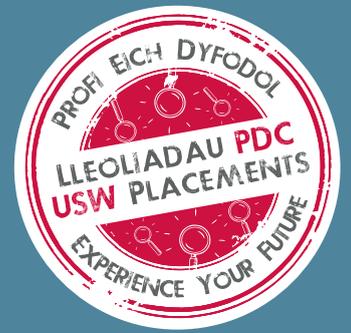


University of
South Wales
Prifysgol
De Cymru

EXPERIENCE
YOUR
TOMORROW



USW STUDENT PLACEMENT GUIDE

Everything you need to
know about work
placements, work
experience and
volunteering



CONTENTS

1. Before your placement

1.1	Welcome	4
1.2	Introduction	5
1.3	Pre-placement preparation	6-9
1.4	Online resources	10-12
1.5	Secured Work Placements	12
1.6	Accommodation and travel	13
1.7	Placements abroad	14-15
1.8	International students	16
1.9	Money	17
1.10	Support including GO Wales Work Experience Programme	18-19

2. During your placement

2.1	Arrival and starting your placement	20-21
2.2	Placement approval and supervision	21
2.3	Your placement environment	22
2.4	Placement etiquette	23
2.5	Top tips	23
2.6	Professionalism in the workplace	24-25

3. Health and Safety

3.1	Health and Safety in the workplace	26
3.2	Health and Safety procedures for assessed work placements	27
3.3	Dealing with potential problems	27

4. End of your placement

4.1	Returning to university	29
-----	-------------------------	----

5. USW Work Placement Team

Contact Details	30
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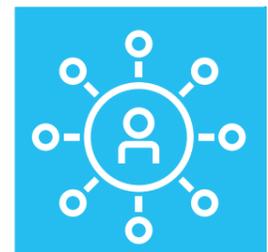


ADVICE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
See page 16

TOP TIPS FOR YOUR PLACEMENT
See page 23

Search: UniSouthWales

@USWCareers
#USWPlacement



PRACTICE HEALTH AND SAFETY
See pages 26-27



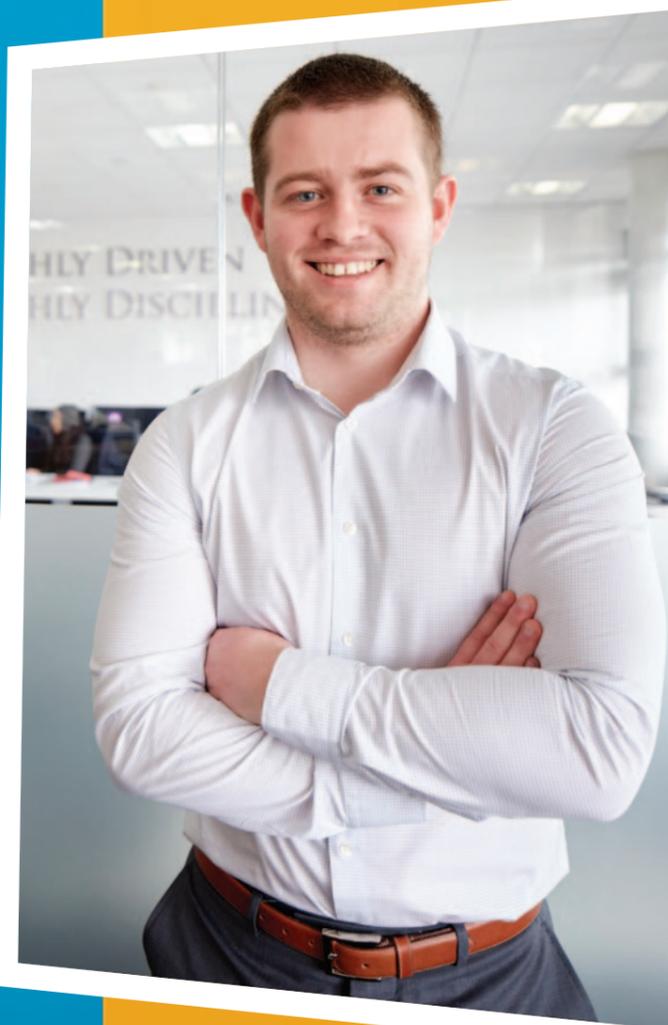
BEFORE YOUR PLACEMENT

With increasing competition in the jobs market, you need to be able to stand out from the crowd.

1.1 Welcome

USW want to prepare you for the future by including employability elements into every course. We know it's not all about the qualifications, but about the practical experience needed to understand the industry you'd like to enter as a graduate. By undertaking a work placement, you will be able to apply your learning in a real workplace environment, whether physically or virtually depending on the industry climate. You will gain many transferable skills that are key to your graduate attributes that you are cultivating at University.

This student placement guide will provide you with all the information you may need about a work placement. While you are on a placement, you are still a USW student and we will continue to support your academic development and general safeguarding. This is designed to answer the questions you may have about your placement and you are encouraged to get in contact with the Work Placement Team that support many courses with their assessment-based placements.



