

Work Experience

The Student Handbook

**Welcome to
your Student
Handbook!**



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Why Work Experience?

Congratulations! You have successfully secured a high quality work experience project. This handbook is designed to support you through the process- both preparing for your work experience and a source for reference and reflection during the week. Work experience provides many opportunities. To ensure that you are well prepared to engage with these opportunities start by reading through this handbook and completing the tasks included.

There are many advantages to completing work experience and we've summarised a few below:

Congrats!



Knowledge of Science based Industries and the Range of Careers Available

1. Work experience can help to inform your future career choices. You have the opportunity to find out about the range of careers in the science industries - you can then assess whether these roles fit with your interests and personality.
2. Work experience also gives you information about the different qualifications and education routes you can take to get into a career in science. This could be through taking an apprenticeship, college education or university education
3. Remember there are lots of different careers in science -much more than just lab work.



Future Career Prospects

Work experience is a great opportunity to:

1. Make contacts within the science companies.
2. Show your passion and interest in the industry, which enhances your CV and increases your chances of getting relevant jobs in the future.
3. Apply your theoretical knowledge in the real world.



Skills in the Working World

Other benefits of work experience include:

1. Prepare you for the expectations of the working world.
2. Helps you to develop your maturity, confidence and self-reliance in the workplace
3. Great opportunity to develop
 - Self-management and self-awareness
 - Commercial awareness
 - Teamwork and interpersonal skills
 - Communication skills
 - Mathematical skills
 - Analysis and problem solving skills
 - Technical skills
 - IT skills

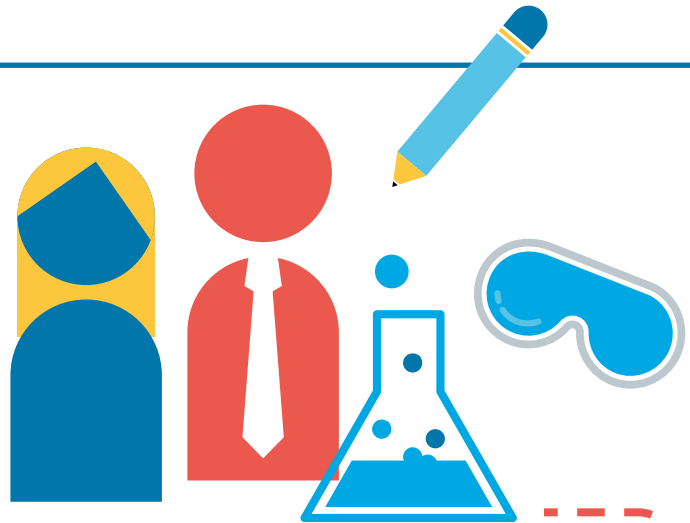


You will also meet people who have recently left school or university and started work in industry. This is an opportunity to speak with apprentices on why they chose an apprenticeship and what value they are finding from doing an apprenticeship.

You will also meet recent graduates and understand the benefits of a university education. This will help you make the choice between an academic or vocational path or, as is now available to you, a mixture of both.

Careers in Science

There are many careers in the science industry and by undertaking work experience you will be able to gain a better understanding of the breadth of those careers (many of them wouldn't necessarily be roles that you would traditionally consider to be "scientific.")



It is also important to consider the route to your desired career. Do you want to gain work experience and on the job training via an apprenticeship or would you prefer to follow a more theoretical, subject focussed route and study for a degree at university before embarking on your career in the science industries?

Whichever route you take it is important to continue gaining work experience via on the job training and placements to ensure that you develop essential employability skills and ensure you access the opportunities available to you.

You can find further information on technical and science careers at <http://www.cogentskills.com/careers/> and <http://careers.abpi.org.uk/>

The Cogent Skills careers navigator tool outlines the career paths between different jobs roles. It is particularly useful in planning for future opportunities. http://bit.ly/career_planner

TASK LIST

So that you get the most out of your work experience there are several tasks to complete before, during and at the end of your work experience week.

Make sure that you read this diary thoroughly before you start as the information in some sections may help you in other sections.

Please use this checklist to make sure you stay on track.

Before Work Experience

- ☐ Preparation for Contacting your Mentor
- ☐ Contacting your Mentor
- ☐ What if...
- ☐ Planning your Journey to Work
- ☐ Health and Safety

During Work Experience

- ☐ Tips for the First Day
- ☐ By the End of the First Day...
- ☐ Skills and Targets
- ☐ Requirements of the Workplace
- ☐ Why would my employer want to offer work experience?
- ☐ Work Experience Diary

At the End of the Work Experience

- ☐ Skills and Targets Review
- ☐ Skills for the Future
- ☐ Saying Thank You

Tips for Contacting your Mentor

You will have been given details of a person to contact at your workplace.

