

A Student Guide to Successful Work Placement

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Contents

Introduction

Preparation

Preparation > General

1 > What is 'Quality Work Experience'?	6
2 > Quality Work Placement Plan	7
3 > Why Work Experience is Vital for Students, Tutors and Employers	8
4 > Work Placement Brief/ Code of Practice	19
5 > Pro-formas - Design and Control	10
6 > Remuneration/ National Minimum Wage	11
7 > Equal Opportunities	12

Preparation > Student

1 > Preparation for Placement	13
2 > Self Assessment of Strengths and Weaknesses	14
3 > Essential Preparation	17
4 > Clarify the Details	19
5 > Examples of Jobs, Roles and Industries	20
6 > Example Job Descriptions	22
7 > CV Preparation	28
8 > Personal Statement	30
9 > Covering Letter	31
10 > Selling Yourself on Paper	33
11 > Going for Interviews	35
12 > Personal Safety at Interviews	37
Summary	38

During

During > General

1 > Placement Assessment	39
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During > Student

1 > Making the Most of Your Placement	40
2 > Keeping a Placement Diary	42
3 > Code of Behaviour at Work	44
4 > Safety in the Workplace	45
5 > Relationship with Your Institution whilst on Placement	46
6 > Preparing for Tutor Visits	47

	7 > Assessment Requirements	48
	8 > Advice on Writing a Placement Report	49
	9 > More advice on Writing a Placement Report	50
	Summary	52
After	After > General	
	1 > Post-placement Feedback	53
	After > Student	
	1 > Reflective Learning	54
	2 > Making a Presentation of Your Placement Experience to Peers and Staff	55
	3 > Tips on Making Presentations about Work Experience	56
	4 > Requesting a Post-placement Reference	58
	Summary	59
	Bibliography	60
	Contacts	62
	Appendices	64

Introduction

A period of industrial work placement within a degree programme may be viewed as pivotal in the development of graduates, in the sense that academic disciplines and practical application can be interrelated, and key skills practised and developed.

The opportunity for students to apply their knowledge and skills in an industrial setting whilst experiencing the atmosphere and pace of the work place helps to develop confidence and define future career goals. Such an important aspect of student development requires significant thought and discussion within course teams to ensure that the purpose, timing, length, assessment and management of the placement is well-defined within course documentation and that all concerned are aware of the opportunities, and their roles and responsibilities.

The purpose of integrating work placement into the course curriculum is to:

- facilitate quality of learning from work experience;
- prepare students for effective transition into the workplace;
- build confidence in key skills;
- develop effective links between HEI based studies and work activities;
- help students make educational and career decisions and improve their employability;
- give employers an opportunity to view students in terms of employment opportunities;
- evaluate courses against the requirements of employment and inform the curriculum;
- ensure a supply of graduates with academic and practical experience of their chosen industry.

Students, employers and tutors are the three major stakeholders in organised work placements. Much of the success or failure of placements is due to how well they combine and co-operate in the organisation and management of the process. This guide offers support to academics, students and employers in a way that should ensure that the full value of placements is realised by all.

This guide aims to address the principal issues concerned with effective work placements in the stages:

- preparing;
- during;
- after.

Each of these stages is organised into information of a generic nature which is of interest to all stakeholders and then specific information for students, tutors and employers. The appendices provide detailed information and good practice on specific aspects of the process.

The guide is presented in a way that ensures that everyone can view information specific to their particular role, and also the information for the other two stakeholders. Everyone will be aware of each other's contributions and responsibilities to achieve a successful and rewarding work placement.

For the benefit of tutors, this guide has been compiled in line with the precepts of the Quality Assurance Agency Code of Practice on Placement Learning (these precepts are listed in [Appendix 2](#)). This document is one of a series of interrelated documents which, taken together, will form an overall Code of Practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education (the Code) for the guidance of higher education institutions subscribing to the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (the QAA).

Of course, the guide is not a 'ready made' solution that can simply be adopted by an institution as its own work placement guide. Institutions that already have work placement information can use the guide to review their own provision and perhaps adopt parts of the guide or further develop some of its ideas. Institutions developing placement programmes for the first time can use the guide as a source of good practice.

Generic terms are used to apply the guide to an interdisciplinary academic audience, i.e.:

Work placement - any period within a work environment as part of a degree course;

Tutor/Institution/HEI - any academic staff or institutional placement staff within any Higher Education Institution.

Preparation > General

1 > What is 'Quality Work Experience'?

The term 'Quality Work Experience' can be defined as a temporary period of student employment as part of a student's course which is effectively planned and managed and takes in the negotiated requisites of the student, employer and HEI.

According to research undertaken by the National Centre for Work Experience, the following items represent a comprehensive definition of quality work experience:

- the student is trained by the higher education institution (HEI) to identify potential learning outcomes;
- objectives are set (by HEI, employer and student);
- supervision is by a supervisor trained in the objectives and learning outcomes of work experience - academic supervision and visits take place;
- regular feedback is given;
- an appraisal is given during and at the end of the work experience;
- where appropriate, a project is undertaken;
- learning and achievements are expressed by the student in written form;
- an assessment is made, including an assessment of skills development (by HEI, employer and student);
- recognition, credit, diploma or a certificate is awarded.

[Appendix 1](#) shows The National Council for Work Experience Code of Good Practice in full.

Preparation > General

2 > Quality Work Placement Plan

A quality work placement plan could include the following:

- development of a work placement handbook for students, staff and employers to describe the placement;
- design and development of appropriate forms/standard letters to be used in the placement process (See [Preparation > General > 5 > Pro-formas - Design and Control](#));
- briefing process for students including potential learning benefits, CV preparation and interview practice;
- designated staff to oversee the academic requirements of the placement;
- designated company member to supervise student on placement and to liaise with the HEI;
- appraisal of student by company member with feedback to student and HEI;
- assessment of student using appropriate form of assignment;
- contact between student and HEI to conduct 'in company' tutorial;
- helpline/ email for student to contact HEI;
- encouraging student to reflect on placement and articulate learning outcomes;
- feedback by student to HEI (staff and students) and employers.

Preparation > General

3 > Why Work Experience is Vital for Students, Tutors and Employers

The following lists highlight the key benefits of an effective Work Placement Programme.

Importance for students:

- to link academic study and theory to real industrial practice;
- to engage with jobs/processes not easily achievable in an HEI e.g. latest technology, work behaviour etc;
- to practise existing key skills and learn new ones;
- to experience the atmosphere and pace of industrial practice;
- to confirm existing career aims or discover new careers;
- to learn critical reflection as a means of self development;
- to apply problem solving in a real industrial environment;
- to learn the 'language' of industry;
- to assess a possible company for future employment.

Importance for tutors:

- to maintain contact with the world of work;
- to identify potential research areas;
- to identify sources of sponsorship;
- to confirm/develop course aims/material relevant to industry;
- to tutor students in an industrial setting;
- to view latest technology in action;
- to identify potential outside speakers;
- to aid progression for students after graduation.

Importance for employers:

- bringing in fresh ideas from a motivated student;
- flexibility of taking students on a short-term basis to help with identified objectives;
- assessing placement students in terms of possible future full-time employment is a cost effective recruitment strategy;
- a relatively inexpensive form of employing an intelligent and flexible resource;
- contact with HEIs can lead to joint research projects;
- good return on investment: average of £6 return on each £1 spent on placement (STEP summer placements 1999).

Preparation > General

4 > Work Placement Brief/ Code of Practice

"An effective placement learning opportunity is one in which the aims and intended learning outcomes are clearly defined and understood by all parties and where the responsibilities of the higher education institution, placement provider and student are made explicit."

(Introduction to the QAA Code of Practice on Placement Learning).

It is imperative that all three stakeholders (students, tutors and employers) share the aims and objectives of achieving a quality work placement.

Each HEI should develop, with due consultation of students and employers, a work placement brief or code of practice, which will form the basis of an agreement between stakeholders (according to the QAA Code of Practice precepts 1,3 and 4 - see full list in [Appendix 2](#)).

The brief or code should set out the aims and objectives of the work placement, which articulate the roles, responsibilities and rights of each stakeholder. Reference to the development of key skills as learning outcomes should be incorporated within the brief or code of practice.

