

Year 12

Guide to

Work

Experience

2024



CARDINAL
NEWMAN
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

What is a work experience placement?

A work experience placement is a period of time spent in a working environment. It is an opportunity to learn about a particular job or area of work by experiencing it for yourself. It should be a high quality and meaningful experience. Work experience can be a potential route to employment when vacancies arise. It is expected to help you prepare for entering the world of work. This guide is designed to help you to get the most from your work experience placement and give you tips and advice on preparing to find the placement.

Dates:

Year 12: Monday 15th July to Friday 19th July 2024

Please note: Most employers must have employer's liability insurance to host a placement – please check that they have this otherwise your placement may not be able to go ahead.

Not all businesses have to have this insurance, so please check if you are unsure with Mrs Scanlon.

DEADLINE for finding a placement and completing the private placement form is Friday 22nd March 2024.

Benefits of Work Experience

How will work experience benefit me in my career choices?

1. **Make informed choices** – try out an area of work that you are interested in to see if you enjoy it. It can also help you to find out what you don't enjoy!
2. **Find out about jobs** and industry sectors you hadn't considered or weren't aware of before
3. **Get an idea of what its like to work** in your chosen work environment and what would be expected of you
4. **Stand out from the crowd** – work experience shows potential employers your ambition and gives them a chance to get to know you
5. **Understand the relevance of your current learning** and how it relates to the workplace and getting a job, which can help motivate you to achieve your learning goals

How will work experience benefit me in my personal development?

1. **Identify your strengths and weaknesses** and the skills you already have
2. **Learn new skills and improve others** – such as teamwork and problem solving. You can get real examples to add to your CV
3. **Develop your social skills** – meeting and talking to new and different people, from workplace colleagues to your potential boss!
4. **Develop independence** e.g. travelling to work
5. **Gain confidence** and feel proud of what you achieved



“Work experience helps you learn about the industries you’re interested in, and gives you meaty things to write about in future applications. For some sectors - education, for example - admissions and recruiting staff will 100% expect to see relevant work experience when you apply.”

Choosing a Placement: Things to consider

Thinking of ideas for work experience can be a challenge, it can feel like there are lots of different options. Rather than trying to find the ‘perfect’ opportunity, look for a placement that ticks as many boxes as possible.

Instead of focusing on one specific job role, consider the wider career industry. For example, it may not be possible to shadow an anaesthetist, but you could explore other roles in the healthcare industry like working in a dental practice, nursing home, or GP clinic. These will all give you relevant experience that you can still learn from and reflect on in your applications.

Interests	Location	Aims	Challenge
What are your interests and what careers are linked to that area?	Where can you travel to?	What do you want to achieve and what sort of placement could help you to do that?	You may want to step out of your comfort zone and try something that challenges and stretches you

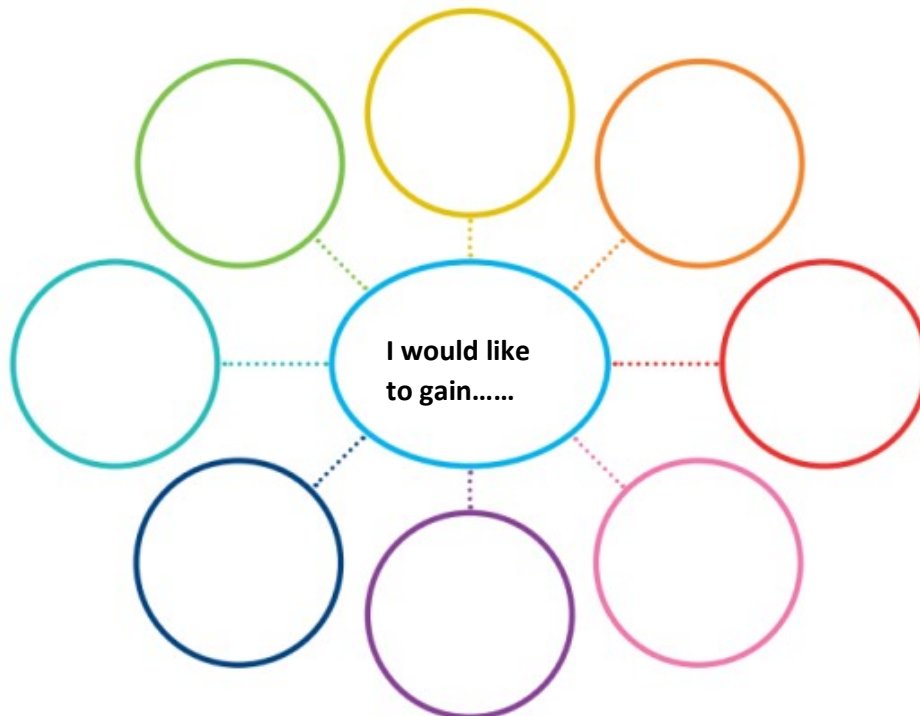
What are your soft skills? Are you good at.....

Most valued soft skills



What do you want to gain from the work experience placement?

Summarise some key ideas as to what you would like to gain from your work experience placement. This will help your parents/carers, form tutor, head of year and the careers advisor support you in finding a suitable placement.



