV
We run a series of CV workshops where you can find information and advice on constructing a targeted CV. You can also book a 20min 1-1 CV Review appointment: https://www.salford.ac.uk/askus/work-and-careers/career-advice/resources/how-to-improve-your-cv.

Book a Work Based and Placement Learning Appointment with a Careers Consultant
If you would like to discuss your options in more detail you can book a confidential 30 minute appointment with a Careers Consultant. Appointments can be booked online, via telephone or visit the askUS Desk at University House. https://www.salford.ac.uk/askus/work-and-careers/career-advice/make-an-appointment.
Book a Mock Interview
Once you have been invited for an interview by a company you can use our Mock Interview Service. For further details about this service please email us at askUS-careers@salford.ac.uk or contact us on 0161 295 0023.

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