[Appendix 3](#) provides an exemplar code of practice. The example details before, during and after the placement, assessment processes, health and safety requirements, and includes a description of the responsibilities and rights of each stakeholder.

Preparation > General

5 > Pro-formas - Design and Control

The process of communication between the major stakeholders is crucial to the delivery of quality work experience. A good work placement system should have an appropriate number of standardised letters and forms so that managing the communication process at each stage is effective and uncluttered by poorly designed and ineffectual paperwork.

The communication system and its paper and/or paperless methods should be viewed as a liberating provision, rather than a restricting one. Good systems free up people to spend more time on the quality aspects of placement i.e. tutorials/workshops etc.

Below is a list of example letters/records that can be considered as a starting point for such a system. The 'Control' aspect of the title suggests that a co-ordinator should monitor the system, be interested in its development and improvement, and warn against the proliferation of forms that are unnecessary or do not meet the standards aimed for.

Suggested pro-formas for inclusion within a work placement programme.

Information	Who is in receipt of the information?
CV advice	Students
Pre-Placement Information Sheet and Skills Audit	Students
Promote work placement	Employer
Tutor reference	Employer
Finding placements	Students
Student record of applications	HEI
Employer job description	Students/HEI
Performance on placement	All
Thank you letter to company	Employer

Consider also a 'Work Placement Logo' with accompanying letterhead/ leaflet style for a more professional look.

See [Appendix 4](#) for an example of a Pre-Placement Information Sheet and Skills Audit.

Preparation > General

6 > Remuneration/National Minimum Wage

Remuneration

It is in the employer's and student's interest that remuneration is agreed before the commencement of the work placement. Students on sandwich courses where the placement period can vary from 6 to 12 months have to pay course fees and do not receive grants.

Students should be advised to go for placement interviews having calculated in advance what level of wage they must achieve in order to cover fees, accommodation, subsistence, and travel to and from work. Clearly, if a student on placement has to worry about meeting basic subsistence levels they will not be able to put all their energies into work and employers will not get the motivated and focused employee they want.

National Minimum Wage

The national minimum wage is a legal right that covers the majority of workers in the UK. It became law on 1st April 1999 and sets out the level of minimum wage applicable for individuals.

However, paragraph 35 of 'A detailed guide to the national minimum wage' states "*Students who are studying on higher education courses at UK universities or colleges are sometimes placed with an employer as part of their course. Such students need not be paid the national minimum wage for the work that they do while with the employer, up to a maximum period of one year.*"

(For enquiries about the national minimum wage call 0845 6000 678 and more detailed guidance can be sought from 0845 8450 360 including provision of a free copy of 'A detailed guide to the national minimum wage'. Local phone rates apply for both numbers.)

Income Tax

One of the less attractive aspects of earning is paying statutory income tax. Unmarried students will be entitled to a personal allowance tax-free (this currently stands at £4615 for the tax year April 02 to April 03, but please check with the Inland Revenue for an update – www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk).

The allowance is divided into 12 equal monthly amounts (or weekly if so paid). If the student has not been earning in the current tax year (April to April), income will not be taxed immediately while the personal allowance is used up. When earnings reach the tax threshold the student will become liable for income tax.

For example:

Tax allowance for year	£4615.00
Monthly allowance (approx)	£385.00

Tax is then paid on the difference between the gross monthly salary (before anything is taken out) and the tax allowance.

If already earning and paying tax in the current tax year, this will continue.

When the placement is finished, depending on salary and end date, the student may be entitled to a refund, but only where s/he does not continue earning during the tax year. To claim tax back students should use a P50 form from the tax office (again the Inland Revenue website - www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk - is helpful in locating your local office).

Everyone has to pay National Insurance contributions.

Preparation > General

7 > Equal Opportunities

Everyone is protected by law against discrimination based on race, sex, disability or marital status in employment, education and the provision of services.

“A Level Playing Field” Equality & Diversity: A job hunting guide for students and graduates - How to challenge unfair discrimination’ is published by the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services and should be available for reference in your Careers Library. This addresses issues of discrimination concerning race, sex equality, age, health, religion, and sexual orientation. It also looks at the position of ex-offenders and those concerned about discrimination on the grounds of politics, ethics, beliefs and social class.

Parity of access to work placements for disabled students is a requirement of the QAA Code of Practice *Section 3: Students with Disabilities* (precept 11). Further, equal opportunities for disabled students will be legally protected from September 2002, when the Special Education Needs and Disability Act (SEND Act) 2001 will come into force. This legislation has specific requirements regarding the entitlement of disabled students to the same opportunities for placement learning as others. The legal responsibility falls on the institution to ensure there is no discrimination against disabled students on the grounds of failure to make a reasonable adjustment or treating a student less favourably. The requirements placed upon the institutions should inform the entire placement process, from the design of the procedures, through the preparation and finding of a placement, to support, monitoring and review of a placement. For more detailed information, see the Department for Education and Skills brochure, ‘Providing Work Placement for Disabled Students: A good practice guide for further and higher education institutions’.

Students should see their tutor, industrial placement officer, or a careers adviser at their institution to discuss anything of concern regarding equality of opportunity within the work placement process. Students should act immediately to report any incidents of harassment.

‘UKCOSA Guidance Notes for Students 2001-2002 “Students and employment”’ covers issues of work restrictions and prohibitions imposed by the UK immigration authorities that may affect international students from outside the European Economic Area.

Contacts:

Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) www.eoc.org.uk - 0161 833 9244 - Employment Department

Commission of Racial Equality (CRE) www.cre.gov.uk - 020 7828 7022

The Disability Law Service - 020 7831 8031

Disability Rights Commission Helpline – 08457 622 633

The Employment Law Website www.emplaw.co.uk/free/index.html

Lesbian and Gay Employment Rights (LAGER) www.lager.dircon.co.uk/index.htm

CANDO Database (Careers Advisory Network on Disability Opportunities)
cando.lancs.ac.uk

UKCOSA – 020 7354 5210 – www.ukcosa.org.uk

Preparation > Student

1 > Preparation for placement

The following key skills (together with problem solving) are considered to be highly influential in terms of your employability:

- communication;
- numeracy;
- I.T.;
- learning how to learn;
- working with others.

No matter how much you have learned through your studies, you will need to underpin this with a period of 'hands-on' learning where you can develop these skills. (For surveys on the skills employers look for, see [Appendix 5](#)).

The success of your work placement can depend on how well you prepare for what can be a vitally important period for you. Your career interests and aspirations will undoubtedly inform your thinking and job research activities. Remember that a good placement will not only develop your knowledge and skills but also define the look of your eventual CV.

Your tutor (and any specific placement organising staff at your institution) can assist you in preparing for work placement, but it is you who must take responsibility for ensuring that the process is a success.

Preparation > Student

2 > Self Assessment of Strengths and Weaknesses

Before choosing an area of industry in which to do your work placement you should ask yourself some searching and important questions.

- what do you hope to get out of the placement?
- what skills do you have?
- what skills do you want to develop?
- which areas of the course interest you most?
- what kind of employer are you looking for?

Here are some tips on how to go about assessing yourself objectively and thoroughly. (Amundson & Poehnell 1996)

Skills

Your employer will ask you about your skills and you should prepare for the interview by rehearsing what you are likely to say. Think about the industry-related skills you have learned on your course as well as other skills like team working, working to deadlines, use of computer software programmes etc.

Interests

Describing your interests can tell employers quite a lot about the kind of person you are. Are you interested in something superficially or do you have a deep understanding and passion for it. Instead of just saying 'reading and socialising' you could say that you are fascinated by eastern influences on western fashion quoting a writer in the field. You could say that you enjoy going to pub quiz nights with friends to cover the 'socialising' claim with something more descriptive. It is not advisable to claim interests that are not genuine to try to impress e.g. chess and early British civilisation. The interviewer just might ask a question on them!

Values

What are you really looking for in your placement? Are you hoping to make money to finance your studies or pay off a loan? Are you looking for a company with a high profile name to make your CV look better? Are you looking for a challenging placement where you can discover yourself and identify your strengths and weaknesses?

