



UNIVERSITY OF
PLYMOUTH

Employers' Guide to Placements



If you require this publication in larger print or an alternative format please contact:

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**CAREERS
SERVICE**

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Introduction

The Employer's Role in the Success of the Work Placement

The opportunities which a work placement affords a student are invaluable to the development of the student's practical and interpersonal skills and in integrating the knowledge and skills acquired during the initial stages of the student's programme of study.

Successful achievement of the placement objectives, outlined below, are dependent upon the student's attitude to the placement as well as the support provided by the host organisation, particularly in terms of the variety of experience offered, the degree of involvement with personnel at all levels, and the information provided by the employer about the organisation and its activities.

Whilst students are expected to justify their employer's investment in them, it is hoped that the employer will recognise that the period of industrial experience is an **essential learning process for the student** and not simply temporary employment in order to comply with the formalities of the student's programme of study. In this respect, **employers are requested to consider students in the same way as their permanent staff and to create opportunities both for learning and for the personal development of the student.**

Work Based Learning (WBL)

There is also the opportunity to engage with our students for shorter projects as part of 'work based learning' modules. The lengths of these vary between courses and the student does not require a whole year away from University.

The information in these 'Employer Guidelines' relates to the **Placement Year**. For further information on how to engage with students through the Work Based Learning option, please contact the Placement team.



Placement Aims and Benefits

Placement Aims

To allow the student to:

- Develop and reinforce the academic accomplishments derived from the first two stages of the degree programme.
- Experience mature employment and, where appropriate, accept responsibility for the completion of tasks and supervision of others.
- Develop key graduate attributes and skills.
- Gain an insight into management and management methods.
- Attain greater maturity and self-confidence.
- Develop attitudes and standards appropriate to defined career objectives.
- Gain significant, programme relevant, practical knowledge and experience.
- Encourage self-development through critical reflection.
- Prepare for the final stage of their degree.
- Achieve a Certificate of Work Experience.

Work Placement Benefits

- Students can bring fresh and innovative ideas to your business.
- They can provide you with essential additional skills, helping you tackle key business projects.
- A student can bring enthusiasm and a new dynamic to your team.
- Future talent stream – how about bringing them back on a graduate programme?

"Benefits of having students with different knowledge and skills each year, enables us to extend our knowledge, particularly in some specialist ways. Students also help to bring an element of diversity to our team, particularly in terms of age."

- Julie Mizen, Deputy Head of Stubbington Study Centre

Placement Basics

How long is the Placement?

To be awarded a Certificate of Work Experience, students must complete the number of weeks as required by their course in full time employment. This is usually completed with a single employer, but can be made up of two placements with different employers. The student must agree the dates of commencement and termination of the employment with the employer.

Pay - what's the going rate?

Students are required to make their own arrangements regarding rates of pay, working hours, National Insurance and holidays with the employer and these should be agreed before the placement commences. For further information contact the Placements Team.

Support - Employer

The student will require a nominated line manager/supervisor who will act as their mentor and oversee the student's induction to the organisation and his/her programme of work. Placement providers are asked to provide the following as a minimum level of support to placement students:

- Participate in the negotiation of the placement arrangement and offer advice about the organisation and management of the placement.
- Ensure that students are provided with appropriate facilities and working conditions at the organisation's site and are made aware of relevant insurance and health and safety requirements.
- Provide regular supervision of the placement to see that designated tasks are properly completed. Also, make sure that students have a clear idea of what is expected of them and how they should approach their work.
- Provide students with information about the management and organisation of the work-place and discuss more general issues relating to the economic/environmental context within which the organisation operates.
- Arrange appropriate training for your placement student.
- Offer the student helpful feedback on their progress and performance and liaise with the Placement Tutor on matters related to the student's assessment.
- Reimburse expenses incurred as part of the work duties.

Support - University

Each student is provided with an allocated academic supervisor known as their **Placement Tutor* or Academic Adviser**, depending on the course of study. The Placement Tutor will visit the student (where possible) at least once in person and stay in regular contact via email, phone or Zoom/MS Teams.

