

Support Material for Placement Students

Why do a placement?

- To develop your skills learnt on the MA course and practically apply your skills commercially
- It is an opportunity to develop other personal skills/attributes
- To gain experience of the commercial world and enhance your work-related knowledge
- To help you discover your own personal strengths and weaknesses and what jobs may suit you
- It will provide insight into the occupational areas you may or may not want to work
- If you perform well, it may lead to a job offer
- The skills and experience gained will look great on your CV

What type of placement?

It is preferable that you choose a placement with an organisation or a company that works in an area that you are interested in working in the future, or which offers specific training in skills that you would like to use in future employment.

Be careful to only undertake a placement that you are capable of carrying out; for example, some companies may explicitly ask for students with specific IT or numeracy skills, in addition to their linguistic skills.

Most importantly, you should be interested in the company/placement, approach it with a positive attitude, and be willing to learn from the experience.

Be careful also that you will have enough time to undertake the placement as well as complete your academic studies.

You may like to consult the Careers Service website:

www.shef.ac.uk/careers/students/postgrads to help you in thinking about what areas you would be interested in working in, if you have not already done so.

Placement Organisation

It is essential that all placements take place within a framework and adhere, where possible, to the principles of best practice.

Students may organise their own placements, but it is important that if a placement is self-generated, it is submitted to the Head of the MA course for approval, and that the correct procedure for setting up the placement is followed.

Placement Responsibility

The student is expected to be prepared and to make the placement as successful as possible. The student should decide to give their very best to the company whilst on a placement, and should be responsible for their own learning outcomes.

However, if a student has any serious concerns regarding their ability to carry out a placement or any concerns whatsoever regarding their Health and Safety on a placement, they must inform their placement organiser at the University as soon as possible.

University of Sheffield Placement Student Profile

* To be filled out by a student interested in doing a placement. This can then be made available to a company.

** To help you answer the questions, below, you may find it useful to investigate the following websites:

- Prospects Planner - www.prospects.ac.uk, select 'What jobs would suit me?' from the menu (this can help you understand your skills and make career decisions)
- Career Skills Module – www.shef.ac.uk/careers/cms (again, this can help you uncover your skills and make career decisions)
- Careers Service OpUS work experience – www.shef.ac.uk/careers/opus (section relating to the Work Experience Portfolio has some skills definitions)

1. Please outline your **higher-level education/qualifications** to date:

2. Give details of your relevant **work experience and/or any other professional/technical/computer skills** you may have:

3. Complete a **SWOT analysis of your character** in a workplace environment:

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats

4. Rate yourself on the following personal attributes on a scale of 1-10 (10 being the strongest, 1 being the weakest)

1-10 Attributes:

	Motivation / Enthusiasm
	Drive / Determination / hard working
	Ability to think strategically
	Capacity to overcome set-backs / resilience
	Analytical abilities
	Communication skills (written and oral)
	Organisational and time management skills
	Ability to work as part of a team
	Ability to receive criticism & learn from it
	Ability to complete a task
	Ability to put ideas into practice
	Ability to come up with fresh ideas / creativity
	Commercial awareness
	Proactive / able to use own initiative
	Negotiation and influencing skills
	Problem-solving ability
	Flexibility & adaptability
	Confidence & assertiveness
	Willingness to learn
	Other skills – please list

5. In what areas would you like to **gain experience** or in what **type of company** would you like to do a work placement?

University of Sheffield Student Placement Form

*To be filled in by the Placement Organiser in conjunction with the Company.

Company - Give a brief description of what the company does

Assignment - Give details of the proposed work placement

Duration of Placement – (including hours of work)

Assessment - How the Placement will be assessed

Company Values – You may choose to attach some company materials

Expectations – Any additional expectations of the student

Student Evaluation Form

The Student and the Company Mentor should complete this Placement form together at the end of the placement.

* NOTE TO STUDENT: to help you answer the following questions, it is useful if you first produce a simple Work Experience Portfolio during your placement. This will help you outline and record your experience and skills development and make answering these questions much easier. For brief guidelines and downloadable templates, go to: www.shef.ac.uk/careers/opus/portfolio.html. Once you have your completed Work Experience Portfolio, put a copy into your Personal Development Portfolio (PDP).

ABOUT YOUR PLACEMENT

1. Give a detailed definition of your placement and an outline of your achievements:

2. What commercial experience and job-related skills you have gained:

3. In addition to helping you with your Masters course, what other transferable skills / personal attributes has this placement enabled you to develop e.g. ability to work as part of a team

4. Outline the top 5 strengths and 5 weaknesses of your character in a commercial environment that have been displayed on this placement (Rate them on a scale of 1 to 5 where 5 is the strongest):

1-5 Strengths:

Weaknesses:

5. Would you consider that this has been a successful placement, both from a Company and Student point of view? – Explain in terms of how you have both benefited from the placement:

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

6. How do you feel this placement will benefit you in the future and what do you plan to do following your Masters course? (If you need help with making these decisions, make use of the Careers Service: www.shef.ac.uk/careers/students/postgrads)

7. What other skills would you like to develop and what areas of weakness would you like to improve upon? How do you plan to do this?

8. Do you have any suggestions for other student placements of this kind in the future?

Briefing Notes for the preparation of students going on placement abroad.

- Clear outline of placement and purpose of trip
- Organisation of travel arrangements, visas, internal flights
- Organisation of suitable accommodation
- Financial provision for the trip
- Verification of Health and Safety in placement
- Personal Safety - verifying areas of high crime, safe use of public transport,
- Timing of the placement i.e. the stability of a country
- Climatic conditions i.e. areas of high altitude
- Health risks - local diseases and necessary vaccinations, contaminated water
- Awareness of cultural differences – accepted behaviour, local laws, views on the position of women, alcohol etc
- Travel and health insurance and local healthcare in place
- Local emergency numbers/contacts
- UK contacts and support

Glossary

Placement – period of learning, integral to student's course, which takes place outside of the University.

Placement Provider – the host company/institution who provides a placement and who directly supervises the student.

Mentor – a member of the company staff who supervises the Student's work and is the contact point in the company for the University.

Placement Organiser – Usually Head of the MA course or a member of the MLTC staff, who is responsible for organising the placement, liaising with the company and preparing the student.

