The University of Sheffield’s Overseas Placement Bursary Programme

The University of Sheffield Careers Service and Global Opportunities and Exchanges, working together to create global work experience for Sheffield students
In 2016 the University of Sheffield Careers Service and Global Opportunities and Exchanges embarked on a partnership. Global Opportunities had valued the importance of students undertaking experiences abroad and were keen to encourage more students to participate in this. The Careers Service had recognised for a while that numerous students were keen to undertake work experience abroad but these could require large financial input from students to cover the cost of travel, accommodation and visas. 

Global Opportunities and Exchanges made available bursaries of £500 to students from any background, studying any subject of any year group, who had committed to undertake work experience in another country to their home country. In the summer of 2016, 23 students travelled all over the world with the help of these bursaries, recorded how these experiences had impacted their life and affected their career choices.
Name: Thomas Jones
Department: Architecture
Company: Caukin studio

Job Description: Work volunteer - design and build a playground for a local school in Ubud alongside 1 student from this university and 17 University of Cardiff architecture students.

What did you enjoy most: Seeing the end result after 3 hard-working weeks and seeing how happy the kids were with their new playground!

What did you learn from your time on placement: Having only built one small pavilion in my first year at University, projects like this that engage a whole different type of learning and understanding of architecture, is an experience I just could not miss out on. It has also made me more confident to tackle my last year of my degree.

What did you find was the most challenging aspect of your placement experience: Working 6/7 hours a day in the intense heat - It was extremely tough at times and it was important I looked after my body!

How has your time on placement influenced your future career choice: I now have new ideas about what I want to do for my dissertation. I am planning to switch to writing about humanitarian architecture which I will base off this placement. I was always keen to be an architect that designed buildings for the wellbeing of a community but this placement has made sure of this aspiration.

More information can be found by watching Thomas Jones’ video on youtube which sums up the placement in 3 minutes: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SgdfNSup_Kk

“...this is an experience I just could not miss out on.”
Name: Kyra Bradley  
Departments: Law and Criminology  
Company: Servants Anonymous Society of Calgary

Job Description: Development Coordinator/Summer Student  
Provide assistance to the Resource Development team through fundraising activities over the summer, by providing support in the organization and administration of special events, supervising volunteers at special events, continually updating database records, conducting research on prospective corporate and individual donors, sending appropriate documentation to donors, and other duties as assigned by the Resource Development team.

What did you enjoy most: I enjoyed getting to spend a couple days over the summer attending local festivals. We ran booths to sell donated quilts and raffle tickets, as well as a few other fundraising activities, and most of the time we just got to chat with people about what our charity does and opportunities for volunteering. My favourite part of these days was getting to explore the other festival booths during my lunch break, as well as getting lunch from all the food trucks.

There were too many fun activities, trips out of the office, and staff meetings during my placement to count. I also enjoyed the times when other staff brought in cake to celebrate events, such as a former participant getting her dream job, other employees moving on to something different, and even me heading back to university after the summer.

What did you learn from your time on placement: I acquired many new skills from working in an office setting, and built on several existing ones. I learned about the process of applying for major grants as a charity, including preparing documentation and proposals, as well as writing reports for grants received. I also gained exposure to writing theories of change, outcome reporting mechanisms, and other complex ways of assessing past successes and future plans in the charitable sector. From my time helping fill in at reception during staff holidays, I honed my interpersonal skills, answering telephone inquiries for all departments, from administration, fund development, communications, and various programs, as well as managing our building’s secure entry system. I also learned about our social enterprise events venue, which donates all profits back to our charity’s programs, and helped implement their new marketing plan by creating online directory listings and helping implement their newsletter and feedback systems. This job involved lots of data entry and research tasks, so I have become more comfortable in particular with Excel and large, protected network computer database systems used in offices.

I developed an appreciation of the social issues many women face, such as abuse, homelessness, addictions, and mental health problems and how important programs like those I was working to help fund are to them.