**STAND
OUT
from the
CROWD.**

1.2 Introduction

So why do a work placement? How does it fit into your course? **A work placement is a period of relevant, academically supervised work experience, assessed as part of a programme of study.** If your work experience is part of your assessment or module grades, it will be classed as a work placement. There are many types of work placements as each placement should be suited and tailored to your intended career path. The work placement will have learning outcomes attached to your module requirements as well as gaining relevant industry knowledge and insight.

There are many types of work placement such as short-term, virtual/remote, year out sandwich placements and internships. In addition, work experience can be carried out alongside your studies. This is optional but very much encouraged to boost your work readiness. Work experience should be relevant to your course and your future work prospects. All students should aim to undertake work experience at some point within their University course. Options include volunteering, industry relevant part time jobs, short-term opportunities or freelance work. Work experience and volunteering that are linked to your course and assessed as part of your module requirements, would be technically referenced as a work placement in this guide.

Competition for placements can be very high, especially year out sandwich placements that are often nationally advertised so it's important to start your preparations as soon as possible and be mindful of when your work placement module takes place within your course structure.

Don't worry, you have the support of USW Careers and academic staff who will work with you to help identify and secure placements. However, ultimately it is your responsibility to apply and secure the placement. Most courses will have a Work Placement Partner allocated to help support the module, who will keep in touch with you throughout the duration of your placement module. Your academic will help to supervise the placement whilst offering support for your learning development and module requirements ready for the assessment hand in. USW Careers Advisers will be able to offer help and advice on the application process such as CV and interview help, as well as giving you a good insight into the industry or sector you are interested in.

A WORK PLACEMENT PARTNER is a member of the Work Placement Team based in USW Careers. Each partner is responsible for specific courses across all campuses.

ACADEMIC STAFF are any members of the course involved in the running and/or support of placement activities.

A VISITING TUTOR is a member of academic staff who visits a student at the premises of the Placement Host during the placement activity.

A PLACEMENT STUDENT is any student participating in a placement activity.

A PLACEMENT HOST is the employer or organisation hosting the placement activity.

Criminology Futures Event 2020



USW supported me the whole way in starting my placement. The Placement Team understood that working for the police was my first choice and would not allow me to settle for anything less. Having the experience will benefit me in my future career.

Annalise, BSc Criminology and Criminal Justice

1.3 Pre-placement preparation

First things first, what type of placement are you looking for and what are the module requirements you need to be aware of for your placement? You need to check with academic staff to ensure you are researching and looking for the correct opportunity to meet the needs of your assessment. The assessment or placement requirements will vary between courses to meet the needs of that particular sector or industry as will the type of work placements as each placement should be suited and tailored to your intended career path.

There are many different types of work placements that vary in length, ranging from a few hours to a whole year. For the purpose of this guide, a "work placement" covers, but is not limited to:

SUMMER PLACEMENT

Taken during the Summer months for up to 3 months duration, that can be offered on a flexible basis to suit the student and host.

SHORT PLACEMENTS

Usually part of Professional Practice and Employability modules. They can be paid or unpaid, but must have academic relevance, usually lasting 30-70 hours. This could also include volunteering opportunities in the third sector.

INTERNSHIPS

Courses that include a longer work-based component of between 8- 10 weeks, they can be paid or unpaid.

LIVE BRIEF/VIRTUAL

Modules where organisations will provide real-world scenarios for you to work on whilst remaining based at the University. They will have learning outcomes confirmed and receive industry standard feedback from the organisation.

SANDWICH/INDUSTRIAL

Equivalent of a year's academic study (30-40 weeks). Usually taken after the second year of an undergraduate degree. These placements can be paid or unpaid.

REMOTE PLACEMENTS

With the guidance of the Work Placement Partner, all the placements above can be undertaken on a remote basis.



A research study by Highfliers (2019) said that, "More than a third of recruiters who took part in the research repeated their warnings from previous years – that graduates who have had no previous work experience at all are unlikely to be successful during the selection process for their graduate programmes".

VIRTUAL PLACEMENTS, REMOTE WORKING AND VIRTUAL EXPERIENCES

Whilst searching for your work placement or work experience you will come across remote working opportunities and virtual placements.

REMOTE WORKING

Simply an umbrella term for any work that doesn't involve a commute to the office or site, for example working from home.

VIRTUAL PLACEMENTS

These involve projects or tasks set and supervised by an employer that are skills based and can be completed over an agreed time period via the use of online collaborative software. Just like physical placements, a virtual placement will give you the opportunity to bridge the gap between academic study and gain vocational graduate experience.

THE BENEFITS INCLUDE: -

- Company location is no barrier
- No travel or housing costs
- Good experience of online project management and communications
- Provides experience of new professional 'norms'
- Flexible working hours

An alternative to a virtual placement is a **VIRTUAL EXPERIENCE**. Virtual work experience programs are simulations that mimic entry-level work in various industry sectors. These experiences are typically shorter in length than virtual placements and involve completing a hypothetical set of tasks that an employee would expect to carry out on any given work day.

