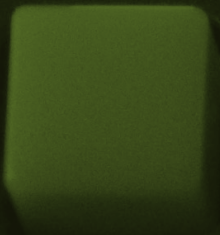


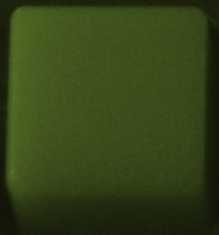
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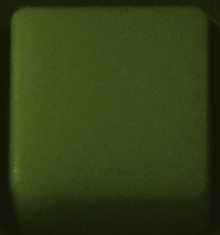
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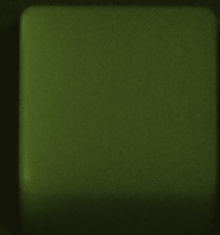
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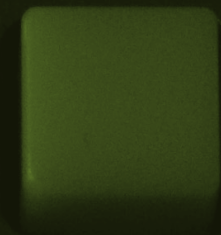
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# Work Experience Guide for Academic Staff



### Using this guide

Work experience comes in all shapes and sizes including part-time jobs, vacation work and voluntary work. This guide offers advice on work experience placements to academic staff in higher education media departments where students are required to undertake a placement as part of their course. It is intended to be used alongside guidelines provided by individual universities. Staff teaching students for whom placements are not compulsory may also find these guidelines helpful.

### Why is work experience so important?

Getting a first job in the media industry is very tough – more people want to work in the business than there are jobs available and entry level positions are rarely advertised. Employers, always keen to attract the brightest talent, can therefore afford to look for people who have some practical experience as well as relevant qualifications and genuine enthusiasm. For this reason alone, offering a placement as part of a higher education course gives students a real competitive edge when it comes to looking for their first job.

Placements also give students the chance to develop other skills that employers value; things like team working, problem solving and communication skills. And, as well as helping them to develop skills that will make them more attractive to future employers, placements can also help students to gain a real insight into how the industry operates, make contacts and network.

### Planning a placement

The placements undertaken by students vary widely depending on their course requirements, the area of the media they are interested in working in, and the size and type of organisation with which they are placed.

New guidelines to promote the fair treatment of work experience placements in television have also begun to influence the placement opportunities that are available. Although developed for and with the television industry, these guidelines have resonance and relevance across the media industry. They can be viewed in full on the DTI's website [www.dti.gov.uk/employment/pay/national-minimum-wage/Further-Guidance/page21693.html](http://www.dti.gov.uk/employment/pay/national-minimum-wage/Further-Guidance/page21693.html) and on the Skillset website [www.skillset.org/tv/article\\_5541\\_1.asp](http://www.skillset.org/tv/article_5541_1.asp). The Pact Work Experience Guide, which is also based on these guidelines, can be found at [www.pact.co.uk/training/information/detail.asp?id=2665](http://www.pact.co.uk/training/information/detail.asp?id=2665)

Outlined below are key issues to consider in relation to placements. You are also advised to seek advice from the careers/placement service within your own university.



### **How can we help students to find placements?**

Students should play a hands-on role in identifying and securing their own placement. As well as being good preparation for the reality of finding work in the media industry, the process will also help them to develop job application skills.

However, finding an appropriate placement in the media industry can be very challenging and you can help your students by:

- Making sure that they have access to a full range of industry publications, directories and websites. Appendix 1 contains a comprehensive list of resources and sources to help students identify and research potential placement opportunities;
- Keeping in touch with past placement providers and building new contacts with potential placement providers;
- Making sure that students have access to advice on CVs, application letters and interview skills.

### **How can we make sure that a placement provides a genuine learning opportunity?**

A work experience placement is intended to be a learning experience. It should provide students with the opportunity to apply knowledge and skills acquired in the classroom; learn about working life and the working environment; meet challenges; and broaden their horizons. For students to make the most of placement opportunities you will need to work with them to agree clearly defined and realistic learning objectives for their placement.

### **Who will supervise the student?**

Although your students will have some useful skills, nevertheless they are inexperienced and will require support. You need to ensure that the employer can provide a responsible member of staff to supervise and mentor the student.

### **How will we ensure that the placement is safe?**

Individual universities are responsible for giving placement students essential information on health and safety. Appendix 2 contains a Sample Health and Safety Information Sheet for students. However, it is employers who have the primary duty under the law to safeguard, so far as is practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of placement students. Appendix 3 contains a Sample Health and Safety Letter that should be sent to the employers before a student begins their placement.

The university must also confirm that the employer has Employers' Liability and Public Liability insurance to cover students for the duration of their placement.



### **How long should a placement be?**

The length of a placement will be determined partly by the requirements of a student's course and their individual learning objectives, partly by which area of the industry they are interested in working in, and partly by the size and type of organisation in which they are placed.

The TV industry guidelines on work experience advise that "two weeks is an appropriate period for an unpaid placement, but where, for it to be a genuine learning experience, it is appropriate for it to be longer, it should run for no more than four weeks". These guidelines also suggest limiting attendance to 40 hours per week, including meal breaks.