How has your time on placement influenced your future career choice: My placement has not significantly affected my future career choice, as I am a Law and Criminology student and spent the summer working in the social service non-profit sector. However, I have always been interested in social areas of law, in particular family law, and I have found working to help disadvantaged and marginalized populations has reaffirmed my interest in this area, as well as developed a greater eagerness to do pro-bono work for those in need. Although I did not spend the summer in a law firm, I found this position did offer lots in terms of learning about related industries, as law can be intertwined with criminal justice in abuse, prostitution and protection cases (and our organization works with Calgary Police’s Vice team and other criminal justice agencies), as well as contracts for the social enterprise’s event bookings and external partnerships for funding and programs.
How has your time on placement influenced your future career choice:

Definitely! I am hoping to explore more of the energy efficiency, renewables or environmental sector in the future, as I really did find it interesting to see how my engineering skills can be applied in this sector. I feel it is a sector that will allow me to make a real contribution to society and the daily lives of people, which is ultimately my personal life goal. Additionally, I would say my time on placement also showed me that I wouldn't want to be behind a desk for too long! It has shown me that I'm more of a practical, hands-on, people person, and would thrive in a working environment in which this was heightened rather than office type work.

I'm hoping my study of chemical engineering will take me to a career path in which there is a variety of the type of work carried out.

What did you enjoy most:

I enjoyed learning so much about energy efficiency, how different countries implement the monitoring, verification and enforcement of energy efficiency products, and seeing some of the technical equipment used to test lighting in action. However, the highlight of my placement had to be the 3-day United for Efficiency (U4E) consultation workshop which was hosted by my internship company, it brought together over 40 representatives from U4E partner organisations and countries engaged in the U4E initiative - I gained an even broader view into the global issue of energy efficiency, and got to network with so many individuals in the energy efficiency, renewables and environmental sector.

What did you learn from your time on placement:

I learnt a great deal about the global issue of energy efficiency, and some of the environmental issues faced in our world today – thus gaining an awareness of the global and societal context in which engineering solutions can be applied. I also learnt about the Chinese workplace environment and work culture in China, which enabled me to develop on a number of skills such as adaptability, teamwork and effective communication. I also acquired some new skills such as project management, through working closely with the project manager on the preparation and delivery of the United for Efficiency workshop, as well as...
Job Description: During my placement in China I will need to live like a local and firstly settle in to this new country. The job description will entail me leading classes of around 15-20 pupils of around 10 years old and teach them English for approximately 3-4 weeks. I will need to work one on one with these pupils and also lead from the front. I will need to plan my lessons in advance and also come up with group activities and games which will help learning English be more fun and engaging.

What did you enjoy most: Whilst on placement I loved making a positive impact improving the children's English. It was extremely rewarding to see at the end the difference that I had made with many of them never had even talked to a native English speaker before. Embracing the Chinese culture was also something that I really enjoyed on my placement with it being vastly different to the UK’s and so therefore it was extremely hard at first to adjust but in the end undertaking this placement made me a much stronger and well-rounded person.

What did you learn from your time on placement: Whilst on placement I learnt the challenges of living in another country where it is extremely difficult to get around due to the language barrier. It made me have a much more international view of the world and made me proud of how multi-cultural the UK actually is. I acquired many new skills whilst on placement in China. I vastly improved my presentation and public speaking skills making me a much more confident and professional individual. It gave first-hand experience of working with children from different backgrounds/countries and demonstrated how I can be a leader and a public speaker. Being able to put something like this on my CV I has allowed me to stand out amongst the crowd and would potentially allow me to apply to jobs that I would never dream of applying to before going on this placement.

How has your time on placement influenced your future career choice: Whilst my placement was such an incredible experience, it has shown me that a teaching career is just simply not for me and has shown me that I’d be much more suited to a corporate career in an area such as marketing. The placement experience was therefore invaluable to me as it has allowed to have a much better idea of what career I wish to go in to in the future.

“It made me have a much more international view of the world and made me proud of how multi-cultural the UK actually is.”
**Name:** Melissa Pilgrim  
**Department:** Chinese Studies with French  
**Company:** Chengdu Beer/ Chengdu Expat

**Job Description:** I was a marketing assistant for both Chengdu Beer and Chengdu Expat, which are companies both owned by the same entrepreneur. I was responsible for editing and updating an expat-orientated website (chengdu-expat.com), managing all forms of social media for both companies (including Chinese social media), creating advertisement materials for Chengdu Beer and taking notes in client meetings (which were carried out in both English and Chinese).