*In this guide we will refer to the member of academic staff as the Placement Tutor.

The main purpose of the placement visit is to:

- See how well a student has settled into the job role and check that a suitable range of activities is being undertaken.
- Assess what sort of contribution the student is making to the organisation and to discuss the skills they are developing.
- Assess the employer's attitude towards the student and the quality of the student's work.
- Ensure that the student is fully aware of the health and safety provision of the organisation.

Contact with the University

Both employers and students should feel at liberty to contact the Placements Team and/or their Placement Tutor at any time during the placement to discuss any matters of concern, or seek clarification of any points that arise. The first point of contact should normally be the student's Placement Tutor. If students experience any problems specifically relating to their placement, the University advises that their first course of action should be to try to resolve these with their employer/supervisor.

The employer should notify the University as soon as possible if they have any concerns about the student's work or welfare at any time during the placement.

Re-sitting of Failed Modules

Employers and students should be aware that the period of placement should not normally start before 1st July in order that students are fully aware of any resit/repeat requirements before they start their placements. Students who do have to complete referred coursework/exams should do so at the same time as all other students and should be enabled to return to University to take any exams in September. An exception to this would be where a student is undertaking an international placement, where students could be set coursework in lieu of an exam rather than returning to the UK.

As always your students have made a significant and valuable contribution to our work here at the Marine Biological Association – they are dependable, fast-learners and enthusiastic.

- Alix Harvey, Ecology Laboratory Manager - MBA

Health & Safety

Under the **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASAW) 1974** any organisation in the UK, which provides sandwich training or work experience for students, assumes the prime responsibility for their health and safety at work.



Before a student begins a placement we ask the placement provider to complete and return an Employer Health and Safety Checklist. This will be organised by the Placements Team. Health and safety procedures and related materials should be included within the induction that a student receives at the beginning of their placement, including the identification of a named individual responsible for the health and safety of the student throughout the placement.

During the first week of the student's placement the student must have a meeting with their line manager. The discussion should include what will be expected of them in their first few weeks as well as any policies in relation to health, safety and wellbeing. The student must also complete and return a Health and Safety Checklist by the end of their first week. Please be prepared to assist the student with this as it does require a small amount of input from the placement provider.

The Recruitment Process

Recruiting our students could not be easier. We have an online careers platform called MyCareer which is free of charge and easy to use. Once you have created a profile/account you can upload and manage vacancies anytime. You can also book onto upcoming events that we are hosting via the platform.

In order to advertise a Placement vacancy you will be required to provide a placement advert - this should include:

- Information about your organisation.
- Job description - highlighting the expected typical tasks and project involvement.
- Technical skills and personal attributes important to the role/company.
- Method of Application - CV & Covering letter to an email you provide, or, a link to your website's career page.
- A closing date.
- Salary.

The placements team will advertise directly to the relevant students. It is then up to each individual organisation how they wish to carry out the rest of the recruitment process.

We ask employers to support **diversity and inclusion** in the workplace, ensuring opportunities are open to all with no restrictions on age or other characteristics. We encourage employers to advertise with links to relevant policies or awards, or to include a diversity statement along the lines of, "We welcome and encourage all students from all backgrounds and sections of the community to apply."

Placements should be in line with the **2010 Equality Act** and employers should make any necessary and reasonable adjustments to accommodate a placement student in the case of disability or additional needs.

Once an offer has been made, and depending on subject area, students are required to provide us with copies of an;

- Offer letter and Employment Contract, or
- Learning Agreement

If you have any queries on recruiting our students, please contact the placements team on 01752 586007 or email placements@plymouth.ac.uk

International Students

Plymouth University currently has around 2000 International Students. Most of these students will be studying in Plymouth on a Tier 4 visa, and this allows them to undertake a full time work or study placement as part of their degree course, as long as it is an integral and assessed part of the course.



