EMPLOYER GUIDE TO PLACEMENTS
# CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction and definitions</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal opportunities, security and confidentiality</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On placement</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement responsibilities</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary and contacting us</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITIONS

This handbook aims to provide you with some information and advice on the placement process, your role within it, what you can expect from the student and the support available from the University.

DEFINITIONS AND AIMS

A placement is a role in your organisation undertaken by a student for a planned period of temporary work. For a student, it is an approved period of assessed learning within a workplace and should be relevant to their course.

The aim of a placement is to bridge the gap between academic study and vocational graduate experience by providing the opportunity to apply the theory and skills gained during the course to a period of practical and professional work.
The majority of employers place high value on taking on a student in a ‘placement’ role and there are a range of benefits associated with this. A placement offers:

• an additional resource to complete specialist projects and short-term objectives

• motivated students with specialist knowledge and cutting edge ideas

• a means of identifying potential future employees

• a low-risk recruitment method through ‘growing your own’

• an opportunity to develop closer links with the University.

PLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS

The student is required to gain a fixed amount of professional experience to successfully complete the placement unit. This does not mean that you need to provide them with an official placement, only that they must complete the required amount of experience in a related role. The University will often allow students to count relevant part-time work, volunteering or holiday jobs towards their placement hours.

Courses at Solent University require a range of placement lengths to be completed. Depending on the course, they can be six weeks, 13 weeks, six months, a year or more. Employers may advertise a role and contract length that suits them and their company’s requirements.

RECENT PARTNERSHIPS

• O2 Guildhall Southampton
• New Look
• Karen Millen
• Enterprise Rent-a-Car
• Re:So
• Women’s Health magazine
• David Lloyd
• Matt Bunday Events
• OK! magazine
• The Sun
• The Gym
• Hugo Boss
• Peer1 Hosting
• L’Oréal Paris
• Shaw Trust
• Carnival UK
• University of Southampton
• Plug and Play
• GottaBe Marketing
• LV=
• Hampshire County Council
• Debenhams
• Saber Powersport
• Tesco
• Carswell Gould
• Red Funnel
• Rose Road Association
• Thomas Cook Travel Ltd
“Our students have definitely added value because they are motivated to learn and work hard. It works well for us as a small company; we had someone that was keen to try lots of things, to get involved with the realities of a working environment.”

Zoe Toseland, marketing administrator, E3 Consulting
Recruiting a placement student is similar to engaging any other employee. Many companies have their own online processes.

Solent Futures Online (https://www.solent.ac.uk/work-with-us/solent-futures/solent-futures-online) is the University’s tailored recruitment site for placements, graduate jobs, work experience, internships and volunteering where you can post job adverts at not cost to you. Posting your role on Solent Futures Online will:

• allow users to click through to your own website

• drive more traffic to your website

• make your target audience aware of your company

• promote your company brand and recruitment activities.

If you would like to promote your company on Solent Futures Online and make the most of this service, please contact the team on employers@solent.ac.uk.

We will discuss the job role, recruitment, selection and interview arrangements that suit your requirements. We can arrange for you to give presentations to potential candidates and deliver selection interviews at our site, if it suits you. Shortlisting and final selection remains the prerogative of the employer.

We will ensure that your vacancy is promoted to the appropriate students and course staff. We require a job description, including details of the nature of the work that the student would undertake.
PAYMENT

While not a legal requirement, the majority of placement students receive an industry-appropriate salary. Where salary is not stated, we find that employers receive fewer applications. If you need help setting a fair salary, please contact placements@solent.ac.uk.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES, SECURITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The University has an Equal Opportunities Policy which applies to employers providing placements.

• The University recognises that matters relating to national security place restrictions on the employment of certain individuals.

• The University will not disclose any commercially sensitive data or information externally. Where such information is made available, it will, with the employer’s permission, be used for assessment purposes only and not subsequently discussed or divulged.

• It is the employer’s responsibility to make Disclosure and Barring Service checks on prospective employees.