You should ensure that you contact this person promptly so you can arrange a telephone call to discuss your upcoming work experience week- this should be at least a week before the placement starts.

TASK

Before the Telephone Call

- Find out how you are getting to and from your work experience. Use the "Planning Your Journey to Work" section for guidance.
- Research the company.
- Put together some questions to ask your mentor about the experience and the company.



The Telephone Call

Take your time and speak clearly and confidently. It is OK to ask the person to repeat something if you didn't hear or understand them.

You should cover the following topics in your conversation.

- Introduce yourself.
- Ask about the activities in the work experience
- Ask about;
 - The timings of the working day
 - Dress code
 - Lunch time and break time arrangements
- Make any enquiries you need to about transport to and from the site. Your contact may have some useful local information.
- Ask are there any additional items you need to bring with you e.g. photo ID, note pads, writing equipment?
- Ensure that you have a clear understanding of when and where you are to arrive on your first day.
- Make sure you know who to contact if there is a problem.
- Are there any other questions you would like to ask about the experience or the company at this stage? (It always looks good to have researched the company and to have some questions prepared.)
- Remember to be enthusiastic about the experience you are about to undertake.

What if?

Below are several scenarios. It is important that in preparation for your work experience you know what to do in these scenarios. If you cannot answer any of these questions then you need to find out the information from your mentor.

What if you are ill?

What if you are going to be late?

What if you do not understand what to do?

What if you have a problem?

Planning your Journey to Work

TASK

Before your work experience you should ensure you know the answers to each of the questions below.

Where is your work placement?

.....

How are you getting there?

.....

How long will it take to get there?

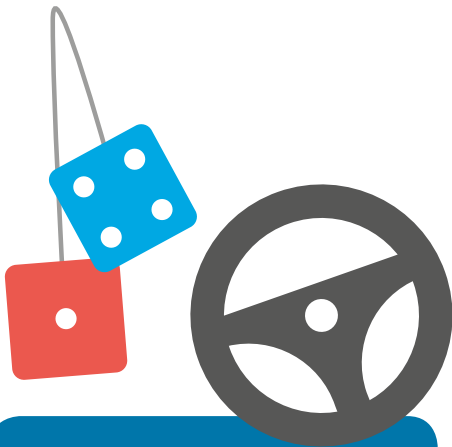
.....

What timetable information will you need?

.....

What time will you need to get up so you are ready on time?

.....



Driving

If you are driving or being driven check you have the correct postcode to enter into the SatNav. Find and print off some back up maps and directions in case the SatNav fails. Ensure you have checked for the availability of parking.



Public transport

Check which trains and buses you will need to get to travel from home to work. Check the timetables for the transport but also the timings of any connections. Check the prices of the journey and ensure you have the correct money with you.

It may be worth checking whether it would be worthwhile getting any young person's travel passes or weekly bus/train passes to make your travel more cost effective.



Do a practice journey

Check the timings of your journey by doing a practice – but remember to account for any differences in time that may be caused by increased traffic at the beginning and end of the day. It may be worth asking about traffic conditions in your telephone introduction.

Health and Safety

Your place of work will have a health and safety induction which you must follow. Having an understanding of health and safety is an important part of working in a science based company. This will be similar to the safety rules you have in your school science lab- but on a much bigger scale.

Your employer will ask you to read and sign policies and risk assessments. It is important that you take time to read and understand these documents. You may be sent these prior to your work experience and it is essential you get these to your employer by the designated time.



TASK

Review the common hazard symbols (below), used for labelling chemicals, and find out what information each pictogram displays.

Common Hazard Symbols



Tips for the First Day



- 1 Having checked the dress code, make sure your clothes are smart, clean and ironed.
- 2 Know who to contact if there is a problem.
- 3 Arrive in good time (10-15 minutes early).
- 4 Show interest- even if some jobs seem routine. Asking questions is a great way to do this.
- 5 Follow instructions.
- 6 Only use mobile phones or personal devices if you have permission to do so.
- 7 Complete the appropriate sections of your workplace diary.
- 8 If you're unsure about anything – ASK.

By the End of the First Day...



On the first day you will receive an induction and lots of other information. Below is a checklist of things that you should know by the end of your first day.