The University remains responsible for them whilst on their placement, and the UKVI compliance team would contact employers (or tutors if a study placement) monthly to check that the student has been attending and everything is progressing as it should. If you have any queries please email ukvi-reporting@plymouth.ac.uk

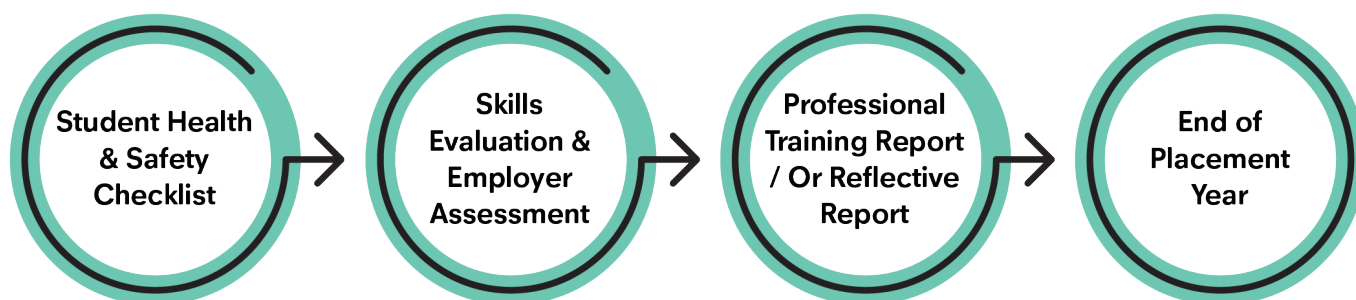
“Having placement students has really added to our school and supported whole school development by moving research into action. It has been great to see placement student’s confidence grow and everything they have achieved. We are also very proud that many of them have been inspired by their placement to work in the area of special educational needs.”

- Claire Wills, Headteacher - Mill Ford School

Placement Assessment Requirements

The placement assessment requirements will differ depending on the programme of study, but all students are strongly encouraged to keep a reflective log.

36 - 48 Weeks (Technology, Engineering, Digital Arts, Business and Built Environment)

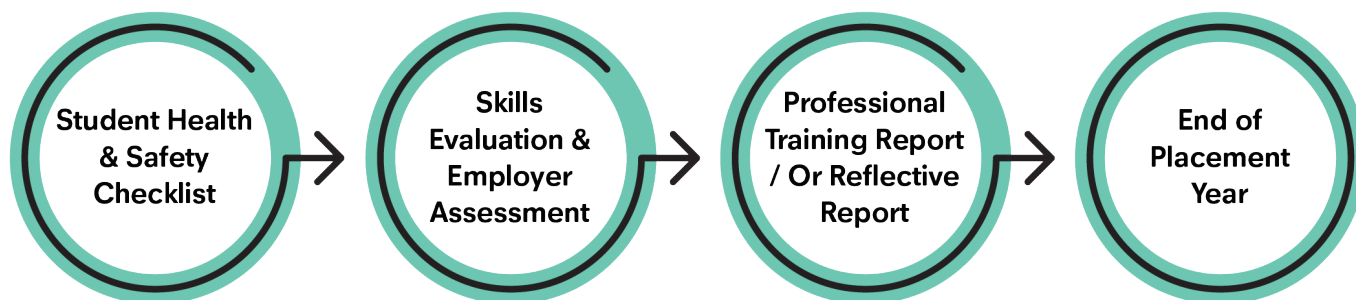


24 - 36 Weeks (Psychology, School of Society & Culture, and 3D Design)



Interim Reports: Psychology students submit an 'Interim Report' to their tutor in February reflecting on their progress.

24 Week (Sciences, Chemistry and Biomedical Science, Human Bioscience)



Reflective log: Students keep a 'reflective log' throughout the placement, which in some cases is submitted alongside their Final Report.

Skills Evaluation & Employer Assessment

An integral requirement to all placements is the completion of the **'Skills Evaluation and Employer Assessment'**. The students' line manager will be sent a copy two weeks before the placement ends. This is an opportunity for the student and their line manager to reflect upon the placement and skills developed. We ask that where possible and once complete, this form is returned via the line manager before the placement finishes.



End of Placement Project / Professional Training Report

During the placement period, the student maybe required to complete a written project/report on their placement experience. The academic requirements for this will be different depending on the subject.