**What did you enjoy most:** The most enjoyable part of my placement was having the opportunity to meet lots of new people, including many entrepreneurs who have moved to China and successfully set up their own businesses. I was able to sit in meetings both with clients who were negotiating large advertising budgets with my boss, and with companies who had just been set up which my boss was investing in.

**What did you learn from your time on placement:** I learnt how to use WordPress, as well as how to manage content across multiple social media platforms simultaneously. I was taught how to publish and monitor the performance of official posts for my company on the most popular Chinese social media network, WeChat.

I gained a better understanding of the importance of cultural awareness when dealing with customers. I also improved my time management skills due to the fact that I would often be given multiple tasks in a short space of time which had to be completed by the end of the working day or by a certain time due to the company’s social media schedule.

**How has your time on placement influenced your future career choice:** After having completed my placement, I now know that I would much rather work for a larger company in China than for a small business start-up. This is because the work culture of foreign start-ups in China is very tiring and most entrepreneurs have trouble separating their work and personal lives, and as a result they never have any time off for hobbies or relationships. I would rather work for a large company in order to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

“**The most enjoyable part of my placement was having the opportunity to meet lots of new people.**” 

[Image of Chinese flag]
Name: Cieran Balthazor
Department: Aerospace Engineering
Company: The Technical University of Liberec

Job Description:
Working in a team of 4 to produce an initial design a 3D printer to construct a 2 storey building. We had to design the entire system from scratch, and were given very few design parameters, which allowed us to be quite creative with our design process. Personally, I designed the automated counterweight mechanism to keep the 5 tonne machine balanced.

What did you enjoy most:
My favourite part of the job was the initial design process. Investigating the problem and thinking of a variety of solutions. This creative opening stages of the design process are for me the most enjoyable because I have the freedom to think broadly and to think of the general strategy needed to solve the problem at hand.

Outside of work, the location of the placement in the Czech Republic gave me a fantastic opportunity to go on many trips and excursions to explore that part of the world. In particular I enjoyed a hiking trip to Austria where I saw the incredible landscape and met many other interns working in Europe.

What did you learn from your time on placement: On my placement I had to work in an interdisciplinary and international team, with differing levels of education, to solve a problem outside of my degree specialisation. This forced me to work beyond my comfort zone and outside of any of my prior experience. This ability to adapt quickly to a new environment, and to use my intuition to solve problems I'm not particularly familiar with is a great skill which I've acquired.

The fact that the majority of people I was dealing with did not speak English as a first language, this dramatically improved my communication skills. In addition, I had never used the software with which I was designing the mechanism before so I had to learn how to use it very quickly. Not only do I now know a new CAD software program, Creo 2.0, but I gained a new independent learning experience.

How has your time on placement influenced your future career choice: Yes. Sitting in front of a computer all day for 7 weeks was far from ideal, and I often found the sketching the small details in CAD tedious. In my future career I want to be more involved with the initial idea generation and problem solving stages of the design process since this is the work which I enjoyed the most. Furthermore, I could feel myself getting restless with the project as I reached the end of my internship, and so I think that work such as design consulting or management where one works for a short time on multiple projects may be the type of work which suits me best.

“...the majority of people I was dealing with did not speak English as a first language, this dramatically improved my communication skills.”
Name: Rebecca Coombes  
Department: French and Economics  
Company: Meltycasa

**Job Description:** 8 week sales internship in a French start-up, a housing platform allowing tenants to reserve rooms completely online. My main roles included finding landlords willing to list their flat on our site, and as the native English speaker I did this with roughly 60% of French landlords and 40% international landlords. I also looked after mainly international but some French clients through our online chat, email and on the phone. I also edited flat adverts which were listed in French. Finally, I helped clients looking for accommodation by organising and ‘matching’ our available flats.

**What did you enjoy most:** The best thing about my placement was the work environment; I was working with a young team and when I arrived the other interns were supportive and helpful. When the more experienced interns left, I enjoyed taking on the responsibility of helping the new interns. Finally, having free evenings and weekends in the south of France during the summer was a key highlight.

**What did you learn from your time on placement:** Having already spent 9 months in Bordeaux on my year abroad I was really happy with the further progress I made with the French language. Speaking and living in French became easy, and being able to manipulate the language in our sales goals as well as understanding subtle tones meant that I was able to do the same work as the French interns. I also learnt about strategy and sales, and as part of the team was able to contribute to recording our sales strategy, which we had experimented with throughout the summer.