USEFUL WEBSITES for virtual placements and virtual experiences: -

- [Forage](#)
- [Bright Network](#)
- [CareersConnect](#)
- [Rate My Placement](#)

In order to carry out a virtual placement you will need access to the appropriate equipment and resources, such as a desktop or laptop with access to Microsoft Office, internet and antivirus software. You may need a microphone and headphones (necessary for video conferencing).





A WORK PLACEMENT CAN:

- Give you the opportunity to 'test drive' your chosen career path
- Provide ideas for future career pathways and networks
- Allow you to practice your academic learning in a real-life working environment
- Help to develop your graduate attributes to be more work ready graduates
- Develop your transferable skillset that employers are looking for

We encourage you to prepare for your placement in advance so that you are ready to apply as soon as you see an opportunity that is suitable for you. USW Careers Advisers are on hand to make sure your applications are the best they can be and can help you to tailor yourself towards your industry or sector. You need to be proactive and attend relevant events or webinars that could also help you stand out from the crowd in your applications. These events can be found on our website: www.southwales.ac.uk/careers or by asking academic staff.

How do you secure a placement? **You are responsible for finding your own placement.** You need to be proactive in researching opportunities and organisations and apply for as many opportunities as you can with relevant employers as well as contacting those organisations you are interested in working with. Search on social media or network online to try to contact the right person to ask about work placement opportunities. LinkedIn or Twitter can be useful to market yourself as looking for a placement and to search for current opportunities. The Work Placement Team and USW Careers will offer help and guidance that will support you in the process. Our CareersConnect system is where organisations regularly add opportunities and you can register for notifications with weekly (or even daily if you're keen!) alerts.

There are numerous job sites online, which you may have already used when looking for opportunities. Placements and work experience can be found on these sites too. Although, there are specialist placement websites advertising only work placement opportunities such as:

- www.ratemyplacement.co.uk
- www.indeed.co.uk/student-placement-jobs
- www.targetjobs.co.uk/internships
- www.milkround.com
- www.totaljobs.com/jobs/placement
- www.linkedin.com/jobs

There are also sector specific websites for work placements available, as well as employers advertising directly on their own websites. It's good practice to frequently check online and watch out for deadlines. It is common for vacancy posts to close early if applications numbers are high, so do not leave it until last minute to apply!
<https://careers.southwales.ac.uk/job-search-career-choices/subject-link/>

TOP TIP: If no deadline is stated, that often means it will close when a certain number of applications have been submitted or will close when they have recruited so get your applications in early!



You are responsible for finding your own placement. You need to be proactive in researching opportunities and organisations and apply for as many opportunities as you can with relevant employers as well as contacting those organisations you are interested in working with.

1.4 Online resources

MyCareer is an online learning portal available to all students which offers career advice and tools for you to get ready to start your professional career path. It's a comprehensive portal covering many employability areas that will help you to prepare for and secure a placement.

It covers the preparation you need to do before you even write your CV as well as key tips on how to write the very best CV you can, the different types of applications and how to write a cover letter. It also has the **CV 360** tool that scores your CV against more than 50 checks that commonly trip up an Applicant Tracking System (ATS), annoy a hiring manager or get your CV deprioritised. You get instant, detailed feedback so you can optimise your CV and significantly boost your chances of getting to interview and a successful work placement.



“ You get instant, detailed feedback so you can optimise your CV and significantly boost your chances of getting to interview and a successful work placement. ”

The **WORK PLACEMENT PROGRAMME** on MyCareer will provide you with guidance on what to do throughout the whole placement process from beginning to end. Along the way, you will enhance your personal brand by developing your **CV** and interview skills in readiness for the recruitment process. You will also develop workplace skills and business etiquette in order to prepare you for the professional world.

There are **6 CORE ELEMENTS** of the Work Placement Programme, these include:

- Before placement
- Placement search
- Confirmed placement - What next?
- Business etiquette and workplace skills
- During your work placement
- After your work placement

In order to complete the programme, you will have a specified number of actions associated with each section to work through. On completion, you not only will have a successful work placement to reflect upon but will also have developed key employability skills that will be invaluable to your introduction into the graduate labour market. In addition, by completing this programme you will also be completing elements of the GradEdge employability award.



GRAD EDGE™

The **GradEdge award** has been designed to demystify the recruitment process enabling you to market yourself and sell those essential graduate skills to potential employers/recruiters in a professional way.

There are **5 STEPS** to complete the Award:



1. Create a CV and cover letter



2. Get top tips in completing applications



3. Prepare for interviews and get instant feedback from the interview simulator



4. Learn how to introduce yourself to employers in a professional way and perfect your elevator pitch



5. Start building your professional brand with LinkedIn

To satisfy the award requirements, you will need to complete the specified number of tasks and actions associated with each task, as we believe these are fundamental in securing your graduate role. If you haven't already completed the award, now is a good time to check it out: <https://careers.southwales.ac.uk/students/usw-employability-award-grad-edge/>



1.5 Secured Work Placements

Once you have secured or been offered a work placement, you will need to notify the Work Placement Partner to complete a placement details form.

We use these forms to conduct Health and Safety checks as we have a duty of care to ensure you stay safe on placement.