Personal Style

It is important to consider your own personal style so that you can focus on companies/jobs that match your way of working. You should also think about how you can develop yourself by going for a placement that will extend you. Assess yourself honestly; are you outgoing or do you tend to hang back? Do you thrive on challenge or do you feel happier doing what you know about? Are you good at time management and do you enjoy working to deadlines? Do you feel happier working in a well-structured environment or one that is more changeable?

Significant Others

Your career aspirations may be influenced by family, friends, company contacts or lecturers. Ultimately your career direction is your choice but it may be useful to involve others with your ideas to enable you to articulate what it is that really interests you in your chosen industry.

Education

Your education up to the point of considering potential placements will undoubtedly influence your career direction and you should think about how you can describe your achievements in

a way that is attractive and understandable to employers. Consider giving short explanations about what you have gained from courses rather than a bland list of courses.

Work and Leisure Experience

Review your track record to date in terms of previous employment/voluntary work/leisure interests. What does your record say about you? Does it show a proactive go-getter or a passive spectator?

Labour Market

Find out about your industry. Consider your geographic issues. Consider changing technology and the opportunities it creates for you. Read trade journals and magazines, look for articles of interest in newspapers, search the web etc.

Finally, use the table on the next page to consider all these aspects, and evaluate yourself and what you want to gain from the work placement.

Self-assessment Questionnaire

<p>Skills you have and those you want to develop</p>	
<p>Interests - do they point to a career path?</p>	
<p>Your values - why are you going on placement?</p>	
<p>Your personal style - do you want to work in a team? Do you want responsibility? Do you want to be coached?</p>	
<p>The people whose views you might seek in helping you think about placement</p>	
<p>What areas of your course really interest you that might suggest a career direction?</p>	
<p>Consider gaps in your work experience history that you want to fill.</p>	
<p>What is happening in your industry? What are the trends? Is technology changing?</p>	

Preparation > Student

3 > Essential Preparation

Here are some ideas for preparing for work placement:

Preparation programme

Make sure that you attend all preparation sessions organised by your institution; this is essential in gaining a thorough knowledge of placement requirements and it shows staff that you are mature and serious about getting a good placement. Note all deadlines for requirements, e.g. CV preparation or submission of forms.

Job research

Your placement tutor will organise a programme of activities that will help you think about finding a placement. You can help the process by researching the many avenues available to you to find relevant placement opportunities. You may consider trade magazines, the internet, and company literature. Additionally, take every opportunity to visit relevant trade fairs to meet potential employers at first hand and make valuable contacts.

Show and use your own initiative - do not rely on staff to tell you.

How to approach employers

Your HEI may approach prospective employers on your behalf. However, you could discuss with your HEI how to make your own approaches and make the most of your own contacts. Here are a number of different ways you could approach an employer.

- **Doorstepping** There is immediacy about this method. You will definitely be more memorable if you meet someone face to face and may get to see someone who happens to have 5 minutes to spare, but who would have felt unable to make an appointment over the telephone. However, this is not for the faint hearted. Rejection can be very personal in this situation.
- **Telephoning** Certainly your warm, human personality should come through and it is a chance to demonstrate those valuable verbal communication skills. However you may catch the person you are trying to impress at an inconvenient time.
- **Mailing a CV and covering letter** This traditional method has a lot of advantages. You can prepare thoroughly and send off a beautiful, finely crafted document that really shows off your skills to the best effect. You won't have to think on your feet and most employers insist on a CV in the first instance. You should try and find a specific person within the company to contact and always follow up your letter with a telephone call if you don't hear anything within a couple of weeks.

Keep track of your academic commitments

Be aware of any project work you have to complete (and submit) during your time on the placement. Plan ahead if you are to submit a dissertation proposal on your return to HEI. It may be useful to make a timetable or chart, outlining your deadlines.

Keep track of your applications

Keep your own record of placement applications, noting who has been sent your CV, date sent, replies and outcomes. This can be in simple chart form with columns, an example of which is given on the following page.

Record of Placement Applications

<i>Company Name (and Contact name)</i>	<i>Correspondence (type and date)</i>	<i>Nature of Reply</i>	<i>Interview Date</i>	<i>Outcome of Interview</i>

Preparation > Student

4 > Clarify the details

Once a placement is offered clarify the terms of employment before you start. Have a set of personal and job-specific objectives in mind.

Questions to ask/issues to highlight could include:

- What is the length of the placement? Sometimes the HEI or the employer has already decided this, at other times it can be negotiated by the student. Finalise this before you start the placement, even if you leave it open to review.
- What are your main duties and responsibilities? How much training will this involve? Who will provide this and when/how?
- To whom will you report directly? How much supervision will there be? Who should you go to for any help/advice?
- What hours will you be working and under what conditions, e.g. when will you have meal breaks, rest periods?
- What is your remuneration and are there benefits of any kind, e.g. meals, fares paid, or discounts? Sometimes an employer will automatically offer to help with these out of pocket expenses, but if not, it is perfectly acceptable to raise the matter yourself. Check to find out how and when you claim the money back - daily or weekly is better than at the end of the placement;
- Emphasise any expertise you already have and explain how you could use this;
- If there are skills that you would particularly like to develop or learn from scratch, check if and when the employer would be able to help you with this.

Preparation > Student

5 > Examples of Jobs, Roles and Industries

This section provides examples of some of the different roles and responsibilities using the fashion industry as an example. This may be useful to you as you think about possible career directions. It starts by helping you to think about the size and type of company you hope to join and goes on to give examples of different job types.

Your tutors and careers advisers will be able to provide you with similar information for jobs in your field.

Which company to work for?

When planning your work placement you need to think about the type of market level in which you want to work and what suits you. Are you interested in producing cheap or luxury goods? Do you want to work for a company where mass output is important, like Arcadia, M&S or for a speciality market?

Within these markets there are different approaches. For example 'The Gap' is concerned with mass volume production but has a clearly defined product and target customer, where as M&S endeavours to produce products for people of all ages and for all walks of life. So are you a 'Gap' person or 'M&S' person?

What types of organisations?

Retail

Very large Corporate PLCs - (400-600 stores) - M&S, Next, Sears, Arcadia

Advantages:

- Structure and training;
- Up to date systems;
- Company benefits.

Disadvantages:

- Small fish in a big pond;
- Competitive environment.

Large Independent Chains or Dept Stores - (100-300 stores) - River Island, Oasis, Bay Trading, New Look, House of Fraser, John Lewis

Advantages:

- Structure and training;
- Systems;
- Flatter management structure.

Disadvantages:

- Cultural differences (i.e. dealing with strong corporate identities).

Both tend to employ people who:

- Like an organised environment;
- Have a strong academic background;
- Are focused;
- Are competitive;
- Have good communication skills.

Small Independent Chains/Single site retailers - (<100) - Whistles, Jigsaw, Harvey Nichols, French Connection, Selfridges, Dune, LK Bennett

Advantages:

- Big fish in a small pond;
- Exposure to other areas;
- Prestigious brands.

Disadvantages:

- Fewer benefits;
- Fewer transferable skills;
- Less structured training.

Tend to employ people who:

- Work on own initiative;
- Like attention;
- Are organised and efficient;
- Are multi-skilled;
- Have a hands on approach;
- Take responsibility.

Manufacturers/Suppliers

- Suppliers often provide the link between the manufacturer and the retailer. A supplier will source the manufacturers to produce their garments on behalf of the client retailer.
- Some retailers deal directly with their manufacturers and are responsible for ensuring the smooth running of the production process.
- Other manufacturers and suppliers will have their own retail outlets to sell their own stock.
- Many of these companies will be involved in all of the above.
- To source suppliers, read 'Drapers Record' articles and look at the vacancies.
- Specialist recruitment agencies mainly deal with manufacturers.
- Ring retailers (Buyers) to find the names of their suppliers.
- Fabric Mills will tell you who they supply - talk to them at trade and cloth shows.
- Use reference books like, 'Fashion Index' 'British Clothing Industry Yearbook'.

Advantages:

- Pay more initially;
- Less competition for jobs if not a high profile company.

Disadvantages:

- Less structured career progression;
- First to be affected by changing economic climate.