**How has your time on placement influenced your future career choice:** Yes definitely. You get all the learning opportunities of a placement, but get to experience a new culture and lifestyle outside of work. Making international friends and contacts as well as learning a new language are also great benefits.

Name: Sebastain Reichetzer  
Department: Aero Engineering  
Company: DG-Flugzeugbau

**Job Description:** I was working in the design department of the company. My main area of responsibility was to produce technical drawings and to design 3D models of aircraft components. Furthermore I was writing repair instructions and technical informations.

**What did you enjoy most:** It was related to my course, so I could see how my workplace could look like after I finish university.

**What did you learn from your time on placement:** I learned about the work that has to be done to improve an already existing product to keep competitive and to optimise the production. I have also learned how CAD software is used in industry. I think the placement made me more independent. I also saw that it is always important to keep learning new things in order to become a good engineer. Additionally, I could improve my communication skills.

**How has your time on placement influenced your future career choice:** I still want to work in the same area.
Name: Luca Rami  
Department: English Language and Linguistics  
Company: Skouras Sports and Language Camp

Job Description:
- Plan lessons with aims and outcomes based on the students’ level of English according to existing syllabi, ensuring students’ needs are met;
- Teach English through reading and writing, communicative language tasks and games;
- Liaise with the students’ home teachers regarding any classroom issues;
- Attend daily meetings and report on any issues;
- Prepare students’ end-of-course certificates;
- Be a point of reference for the students regarding academic issues;
- Join in the evening activities and lead the participating students.

What did you enjoy most: Working in an international environment, with people from all over the Balkans, Europe, and the whole world. This is definitely going to be a key aspect when job hunting in the future.

What did you learn from your time on placement: Teaching means you want to be the most effective communicator you can be. Teaching a language also entails that one of the main tools for communication itself is constantly under ‘control’ and ‘scrutiny’, and so I very often found myself quite mindful of the language I was using for this very reason as well as because I was teaching students from all over the world. Additionally, working as part of a team of teachers meant that we were constantly giving each other lesson-related feedback and exchanging ideas;
Teaching means you work with people on all levels, and things are unpredictable in the classroom. As a teacher with modest experience, I often struggled to assess my lesson plans in terms of how I saw my class react to them - it might be they found it too easy or hard, that it took too much or little time, that it simply did not work because it was so boring that the students simply did not pay attention etc. (yes - teaching is a demanding job!) Plus, you can't be entirely sure that if you have fewer and planned a whole-class discussion, then that's an issue; if there are too many and still you have planned a whole-class discussion, then that's also an issue for you lesson. Therefore, as a teacher, I believe you have to be very mindful of all of these possible simultaneous ‘problems’ you may face during your lesson and be responsive to them in the best way possible;
The most important thing when you start a new experience in your life is to have an open mind about the people, things, rhythms and routines that are awaiting you, and to be ready and willing to accept them;

How has your time on placement influenced your future career choice: My time on placement has been crucial in shaping my future career choices. Teaching in general, and teaching a language in particular, is something I have always wanted to do, and going through this experience really showed me I would enjoy it as a full-time job, and it is something I definitely want to do in the future.
Name: Matthew Brown
Department: Mechanical Engineering
Company: AIDA S.r.l. Italy

Job Description: Structural Analysis of Press frames using FE analysis and other techniques to ascertain the reliability, potential failure areas and recommended improvements of a 6300kN stamping press. The role included modelling the press from 2D drawings using Autodesk Inventor, setting up the FE analysis in Ansys, then creating a brief but descriptive report using PowerPoint to present to others.

What did you enjoy most: The work involved was very relevant to my degree course, and was able to directly transfer learning from a number of modules to the work being done. From a non-technical perspective, I enjoyed working in a very different environment, in a new culture, met some great people and was able to pick up some of the Italian language.

What did you learn from your time on placement: I was able to go into FE techniques in more depth than I had in my course, using more advanced software which allowed greater control, to produce more accurate and predictable results. Furthermore, I took an interest in the management techniques of the engineering department, which was very different to other places I have worked. The department was going through a difficult time of restructuring and moving from 2D to 3D design, therefore issues came up regularly. There seemed to be a lack of communication between design teams which led to many costly manufacturing problems. Finally, I was able to learn a small amount of the Italian language.

