

## Work Experience

### Student preparation – sourcing your placement

Work placements are a great way for you to start your career path. Quite often a work experience placement will be the first real experience of work that you have and so it's a great way for you to learn key transferable work skills that future employers will look for.

#### 1. Why do work Experience?

Work experience is an opportunity to spend a week or two with an employer, which may help you to decide what you want to do in the future. You will be treated like an employee, will be asked to abide by the employer's rules and policies and will gain valuable experiences. These experiences are to be used as evidence when applying for jobs when you leave education – employers always want to know your past experiences!

#### 2. What to choose?

The world is your oyster when it comes to choosing a work placement, there are minimal restrictions on the type of work placement a student can do. It's best to think about what your interests are, your hobbies and things you are already good at. If you are creative think about marketing or working in media. If you are good with computers an IT technician role or working with website creation. Do some research on potential roles or jobs you might like first and then decide. You may need to think about location, will you be able to get to the employer? Do you know anyone who might be able to get you a placement with their employer or any family members who run their own business and might be able to help?

#### 3. Applying for a work experience placement

The best way to get a placement is often face to face with an employer or by phone/email. A phone call is often the easiest way but make sure you write down what you are going to say before you call.

Firstly ask if they offer work experience, some businesses might not! Secondly you need to make sure you introduce yourself, state which school you attend, that you are looking for a work placement. Then give the dates of the placement and identify which area or department you would like to join. If you are emailing an employer write it out formally like a letter, and make sure you send from an email account which is suitable—your personal email address might not be so create a new account with just your name as your email address as it looks more mature and professional. Once a placement is agreed, send the employer your Self Generated Request form and ring them a few days after sending to make sure they received it.

#### 4. Creating a CV

If you are planning to approach employers in person you should have a CV and introductory letter ready to hand in to businesses. Employers would prefer to know a little about you before the commit to a work placement. By listing your skills, interests and hobbies on a CV an employer can pick you out from a crowd, please note some employers may receive many applicants or students asking them for a placement at the same time as you are.

Have a look at the CV template guide provided with this document for help when writing out a CV. Once you have completed your Work Experience Placement you can then update this CV with your experiences learnt during work placement. You can then keep adding to it throughout your career as you learn new skills.

#### 5. Writing your covering letter

With your CV should also be a letter to the employer which tells them why you are interested in working with them. Let the employer know about any skills you have which link to their business or the type of work placement you are looking for. If you are applying for several different job roles or employers (this is advised!) then you should tailor each letter to suit that job role or employer. A cover letter doesn't need to be more than one page in length.



## Work Experience CV writing guide.

Writing a CV (Curriculum Vitae) is the best way to show an employer your skills and experiences. It is a record of your achievements and successes. Its a way to log GCSE grades or predicted grades, show your commitment to out of school clubs or activities and also lists your skills and trait. Most CV's follow the same format so we have shown this format to you to base your CV on.

*List your name and address at the top of the CV so employers can get in touch with you:*

Mr John Smith  
10 Croft Farm  
Falmouth  
Cornwall  
CM1 2AB

Telephone: 0123 456 7789

Email: john.smith@hotmail.com—*make sure your email address is sensible!*

### Personal statement:

*Start with a little bit of background information into your personality.....*

“A highly motivated and hardworking individual, seeking an work experience placement. *NOTE (if you are looking for a specific industry such as engineering or mechanics then state this and list some skills/personality traits which will fit in with that industry, for example* “Mechanically minded, with a methodical approach to working and an eagerness to learn and develop personal skills in a practical setting. Eventual career goal is to become a fully-qualified and experienced maintenance or electrical engineer, with the longer-term aspiration of moving into project management”

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### Education:

*Usually if you are in high school you just need to put your school name and the date you started and date you finished or put “until present day”*

St Josephs High School, September 2011—present day

*Then state your predicted grades (year 10 and 11) or grades achieved at GCSE level (for students in Year 12 or 13.*

GCSE Grades:	Maths	A
	English	B
	English Literature	B
	Science	C
	PE	C
	Spanish	C

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### Key Skills:

- Problem solving and numeracy skills
- Good communication skills, both written and verbal, developed through numerous essays and presentations
- Ability to take the initiative and work well under pressure, ensuring strict deadlines are met
- Flexibility, whilst maintaining enthusiasm and commitment to each project
- Proficiency in all areas of Microsoft Office, including Access, Excel, Word and PowerPoint

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**Hobbies and Interests:** *employers will want to know a little about your hobbies or things you do out of school or in personal time. By playing sports it shows you are a team player and good at obeying orders or instructions. By being in the scouts or guides shows you have commitment and usually have good communication skills.*

*Things to include:*

- Sports you play or teams you are part of
- After school clubs you are part of
- Extra curriculum activities you are involved with
- Voluntary work—helping out at a church or library counts as previous work experience too
- If you have any other commitments such as Library monitor or head of house

*Remember to tailor your skills to suit each different type of job role - for example if looking for an engineering or mechanics role try using something like* “Over the last two summers I have helped a family friend restore a classic sports car. This has triggered a passionate interest in mechanics and automotive restoration and, now that the project is finished, I have continued to build my knowledge by attending various classic car events. I hope to put my interests and skills to the test by conducting a work experience placement within your organisation.”

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**References** - Please contact for reference *add this statement to the end of your CV—some employers may want a reference from someone who knows you, like a teacher or a family friend but an employer will get in touch if they require anything else from you.*

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