Depending on the module you are studying we may also send the form to academic staff for approval. Once the form is approved, we will send you a student agreement to complete – for some students this is a mandatory element of the placement module.

If you have secured work experience or a volunteering role that is not assessed as part of your module/course requirements, there is no need to notify the USW Work Placement Team but it is still a good idea to discuss it with academic staff to make sure you are agreeing to a relevant, industry specific role that will add benefit to your career path and graduate attributes.

Before you can be selected for certain work placements, you may be asked to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. This is most common where contact with children or vulnerable adults may be involved or where you may be required to deal with confidential or sensitive information.

A DBS check investigates your background for spent and unspent criminal convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings. You may be asked to undertake a DBS check before you start a placement or volunteer position dependent on the nature of the work. Full details regarding DBS checks including a 'Helpline' service can be found on the Government website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/basic-dbs-checks-guidance>.

Unless your placement/voluntary host has agreed to pay for your DBS check, you will need to pay for all associated fees which are non-refundable (approx. cost is £58.00). If you believe you are unable to meet the costs of your DBS check due to financial difficulties, please contact the **Student Money Advice Team** for guidance.



1.6 Accommodation and travel

Your placement could be located anywhere in the world and you are able to travel to destinations that are relevant to your industry or sector. If you decide to accept an opportunity that is away from your home or University address, then you will need to consider many aspects around accommodation and travelling arrangements. It will be your responsibility to arrange for your own accommodation and travel in the area of your placement setting. Your placement host may be able to assist you in your need for suitable arrangements. It would be a good idea to visit your place of work BEFORE your first day. This way you will understand how long it takes to get there in the morning, so that you can plan your morning routine and avoid being late on your first day. You can scope out what is near the location as possible lunch venues or break time walks. Getting to know public transport links is also advisable so that you know how to get there and how to get home if you are travelling to work that way. If travelling by car, work out where you will park or organise onsite parking before you arrive so that you are not stressed looking for a space in your first week.



“Planning is the key to an effective placement and that starts before your first day on placement.”



**YOUR
PLACEMENT
can be located
anywhere in the
WORLD.**

1.7 A placement abroad

If your plans are to work internationally then it would be a good idea to speak to the **USW Immigration & International Student Advice Team** (IISA Team) about the chosen country you will be travelling to.

WHY UNDERTAKE A PLACEMENT ABROAD?

Gaining a work placement in another country provides opportunities to:

- Develop a broader outlook and put your skills into practice
- Experience a different culture
- Learn or practice speaking another language
- Make your CV stand out
- Enhance your employability and life skills
- Build an international network of professionals in and around your field of work

There are many points to consider when thinking about whether you plan to live and work outside the UK, for example:

- Where are you going to live, what will that cost, and what is the process for securing accommodation?
- Do you have sufficient language skills? Will you be able to communicate fluently and effectively in the workplace, in social and everyday situations?
- Are there cultural issues or local customs to be aware of?
- Do you need a visa or other authorisation to work in the country you are travelling to? What is the process and cost of obtaining that?
- Ask the employer whether their insurance covers liability for injuries or sickness suffered by placement students and linked to their duties with the organisation.
- You will need to get an appropriate travel insurance policy; holiday travel insurance will not be enough.
- Some countries offering placements or internships e.g. France or Spain, will require you to complete an agreement before starting your placement with them. These are called a Convention de Stage in France and Convencio de Colaboracion in Spain. The Convention de Stage/Convencio de Colaboracion is completed by you, in conjunction with the placement host in question and USW, in both languages. You can find more information here: <https://careers.southwales.ac.uk/get-experience/global-opportunities/>

Seeking work in a different country can be challenging, but there are plenty of resources available. We have highlighted some useful starting points below:

Internship Abroad Programs

If you're a student who is drawn to sharpen your soft skills, but also wouldn't mind coming home with some new professional skills in your repertoire too, then interning abroad is the international experience for you.

Rate My Placement

It's important to stand out from the crowd when applying for a placement or internship. One of the best ways to ensure you do is to have international work experience.

Placement Year International

They arrange work placements abroad for undergraduates, graduates and those already working in related jobs.

Gap Year

Taking on some work experience abroad can comfortably fit into a longer backpacking adventure or tour, with placements lasting anything from a few weeks to a whole gap year.

GradConnection

For graduate jobs and internships in China, Hong Kong and Singapore.

TARGETjobs

Working abroad - options for finding jobs and internships abroad. For each country, there is information on language requirements, major industries, shortage occupations, recent growth areas and job-hunting tips.

Prospects

Includes information on the job market, immigration, vacancy sources, application advice and much more.

EURES

Has lots of information, advice and job listings for countries throughout Europe. It also has a section aimed specifically at graduates.

ERASMUS

Work placement programme enabling you to complete a work placement in another European country.

BUILD AN INTERNATIONAL NETWORK



“ I would wholeheartedly recommend a placement in another country if that is possible. As well as discovering more about the industry, I was able to learn about another culture and country. Push yourself as the opportunity may be once in a lifetime. ”

Amber, BA Fashion Design

I.8 International students

I am an International student, can I do a work placement?