How has your time on placement influenced your future career choice: My time in Italy opened my eyes to a potential career abroad as I found that the people were very kind and welcoming.

Furthermore, it turned out that not knowing the language wasn’t a barrier, and we were still able to communicate very effectively due to most of the employees speaking excellent English, and having four interpreters if there were any issues.

“...My time in Italy opened my eyes to a potential career abroad as I found that the people were very kind and welcoming.”
Name: Lauren Howe
Department: Materials Science
Company: Philips

Job Description:
Research and Development intern in the Department of Smart Interfaces and Modules. Collated supplier information and material datasheets into a database of available materials for the project. Mechanically characterised materials through tensile testing, cyclic hysteresis tensile testing, water vapour transmission rate measurements and T-Peel tests in order to narrow down the selection of materials to a final few for the final application.

What did you enjoy most: I loved experiencing working in a multinational company, within my project I got to work closely with Dutch, Germans and Americans along with meeting other interns from worldwide such as South Africans and Canadians. Working for such a renowned company was amazing. Philips has a long history, founded in 1891 and has been really influential in the development of Eindhoven. Its founders, Frederik Philips and his two sons, Gerard and Anton, were very socially-minded entrepreneurs and this is still very much evident now around the town with the old workers’ houses, PSV football stadium, the museum and many other buildings and places to enjoy.

I was very fortunate to have the opportunity to work at the High Tech Campus, I don’t think you could find a better work environment. The High Tech Campus is made up of 130 companies, mainly Philips related, it has a lake that we would often walk around at lunch and a strip of restaurants, a supermarket, bank and gym to name a few, all adding to the experience of working at Philips. Philips had an intern committee with continuous activities to get involved in. During my time in Eindhoven PSV won the league so employees got a chance to meet the team.

What did you learn from your time on placement: I gained data analysis skills (using matlab for efficiency), I experienced the bigger picture - met with different departments, possible suppliers and internal customers, conducted meetings and gained valuable presentation skills. At the start I had a conference call with the project leader in America and took a brief from them, it was interesting to see how projects were carried out with areas being covered in different countries. Also learnt to explain my ideas and outcomes more clearly for others to have a better understanding, especially in a multinational work environment, where English was many peoples second language.

My confidence grew throughout the placement to the point that I was happy to source the supplier and organised a visit to them on my own. It wasn’t just work related skills, with moving abroad came a lot of problems to overcome, therefore organisation was needed. Firstly finding a place to live was very challenging. We also had to sort out Dutch bank accounts and tax numbers and register at the town hall to say we were living there, all things I hadn’t really thought about before going.

How has your time on placement influenced your future career choice: Made me realise that I’m less keen on looking into the literature and tedious early research side of projects and much more enjoy the practical side, and more towards product development and manufacturing end of things. I could easily see myself working at the High Tech Campus and have gained some valuable contacts within the industry from the placement.
Name: Surachai Chan Somchit
Department: Materials Science
Company: Philips

Job Description: As an intern at Philips, my role as a research assistant was to study the electrochemical stability and leach characteristics of skin conductance electrodes currently being used in a novel consumer lifestyle product known as the Discreet Tension Indicator. I also needed to develop appropriate experimental procedures to carry out these tasks in a laboratory environment.

What did you enjoy most: There were many parts of my placement that I would deem enjoyable. The first would be the opportunity itself to carry out my placement at Philips in the Netherlands since it gave me the chance to expose myself to a new cultural and living experience. The research I was involved in was very interesting and gave me incentive to try to fully understand the idea behind the product as well as appreciate the development process. I also enjoyed the laid-back but yet forward-looking culture of the company, where employers are given flexi-hours as long as they complete their workload punctually and brainstorming sessions with different engineers and scientists are consistently being held. Besides that, my course mates who were also working at Philips made the experience much more enjoyable since I always had company and we travelled a bit around Europe.

What did you learn from your time on placement: In terms of general skills, my inter-personal skills have improved since I had to communicate with many different engineers and scientists with different backgrounds. Also, communicating with my Dutch supervisor was difficult at the beginning but it gradually improved as my placement progressed. This has helped me become less self-conscious and has increased my confidence. Besides that, having to write a full technical report for the company has prepared me for my final year thesis.