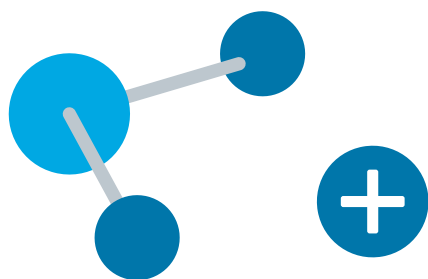
- ☐ The work you will be doing (timetable)
- ☐ Location of the fire exits and what to do in case of a fire
- ☐ Location of first aid kits and what to do in the event of an accident
- ☐ Location of facilities (toilets/ washing/ rest areas)
- ☐ The structure of the working day (including breaks and time away from work)
- ☐ Any confidentiality issues, including use of your mobile phone and taking pictures
- ☐ Security processes
- ☐ Health and safety rules
- ☐ Use of protective equipment (lab coat, safety specs etc.)
- ☐ Skills targets (from your skills and targets sheet to be completed with your mentor)

Skills and Targets

There are many skills you can develop during work experience but the best way to ensure that something happens is to plan for it.

In this table we have highlighted the skills you can develop (sometimes called competencies) and tasks that are associated with each skill.

It will be useful for both yourself and your mentor to see what you have learnt whilst you have been with the organisation.



TASK

With your work experience mentor, look at the timetable for the week and pick out some of these as targets to develop (not too many- it's important your targets are realistic.)

At the end of the work experience you should review these targets with your mentor. Have you met your targets and how? Have you exceeded your targets?

Skills and Tasks	Target	Achieved?
Self-management and Self-awareness		
Followed guidelines, procedures and, where appropriate codes of practice.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Encouraged and accepted feedback from other people.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Managed time and time-keeping effectively- arriving, starting and finishing tasks on time.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Recognised new skills gained.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Commercial Awareness		
Understood the organisation structure and products/services		<input type="checkbox"/>
Understood who the company's customers are.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Understood who the company's competitors are.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Know about the groups who affect, or are affected by, the business (stakeholders.)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Understood how different job roles fit into the business.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Teamwork		
Adapted behaviour to suit different roles and situations.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Has shown fairness and consideration to others.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Taken responsibility, shown confidence in themselves and their contribution.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Reached agreements through discussion to achieve results.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Shown they have been supportive of work colleagues.		<input type="checkbox"/>

Skills and Tasks	Target	Achieved?
Communication		
Listened to and carried out instructions.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Took part in discussions with your mentor.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Talked to people from outside the company.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Identified the information and knowledge people need and why they need it.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Confirmed that the information and knowledge they are communicating is current, accurate and complete.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensured the language is appropriate for the audience and explain jargon, technical terms or abbreviations – where appropriate.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Communicated in ways that helps people to understand the information and knowledge they are communicating and its relevance to them.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Used a variety of techniques to gain and maintain people's attention and interest and to help them retain information and knowledge.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Mathematical skills		<input type="checkbox"/>
Completed a calculation in your head/ on a calculator.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Measured, weighed or estimated something.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Recorded numerical information.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Produced results in an appropriate format for the data.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Solved problems using a variety of methods, this could involve the use of computers.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Analysis		
Produced some accurate and unbiased results.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Used a set of data to produce a conclusion.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Organised data for analysis.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Presented data.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Technical		
Demonstrated an understanding of the importance of safety in the workplace.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Used a new piece of equipment.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Learnt a new practical technique.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Taken and recorded readings in the correct format for the situation.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepared solutions correctly e.g. chemicals and buffers.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Handled and disposed of all waste materials appropriate to its type.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Returned the work area to its original state		<input type="checkbox"/>
Recorded the data according to work procedures and let the relevant people know that the work has been carried out.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Has accurately interpreted results using tools that are appropriate for the situation.		<input type="checkbox"/>
ICT		
Used the internet.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Used email.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Used a photocopier.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Used Microsoft Office software or equivalent.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Created a presentation.		<input type="checkbox"/>

Why would my employer want to offer work experience?

- 1 An opportunity for the employer to encourage young people to consider careers in with them and learn more about their industry.
- 2 An opportunity to provide young people with the initial skills to build the science industries workforce.
- 3 Younger people may have more up to date knowledge of current social media and technology trends.

Whilst undertaking your work experience try and find out some additional reasons that companies may take on work experience students and fill them in here.