YES...

before undertaking any work experience or placement, you must ensure that you have met all of your visa requirements. As an international student, you must ensure that you are aware of and comply with, any regulations set out by the Home Office relating to your visa and any work permits. You will find further information on the Immigration and International Student Advice (IISA) website.

You must ensure that your visa has been extended to cover the whole duration of your course (if undertaking a sandwich year) as this will extend your time at the University. Again you will find extra advice on this from the IISA Team- <https://intadvice.southwales.ac.uk/>. Further guidance can also be found on the UKCISA website -

<https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Working/Student-work>

The culture within the UK may be very different from what you are used to in your home country, therefore, it's important to read up on the UK cultural awareness information that is available to you.

<https://intadvice.southwales.ac.uk/life-uk-and-faqs/uk-cultural-awareness/>

You will find some other useful links for further research from:

<https://intadvice.southwales.ac.uk/useful-links/>

Remember, you must inform the Work Placement Team of your Work Experience/ Placement BEFORE YOU START so that we can ensure you have completed all the relevant paperwork to start on a work placement as part of your academic course.



I.9 Money

Most employers will pay students on a longer-term placement such as year out sandwich placements. However, in some cases, employers may offer placements that are unpaid or offer to pay expenses (this is where some employers will refund you some of your costs such as travel or parking costs). You are most likely to find unpaid opportunities when applying for roles within charities, politics, media, fashion or the arts. All employers should indicate in their advertising if the placement post is unpaid, expenses only or salaried. If you are in any doubt, contact the organisation to ask for advice.

Shorter-term placements are typically unpaid, which include 30-70 hours' worth of experience with an organisation. Any work above the 70-hour threshold would need to be discussed with the placement host directly.

The majority of Sandwich Placements are paid and will attract a salary of varying amounts. The amount you could earn can vary significantly depending on the industry and location. Although, there are placements that are advertised as unpaid or volunteer roles therefore it is always best to check with the organisation and your Work Placement Partner on the specifics.



If you are on a paid placement, you will receive the salary via the employer. You will pay tax that will be deducted from your wages by your employer during your placement. During your placement, your status will remain as a student, which means you are exempt from paying council tax. You will need to prove this with a council tax exemption certificate, which you can request online:

www.gov.uk/council-tax/discounts-for-full-time-students

Make sure you keep all pay related documents safe, as you may need them in case of claiming any tax back after your placement as you will be paying Income Tax and National Insurance (NI). Claiming a tax refund through HM Revenue and Customs is free. Forms and further information regarding tax refunds can be found at: www.gov.uk/claim-tax-refund/too-much-tax-taken-from-your-pay

Students on a professional year, sandwich placement for a year out in industry are subject to reduced tuition fees. This fee covers the support you will receive before, during and after your placement, the assessment of your placement and your continued access to university support services.

The Student Money Advice Team will be able to help you with how your student funding may be impacted as a result of going on a placement so for full details, look at this link:

<https://studentmoney.southwales.ac.uk/student-funding-advice/student-finance/placement-or-studying-abroad/>

If you have any concerns with money, you can seek advice from the Work Placement Team or the Student Money Advice Team at USW. You can also visit the USW advice page for all the relevant funding bodies:

<https://studentmoney.southwales.ac.uk/student-funding-advice/student-finance/>

You may still be eligible to apply to the University's Student Support Fund and relevant bursaries, if you experience financial difficulties whilst on placement: <https://studentmoney.southwales.ac.uk/financial-hardship/>

**For further money advice on an individual basis, please contact the Student Money Advice Team.
E-mail: money@southwales.ac.uk**

1.10 Support

Work placement and work experience support is available to all students from USW Careers
<https://careers.southwales.ac.uk>

There are dedicated Careers Advisers who can help support you to develop your career learning. Providing the opportunity to practice recruitment processes from mock interviews and psychometric tests to CV workshops and one to one support. There are many career events for students to attend such as Futures events, Experience Works or Career fairs, as well as employers visiting campus on a regular basis.

The Work Placement Team help support students that have work placement modules integrated into their degree courses. There are a team of course based Work Placement Partners available for one to one appointments and group sessions to help support you before, during and after your work placement module. They can draw on many years of industry knowledge for your supported courses and have many links with organisations suitable to your sector. They will be in communication with your class and academic staff with regular placement updates and bulletins, which could contain many suitable placement opportunities for you to apply for. Some courses even have a matching service whereby opportunities are carefully selected for students based on your academic record and commitment.



“ There are dedicated careers advisors at USW, that are able to help support you to develop your career learning. ”

Do you need extra support in gaining work experience?

Are you aged under 25, in full-time education and have the legal right to live in the UK?

YES...

The GO Wales Work Experience Programme is for students who are struggling to access work experience. Advisers provide one to one support to help you work through any problems you are experiencing with work experience, help you to increase confidence, and to source an opportunity that is relevant to your career plans.