In terms of technical skills, I have gained knowledge on electrochemistry, mainly using cyclic voltammetry to understand the current-voltage characteristics of electrodes and surfaces. In accordance with this, I had to learn LabVIEW programming, use different electronic machinery to conduct my experiments and improve my Matlab skills for data analysis. Also, by using the Nernst equation and Pourbaix diagrams, I learned the basics for pH calculations and predicting leach characteristics of materials. I've also gained some understanding of psychophysiology and skin conductance, which is the main science behind the above-mentioned product.

How has your time on placement influenced your future career choice: My placement in Philips has helped me gain exposure in working in a research and development environment, which has showed me a possible employment option for the future but working at Philips also showed me the many different engineering prospects and hopefully after completion of my degree, I will have a better idea of what I want to pursue after graduating, which could either be a post doctorate or a graduate placement.
Name: Charlotte Dickinson
Department: International Relations and Politics
Company: ICS VSO Nigeria

Job Description: Volunteer – During my 3 months, I facilitated classes with primary school and secondary school children, to help increase the level of literary schools in the local community. Additionally the role consisted of celebrating international days, such as international youth skills day, and international hepatitis day. Mainly to help educate the community on global issues affecting them and to teach them basic English.

What did you enjoy most: The placement was thoroughly enjoyable, as I was immersed into a new culture and lifestyle, as I lived with a host family within the community. The placement allowed me to meet new people, and develop and expand my knowledge of poverty and global issues.

What did you learn from your time on placement: I learnt about global issues such as poverty, and how people in the 3rd world live. I also learnt about how education is a gift that not everyone has, and it is so important that everyone gets the opportunity to learn. The new skills I acquired were public speaking, how to work in a cross-cultural team, how to plan and facilitate lessons and how to communicate even with a language barrier.

How has your time on placement influenced your future career choice: The time on my placement has definitely increased my interest in international development, and the work NGO’s do in third world countries. Therefore I am thinking of doing a masters in international development and wanting to work with an NGO in the future.

“...education is a gift that not everyone has, and it is so important that everyone gets the opportunity to learn.”
Name: Eleanor Blake  
Department: Russian with Czech  
Company: Crossroads to Eurasia, International Youth Centre

Job Description: I worked as a camp counsellor at a children’s summer camp in Russia. The town was called Nerekhta, which is about 5 hours from Moscow. It was in an idyllic spot in the countryside and the weather was excellent all the way through. My job was to look after the kids in a more pastoral way. I would make sure they were awake and ready on time for activities, would participate in some with them, eat with them and put them to bed at night. Also as it was a camp based around learning English I was pretty useful at teaching some words or explaining something. We would have group times where my partner (2 counsellors were put with one group) and we would play games, reflect on events or prepare performances as required.

What did you enjoy most: Most of all I loved meeting all the people I came across. The kids I looked after were wonderful, they included me in their games and would teach me some new words and phrases in Russian. My colleagues, the other counsellors and other staff at the camp were all a great pleasure to work with. Being in a close environment meant we got to know each other very well and we became great friends. Also I have met people from all over the world. It amazed me how far people would come to participate or work for the camp.

What did you learn from your time on placement: I learnt to become more assertive and I learnt some very useful phrases in Russian! I learn the language as part of my degree so the more I know the better! Also that working as a counsellor really isn’t so scary. At first I felt nervous but as you get to know the kids better things go smoothly. I have learnt that I really love Russia and would love to come back to the camp one day. I would like to spend more time in the country itself.

How has your time on placement influenced your future career choice: Yes – it has confirmed that I want to work with children in some way. I’m not sure in what yet, but certainly it has got cogs turning!
**Name:** Kiyumbu Wilkister Ludenyi  
**Department:** Economics and Politics  
**Company:** kLab (Knowledge lab) Rwanda

**Job Description:** Initially, my role involved interviewing kLab tenants to try and identify ways in which kLab can better improve its services to them. I also developed a Customer Survey with the same intention. Later, I was given the task of writing a proposal for a similar hub that would be launched and that would incorporate the qualities of an Openspace, incubator and accelerator. I also helped in writing up a Training & Orientation outline for FabLab- this is similar in concept to kLab except specifically focuses the digital expertise to design and fabrication. FabLab is new and had only started in May.

