

Work Placements

A Guide for Young People



Develop transferable skills

Get a taste for the field you're interested in

Learn about different career pathways

Looks great on your CV



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ORKNEY
Developing the
Young Workforce

This booklet has been developed to act as a guide and give you a set of expectations that will help you make the most of your work placement.

WHAT IS A WORK PLACEMENT?

Work placements are an opportunity for you to become familiar with working in a professional workplace, while also giving you a chance to learn about and understand the variety of jobs that are available in Orkney.

Undertaking a work placement can help you identify the sorts of jobs you may – or may not - be interested in and can help you make informed choices about your future. This includes what subjects to study at school, or identifying the available pathways into a future career such as Foundation Apprenticeships, Modern Apprenticeships or continuing your studies at College or University.

A work placement will also help you develop transferable skills which will benefit you in whatever job you choose in the future. These skills include:

- Managing time;
- Planning and organising;
- Communication (written and oral);
- Problem solving;
- Working with others;
- Thinking critically and creatively;
- Taking responsibility for your own development;
- Behaviours and attitudes.





WHY TAKE PART IN A WORK PLACEMENT?

Work placements may be the first time you have been exposed to a professional working environment. It is very different from school and you should use it as an opportunity to get a taste of what a particular job or workplace is like and decide if you're interested in that type of career.

It is also an opportunity to learn more about the range of jobs on offer in Orkney – there are a lot of jobs that exist 'behind the scenes' that support the work of every organisation that you may not have considered. When you're on your work placement, take the opportunity to speak to the different people you're working with to learn more about what they do and how they ended up doing their job - you may be surprised to learn the different routes people have taken before ending up in their current job.

As well as teaching you new skills that will look good on your CV, work placements show that you are enthusiastic and ready to work hard and you can pick out particular achievements to show off. It also looks good on your CV, UCAS form or College application. In addition, working with other people and doing your tasks well helps you build your confidence.

Your experiences while on a work placement can also form part of the profiling process on My World of Work.

Finally, a work placement is a great chance to make a more informed choice about the career you would like to do when you leave school.

Work placements show that you're enthusiastic and ready to work hard



IDENTIFYING AND ARRANGING YOUR WORK PLACEMENT

Through discussion with your parents/guardians and school staff you will:

- Be supported in identifying a placement that suits you best;
- Take ownership of your placement, considering whether it is appropriate for your studies and future career aspirations, ability and capabilities;
- Identify and agree the goals you aim to achieve during the placement.

Through discussion with employers and the school you will:

- Agree the duration of the work placement – this will include the dates you begin and end your placement, as well as the days and times you will go on placement;
- Understand the conditions of the placement:
 - The period of time;
 - Name of your main employer contact;
 - Employer's expectations;
 - Location and how to get there;
 - Dress code;
 - Behaviour code;
- Consider any potential hazard and safety issues that could occur on placement.

If you felt the placement went well, you can ask your employer if you can add them as a referee on your CV

You will need to complete and hand in the following before you will be able to go on placement:

- Parental/Guardian Consent Form;
- Record of Placement Form:
- Business name, address and telephone number;
- Name of main contact;
- Days and time of placement;
- Agreed time you will be signing out of school.

During your placement you will:

- Complete your Workplace Logbook which will support you in working towards achieving your agreed goals and targets;
- Demonstrate the behaviours and attitudes that an employer would expect to see in employees;
- Follow training and instructions provided by the employer;
- Take full advantage of the opportunities available to develop your skills and gain knowledge.

After your placement you will:

- Reflect on the skills and knowledge you have gained from the placement and how this can be developed further and impact on your future learning;
- Review your logbook with staff and parents/guardians, reflecting on any feedback from employers and identifying next steps and further development goals;
- Share your placement experience with staff and your peers through group discussion and a presentation.



WHAT'S EXPECTED OF YOU WHILE ON WORK PLACEMENT?

Each employer will have their own set of expectations of you when you are on work placement and these should be explained to you when you start your placement. However, as a general rule you will be expected to do the following:

Before your placement you will:

- Plan how you are going to get there and make sure you arrive on time. If you are late for any reason, apologise and explain why;
- Know the name of your main contact – you will need to know who to ask for when you first arrive at your work placement;
- Find out the dress code beforehand and dress appropriately for the environment you will be working in.

During your placement you will:

- Be respectful towards other members of staff and the public. Employers expect all of their employees to have a good attitude, this includes the use of appropriate language and behaving in a manner that is appropriate for the individual workplace;
- Pay close attention to any instructions you are given in the workplace. In particular, you should always obey safety instructions to avoid hurting yourself or others;
- Ask about anything you are unsure about. You are not expected to know everything and employers and other staff members will be happy to answer any queries you may have;
- If you are ill, phone your employer early and let your supervisor know. You should also phone the school and let the office and your Guidance Teacher know;
- Make the most of the opportunity. Work placements are a great way to get access to people who work in the field you are interested in and is a good opportunity to make contacts or impress a potential future employer;
- Say thank you at the end of your placement. If you felt the placement went well, you can ask your employer if you can add them as a referee on your CV. Even if you do not want to work in that particular area, a positive reference from a previous employer will always be beneficial.

After your placement you will:

Reflect on all that you have learned and any feedback you got from your employer. Think about your skills and strengths and consider where they may be best placed. You should also talk to your Guidance Teacher and Careers Adviser to consider the right pathway for you to access your future career.



Need More Advice?

My World of Work has some great advice and tips on how to get the most out of your work experience placement. Visit www.myworldofwork.co.uk/getting-job/work-experience for more details.