- Do you need support with travel or childcare costs to carry out work experience?
- Do you suffer from a mental/physical health condition?
- Do you have a disability or work-limiting health condition?
- Do you have childcare/care responsibilities?
- Were you in care before you came to University?
- Are you from a black or minority ethnic group?
- Are you from a low HE participation neighbourhood?

If you answer yes to any of the above questions, then get in touch with the GO Wales Team to see if you are eligible for this extra support.



gowales@southwales.ac.uk

Years of
**INDUSTRY
 KNOWLEDGE**
 and links with
ORGANISATIONS

DURING YOUR PLACEMENT

2.1 Arrival and starting your placement

We regard the placement as a three-way partnership between the employer, the student and the University. The important thing to remember is whatever type of work placement you undertake, and whether you are employed by the placement host or not, you are still enrolled as a USW student. We would expect you to conduct yourself in a manner that reflects well on yourself, the employer and the University.

YOU ARE OUR AMBASSADOR.

YOU ARE YOUR OWN AMBASSADOR FOR YOUR TOMORROW!

If your work placement is an integrated part of your course and an assessed module as part of your degree, then you will be expected to complete a number of academic requirements and assessments as part of your placement. This will document your learning within the workplace as set out by your individual course requirements. Full details of specific placement assessments and requirements will be set by academic staff and they will be able to help you with any questions relating to this.

SOME KEY LEARNING OUTCOMES CAN INCLUDE:

- An understanding of work, work roles and work environments in a practical, real-life context.
- An aptitude to connect subject specific theory and learning in a relevant work environment.
- The ability to communicate with a wide range of colleagues and clients in a working capacity.
- The skill to work in a team and on your own initiative within a working environment.
- To improve your personal and professional attributes to become a work ready graduate.
- An understanding of completing work and projects to a deadline for a professional line of management.

Remember, you are still a USW student when out on your placement, so you will still have access to all USW facilities as usual such as the [library](#), [Advice Zone](#) and [USW Careers](#).

2.2 Placement approval and supervision

Some placements would need to be pre-approved before you start, and any supervision information will be given to you by academic staff. All correspondence from academic staff and the Work Placement Team will be via your University communication channels and your University email address. You must remember to regularly log into your University accounts to check for important messages.

Whilst you are on your work placement, you may have regular contact with your Work Placement Partner who will be able to answer any queries or refer you to appropriate sources of advice if you encounter any problems. They will also be the communication channel to your placement hosts so that organisations can be contacted regularly to ensure everything is progressing satisfactorily.

Likewise, academic staff will be on hand to answer any module assessment questions during your time on placement. They will support you with all issues related to your assessment requirements and deadline enquiries. This is to support your work-based learning and development at every stage of your experience. In some cases, this may involve a visit from a visiting tutor.



“ Regularly log into your university accounts to check for important messages. ”



2.3 Your Placement environment

It will be natural to be nervous about starting a new job but try not to be too anxious as you are well supported by USW and your placement host will fully understand as you settle in.

Make sure to introduce yourself to other colleagues and start to network within the organisation. Your placement host will appoint a representative during your induction with them who will be on hand at the organisation to help settle you into your role effectively.

Stay positive and upbeat to get the most from this opportunity. We all have down days but it's best not to share this in work. Stay work focused and try not to let your personal life impact on your role. You should strive to be as upbeat and enthusiastic as possible with a can do, problem solving attitude.

Try to stay out of office politics! Wherever you work, there will be internal politics or gossip going on, you could get yourself in trouble so best to just keep away from it all. Definitely, do not post about any of this on social media (keep social media for placement praise and appreciation!). Respect others, no matter what their role within the host organisation. Being courteous and respectful is key to a happy working life by being friendly, polite and well mannered. Remember, you never know what people's professional working relationships are, so treat everyone the same!

You may find the [USW Social Media Policy](https://its.southwales.ac.uk/policies-and-regulations/) useful:

<https://its.southwales.ac.uk/policies-and-regulations/>

**STAY
POSITIVE
AND
UPBEAT**

**BE
COURTEOUS
AND
RESPECTFUL**

**BE POLITE
FRIENDLY
AND WELL
MANNERED.**

**STAY WORK
FOCUSSED
WITH CAN DO
ATTITUDE**

2.4 Placement etiquette

Many students view their placement as one of the highlights of their degree. Take full advantage of all the opportunities that are on offer, you never know what will come from your time on placement. It's important to remember that you are in a different environment and different rules may apply on how you behave and communicate.

A FEW THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN ON A PLACEMENT:

- Don't use your phone apart from when you're on lunch and/or a break – better still leave it in your bag, locker or car unless you need it.
- Adhere to the organisation's internet and social media policy.
- Check dress code and dress appropriately for your industry or role.
- Adhere to your agreed working hours – start time, breaks, finishing time. Don't be late!
- Address colleagues and customers formally and with professionalism.
- Body language is important, make eye contact with colleagues to show you are engaged in the topic and interested in what people are saying.
- Remember that you are representing USW, you are your own ambassador too.

“Doing this internship to support University studies is the best thing that I have done. Being able to put theory into practice has really helped me to gain skills ready for when I leave University.”