### **Should placements be paid?**

Employers should always be encouraged to pay a fair sum to students for the work that they undertake and to cover travelling and other associated expenses. However, employers are not required to pay national minimum wage rates to students studying certain UK based higher education courses who are undertaking a placement as part of their course and where the placement does not exceed one year. For further advice on any aspect of the national minimum wage contact the NWM Helpline on 0845 6000 678.

### **Are there issues around confidentiality?**

Students on placement should always behave professionally and this includes respecting the confidentiality of all information relating to the employer, their customers, clients and suppliers.

### **Are there issues around intellectual property rights?**

In most cases placement students will not be involved in activities which attract copyright protection. However, if the individual is to be involved with a piece of work which attracts copyright they should raise this with the employer in good time.

### **What should we expect an induction cover?**

The employer should provide an induction on the first day of a placement. Appendix 4 contains a Sample Induction Checklist with you may find useful.

### **How will we get feedback?**

Ideally feedback should be given in a one to one meeting between the student and their supervisor/mentor. If you require written feedback in a specific format or need to make a formal placement visit, make sure that this is clearly communicated to the employer in good time. Appendix 5 contains a Sample Feedback Form which may be helpful.



## Paperwork

Having written confirmation of the arrangements for a placement will help to make everyone's expectations about it clear. Once a student has been offered an appropriate placement, and before the placement begins, the university should write to the employer:

- Advising the employer of everyone's health and safety responsibilities and requesting confirmation that the employer has adequate Employers Liability and Public Liability Insurance. Appendix 3 contains a Sample Health and Safety Letter.
- Asking them to complete and return a simple placement information form. Appendix 6 contains a Sample Placement Information Form.

Since the individual university is not generally party to the contract of employment between the student and the employer, any formal employment agreement should be negotiated directly between the student and the employer. However, you may wish to encourage your students to ask their employer to provide the following information in writing:

- A clear and accurate description of the placement including which department or production it will be with and what activities they will be involved in.
- The name of the supervisor or mentor.
- Start and end dates.
- Start and finish times for the working day, including arrangements for meal breaks.
- The work location.
- Arrangements for payment and expenses, if applicable.
- Confirmation that they have adequate insurance cover, including Employers' Liability and Public Liability insurance.
- Confirmation that they will safeguard the student's health, safety and welfare at work.

At the end of the placement the university should contact the employer for their feedback, if this has not already been supplied directly to the student.



## Appendix 1: Useful resources

### Publications

**Broadcast** ([www.broadcastnow.co.uk](http://www.broadcastnow.co.uk)) – news, analysis, opinion and key data on the UK television and radio industry. Published weekly.

**Guardian Media Directory** ([www.mediauk.com/directory](http://www.mediauk.com/directory)) – lists websites, addresses, telephone numbers, programme schedules, live links and more for all areas of the online media.

**Kemps** ([www.kftv.com](http://www.kftv.com)) – free to search online production directory for the TV, film and video industries. Separate volumes for UK and international listings.

**The Knowledge** ([www.theknowledgeonline.com](http://www.theknowledgeonline.com)) – free registration gives access to the crew and facilities database, an online form and industry news. Predominately London-based, although now expanding to include some international listings.

**The PACT Directory of Independent Producers** ([www.pact.co.uk/pactdirectory](http://www.pact.co.uk/pactdirectory)) - an online guide listing UK independent producers who are PACT members. Free to search for PACT members and their staff, subscription charges apply to others. Includes company profiles plus details of credits and projects in development, key personnel and contact details. Ask your careers/placement service to arrange an educational subscription.

**Screen International** ([www.screendaily.com](http://www.screendaily.com)) – news, film reviews, features and analysis on film production, box office performance, distribution, technology and film festivals. Published weekly.

**Televisual** ([www.televisual.com](http://www.televisual.com)) – monthly magazine delivering news, features and industry surveys to the UK TV production community.

**The Writers' Handbook** - a comprehensive director of markets (mainly UK) for creative writers.

**Writers' and Artists' Yearbook** - a comprehensive directory of UK markets in all areas of the media for writers, artists and photographers.

### Employers and trade associations

**[www.bbc.co.uk/jobs](http://www.bbc.co.uk/jobs) and [www.bbc.co.uk/newtalent](http://www.bbc.co.uk/newtalent)** - information about opportunities at the BBC including information on BBC work experience placements. The BBC receives over 20,000 applications a year for its work experience placements.

**[www.channel4.com/4careers/4careers\\_new/work\\_experience.html](http://www.channel4.com/4careers/4careers_new/work_experience.html)** - register on the Channel 4 website for details of a very limited number of short-term work experience placements. Remember, Channel 4 commissions almost all of its programmes from independent production companies and does not produce programmes in-house.

**[www.itvjobs.com](http://www.itvjobs.com)** – information about opportunities at ITV plc. For information about work experience opportunities visit the regional pages in the 'Working at ITV' section.