Preparation > Student 6 > Example Job Descriptions

Job description for a BUYER *Responsible for buying the merchandise range*

The Work:

- plans a new range each season - more involved in strategy to the business;
- presents range to directors and holds regular range review meetings with senior management;
- controls a year's budget;
- sets criteria for suppliers and develops key suppliers both in UK and abroad;
- trains and motivates Assistant Buyer and Buyer's Administrative Assistant;
- ensures deadlines and delivery requirements are met;
- calculates lead-times;
- plans and implements purchasing procedures;
- responsible for price negotiation with suppliers that maximises profits.

Working Environment:

Office environment, close liaison with other team members.

Skills and Knowledge:

- Retail/Fashion/Business Management degree;
- two years at Assistant Buyer level;
- excellent negotiation and communication skills;
- numerate and commercial;
- research skills;
- leadership/management experience.

Entry Requirements:

Degree or HND (sometimes necessary to be in fashion related subject) to gain entry to Buyer's Administrative Assistant level.

Two years at Buyer's Admin Assistant level to gain entry to Assistant Buyer level.

Two years at Assistant Buyer level to gain entry to Buyer level.

Training:

Large retail companies offer a variety of training in areas such as presentation skills.

Opportunities/Vacancies Available:

Trainee buyer is part of the graduate recruitment schemes offered by big retailers. Many of these schemes recruit early on in the autumn term of the final year, others recruit when staff are needed.

Pay and Conditions:

£23,000 - £45,000 + car + benefits.

Prospects/Promotion:

Senior Buyer/Buying Manager (Salary £45,000 - £60,000).

Product Manager/Head of Buying and Merchandising (Salary £60,000+).

Job Description for a PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

The Work:

- A Product Development Manager has a strategic overview of the whole company with the aim of moving the company forward by spotting new trends and areas of growth which will be profitable. For example, fashion stores are now branching out into travel goods and this new product range is likely to have been initiated by a product development manager.
- Take a global perspective when developing a season's collection. They conceive and develop a product taking into consideration design, commerciality and technical issues. Product Development Managers need to have an understanding of marketing factors as well as garment construction and design.
- Will work very closely with the marketing team who research into what customers want (looking at loyalty cards etc.) This information will be communicated to the design team.
- It is their job to formulate a collection based on trends and market research, and present it to senior managers and the buying team who will then decide how they want to package a collection. For example, the Product Development Manager will decide a style of trouser for that season and the buyer's will decide on the colours and combinations of product and then source the best manufacturers for production of these garments.
- They need to be able to reinvent designs to suit their customer. For example, they may look at how to re-cost a garment through its production process in order to meet the needs of the customer. This may mean liaison with fabric agents to look at the yarn, dye, cloth, breaking down the process to redesign a product. Sometimes the product will not change but by re-looking at the production process a company can reduce costs and so offer the customer better value for money.

Working Environment:

- Product development teams are more commonly found within 'brand' companies, such as Levi's, Nike and they work alongside the design team. Luxury brand-led companies are more common in Europe, especially Italy where the industry is led by manufacturing.
- The UK is a more retail led environment, however companies like French Connection, Oasis, Warehouse are brand led retail companies. Within a retail environment the role of the designer or buyer is similar to a product developer in a brand or manufacturing company. For example, a Design Manager may present a collection to the buying team who will then choose products from that collection based on what they can sell. The buyer will then negotiate production costs with the manufacturer
- Retail buyers and designers sometimes place more emphasis on their suppliers developing the product for them. Suppliers and manufacturers may also offer roles with a product development element to them.

Skills and Knowledge:

- Product development is a senior role, often entered after having many years of experience in buying, garment technology or design.
- Have to understand all the roles involved in the process, from conceiving a design idea to it arriving on the shop floor. This includes understanding garment construction, marketing and design.
- Commercial awareness.
- Large budget management skills.
- Excellent communication skills: Need to present strategic ideas to managing directors of company and liaison with design and marketing teams.

Entry Routes:

Junior roles which could lead into product development are:

- Sales Co-ordinator;
- Wholesale Merchandiser;
- Product Assistant;
- Junior Garment Technologist;
- Designer.

Training:

On the job experience.

Opportunities:

Often through specialist recruitment consultants.

Pay and Conditions:

£30,000+

Job Description for a FABRIC TECHNOLOGIST

To develop, implement and maintain fabric standards to commercial requirements

The Work:

- A fabric technologist is concerned with developing fabric standards and ensuring that they are maintained to commercial standards. There is liaison with designers and buyers, to make sure that chosen fabrics meet the needs of their clients in terms of quality, performance and price. They offer technical support and carry out analysis of fibres, fabrics and finishes. Part of their job is to source new fabrics and work with mills and dyers to engineer products. They also carry out colour testing of fabrics and approve laboratory dips.
- Assess whether the fabrics are within the capabilities of machinery, costings and the capabilities of the fabric.
- Work in a three-way chain between technologist and team, the yarn suppliers and the customer.
- Oversee a short sample run (about two garments or 60 metres of fabric) and monitor each stage - knitting, dyeing, finishing - for potential problems before ironing them out.
- Attend trend presentations, source ideas from magazines and go to yarn shows for technical innovation.

Working Environment:

Office based, working with machinery and in laboratories.

Skills and Knowledge:

- Technical textile qualification;
- Good communication skills;
- Attention to detail;

Entry Routes:

Graduate level entry, possibly as an assistant fabric technologist.

Training:

In house training.

Opportunities/Vacancies Available:

Trade press ('Textile Horizons' and other textile/fabric publications), recruitment agencies.

Pay and Conditions:

£12,000 - £30,000.

Prospects/Promotion:

Technical Manager.

Job description for a Work Experience Projects Assistant: 12 Month Placement

A placement student is required to work within the publishing department, to assist with the development of a work-experience website and other related projects.

The job involves

- Further development, management and maintenance of established work-experience website.
- Building and maintaining work experience related databases through contacts and research.
- Seeking input from relevant organisations and exploring ways of incorporating these ideas into the website.
- Work on related projects, either singularly, or in consultation with others and supply general assistance as and when required to the partner organisations.
- Work alongside AIPT in the US to process US work placement visas and Work Permits for the UK.
- Attend work experience related events and represent the company at national fairs as needed.

Skills required

- Ability to prioritise workload, and manage time effectively to achieve objectives.
- Excellent administration and organisation skills.
- A positive and flexible attitude: Must be willing and able to undertake a wide variety of tasks and work effectively as part of a team.
- Ability to deal effectively with people at all levels throughout the organisation and externally. Good customer focus.
- Good communication skills: Including report writing, presentation skills, and telephone and email useage.
- Research and information gathering skills.
- Attention to detail.
- Knowledge and interest in the internet.
- Web skills desirable, but not essential.

Job description for a 3D Designer/ Modeller/ Animator

Your responsibilities and general duties are as follows:

To work as a member of the design team to complete design tasks in accordance with schedules set by the directors of the company.

Your main tasks will centre around 3D modelling. You are expected to work primarily on 3D modelling projects alone or as part of a team. You may be expected to handle some paperwork for these areas of the business and to enter any relevant information into databases where necessary. You will be expected to contribute to discussions about the nature of the company, its mission statement and its general day to day running. You will be involved in weekly meetings with regard to work in progress and company business.

To manage customer accounts and keep the appropriate records that facilitate the correct invoicing of those accounts.

Liaise with colleagues regarding work in progress and promptly inform of any problems, delays or concerns relevant to our work in progress.

Report to a director with all relevant information in the event of problems or concerns with any particular job or customer and also to the directors in the event of customer complaint.

Liaise with service providers or suppliers to ensure that goods or services are delivered on time and to an acceptable standard.

To conform to the internal procedures regarding new enquiries.

Participate in weekly team meetings with all information relating to your own work in progress made available for discussion or review.

To participate in training programmes and cooperate fully with training providers to complete given training tasks without compromise to completion of normal daily workload.

To lead and/or participate in team creative thinking sessions on request.

To support and provide assistance and technical training to other members of staff if required.

In carrying out the duties and responsibilities of the post you are expected to pursue actively the company's Equal Opportunities Policy and policy of Customer Care.

To ensure that your personal working space and the studio in general is kept tidy and presentable.

To represent the company at external events and to liaise with and promote the company to the press when applicable.

To ensure that your workload is backed up regularly, and to label your work in such a way that it can be databased efficiently.

