

The whole point of work experience is to see what it's like to be employed in the real world. But for most people, this can be a little scary, especially if you've never been in a working environment before.

Why Work Experience- what's in it for me?

Work experience is an excellent way to introduce you to the world of work. This should enable you to:

- gain an insight into the workplace
- work alongside adults as part of a team
- gain practical skills
- develop employability skills
- develop independence, confidence and self-esteem
- gain hands-on experience
- enhance your CV

Things to consider:

Remember work experience is exactly that – experience in the workplace

- Any experience in the workplace is valuable - even if it isn't in a field of work you are passionate about, it is still a great way to find out more about work in general
- Manage your expectations – there are many tasks you will not be able to do due to your age or inexperience
- Your employer is under no obligation to offer work experience – remember THEY are doing YOU a favour, not the other way around.

Finding a Placement:

- Self-placement is the best way to make sure you get the placement of your choice
- You may have a friend or family member who is prepared to offer you work experience or you might like to approach local companies, organisations or shops.
- Employers will appreciate a personal approach and will be impressed that you have made the effort
- Employers will need to complete a self-placement form and we will then make contact and set up the placement via UNIFROG. You will need to enter your employer's details on the UNIFROG platform but staff will be able to help with this. Don't worry if your employer is unfamiliar with UNIFROG – we can work around this.

If you are finding it difficult to find a Placement:

Don't worry – staff will be happy to help you find something suitable although this may not be your first choice. Be prepared to give it a go – you might find you enjoy it.

Preparation:

Make sure you monitor your UNIFROG account and respond to any messages promptly.

Your parents/carers and also your employer will also need to respond to UNIFROG e-mails to ensure the placement is set up.

Read the details carefully so you know what is expected of you including:

- Working hours
- Dress Code
- What you will be doing

Check your route beforehand and work out how long it takes

Do's and Don'ts

Do's

- Work experience is **WORK**. Be prepared to work and do what you are asked
- Ask questions – no one is expecting you to be an expert on day one. You are there to learn so ask about anything you don't understand.
- Be professional, polite, willing and respectful
- Use your initiative – if you have finished your task see if there is something else you can do
- Be realistic about what tasks you will be undertaking. You won't be an expert straight away and may need to carry out some routine jobs.
- Follow instructions - cheerfully!

Don'ts

- Don't use your phone apart from during break/lunch. Mobile phones should be kept in your bag or in a place specified by the employer. **IT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO TAKE YOUR PHONE OUT AND SEND MESSAGES/CHECK SOCIAL MEDIA DURING WORKING HOURS.**
- Don't ask to leave early
- Don't make any references to the company, staff or clients on social media
- Don't be negative – work experience can be challenging at times but try to look at this as an opportunity. Your employer is under no obligation to offer work experience and is willing to give up his/her time to give you this opportunity.
- Don't use inappropriate language
- Don't complain about being bored – use your initiative and find something useful to do
- Don't slouch, roll your eyes or be rude

Timescale

March - May:

- Speak to family and friends to see if anyone can offer you a placement
- Search the internet for suitable employers and contact them in person, by email or by phone to see if they can offer you a placement – ask them to complete a self-placement form
- If you have tried to find a placement but haven't been able to, speak to Jean who may be able to help providing you are willing to commit

May – deadline for return of self-placement forms

Early June – deadline for return of medical/consent form

8 – 12 June – work experience – ENJOY!!!