**Pact** ([www.pact.org.uk](http://www.pact.org.uk)) – trade association representing and promoting the commercial interests of independent feature film, television, children's and animation media companies.

#### **Reach For the Sky**

([www.reachforthesky.co.uk](http://www.reachforthesky.co.uk)) – BSkyB's flagship initiative to support and inspire young people, including unpaid work experience placements for young people at school or college.

#### **Other websites**

**[www.broadcastfreelancer.com](http://www.broadcastfreelancer.com)** - subscription based online database of freelance jobs and talent in UK TV. Provides job leads, news, careers and training information.

**[www.mandy.com](http://www.mandy.com)** - a film and television job site. Search through related jobs worldwide – some paid, low paid and voluntary. Jobs offered and jobs wanted pages. Mandy.com can email you weekly with the latest job info. Directory of services, classified ads, jobs and other resources for filmmakers tailored to people's choice of skill type and area.

**National Council for Work Experience** ([www.work-experience.org](http://www.work-experience.org)) – promotes, supports and develops quality work experience for the benefit of students and employers.


**[www.productionbase.co.uk](http://www.productionbase.co.uk)** – a subscription based online database of film and TV professionals and directory of jobs.

**[www.theproductionguide.com](http://www.theproductionguide.com)** - an industry based site containing jobs offered, industry news and info on facilities.

**[www.shootingpeople.org](http://www.shootingpeople.org)** – a subscription based (£30 a year) online network of independent film-makers, providing daily email bulletins about opportunities for cast and crew.

**Skillset** ([www.skillset.org](http://www.skillset.org)) - the Sector Skills Council for the audio visual industries. Its website contains a wealth of material including profiles of different areas of the media industry e.g. film, television, animation; information about job roles; and hints and tips for people considering or starting a career in the industry.

**[www.ukscreen.com](http://www.ukscreen.com)** - a free, one stop centre for film and music making from casting, networking and crewing to broadcasting and distribution.



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**Appendix 2:**  
**Sample health and safety**  
**information sheet for students**  
To be added after H&S audit



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**Appendix 3:**  
**Sample health and safety and  
insurance letter**

To be added after H&S audit



## Appendix 4: Sample placement details form

This form must be completed and returned to the university before the placement begins.

### Section A: Student details

Name: .....  
Address: .....  
Postcode: .....  
Telephone number: .....  
Fax number: .....  
Email: .....  
Who to contact in the event of emergency: .....

### Section B: Company details

Company name: .....  
Address: .....  
Postcode: .....  
Email: .....  
Website: .....  
Telephone number: .....  
Fax number: .....  
Nature of business: .....  
Supervisor/mentor's name: .....  
Supervisor/mentor's job title: .....

### Section C: Placement details

Placement job title: .....  
Duties: .....  
Work location: .....  
Start date: .....  
End date: .....  
Hours of attendance: .....  
Payment arrangements: (please tick)  
Paid   
Unpaid   
Expenses only



## Appendix 5: Sample induction checklist

This checklist is reproduced from the Guidelines for Television Employers Offering Work Experience Placements to Individuals, co-ordinated by Skillset and published by the Department for Trade and Industry (DTI) and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

Individual's name: .....

Supervisor/mentor's name: .....

Company/department: .....

Placement start date: .....

Placement end date: .....

Agreement signed and returned:

Yes

No

Temporary ID pass obtained:

Yes

No

Informed of who to call in case of sickness:

Yes

No

Given details of hours of work and meal breaks:

Yes

No

Given outline of placement programme:

Yes

No

Introduced to supervisor/mentor/point of contact:

Yes

No

Fire and evacuation procedure explained:

Yes

No

Other emergency procedures and health and safety information detailed:

Yes

No

Informed of prohibited areas/activities:

Yes

No

First Aid facilities explained:

Yes

No

Any significant risks associated with work placement explained:

Yes

No

Given instruction in safe use of any equipment including IT equipment, adjusting workstation and taking adequate screen breaks:

Yes

No

Any further information:

.....

.....

I have been informed of the above/given the appropriate training.

Signature: .....

Name: .....

Date: .....



## Appendix 6: Sample feedback form

This form is reproduced from the Guidelines for Television Employers Offering Work Experience Placements to Individuals, co-ordinated by Skillset and published by the Department for Trade and Industry (DTI) and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

Individual's name: .....

Supervisor/mentor's name: .....

Company/department: .....

Placement start date: .....

Placement end date: .....

### Section A: To be completed by the individual

Were the tasks you undertook or shadowed during the placement those indicated in the original placement description? If not, what tasks were you given the opportunity to carry out and/or observe?

Did the placement enable you to achieve your specific objectives?

Which aspects of the placement did you find most useful?

What, if anything, would you change about the placement?

Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

Signed: .....

Name: .....

Date: .....

### Section B: To be completed by the supervisor/mentor

General evaluation

Strengths

Weaknesses

Recommendations

Signed: .....

Name: .....

Job title: .....

Date: .....