Preparation > Student

7 > Curriculum Vitae (CV) Preparation

A CV is your opportunity to communicate relevant information about yourself to a prospective employer; you should invest time preparing a good CV.

You should attend workshops or seminars on CV preparation run by your institution as part of your pre-placement programme, and you should consider forming self-help teams with your friends to proof read one another's work.

You will find the following topics helpful in producing a CV draft and refining the finished product.

Layout:

- Two sides maximum;
- Organised in a way that makes it visually easy to read (consider bullet points, sub-headings, use of **bold**, capitals);
- Avoid dead spaces;
- Only use gimmicks if relevant and well done.

Content:

- Only include relevant information;
- Always check grammar and spelling;
- Do not repeat information;
- Must be personal and specific.

Categories to include:

- Your name, contact address, email address and telephone number.
- Education - most recent first. For the most relevant courses, give details about your particular strengths/skills, what subjects you studied, particular projects. *Think about what will be relevant to the employer.*
- Further training/other qualifications - computer courses, languages.
- Work experience - most recent first. Consider sub-dividing experience into smaller headings e.g. design, retail, office, or service related. Could be paid/voluntary/part-time/full-time.
- Key or special skills. Highlight your practical skills, summarise key personal skills and interpersonal skills e.g. self-starter/ team player/ good communicator.
- Interests - what you do in your spare time gives a good indication of your character. Avoid long lists/ inclusions must be genuine/ it is better to say 'fascinated by 20th century American literature' than just 'reading'.
- Referees - usually two, one academic and one employer. Remember to ask permission of prospective referees to ensure their support if called upon. It would be useful to prepare a reference summary for your referees or give them a copy of your CV. Tutors need to need to know more about you than just your marks, so let them know about work experience, extra-curricular activities etc.

Example of a CV

Francis Hunter
3 Gipsy Hill
London SE22 3AB
020 8110 011
f.hunter@lcp.linst.ac.uk

Education

1994 - 1996 **London College of Printing and Distributive Trades**
HND Business and Finance
including Fundamentals of Marketing, Quantitative Methods

1987 - 1994 **Streatham Vale School**
 1994 **A level French (B) and Psychology (C)**
 1992 **7 GCSEs including English (B), Maths (C), French (B)**

Other Qualifications

Languages - conversational French and Spanish
Computer Skills – proficient in WordPerfect 6.0, Pagemaker, Lotus 1-2-3 and experience of using AppleMac
Full driving license (since 1995)

Work Experience

1995 **Paragon Communications**
Placement with Assistant Accounts Executive, involved organising events for clients, drafting press releases, undertaking projects.

1994 **Brand Direct Marketing**
Placement with Marketing Department, drawing up development plan, meeting with clients, writing reports.

1992-1996 **Safeway**
Sales and shelf filling (part time)

Interests

Sport – work out at local gym and member of squash club.
Travel – have visited many European countries.

Referees

Helen Brown
School of Business and Management
London College of Printing and Distributive Trades
Elephant and Castle
London SE1 0DB
020 7773 335
h.brown@lcp.linst.ac.uk

John Smith
Manager
Safeway stores
Westwood Hill
London SE7 3ED
020 8444 606
j.smith@safeway.com

Preparation > Student

8 > Personal Statement

If required to make a personal statement in support of your CV it is a further opportunity to show that the placement applied for is right for you and that you possess the necessary skills and motivation to succeed.

You will need to demonstrate:

- why you want the placement;
- what you have to offer;
- why the company should take you, i.e. what is exceptional about you?

For an idea of how you can use personal attributes and course content to good advantage, see the following example of a *statement targeted on an area of work*.

“The BA Hons Product Design and Development for the Fashion Industries Course has provided me with a management education integrating the areas of marketing, sourcing, stock control, quality assurance, design, technology, manufacturing and finance. I have found the area of production management to be the most absorbing aspect. My placement objective is to utilise my educational background in order to gain more practical experience of the production process. I am an ambitious, flexible person who works well as part of a team. The prospect of spending the next year working in industry and the challenges involved is something I very much look forward to.”

Preparation > Student 9 > Covering Letter

When approaching employers you also require a covering letter. The CV is standard information. *The covering letter must be composed to suit each separate application* and addressed to a named person within the organisation. Never send out a general letter.

Information to be included in your covering letter:

- the name of your contact (a quick call to the company should provide you with this information), the department and the company address;
- your name and address;
- the date;
- the course you are studying, the year and the place of study;
- your reasons for wanting to undertake a placement with that company;
- the skills and attributes you can offer;
- the preferred timing and length of placement.

Keep your letter brief and to the point and always use a word processor and good quality paper.

Example of a covering letter

Your Address

Today's Date

Name of person you are writing to

Title of person

Name of Company

Address

Dear Mr/ Mrs/ Miss/Ms.....

At present I am studying in the second year of the BA Hons Design and Technology for the Fashion Industry course at the London College of Fashion. I am now looking to find a work experience placement, starting in (insert date) for a period of (insert length of placement), which is an integral component to the completion of my degree.

(Insert) is of particular interest to me and to date I have covered a wide range of topics including (insert). The area of (insert) is one that is close to my heart and is definitely something I wish to pursue after my graduation. An experience in the every-day running of a company like yours would give me an opportunity to understand and develop new and existing skills, such as (insert).

A committed, hard worker, with great enthusiasm and a passion to learn I would very much like an opportunity to prove myself by working as part of your team.

Any advice and help you may be able to offer me, concerning my work placement would be much appreciated.

Please find enclosed my CV and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours (sincerely if you are writing to a specific person; faithfully if you are writing Dear Sir/Madam)

Print your name underneath your signature

Preparation > Student 10 > Selling Yourself on Paper

Words that demonstrate your personality

What employers want is for you to conjure up a picture of yourself, you need to do more than just copy out verbatim the qualities that are listed in the advertisement. The following words may help you create a positive image of yourself:

Accurate	Competitive	Friendly	Perfectionist
Alert	Compliant	Good Listener	Persistent
Amiable	Deliberate	Independent	Persuasive
Assertive	Dependable	Influential	Positive
Careful	Driving	Inquisitive	Precise
Cautious	Eager	Kind	Probing
Communicative	Factual	Logical	Reflective
	Firm	Mobile	Self-starter
	Forceful	Modest	Strong-willed
		Optimistic	Sympathetic

Demonstrating your capabilities and achievements

It is easier to demonstrate what you have to offer an employer if you know what skills they are looking for. Referring to a job description is a good starting point.

For example: Buying and Merchandising attributes sought by Selfridges Ltd. for Graduate Trainees are shown in the table below.

Skills required	Example of achievement illustrating skill	Where/ How
be able to manage relationships with suppliers	<u>negotiated</u> with record company distributors and their sales reps, face to face, through correspondence and over the telephone. Reduced overstocking of singles department.	Summer job at 'Our Price'
be high on energy	set up a hugely successful karaoke night in the pub where I worked, which was packed every week. <u>Organising</u> a new venture for summer.	Bar work
be ready for responsibility	<u>represented</u> year group (69 students) on course committee and <u>persuaded</u> academic team to reschedule project work.	Course rep
be adaptable to change	<u>took over</u> as team leader on degree course project when previous leader left course a month before deadline. Team received distinction for project.	Degree course

Doing words

Activating	Contributing	Informing	Planning
Acquiring	Creating	Initiating	Presenting
Administering	Deciding	Instructing	Promoting
Advising	Determining	Interviewing	Representing
Analysing	Developing	Investigating	Resolving
Arranging	Directing	Justifying	Reviewing
Balancing	Encouraging	Leading	Searching
Buying	Ensuring	Listening	Selecting
Changing	Establishing	Managing	Selling
Collating	Evaluating	Motivating	Solving
Committing	Explaining	Negotiating	Studying
Communicating	Forecasting	Obtaining	Training
Conducting	Generating	Organising	Travelling
Consolidating	Improving	Persuading	Warning

Verbs of achievement

Acquired	Devised	Maintained	Reduced
Administered	Directed	Managed	Represented
Advised	Distributed	Negotiated	Researched
Analysed	Drew up	Networked	Restored
Arranged	Evaluated	Observed	Revised
Calculated	Expended	Obtained	Rewarded
Completed	Formulated	Operated	Selected
Consolidated	Generated	Oversaw	Served
Controlled	Identified	Performed	Sold
Created	Implemented	Prepared	Solved
Delivered	Improved	Produced	Supervised
Designed	Increased	Promoted	Supplied
Detected	Instructed	Provided	Tested
Determined	Interviewed	Received	Trained
Developed	Invented	Recommended	Wrote

Further sources of help for CV writing

Internet:

Try <http://www.alec.co.uk/cvtips> or <http://www.handsoncv.co.uk> or http://www.thebigtrip.co.uk/plan_your_route/applying_for_a_job/cv/, which all provide examples of different CV styles, as well as information on content. The Internet is also a good way of researching information about companies you may be approaching speculatively.