Sourcing a Placement:

- Did you know that the biggest employers in Coventry and Warwickshire are Business, Financial Services and retail. Take a look at this website to find out more and find some of the biggest employers in the area: [LMI](#)
- Log into unifrog, using your school email address, to research jobs and careers that you find interesting: <https://www.unifrog.org/sign-in>
- Research industry sectors that interest you e.g. IT, finance, publishing, retail, social care, engineering, hair & beauty, sport & leisure.
- Search online for local employers working in your area/s of interest
- Ask family and friends for suggestions and contacts too. Employers could vary from small/medium sized companies that you haven't heard of, to well-known companies or organisations.
- Research employers' websites to find out what they do. What in particular interests you about them?
- You will be working on creating a CV and cover letter to send off to potential employers in your PSHE/pastoral sessions

Interviews

An interested employer might ask you for a telephone or face-to-face interview. Make a good first impression. Be professional and polite. Impress them with your research of their business and be passionate and enthusiastic about the possibility of working for them!

Practice answering some commonly asked questions, such as:

- Can you tell me a little about yourself?
- What do you know about our company?
- Why are you interested in doing a work experience placement with us?
- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?
- What's the accomplishment you feel proudest about?
- Do you have any questions about the job or this company?



Applying for a placement:

Keep a note of things

It's helpful if you can keep a note of which businesses you have approached, the date you applied and the date they replied. This will give you an instant reminder of how many applications you have sent and who you have contacted. You can use the grid at the end of this booklet to support.

How to apply for a placement through an email

You may wish to contact a potential placement via email to see if they can host you.

1. Search on the company website for an email address – make sure you actually want to go on placement there (ie. Where are they located – can you get there, is it in a industry that you want to work in,
2. Use this sample email to send to the employer

Sample email – Year 12:

Good morning,

I am a student in Year 12 at Cardinal Newman Catholic School in Coventry. I am enquiring as to whether you would consider offering a work experience placement to me in July. The dates of the placement are Monday 15th July to Friday 19th July 2024. I am interested in work experience with you as (insert reasons). I feel that I would be a good candidate for work experience as (insert skills e.g. I am organised, polite etc). I would be interested in finding out what tasks I might be able to take part in whilst on work experience.

If you have not hosted a work experience placement before, you can look at this guide to find out what you might need to do: <https://www.unifrog.org/placement/guides/for-employers-how-to-run-a-successful-placement>

If you think you would be able to host me for work experience, then I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Kind regards

(insert your full name)

How to apply for a placement by letter

Writing a speculative letter is probably one of the most important types of letter you'll write.

The employer may receive hundreds of letters for work experience and will only consider a few. There are some basic rules you must follow:

- Carefully research the company
- Choose a suitable format – formal letter.
- The letter will be the employer's first impression of you and will create either a good or bad impression
- You will likely send the letter via email, make sure that you spell check it and that your teacher/parent has checked it before you send it
- If you have a specific person's name, use it.
- Do not overload the letter with information, but do not 'sell yourself short' either. Make sure you give the employer enough accurate information to be impressed.
- Keep a copy of the letter for reference.

What points should you cover in your letter?

Checklist – You could add:

- Who you are
- Which area of experience are you applying for
- Why you would like to complete work experience at their workplace
- Where you can be contacted (your postal and email addresses; your mobile telephone number)
- The date
- The name of the specific person you are writing to and the firm's address
- How you heard about the opportunity, i.e. family friend/ relative
- Why you think you are suitable, show you're keen
- You are enclosing your C.V.
- You are willing to attend an interview if needed
- Your interests or experience
- Make sure you 'finish' the letter correctly. If you started with 'Dear Sir or Madam', finish the letter with 'Yours faithfully'. If you had a specific name, (Dear Mrs Wood), finish with 'Yours sincerely'.
- Always sign your name and print your name in capitals underneath.
- Think about the person receiving the letter – what will they want to know? Research the company. They want to know you are interested in spending a week shadowing an employee of that company.
- Employers ask you to apply in different ways. Letter, phone call, call in and see them.

How to make a speculative phone call to a company to gain a work experience.

A telephone is the fastest means of communicating with an employer. Learning how to use the telephone correctly could help you to get a placement.

1. Before you make the call know: -
 - Where you are ringing, get the number right!
 - Who you want to speak to
 - What you are going to say
 - Know what the next steps are if they agree to a placement
2. Be Organised
 - This is your chance to make your first impression, be prepared and confident
 - Write the person's name on a notepad
 - Have the notepad and pen ready
 - Make a list of things to ask
3. Make the Call
 - Make sure there are no loud background noises, i.e. music, loud voices and laughter.
 - Speak confidently and clearly, don't mutter
 - Use your natural speaking voice; don't 'put on' a posh one!
 - Listen to the person and answer their questions concisely, but not abruptly
 - Understand what you are told
 - Never eat, drink whilst making the call

What to do once you have confirmed a placement with an employer

You will need to complete the private placement form, which can be obtained from your tutor or the sixth form pastoral team.

You will need the correct contact details for the employer before starting the form and the employer will need to have agreed to the placement.

Need further help/support?

- Go to the careers drop in sessions with Ms Brennan in the lecture theatre after school on a Wednesday
- Speak with your tutor
- Go to the Unifrog guide to Work Experience:
<https://www.unifrog.org/teacher/resources/sort/work-experience-researching-possible-placements>

Use these helpful websites:

- <https://www.ucas.com/careers/getting-job/10-ways-get-most-out-work-experience>
- <https://www.pearson.com/uk/learners/fe-and-college-students/career-choices/careers-advice-topics/how-to-find-work-experience.html>
- <https://barclayslifeskills.com/i-want-to-gain-experience-and-build-my-network/university/>

Employer contact grid

Use this grid to log which employers you have contacted for a placement and whether they have replied or not:

Company name	Contact person and number/email address	How have you contacted them and when (e.g. letter, email, phone call)	Have they offered you a placement? (Yes/No)