"It was a very positive experience having a student with us for a year. Their skillset was pretty high when they started and she was up and running and contributing as a valued member of the team surprisingly quickly. She showed real interest in our business and the industry as a whole and was an asset to us. So yes a very positive experience all in all."

- Tom Lawson, Associate Director - SD Solution

Summary of Employers' Responsibilities

Employers are asked to:

- Provide students with the required pre-placement documentation according to subject requirements.
- Nominate an individual who will supervise and oversee the student's induction to the organisation.
- Ensure the student is fully aware of the relevant health and safety and insurance requirements.
- Return the Employer Health and Safety Checklist to the Placements Team.
- Regularly provide the student with helpful feedback on their progress and performance.
- Provide feedback to the University by taking part in the Placement Tutor visit and advising the Faculty of any concerns.
- Assess the student by completing the Skills Evaluation & Employer Assessment at the end of the placement.

Disclosing Disabilities

By law students do not have to declare their disability, however we encourage them to do so in order for them to access the full range of support available to them.

We ask employers to do all they reasonably can, to create an environment and recruitment process where students feel safe and comfortable to talk about their disability. This will enable the student to confidently present the disability to the employer and this experience will be beneficial to the student's graduate employment journey; it may be that disclosure will be a part of their working lives and this is good experience prior to graduation.

Breaking down barriers is important, and helping both students and employers to focus on what they are capable of, rather than restricted to, is crucial to building a more equal workforce.

For further information please visit [the Gov.UK website for guidance on employing disabled people and people with health conditions](#).

Courses and degree subject areas

- ✈ [Biological Sciences](#)
- ✈ [Biomedical Sciences](#)
- ✈ [Built Environment](#)
- ✈ [Business, Management, Marketing, Finance, and Maritime and Logistics](#)
- ✈ [Chemistry](#)
- ✈ [Computing](#)
- ✈ [Design](#)
- ✈ [Earth, Geography and Environmental Science](#)
- ✈ [Engineering](#)
- ✈ [English](#)
- ✈ [Hospitality, Tourism and Events Management](#)
- ✈ [Law and Criminology](#)
- ✈ [Marine Sciences](#)
- ✈ [Mathematical Sciences](#)
- ✈ [Psychology](#)
- ✈ [Humanities](#)
- ✈ [Performing Arts](#)
- ✈ [Sociology, International Relations and Politics](#)
- ✈ [Music](#)

For more detailed information on placement year requirements and assessment, based on the subject of study, please contact the Placements Team.

As an employer, here are some more ways you can get involved with the Careers Service. Please feel free to email employers.careers@plymouth.ac.uk if you would like to talk to one of the Employer Engagement Team.

Micro Internships

This is a recent initiative from the University of Plymouth for undergraduate students to assist them with preparation for placements and give additional voluntary work experience. These micro-Internships are 3-10 days only and take place in student vacation time. Working on small projects within the University or with an external company, there are three cycles; Spring, Summer and Winter. Students work in remote and hybrid environments to develop and enhance their transferable skills. If you are interested in hosting a micro-internship, perhaps to work on a specific project, please email internships@plymouth.ac.uk.

Networking, Events, Fairs, Panels and Competitions

Employer Engagement is crucial to the University and we have a variety of ways for you to engage with our students from recruiting online with our free vacancy service or attending our popular fairs, offering advice at networking events, giving an overview of your sector at panels or having space in our library to showcase your company and talk to students. Our portfolio of events is evolving so get in contact to see how we can support you and our students or visit mycareer.plymouth.ac.uk.

The Professional Mentoring Programme

The Mentoring Programme gives professionals the opportunity to offer advice and guidance to support a student within an academic year. Support can be around career paths, tips on interviews or highlights of working in the sector and the mentor and student work towards goals throughout the year. Training events and a celebration occurs for this programme.

To find out more visit www.plymouth.ac.uk/mentoring or email mentoring.careers@plymouth.ac.uk



[Employer webpage](#)

CONTACT US

Placements Team

01752 586007 / placements@plymouth.ac.uk

The Careers Service

01752 587456 / careers@plymouth.ac.uk



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