

Placement Preparation

Finding your Own Placement

Making a telephone call to secure a placement

Writing a 'Letter of Application'

Tips on writing a CV

Arranging an interview

At the interview



Finding your Own Placement

1. Decide on the type of work you would like to do. It may be related to an idea for a future career or just an area of work that you would like to experience. All Work Experience can be equally valuable regardless of the career link, providing it gives you a good opportunity to develop your **Employability Skills**.

2. Look for a placement by asking your parents or carers, relations and friends, if they know anyone doing the type of work that you are interested in. You can also ask your tutor and staff at school or college, look at advertisements in newspapers and magazines, enquire at customer service desks, look at shop fronts and businesses in your home area and on the way to school or college, research in libraries and on the internet.

3. Discuss your ideas with your parents or carers and tutor. You should not arrange a placement where you will be working closely with a parent or relative or where you already have a part time or holiday job. It is important that Work Experience is a 'new challenge' in terms of people and environment.

4. Consider the geographical location. You need to take into account where you live, what transport links are available and how long will the travel times be from your home to your placement.

5. Contact the company or organisation and ask if they are prepared to accept you for Work Experience. This can be done by telephone, personal visit or letter. Make sure that you know the dates of your Work Experience and advise the company of these. Think about why you would like to do Work Experience within that organisation and remember to be enthusiastic in your communication. A copy of your CV should be taken when making a visit or enclosed with your letter when applying to the company.

6. Once you have confirmed a placement, you should complete an Own Placement Form downloaded from WebView or a similar document provided by your school or college.

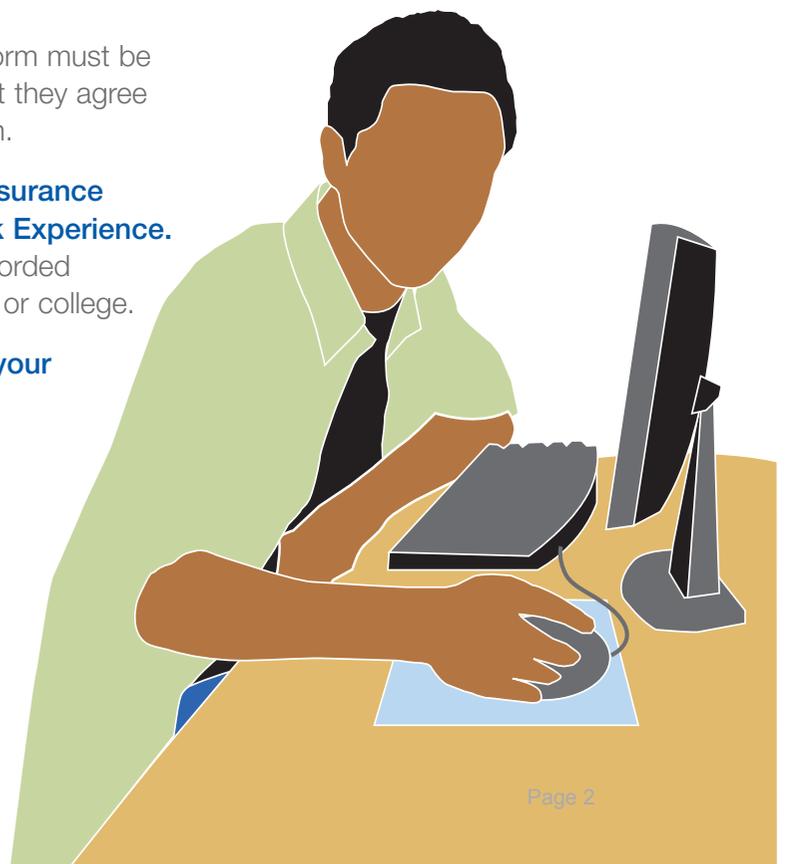
Send or take it to the company or organisation. The form must be completed and signed by the employer to confirm that they agree to you doing Work Experience within their organisation.

7. The Company must have Employers' Liability Insurance otherwise you will not be able to go there for Work Experience.

The policy number and expiry date will need to be recorded on the Own Placement Form provided by your school or college.

8. The completed form should then be handed to your school or college Work Experience Co-ordinator, before the deadline date given.

Your placement will then be checked for suitability, insurance and health and safety before it is finally confirmed that you can go there for Work Experience.



Placement Preparation

Making a telephone call to secure a placement

Before you dial

Have a pen and paper ready to record any information you are given.

- Make sure you know the correct number
- Make sure you know the correct name of the company or organisation you are trying to contact
- If possible, find out the name of the person you are trying to contact in advance. (If not, you can ask the first person who answers for the name of the Human Resources Manager, Personnel Manager, Work Experience Supervisor, or other suitable person to help you.)

Making the call

- Ensure that there will be no distracting background noise (e.g. music, traffic, friends talking, noisy machinery)
- Dial the correct number

When someone answers

- Say “Good Morning” or “Good Afternoon”, as appropriate
- Introduce yourself, giving your name and school or college
- Explain why you are phoning e.g. “I am phoning to ask about the possibility of your company or organisation offering a Work Experience placement betweenand..... etc”
- Explain why you would like to do your Work Experience there
- Ask to speak to someone who can help you
- Remember to ask for the person’s name



If you are passed to a different person

- Introduce yourself again in the same way and repeat the information suggested above

If the person agrees to accept you for Work Experience

- You will need to arrange for an Own Placement Form or similar document provided by your school or college to be completed. Please advise the employer of this and arrange to either send or take the form to them
- The form must be signed by a person in a position of responsibility e.g. a manager
- The employer may wish to see you for an interview before they confirm that they will be able to take you for Work Experience

Remember to always speak politely and clearly and remember to thank people for their help.