Bookshops:

Most good book shops have a selection of self-help books that give examples of different CV styles. You don't have to spend a fortune; take advantage of the new trend in book shops where you are encouraged to browse and spend as long as you want in there. Alternatively you could borrow books on CV writing from your careers library or local library, without cost.

Preparation > Student

11 > Going for Interviews

Everyone feels nervous at the prospect of an interview, however good preparation will help to ensure your interview is a success.

Preparation for Interview

Try to see the interview experience as a positive one by remembering that this is your opportunity to show how suitable you are for the placement you have applied for. The selectors are not out to expose your weaknesses or embarrass you. You should use the experience to ascertain whether the company/organisation is right for you.

Format of Interview

Find out as much as you can about the format of the interview - the length of the interview; whether you will be expected to take a test. This will help with your preparation and help put your mind at ease.

Dress Code

Decide what you are going to wear and try the outfit on beforehand, perhaps get a second opinion. Appropriateness is the key word in the dress code for interviews. You should probably expect to wear clothes that constitute a smart version of clothes worn by people in that job, business or service. Avoid heavy make-up, too much jewellery, gimmicky ties or socks, or immodest clothing.

Getting to the Interview

Work out how you will get to your interview, double-checking timetables for public transport, tickets and fares, or your route by road if travelling by car. Make allowances for possible delays. Check whether your expenses will be reimbursed. You may wish to indicate physical access if you have a disability, and indicate any support you might require in the interview.

Selection Criteria

Study the job and/or person specification as these are the criteria that your experience, skills, attitude and knowledge will be measured against, and the area in which the selectors will look for evidence to see whether you have acknowledged them and have attempted to match yourself with them. It may be a good idea to write down how you perceive that you meet the criteria.

What do you take with you?

Take with you a copy of the CV/application form; the letter of invitation to interview with the organisation's telephone number in case you need to call them; map of how to get to the interview; list of questions to ask at your interview; money for taxi fare in case you are late or to make a phone call; interview clothes if you are staying overnight; any examples of work (such as a portfolio or dissertation) that they have asked you to bring.

Self-assessment of strengths

Know what your strengths and weaknesses are - what you would be able to offer a potential employer. It is not a negative sign to admit weakness - employers want to know that you can identify your weaknesses; you can learn from them and develop them into strengths.

Interview Practice

Thinking about how you'll respond to interview questions and react to interview situations usually isn't enough; typically, you need to experience those questions and situations ahead of time, even if only in a mock setting, so you'll be prepared for how you're likely to react. Knowing what you are up against will allow you to work on ways to present yourself more effectively. Visit your institution's career centre or placement officer to arrange some interview practice, perhaps checking to see whether it would be possible to have the practice interview videotaped. That way, you and the careers adviser or placement officer can correct any bad habits afterwards. Think about the questions you might be asked and why you want the job.

Body Language

This is an important consideration as the impression you give will add to the selectors overall impression. It is worth remembering that it is not the fact that you are nervous that makes the difference, rather how you cope with the situation. Although you may be nervous, try to smile and give a firm handshake. Avoid nervous habits or gestures such as fidgeting in your chair, playing with hair or jewellery, making excessive hand movements! Maintain eye contact at all times, particularly with the person asking the question, acknowledging other members of the panel as appropriate.

What do you know about the company?

Although you won't be expected to know every last detail about the company/organisation that is interviewing you, you will be expected to display some understanding of the business, company size, markets, products/services. This shows the employer that you are serious about the job you're applying for and have taken time to undertake some research. Sources of information about companies are graduate recruitment brochures, annual reports, and company websites. Careers services can also recommend sources.

What questions might you be asked?

Study the job and person descriptions and your CV or application form, and try to identify the type of question that you may be asked. What would you ask if you were the interviewer?

What questions will you ask the interviewer?

Prepare two or three questions for the interview panel - this is a further opportunity to demonstrate your enthusiasm and keenness. Points to remember are: avoid asking questions where the answers are clearly given in the literature you have received with your invitation for interview; good questions to ask demonstrate your keenness to develop with the organisation and take on responsibility. If you are not given the chance to ask questions, assert yourself politely and say you have a number of things you would like to raise and is this the right time to do so. If the interviewer has not informed you when you are likely to know the outcome, ask.

Thanking the Interviewer

On finishing the interview, thank the interviewer or interview panel for their consideration of you and leave straight away. Do not hassle the interviewer about how well the interview went once the interview is over.

Learning from the Interview

Try not to panic after the interview, or torment yourself with all that you did wrong. Instead, give yourself time to calm down and then review what happened. Use this as guidance for the next interview. Review how you coped under the interview conditions, what you would do differently in terms of preparation and handling the interview next time. What aspects went well? Try to be positive as well as critical.

Recommended Reading

AGCAS *Going for Interviews*. Available from your Careers Service.

Preparation > Student

12 > Personal Safety at Interview

Most job interviews are straightforward. You attend and everything goes well. The worst you can expect is not to get the job. It is, however, sensible to be aware that danger can exist in the most unlikely of places. There are a few common sense rules you should consider for your own safety.

DO

- Find out as much as you can about the company before the interview.
- Make sure that a relative or friend knows where you are being interviewed and at what time you expect to return.
- Leave the telephone number or address of where you are going for the interview.
- Make sure the interview takes place at the employer's premises or in a public place rather than a home address. If in a public place, take a friend who can wait at a safe distance.
- Arrange to be collected from the interview at a specified time if it takes place outside working hours and tell your interviewer that someone is coming.

DON'T

- Apply for jobs that seem to offer too much money for very little work!
- Go into a building if it seems to be a private house, unless you have discussed this beforehand and are happy to be interviewed there.
- Let the interviewer steer the conversation towards personal matters that bear no relevance to the job.
- Let an interview, no matter how well it is going, continue into the social scene - over drinks, dinner etc.
- Accept a lift home from the interviewer.

Contact:

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust (National Charity for Personal Safety) www.suzylamplugh.org

Preparation > Student Summary

- ◆ *Make an effort to attend all the sessions offered by your institution in support of finding your work placement.*
- ◆ *Do some research into the type of job and the type of company where you would like to undertake your placement.*
- ◆ *Consider exactly what you need and hope to gain from the work placement, and select the type of job and company accordingly.*
- ◆ *Prepare a good CV - remember to target it and the covering letter to the type of work and company where you would like to undertake your placement.*
- ◆ *Be fully prepared for your interview - research, practice, dress appropriately, stay calm.*
- ◆ *Be clear about any academic requirements that are expected during your time on work placement.*

During > General 1 > Placement Assessment

In its broadest sense assessment can extend to all three stakeholders. Students expect to be assessed, as it is the nature of education to set tasks and measure results. The monitoring process however should aim to assess the contribution of education and employer too because successful systems rely on all concerned playing their roles effectively.

Students should expect to be assessed formatively (during placement) and summatively (after placement) and they should also realise that assessment can be formal and informal.

Informal Assessment

A student's day to day activities will undoubtedly evoke judgement by employers as to how well they are adapting to the company and how they are 'fitting in'. Each task a student tackles will be viewed, as will how they relate to others. Do they show initiative or wait to be told what to do? Do they start work on time? Are they dressed appropriately? Do they understand instructions?

The key to managing any anxieties evoked by this process lies in regular feedback of performance, praise when warranted, and support in dealing with weaknesses.