Eleanor, BA Business and Management

2.5 TOP TIPS

We've been supporting students on work experience and work placements for many years, this has given us an insight into the top tips that could help you during your placement:

Put the key contact numbers in your phone.

Welcome the policies and paperwork they give you – this will give you what you need to understand the organisation that you are working with.

Accept that being on work experience can be tiring. It takes energy to be in a new workplace and you may not have worked a full day in a workplace before. If this is the case, look after yourself and consider keeping some of your first evenings free to recover.

Trust your instincts – if something doesn't feel right, tell the person that you report to - whether that is your line manager, or, if you don't feel like you can speak to your line manager please contact your Work Placement Partner or academic staff.

Log in at regular intervals to your University email account and respond to any communications from academic staff.

Your work placement will provide you with valuable contacts and networking opportunities for future use. It is recommended you utilise these as much as possible.

IT MIGHT SOUND OBVIOUS, BUT THE MORE YOU GET INVOLVED, THE MORE EXPERIENCE YOU'LL GAIN.

2.6 Professionalism in the workplace

You have the responsibility to follow your placement hosts' organisational policies, to respect the confidentiality of your organisation's business and to behave professionally at all times.

It is important to consider the implications of data protection and the confidential nature of your role with your employer particularly in the use of office internet, email, social media or mobile phones for personal use.

Time management is important, as is punctuality. You should ensure that you are on time for work every day, lateness is not only rude, but it implies poor organisational skills or disinterest. This is important not only for the start of the working day but includes coffee or lunch breaks too.

You should dress appropriately, smartly and professionally for your industry at all times during your placement. It's not always easy to know what to wear to an interview, or for your work placement, and it does depend on the type of industry that you are looking to enter. If you get the opportunity, ask at the interview stage or email the organisation in advance of starting to double check if you are concerned. Most organisations are impressed that you have considered this and asked the question. Below are some useful guides:

<https://www.theguardian.com/careers/careers-blog/what-wear-job-interview-fashion-dress-impress>

<https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/interview-techniques/273667-dress-for-success-at-your-graduate-job-interviews>



“Time management is important, as is punctuality.”

PLACEMENT CLOTHING DISCOUNTS AND FUNDING

- **NUS Discounts**
- If you are struggling to afford to buy a suit, for example, you may be eligible to apply for funding via the **Student Money Advice Team**
- **Alumni Student Experience Fund - The Student Experience Fund exists to provide students with funding to help them to develop the skills, drive and opportunities that they need to succeed after graduation. Students are best placed to tell us what it is they need to make their USW experience even better to ensure that they stand out from the crowd.**

Dress APPROPRIATELY, SMARTLY and PROFESSIONALLY for your industry.

3.2 Health and Safety procedure for Assessed Work Placements

There is a **three-part process** that all students must follow:

BEFORE YOUR PLACEMENT:

Step 1:

You will submit a placement details form that will explain where and when you are going on placement to your Work Placement Partner.

Step 2:

From this information, your Work Placement Partner will be able to send firstly, a Health and Safety general form (if the employer is new or hasn't been used within 3 years). This gathers information such as the employer liability insurance and risk assessment information. Secondly, the Health and Safety specific form will be sent, which details your information as a placement student.

Step 3:

You will receive a Health and Safety briefing and copy of the guidelines.

Step 4:

The placement is then approved by your Work Placement Partner and sometimes academic approval is required to check the suitability of the placement.

DURING YOUR PLACEMENT:

Step 5:

Contact and support is maintained by academic staff and Work Placement Partner.

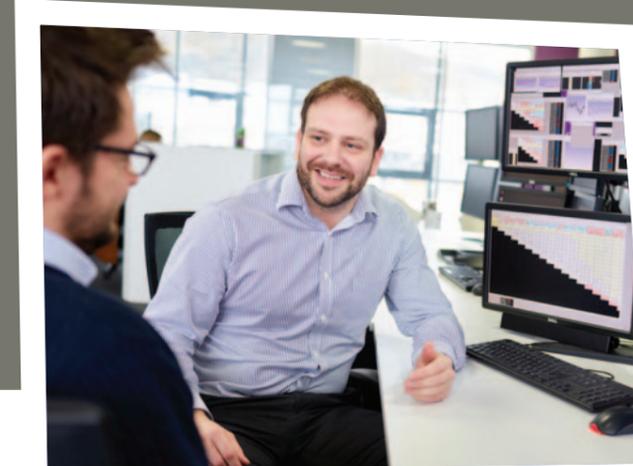
Step 6:

If any Health and Safety issues come up, they should be reported to your employer as the first step and then your work Placement Partner or academic staff should be notified.

AFTER THE PLACEMENT:

Step 7:

You will need to submit feedback about your placement to your Work Placement Partner.



HEALTH AND SAFETY

3.1 Health and Safety in the workplace

During the first few days at a new organisation, you should receive an induction covering your employers Health and Safety policies, amongst other regulations in the workplace.

These policies and procedures will cover a wide scope of areas providing information on who to contact if you are too ill to attend work, how to report an accident in the workplace and what you may or may not do in the workplace environment.