TASK

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue lines, resembling notebook paper. The paper is pinned to a solid blue background by a red pushpin at the top center. There are six sets of three horizontal lines each, providing space for writing.[illegible][illegible]This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue lines, resembling notebook paper. The paper is set against a solid blue background. At the top center of the paper, there is a yellow circular pushpin with a silver pin. The paper has rounded corners and appears to be floating or pinned to the blue surface.This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue lines, resembling notebook paper. The paper is pinned to a solid blue background by a red pushpin at the top center. There are five sets of lines on the page, each consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line, providing a guide for handwriting practice.This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue lines, resembling notebook paper. The paper is pinned to a solid blue background by a yellow pushpin at the top center. There are six sets of three horizontal lines each, providing space for writing or drawing.

Day One A.M



COMPLETE
HERE

Date:

Outline your main task. Use the STAR method. What was the situation? What was the task or goal? What action did you take? What was the result?

What skills did the task require?

What skills did you develop?

If you were to complete this task again what would you do the same and what would you do differently?



Day One P.M

Date:

Outline your main task. Use the STAR method. What was the situation? What was the task or goal? What action did you take? What was the result?

What skills did the task require?

What skills did you develop?

If you were to complete this task again what would you do the same and what would you do differently?

Day Two A.M



COMPLETE
HERE

Date:

Outline your main task. Use the STAR method. What was the situation? What was the task or goal? What action did you take? What was the result?

What skills did the task require?

What skills did you develop?

If you were to complete this task again what would you do the same and what would you do differently?



Day Two P.M

Date:

Outline your main task. Use the STAR method. What was the situation? What was the task or goal? What action did you take? What was the result?

What skills did the task require?

What skills did you develop?

If you were to complete this task again what would you do the same and what would you do differently?

Day Three A.M



COMPLETE
HERE

Date:

Outline your main task. Use the STAR method. What was the situation? What was the task or goal? What action did you take? What was the result?

What skills did the task require?

What skills did you develop?

If you were to complete this task again what would you do the same and what would you do differently?



Day Three P.M

Date:

Outline your main task. Use the STAR method. What was the situation? What was the task or goal? What action did you take? What was the result?

What skills did the task require?

What skills did you develop?

If you were to complete this task again what would you do the same and what would you do differently?

Day Four A.M



COMPLETE
HERE

Date:

Outline your main task. Use the STAR method. What was the situation? What was the task or goal? What action did you take? What was the result?

What skills did the task require?

What skills did you develop?

If you were to complete this task again what would you do the same and what would you do differently?



Day Four P.M

Date:

Outline your main task. Use the STAR method. What was the situation? What was the task or goal? What action did you take? What was the result?

What skills did the task require?

What skills did you develop?

If you were to complete this task again what would you do the same and what would you do differently?

Day Five A.M



COMPLETE
HERE

Date:

Outline your main task. Use the STAR method. What was the situation? What was the task or goal? What action did you take? What was the result?

What skills did the task require?

What skills did you develop?

If you were to complete this task again what would you do the same and what would you do differently?



Day Five P.M

Date:

Outline your main task. Use the STAR method. What was the situation? What was the task or goal? What action did you take? What was the result?

What skills did the task require?

What skills did you develop?

If you were to complete this task again what would you do the same and what would you do differently?



Skills and Your Future Career

What skills have you gained during this week? Why are they useful?

Have you identified any skills you need to develop as a result of your work experience? Why?

How will you develop these skills? Do you need any help doing this?
Where will you get this help from?



How has this week changed or confirmed your thoughts on your future career?

A large white rectangular area with rounded corners, containing horizontal dotted lines for writing.

Has this week helped you to understand the routes into science- based careers? What are they? If you are not sure of the routes, where would you find the information?

A large white rectangular area with rounded corners, containing horizontal dotted lines for writing.



The Final Day

Congratulations, you have successfully come to the end of your work experience. The final day is a good time to take stock and to thank the people who have helped you during your placement.


Many people give up their time to organise a work experience placement and for many people it is outside of their normal job role. Saying thank you at the end of your work experience placement is therefore important.

There are many ways to do this and you are not expected to spend large amounts of money on gifts. Most often a card with a sincere message will be far more meaningful.

A thank you card should thank people for their time and effort and may also include some information about how their efforts have helped you. Your last day would be an appropriate time to give cards.

If you give a presentation on your final day a final “Acknowledgements” slide with the names of the people who have helped you should also be included.

Also, don't forget to stay in contact. The people who have helped you will be interested to hear about your next steps, an email or phone call in a few months time will often be welcomed.



NOTES

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 20 horizontal dotted lines.



If found, please return to...

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