I also helped in developing marketing materials for a Hackathon that kLab was hosting later in July. I also worked on a blog post highlighting the day to day life of a hub tenant.

I also worked with a mentor and one of the managers on developing a Business proposal that they were hoping to work on together.

**What did you enjoy most:** kLab has mentors who work with tenants at the hub in sharing their knowledge and expertise with them in helping them developing their ICT solutions so that they are market viable. My favourite part of my internship was working on a Project proposal with one of the mentors (from South Africa) who was collaborating with another one of the kLab managers, on an education project that they were planning to start with the aim of meeting the ICT knowledge gap. I gained insight on business proposal planning, strategizing for community one’s idea to various stakeholders (specifically in the African context) and because it was a totally different field from my degree, I gained skills for working in teams of people with different knowledge/expertise. I believe this would be really useful for project management opportunities for the career that I would take up after school.

**What did you learn from your time on placement:** I enjoyed working in a rather different culture from mine. Before the internship, I was partially ignorant of the difference between East Africans even in their work ethics. As I am Kenyan, I had just assumed that we are the same as Rwandans in most ways. I have learnt the importance to go into a different workplace with a totally open mind in order to make the most of the opportunities and to learn from those you are working with.

My communication skills have also improved. Within the workplace and in my interactions with the locals, there was a lot of language barrier because most people do not communicate in English. It was introduced as the country’s official language only a few years back. As I had to interview tenants who sometimes weren’t efficient in English, paraphrasing, finding simpler ways to communicate without watering down the content that I wanted to pass across and using nonverbal cues effectively were skills that I improved on.

Lastly, I also took some time to learn about the political history of the country, briefly looked into the economic plans that Rwanda has outlined in its Vision 2020 and had discussion about them with the locals.

**How has your time on placement influenced your future career choice:**

Yes. I am more informed about applying for opportunities abroad, challenges that I may face in new environments and also the skills that I should prioritise on gaining at the workplace. In the short-term, I would prioritise job opportunities that challenge me, include elements of fieldwork (as I enjoy travelling) and looking out for the organisation’s training and development of its employees.

“...I have learnt the importance to go into a different workplace with a totally open mind.”
Name: Angus Calder
Department: International Politics
Company: Save the Children International

Job Description: Security and Counter Fraud Intern at Save the Children International, Singapore Regional Office:
- Monitoring of information, data, news and legal development related to safety and security across Asia
- Support the review of safety & security standards;
- Support daily safety & security operational tasks;
- Assist in the completion of fraud risk assessments through the completion of specific tasks as directed by the Counter Fraud specialist;
- Assist in the routine provision of support and information regarding counter fraud arrangements and procedures and related matters;
- Assist in the preparation and production of case files and reports;

What did you enjoy most: The thing I enjoyed the most about the placement was really feeling my skills could be put to use. As an International Politics student I have a fear that I don’t have any specific or technical skill sets that would be sought after when I enter the job market. This placement helped to build my confidence in realizing that my political/security analysis skills could be a key asset for employers. Monitoring developments such as The Hague South China Sea Ruling, spread of Zika virus in SEA, terrorist activity in Bangladesh etc, were all really enjoyable, in that, I felt that my skills could be of use to an organisation.

What did you learn from your time on placement:
The steepest learning curve during my time in the placement was learning about Counter Fraud and Corruption Management. I knew next to nothing about Counter Fraud management and I had to be very attentive and focused in absorbing all the new information in how fraud is prevented, detected and managed in an international organisation. It gave me a better awareness of what constitutes corrupt practices and how investigations are conducted and what measures are taken in response when an employee is found to have committed fraud. Accordingly, I had to learn to be very strict in managing confidential information. In addition, part of of fraud management involves financial process and I had to learn quickly about controls placed on financial transactions to prevent fraud, as finance in general is a subject I knew little about, I had to learn very quickly. Towards the end of my placement Save the Children enabled me to take an anti-corruption test whereby I passed and obtained a certificate for my understanding.