If your work placement is part of your course as an assessed module then you will need to confirm your placement host details to the Work Placement Team via the placement details form BEFORE you attend your placement. As a USW student, you will need to familiarise yourself with the USW Student Health and Safety guidance:

<https://careers.southwales.ac.uk/get-experience/work-placement/health-safety-guidance/>

3.3 Dealing with potential problems

For the majority of students, everything goes incredibly well and we hear fantastic success stories. On the rare occasion, some students may face difficulties on placement. This can be down to a variety of different reasons from personal circumstances to disagreements with the placement hosts.

If you experience any problems during your placement, you should try to resolve the matter with your workplace supervisor or manager. They may not be aware of your unhappiness and may be able to expand your role or offer you new experiences. If you are unable to resolve the issue, then please let academic staff and your Work Placement Partner know as soon as possible.

In the UK, besides your placement-specific rights, you have the same rights at work as every individual working in the UK. You can get information on basic employment rights on the Citizens Advice Bureau website: www.citizensadvice.org.uk

If your placement is abroad, different laws and regulations may apply. The rights at work that you are entitled to in the UK do not apply when you work abroad. Make sure you understand your work rights abroad by consulting with the USW Immigration & International Student Advice Team before you travel. One source of information would be the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website: www.gov.uk/browse/abroad

END OF YOUR PLACEMENT



4.1 Returning to University

Once you have completed your placement, it is always a nice gesture to write to your placement host to thank them and discuss references. You should ensure that you have completed any feedback forms or documents relating to your assessments before you leave the placement.

The Work Placement Team also run a termly social media campaign whereby we ask all students to use the hashtag #USWplacement both during and after a work placement.



This gives you the opportunity to post about your appreciation for the opportunity and to tag in the organisation and colleagues that have helped you in your placement. This is an excellent opportunity for you to network and link up with the organisation and contacts you have met on social media such as LinkedIn and Twitter. Ask for a reference; future employers like to see work references as they can give valuable insights into a person's character and working style as well as providing validation for what is written in their CV. You can ask for these references via LinkedIn, so that it's viewable to all your connections.

Whether the experience was good or bad, simply waving goodbye and moving on won't allow you to get the most out of your experiences on placement. Read the following few things you need to do just before you complete your placement to ensure you will reap the benefits of your hard work.



THINGS TO DO BEFORE YOU COMPLETE YOUR PLACEMENT:

- Reflect on your experience and skills gained whilst on placement and make a note of them whilst you remember. Highlight your strengths and weaknesses, preferences and tendencies, helping you to spot areas of development and identify suitable future opportunities.
- As your work placement comes to an end, go through your notes to identify your greatest achievements, biggest learning moments and the key skills you picked up.
- Use this information to update your CV and LinkedIn profile. Book an appointment with a Careers Adviser if you need support with this.
- Consider if this is still a career area that you are interested in
- Your feedback is important to the Work Placement Team as it helps shape our offering for the future. It will also encourage you to think about your placement and what you have learnt. Student feedback may be part of your assessment or it may be requested by your Work Placement Partner. Either way, we really appreciate your thoughts and we may even get back in touch to develop your feedback into a Case Study.

It's important to remember that you check your University email regularly for information and to get in touch with academic staff ready for your return to your studies. Ensure you complete your placement assessment and that you are aware of submission dates for your course. Check with academic staff if you have any questions or concerns about your module requirements or deadlines.

CONTACT DETAILS



TOP TIP

Take a photo of this page so that you have it stored on your phone!

Use this page to make a note of all the information contact details to ensure you have the details to hand when needed:

Your Work Placement Partner

<https://careers.southwales.ac.uk/meet-team/>

NAME

EMAIL ADDRESS

CONTACT NUMBER

Your Academic staff details

<https://www.southwales.ac.uk/contact-us/>

NAME

EMAIL ADDRESS

CONTACT NUMBER

Your Placement Host details

NAME

EMAIL ADDRESS

CONTACT NUMBER



USW WORK PLACEMENT TEAM

Dedicated Work Placement Partners are here to help support you across USW campuses
uswplacements@southwales.ac.uk



USW CAREERS

<https://careers.southwales.ac.uk/meet-team/>

Careers advice appointments can be a good starting point to talk about a range of career issues, including discussions on career options, postgraduate study, job-seeking strategies and techniques, assessment centre preparation and CV reviews. It is also ideal if you need advice on preparing a CV, covering letter or application.

Remember to use the #USWPlacement on any social media posts about your placement

ASK A QUESTION

<https://careers.southwales.ac.uk/ask-question-book-appointment/>

Use this service to ask us a question or questions, especially if you are unable to book an appointment with a Careers Adviser. Questions can include CV reviews, discussions on postgraduate study, job seeking strategies and techniques, assessment centre preparation and counselling on career options and work experience.

Experience your tomorrow, today.



Search: UniSouthWales

@USWCareers
#USWPlacement



PDC GYRFAOEDD
USW CAREERS



www.southwales.ac.uk/careers
www.southwales.ac.uk

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