RECRUITMENT OF DISABLED STUDENTS

It is unlawful for any employer to discriminate against a disabled person when choosing someone for a job or considering people for promotion, dismissal or redundancy.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission can provide information and offer practical guidance to employers and organisations to make sure that disabled people are treated fairly. Often quite simple adjustments help not only disabled people but the general public as well.

You can also access further information through the Equality and Human Rights Commission website (http://www.equalityhumanrights.com) or contact the Equality Advisory Support Service Helpline on 0808 800 082 (Text phone 0808 800 0084).
ON PLACEMENT

ARRANGEMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As the employer, we would expect that you will treat our student(s) in the same way as you treat your other employees in respect of their health, safety, welfare and attendance.

The University also expects you to have met your country’s legal obligation for health and safety and to hold the relevant insurance, for example, your country’s equivalent to employers’ liability and public liability insurance. You should complete a risk assessment to cover the student’s activities for the period of the placement. If the placement involves a student carrying out specific activities such as operating machinery, then additional training and supervision may be required. In addition, if a student will be driving on your behalf, you should check that the motor insurance policy covers this.


You can access further information on the Health and Safety Act and employers’ liability insurance (UK) by visiting the Health and Safety Executive website: [http://www.hse.gov.uk/workers/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/workers/index.htm)

SOLE TRADERS

Please note that as a sole trader you may not have the above insurances however please be aware that if you are taking on student as part of a placement that is deemed High or Medium risk then you will be required to have appropriate cover before the placement commences.

INDUCTION AND TRAINING BY THE EMPLOYER

It is important that you give the student an induction to your organisation. This induction should include an overview of the organisational and team structure, the role requirements, the use of equipment, and relevant health and safety policies. We suggest a handover period between the previous employee and the new placement student.

A POSITIVE PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE

The majority of placements progress very smoothly. However, occasional problems do arise. If raised at an early stage, most issues are usually resolved quickly. In our experience students respond best when they know who they are working with, what tasks are expected of them and what deadlines they have for completion. Review meetings are a useful way of keeping them updated. Students are encouraged to discuss any difficulties initially with their line manager or in accordance with the procedures of their employer.

If an issue is not satisfactorily resolved, the student and employer may discuss the matter with the placement team or the placement unit tutor, who will, with the consent of both parties, aim to help, if appropriate.
Employers with pertinent issues are encouraged to deal with matters through their internal procedures, which may include disciplinary processes. Please keep the University’s staff informed, with the student’s permission, of any matters that could jeopardise the continuation of the placement. Employers are welcome to contact the University through placements@solent.ac.uk at any time.

“It is thoroughly beneficial for us and it is vital to get students involved because at the end of the day they are the business future. So if you have their enthusiasm and you are able to foster it and help it grow, that can only be a positive thing.”

Ruth Andrew, Alumni Relations and Fundraising Officer, Solent University

ATTENDANCE

Attendance at the placement is just as important as it is when students are at the University. Please notify the University if there are any unexplained periods of absence.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS FROM OUTSIDE THE EU/EEA

International students can carry out a work placement as long as it is an integral and assessed part of their University course. International students from outside the EEA are sponsored by Solent University and are subject to immigration control, normally under the Tier 4 (General) immigration rules. As a Tier 4 sponsor of international students, the University has an obligation to monitor the attendance of Tier 4 students while they are away from the University on a placement and to advise the Home Office if these students’ attendance or engagement is unsatisfactory. Therefore, it is essential that employers advise the University if a student has not arrived for work and has not communicated why by 1pm, or if there are concerns about any aspect of their performance.

Please note, Tier 4 visa students are not permitted to be self-employed or engaged in business activity, which includes setting up a business, being employed for a company in which they hold shares of 10 per cent or more, or holding a statutory role, such as a director.
STUDENT WITHDRAWALS

Should the situation arise where you deem it necessary to withdraw the student or terminate the contract, please contact us at placements@solent.ac.uk immediately so that we can discuss this and develop an action plan.

ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

Students receive accreditation for their placement within their final degree and consequently the nature and level of work must provide an appropriate learning experience. Potential placements need to be approved for suitability and the criteria for approval will be:

• suitability of work in terms of level and relationship to academic course
• evidence of intended contractual employment for the period of the placement
• suitability of the working environment with availability of experienced practitioners.