Formal assessment

For the HEI, successful completion of placement depends on clearly defined outcomes and these can include:

- a designated number of weeks in placement;
- a diary or learning log;
- a satisfactory report from the employer;
- a project/report on some aspect of placement;
- a satisfactory report from visiting tutors.

During > Student

1 > Making the Most of Your Placement

Starting a new job can be nerve racking for many reasons: Will you like the people? Will the job be interesting? Will you be able to cope? What kind of impression will you make?

It seems premature, but think from day one 'what kind of reference will the company write for me at the end of the placement?' Keep this at the back of your mind throughout your stay - and don't forget to ask for a reference at the end of the placement because if you leave it until later you find that the person you hoped would write has moved on.

First impressions

Make sure you show that you are a professional by being punctual. Research on the company and your interviews will have given you an insight into the right dress code for your job, so try to show that you want to fit in. Report to the person whose name you have been given and be prepared to listen intently to advice and instructions. You may find it useful to buy a small pocket note pad to keep records of instructions and also a diary for noting key meetings etc.

For your work placement to be a success you need to contribute to the company and learn as much as you can. You can learn by observing how people and organisations work, and you can even learn from mistakes. Take time in your placement diary (see [During > Student > 2 > Keeping a Placement Diary](#)) to note these observations and what they have taught you.

The company will expect you to behave like a real employee, not someone who is expecting others repeatedly to explain how the job works. The best way to learn is by participation.

Key skills

Your work placement will help you develop a range of skills that employers look for when recruiting. Five important key skills are:

- Communication;
- Numeracy;
- Learning how to learn;
- Working with others;
- Use of information technology.

Bear these key skills in mind as your placement progresses, and try to record instances when you have learned, used or improved any of them (again see [During > Student > 2 > Keeping a Placement Diary](#)).

Also consider which skills from your course have been helpful to you in your placement, and whether you have gained useful skills not included in your course.

Maximising your experience

It's a sobering thought that although the job description and the particular supervisor you are assigned to do matter, the most important factors are largely within the control of the student.

Don't be put off if the job isn't quite what you expected. Paradoxically changes to planned pathways can lead to positive experiences that would not have been possible without the change. Be prepared to give your best for every task and seek to help people in your team just as they help you.

Ask your supervisor early in the placement, within two or three weeks, for an informal discussion about your progress and how s/he thinks you are settling in. Ask if there are any areas that you can improve on and makes notes of them.

One of the most common causes of discontent is that students think that some jobs they are given are trivial or 'beneath' them. Remember that people are busy and don't always have the time to give you work that would take a lot of explanation and control. If required to spend time on simple tasks, study the task from a management consultant point of view. How was it created? What is it for? What method is being used? Are they utilising technology effectively? Show particular interest in the use of new technology and how it is being used to create competitive advantage. If you show willingness and an analytical approach to work you may move on to more exciting and demanding tasks.

Finally, show your work colleagues and supervisors respect, and thank them for the efforts they have made to help you settle in and make a success of your placement.

During > Student 2 > Keeping a Placement Diary

Most people find it difficult to recall in detail what they did over a particular time span at work but it can be useful as part of future job applications. Keeping a written record will help you in recalling the detail of your placement and articulating what you have learnt.

You could keep this record in the form of a *daily diary*, making brief notes of work activities with personal comments. The diary's contents can help you prepare your CV's in future and give you ideas for how you can talk about previous work experience at interviews.

Alternatively you could keep a record of your placement in the form of a *log book*, not to be entered in daily, but used to become a source of reference which will help you with your academic assessments in relation to the placement.

Unless it is a specified course requirement, you will have complete discretion how you set it out, and what you decide to record.

For guidance you may wish to include:

- information on the company:
 - history;
 - current status and place in the market;
 - competitors.
- management structure:
 - is there an identifiable management structure?
 - does management practice reflect theory?
- your role:
 - how do you fit into the organisation?
 - what is your job function/key interfaces?
- specific learning:
 - new processes and skills;
 - contacts and information for future reference.

You might also include information on new technology, specific practices, sales and marketing, training programmes etc.

Recording information and examples in terms of your key employability skills (as discussed in the previous section [During > Student > 1 > Making the Most of Your Placement](#)) is invaluable. As these are the specific areas employers look at, being able to categorise your experiences in this way will give you a head start on the competition. Focusing solely on your use and development of key skills, a third alternative diary format could be a *weekly skills tracker*, an example of which is on the next page.

Example of a skills tracker diary

SKILL TRACKER - WK COMMENCING.....	
SKILL	EXAMPLES
Communication	
Numeracy	
Learning how to learn	
Working with others	
Use of Information Technology	

During > Student

3 > Code of Behaviour at Work

Achievement of a successful placement experience requires you to make a contribution to the company and to learn from the experience.

You will be expected to act as a normal employee and not as a student who expects things to happen for them.

You need to start work at the appropriate time, take only those holiday breaks that the employment entitles you to, behave appropriately and put all your energies and commitment into meeting the tasks and role given to you.

Your employer will look at your attitude to work and work colleagues and you should work hard at fitting in to team activities and individual tasks that you are set. You will get much more out of the placement if colleagues see you as someone willing to learn, ask questions, show interest in the company and meet task deadlines.

You should show initiative where appropriate and demonstrate a flexible and co-operative approach to work.

You should abide by the company's employment rules and maintain its confidentiality.

You should carry out the work programme specified by the company under the guidance of your work supervisor.

If in doubt, ASK! This motto should cover most contingencies, whether it is procedures of which you are unsure, information that you need or an activity in which you want to be included. Never let a worry or source of unhappiness grow in intensity; deal with it by asking the appropriate person, probably your supervisor or placement tutor. Remember though to approach such matters with maturity, offering solutions where necessary. Show that you are proactive not reactive.

Be friendly and enthusiastic, punctual and ready to volunteer, but know your limitations. If you are ill or unavoidably delayed from arriving at work at the normal time, you should contact the company as soon as is practicable.

The majority of placements are trouble free, but where there are difficulties these are generally caused by a lack of communication e.g. if you feel that you are being ignored, it could be that colleagues are too busy to include you or that they don't know what you can contribute. In either case, you might need to explain your situation, rather than wait for them to approach you.

If a placement is not working out, try to identify the reasons for this and take up the matter with your supervisor as soon as possible. NEVER walk out of a placement without discussing it with the placement tutor. Remember, the willingness of an employer to accept students for placement will normally have been on the satisfactory performance of students in the past.

During > Student

4 > Safety in the Workplace

When you start the work placement, you need to be prepared and able to work office and other machinery. Make sure that you are not exposed to any risks from equipment, chemicals etc., and know what to do in case of accidents.

Employers have a duty to provide a safe working environment for their staff. Your institution may require that you fill out a questionnaire to check the health and safety provisions of your employer as part of your induction - (sample in [Appendix 11](#)). If not, you can use the checklist below to see whether health and safety is given priority by the employer.

- Were you given a health and safety induction when you started work?
- Have you been told about the hazards involved with the tasks you are asked to do? Have you been shown how to perform each task correctly and safely? Operating equipment, using chemicals and moving materials are examples of situations where a good employer will provide training.
- Have you been told what to do in an emergency such as a fire, bomb threat, or flooding? Are all fire exits and evacuation routes signed clearly? Are fire extinguishers readily available? Do you know what the fire alarm sounds like? Do you know where the assembly point is?
- Is there a first aid box available? Are staff offered first aid training? Is there an accident report book?
- Does the company have a written health and safety policy? Have you been given a copy? Do you know who the Health and Safety Manager/officer is?

Please remember that all individuals have duties in respect of health and safety. You must follow the employer's safety procedures, use tools properly and take care of yourself by using all the safety equipment provided for a task. Employees must not endanger others by their actions and must report any dangerous or potentially dangerous situations to the employer so that things can be put right.

You have the right to leave the place of work on your own initiative if you reasonably believe you are faced with imminent danger.

Contact:

Your local **Environmental Health Department** or **Health and Safety Executive** - www.open.gov.uk/hse/hsehome.htm. Public Enquiry Point 0114 289 2345

For a more detailed look at Health and Safety legislation and situations that may arise on a work placement - see [Appendix 9](#).