Placement Preparation

Writing a 'Letter of Application'

Writing a good 'Letter of Application' will often give a positive impression to an employer

Below is a typical layout of a 'Letter of Application'. Remember to keep it brief, one side of A4 only, with no spelling or grammatical errors and on good quality paper.

Your name and address

Name of contact
Their job title
Name and address of the company

Date

Dear name of contact *or*
Dear Sir/Madam

1st paragraph - introduce yourself and explain why you are writing e.g.
My name is _____ I am a student at _____
and I am looking for Work Experience from _____
(state the dates that you will be doing Work Experience)

2nd paragraph - explain what sort of Work Experience you are looking for and why you have chosen this company.

3rd paragraph - give some information about yourself e.g. what are your best subjects at school or college, hobbies, sports, interests, skills and abilities etc? But don't repeat at length everything that's written in your CV!

4th paragraph - finish your letter on a positive note and say that you are looking forward to hearing from them.

Yours sincerely (if addressed to a named contact)
or Yours faithfully (if addressed to Sir/Madam)

Your signature
Your name in full

Placement Preparation

Tips on writing a CV

When you are seeking Work Experience a well presented CV will help with your application

The most common and accepted sequence for presenting information about yourself is as follows:

Your name

- If you **always** shorten your first name, are commonly known by the shortened form and would introduce yourself as such, then it is increasingly acceptable to use.

Full contact details

- Postal address, telephone or mobile numbers, e-mail address

Education

- Name, location and dates of schools or colleges attended in date order
- Qualifications achieved, results pending, subjects studied and level of study

Responsibilities and achievements

- Identify responsibilities held and any specific targets or goals achieved
- Aim to include references to successful achievements with each responsibility. Use bullet points starting with an **action** word such as: won, achieved, improved, built, formed, launched etc

Work Experience

- List specific experience, preferably in date order, most recent first

Interests and hobbies

- Include information which will **add** something to a reader's impression of you

Layout

- Generally MS Word format, A4 portrait
- Ideally 2 pages maximum
- Use an easy-to-read, standard font such as Arial, Helvetica (this document), Times New Roman, Verdana, Calibri etc
- Font size: 16, 14, 12pt for headings (use **Bold** to emphasise, avoid underlining)
12, 10pt for body text allows best use of space
(10pt is acceptable if there's lots of detail to be included)
- Use bullet points rather than long paragraphs
- Hard copies on white paper, no fancy binding or photographs of yourself!

Placement Preparation

Arranging an interview

You will usually have to attend an interview before you start Work Experience. You will need to create a good impression from the start and it is important to ensure that you prepare well before you contact your employer.

You need to find somewhere quiet where you will not be disturbed. Make sure that you have a pen and paper with you, along with details of your work experience placement.

To help you prepare, you should think about what you want to say in advance and record the following before you make your telephone call:

Company Name _____

Telephone No _____

“May I speak to _____ please?” *(Name of the person you wish to speak to)*

“I am _____ *(your name)* from _____ *(your school/college)*

and I am due to start work experience on _____” *(the date you are due to start)*

“I am telephoning to arrange an interview before my Work Experience”

(Listen to the response and make notes at once)

Date of interview _____ Interview time _____

Person to report to _____

Where to report _____

Ideally, this is the way the telephone call should go, but:

- If the line is engaged, try again until you get through
- If the person you want to speak to is unavailable, ask when it would be convenient to telephone them or leave a message, but **do** telephone again
- If the person you want to speak to has left the company, ask for the name of the person who has taken over responsibility for Work Experience and speak to them. Let your school Work Experience Co-ordinator know that the contact person has changed
- If you cannot contact anyone, let your school or college Work Experience Co-ordinator know at once



Placement Preparation

At the interview

Remember that first impressions are important

Your appearance will help to create a good impression if you dress appropriately. Make sure that you are clean and tidy.

It is also important to arrive on time. You should plan your travel arrangements carefully and allow plenty of extra time to make the journey in case of delays. Try to arrive a few minutes early to prepare yourself for the interview.

It would be useful to take along your CV, a copy of your Letter of Application and any Work Experience information you have been given.

If you have secured your own placement you will need to take an 'Own Placement' form for the employer to sign and record the policy number and expiry date of the company's Employers' Liability Insurance.

If there is a reception area you should speak to a member of staff there. You should give your name, explain that you have come for an interview and tell them the name of the person you have come to see.

Remember the following:

- No chewing and make sure your mobile phone is switched off!
- Shake hands with people that you meet and make eye contact
- Be polite to everyone, including staff in reception..... say "please" and "thank you". Wait to be invited to sit down. Smile and try to stay relaxed. Remember that your body language can give-off negative signals!
- Speak clearly and maintain good eye contact with the employer. Give full answers to questions, not just "yes" and "no". Listen to questions and instructions. If you do not understand something then ask politely for an explanation. Write down new information or instructions and don't rely on your memory
- Prepare some questions about the work that you may be doing and prepare answers to questions they may ask, for example: "What do you want to do when you leave school?" or "Why did you choose this type of Work Experience?" Be sensible with your answers
- Check that the employer knows what date you are starting and how long the placement lasts. Give advance warning of any time you need to take off, e.g. hospital appointments or exams and provide evidence of this
- If you have a pre-placement action plan, show it to your employer during the interview



Remember to be enthusiastic and smile during your interview!