Assessment may take the form of an individual learning contract, objectives, work project outcomes, a reflective journal and a portfolio of evidence. Students are required to gather information relating to this. Any assessment is designed to encourage the student to:

• reflect upon the relationship between the work they do during their placement and concepts and theories discussed during their course
• evaluate their personal development during the placement.

Details of work that a student undertakes for an employer may be submitted as part of a portfolio of work for assessment purposes. If you, as the employer, wish this to remain confidential and not to be used, please make the student aware and contact the placement unit leader or tutor.

Students have a placement unit leader whose role is to provide academic support and advice and to monitor progress and development. The placement unit leader may make contact and visit the student during the placement. It is important that the student’s line manager is available for part of the site visit, and the University appreciates this support.
“Placements not only introduce students to the world of work, but we get new fresh ideas from somebody outside of our organisation. Students are up for anything and are really hard working, and they are more than willing to see how our office environment works and to offer new ideas and ways of looking at the work.”

Tiffany Bryant, Fundraising Officer, The Rose Road Association
Overall, placements should provide the opportunity for students to apply and develop the skills and knowledge they have already gained during their course in a practical working environment. Furthermore, it should provide opportunities to acquire new skills and prepare students for a future working environment.

The University, student and you as the employer all have a role to play in ensuring the success and smooth-running of a placement.

**Solent University will:**

- work within the University placement procedures
- be available to address any queries or issues you may have
- provide information to students to prepare them for placements; including job search training, CV and application preparation and requirements of a placement
- provide specialist advice and guidance for students with additional support needs
- appoint a ‘contact’ tutor and establish dates of contact/visits as appropriate.

**The student will:**

- attend placement preparatory workshops at the University and familiarise themselves with all the relevant information provided
- abide by the employer organisation’s guidelines, policies and procedures
- discuss and agree with their supervisor/employer the appropriate time allowed to focus on University assessment requirements
- report any concerns to the employer, including health and safety, personal or health concerns, or a disability that may require adjustments
- consult with both the University and the employer prior to seeking any changes in the terms and duration of the placement.
The employer or placement provider will:

• provide an offer letter/contract of employment

• plan the work programme and associated training to be undertaken by the student

• provide the student with a full and clear induction to the organisation and its working practices, including health and safety arrangements

• nominate a supervisor who will conduct or make arrangements for day-to-day supervision of the student

• discuss and agree with the student the appropriate time allowed to focus on University assessment requirements

• facilitate access to the student for contact by a University tutor, as appropriate

• ensure that appropriate employers’ liability and public liability insurance is in place and comply with its country’s health and safety legislation

• advise the University in cases of serious accidents or incidents involving the student, or breaches of discipline by the student

• advise the University promptly of any unexplained periods of non-attendance.

IN SUMMARY

A placement is an approved period of assessed learning in a workplace included in a course.

• Students are required to work in a field relevant to their course and teaching staff are required to approve the placement before it begins.

• Employers will be required to have a job description, contract or confirmation letter for the student.

• Placement teaching and/or employability staff prepare students for the placement and will also work with employers to explain what is required.

• It is the student’s responsibility to search for and secure a placement; however, information and help is available for students from University staff.

• Students are more likely to achieve a higher degree classification and to be in managerial/professional-level work within six months of graduating if they have undertaken some form of work-based practice.
Solent Futures is a central professional service that supports placement unit delivery for students in each of the five schools through its placement team.

The placement team greatly appreciates placements provided for our students and the range of employment opportunities that employers offer. We welcome any suggestions or comments from employers.

Contact us at placements@solent.ac.uk or on 023 8201 3883, or through Solent University, East Park Terrace, Southampton SO14 OYN.

We work with organisations from all sectors to identify how the University can help move your organisation forward. We have a range of options, from advertising opportunities, to our students and graduates, to working with our courses to source live briefs from businesses. Contact us for further information: employers@solent.ac.uk
EMPLOYER GUIDE TO PLACEMENTS
SOLENT UNIVERSITY

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information in this leaflet is accurate and up-to-date at the time of going to print (March 2019). For the latest information, visit our website or get in touch.