Another related area of learning from security and fraud management was overall risk management. An international organisation such as Save the Children working in many high risk countries needs to pay careful attention to various risks. I had to, therefore, learn how risks are rated both numerically and qualitatively, in terms of gross and net, likelihood and impact, and the process of mitigation monitoring to address the key risks that the organisation faces. Risk management, is a general form, is an adaptable skill, that I know could be useful in any role I take in the future.

How has your time on placement influenced your future career choice:
Learning more about risk management in general has influenced how I will think about my career in the future, because it’s such an adaptable skill it keeps your job options more open than if you focus purely on security or fraud management for example. Furthermore, while this placement has reaffirmed my interest in security management, learning about counter fraud, and fraud investigations in specific, was fascinating in its moral complexity and I would be more keen to explore this further as a possible career path.
Name: Jennifer Schofield  
Department: English Literature  
Company: Camp Thailand

Job Description: I worked in three different schools in Thailand helping the students acquire basic English to assist them with their studies. Firstly, I worked in a kindergarten for a week playing games with the young children. The children only knew very basic English so I taught them colours, numbers and other simple elements to help the children with conversational English. The following week I stayed at Pasang college working with adult students. I was able to focus on more complex English such as making conversation which is useful to the students in real life. I had a number of classes in which we worked on directions, talking about themselves and other elements to a conversation. I then enjoyed working at an English camp at an all-girls school; we played interactive games which incorporated the study of English.

What did you enjoy most: I mostly enjoyed meeting new people who were on the same scheme. I met people from all over the UK who I still keep in touch with now. I appreciated the opportunity to make many more friends who I shared a great experience with. Alongside people who were on the scheme I met a lot of Thai teachers whom were extremely hospitable, this gave me the chance to learn more about Thai culture and the language.

What did you learn from your time on placement: I learnt many interesting things about the Thai culture for instance, their devout appreciation for their royal family. I believe the placement increased my independence greatly; I had to look after myself in an unfamiliar country and navigate myself around it. Overall, I am proud of myself for embarking on a trip on my own not knowing anyone, to eventually leaving with many friends from all over the UK. I also think the placement has given me the confidence for future independent travel which is useful in terms of employability.

How has your time on placement influenced your future career choice: I think I still want to have the same career choice however, my placement has enhanced my CV greatly possibly giving me a greater chance of acquiring employment. Also, my placement has broadened my opportunities as previously, I would not have contemplated going abroad for work however, since my placement I would definitely consider the option. Therefore, my placement has not changed my career choice but, rather opened more opportunities for employment such as working abroad or travelling with work.
**Name:** Jessica Kelly  
**Department:** Music  
**Company:** The Walt Disney Company

**Job Description:** Operations - I worked at ESPN Wide World of Sports operating golf carts for guests, ushering games, I worked in the parking lot and also on the main entrance. I also worked at Animal Kingdom on the night time show 'Jungle Book: Alive With Magic' helping with crowd control.

**What did you enjoy most:** I enjoyed getting work experience in roles I’d never worked in before, and also getting to work with people from all over the world, helping to create magic for guests.

**What did you learn from your time on placement:** I learnt how to engage with guests, how to cope with working in extreme conditions (heat), and I also learnt what it was like to live in another country. I gained timekeeping skills and money managing skills.

**How has your time on placement influenced your future career choice:** It has definitely assured me that I enjoy working in close contact with guests, and love working in entertainment.

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**Name:** Laura Eastaff  
**Department:** English Literature  
**Company:** Camp Watia

**Job Description:** Lifeguard and Counsellor; lifeguarding waterfront activities, conducting various sport and art related activities, supervising the children and offering support during their time at Camp.

**What did you enjoy most:** Being able to have an impact upon each camper's summer and future, it was the changes in each child that you’d see from the beginning to the end of their time at camp that kept my enthusiasm levels as high as they were. Whether it was the small things like hearing a camper finally saying please or to the camper who finally had the confidence to stand up and sing in front of others, or the bigger things like having a camper open up to you about problems at home or asking for advice on how to cope.

**What did you learn from your time on placement:** I gained a lot of new skills from working at camp; a work ethic, patience, a level of commitment to a role and leadership abilities. What I learnt from my placement was the importance of helping others and the impact one action can have.

**How has your time on placement influenced your future career choice:** Definitely, it has drawn my focus from business to charity work or social work, I now aim to find a career were I can help improve children’s opportunities.