During > Student

5 > Relationship with Your Institution whilst on Placement

For students 'getting away' from the student role and into the 'real world' can be a welcome prospect, away from the pressures of many assignments and associated deadlines. It is easy for you to believe that your tutors will have a year off from thinking about you, and you will have a year off from thinking about your course.

However, a well-designed placement scheme acknowledges your existence and is concerned about your welfare and progress.

It is true that while on placement your main concern is how you are doing at work and whether your contribution is adequate. Unfortunately, some students on placement completely forget about the requirements of their course and cite heavy work commitments, long working hours or travel difficulties to explain why they have not submitted a dissertation proposal or have not submitted their work placement report on time. Remember that you are one of a group of students on placement and most will have met these deadlines. There is an old saying 'if you want something done, ask a busy person' because the inference is that busy people have to plan ahead and make time.

So, one form of relationship with the institution is that you should meet course requirements in terms of submission of work, but there are others.

It is normal for students on lengthy placements to receive visits from tutors and this can be invaluable to you in relating what you are doing at work to a broader theoretical framework.

In addition you should make yourself aware of the support available from your institution which could include helplines, email numbers or course web sites. Make every effort to use them as they have been devised to help you make a success of your learning.

Avail yourself of every possible competitive advantage by seeking help when necessary.

Finally, seek advice from tutors if you have a work related problem or concern that you don't feel able to confide in with your company.

During > Student

6 > Preparing for Tutor Visits

Being unprepared for a tutor's visit does not allow you to make the most of the time you will have with someone who can help you make the links between theory and practice. You can be sure that the tutor will have a plan for the visit with a number of set issues to discuss. If yours is a long placement of say 6 to 12 months you may receive two visits, and each will have its own emphasis.

During the first visit the tutor will be interested in:

- How you have settled in?
- What kind of introduction you had to the company?
- What kind of jobs you have been doing?
- What kind of company it is?
- Who are its customers?
- Who are its suppliers?

Your visiting tutor probably knows the answer to some of these questions already but will want to know how much you have learned. Your tutor may want to talk about the assignments you are required to do in respect of placement assessment particularly if you have been asked to liaise with your company in the formulation of a suitable topic or project.

You can prepare for the initial visit by making sure that you have learnt as much as possible about your company and how it operates. The answers to the questions you have asked can now be used to show your tutor how you have grasped the essential features of your company's operating methods and market. You can use your placement diary as a basis for discussing your work and don't forget to ask questions.

Your tutor will also have met your supervisor during the visit to ascertain from the company how the placement is going.

Subsequent visits

As well as reaffirming that your placement is progressing satisfactorily subsequent visits will focus on your deeper understanding of the company and could cover issues such as:

- How you feel that you have developed in the placement?
- What job related skills you have learned or developed?
- What thoughts you now have about future career directions?

Again, have your placement diary available for the visit, and use it to form links and connections between theory and practice.

For examples of the type of questions your tutor may ask you, see examples of visit questionnaires at [Appendix 12 A-D](#).

During > Student 7 > Assessment Requirements

Most HE courses will set out placement assessment requirements, which will seem wholly academic to you. However, assessments are in themselves learning experiences and are designed to help you focus on important aspects of the placement.

Whether a *placement diary* is an assessed requirement or you are making it for your own records, make the most of it. It will form an invaluable record, not just of the work you did, but what you learned from doing it. Look out for the important skills you are developing like making presentations or applying certain software packages or team working etc. (see [During > Student > 2 > Keeping a Placement Diary](#)).

Report writing is an important skill and many placements will require you to apply this skill in a real industrial environment. Your employer and/or your institution may require you to present a report about some aspect of your placement and the following example of an industrial placement report brief will give you a good idea of the typical requirements.

During > Student

8 > Advice on Writing a Placement Report

Selecting a Project Topic

The selection of the topic for the placement report and its general conception should be approached with a considerable amount of thought and effort.

What to avoid

It's probably easier to suggest what should be avoided in topic selection rather than what should actually be looked for:

- Avoid a strategy which can be interpreted as 'showing off' how clever you are and how incompetent everyone else in the company is, especially your supervisor.
- Do not try to produce a dissertation.
- Do not select a topic requiring considerable library research.
- Do not select a project methodology which the circumstances of your placement make unrealistic.
- Avoid topics or methodologies which do not lend themselves to the production of a report.
- Avoid topics with no direct significance for your employer or your role within the company.
- Drop a potential topic if it does not have the explicit backing of your supervisor.
- Don't take on a topic which, however relevant, is outside your own field of competence or potential competence.
- Don't try the impossible.
- Don't be over ambitious.
- If possible, avoid a topic that doesn't really interest you.

Picking Winners

By far the best strategy is to take your specific placement as the starting point for a systematic approach.

- Does your supervisor already have a specific proposal for you?
- Are there any operational problems or issues which your employer thinks it would be worth you investigating on behalf of the department or company?
- Have you yourself noticed anything within the company and its procedures which you think might be worth investigation and to which your employer would agree as a special project?
- Has your employer been intending to do something themselves but haven't got round to it because of pressures of work - is this something you could do as a project?

During > Student

9 > More Advice on Writing a Placement Report

Negotiating the project with your Employer

Local difficulties between a student and the employer do occasionally arise when a student attempts to agree the terms of their placement project. If this does occur and cannot be resolved it should be referred to your tutor.

The placement project is an integrated part of the placement, which may be carried out to a large extent (but by no means exclusively) in company time, using company resources and it has the full backing of the employer.

Accordingly the project must at some time in the early days of the placement be negotiated and agreed mutually between you and your employer. Your employer will have signed a general agreement that you are to carry out a placement report so broaching the subject should come as no surprise to your employer.

You should always be ready to assure your employer that:

- no report you produce for the institution will breach the commercial confidentiality of the company;
- any draft of your report will be in the first instance submitted to your supervisor for approval and editorial amendment;
- the project is in part for the benefit of the employer.

Tutor's Approval

Once you have identified a potential report topic and agreed it with the employer together with its terms and methodology, you must then seek approval from your institution .

A report proposal for submission may include:

- key personal and placement details;
- working title for the report;
- its background in terms of a company context;
- its intended content and expected outcomes;
- an outline of the methodology to be employed.

Not only will this proposal inform your tutor of your plans, but thinking about it and then setting it out in writing will help you to clarify and test your own ideas.

Planning and Scheduling

Planning and committing yourself to delivery of your plan are an important part of the industrial placement and your tutor is unlikely to sympathise with any assessment problems that originate in your failure to organise yourself properly or to take responsibility for the progress of your own work.

You may receive formal tutorial visits (or telephone/ email contact) from a member of staff during the course of your placement, and the progress of your report could be discussed then.

The Report

Structure and contents

The structure of your report will to some extent be determined by the precise nature of the topic.

However, as guidance, all reports should include the following elements:

- An appropriately informative title page.
- A general introduction including acknowledgement and details of the placement.
- A rationale, context, terms of reference of the report and the methodology to be employed.
- A description of the company, department, current practices etc.
- Analysis of situation and/or problems.
- Key findings, recommendations and course of action, action plan.
- A conclusion.
- Appendices (if necessary).

In many cases the report could contain information in the form of illustrations, graphical data, numerical data and tabulation.

Presentation will be specific to your HEI and should have been covered in pre-placement briefing material.

For examples of the assessment criteria that may be applied see [Appendix 14A-B](#).

During > Student Summary

- ◆ *Make first impressions count - be eager to learn, and willing to work hard, be punctual and sociable.*
- ◆ *Keep a placement diary -the more information you can record the better. Don't forget to focus on key skills development.*
- ◆ *Don't be afraid to ask questions or talk about problems. Take any serious problems to your supervisor or tutor.*
- ◆ *Ensure that Health & Safety measures are fulfilled by your employer.*
- ◆ *Maintain your relationship with your institution.*
- ◆ *Prepare for your tutor's visits - be able to fill them in on what they want to know, and have any questions prepared in advance.*
- ◆ *Don't put off your academic assessments. Be aware of deadlines, requirements of format etc. Remember your employer may want to read or attend a presentation on your placement-related assessment - aim to impress!*

After > General

1 > Post Placement Feedback

The success of a student's work placement period can be measured by monitoring and assessment methods, both by the academic institution and employer. This kind of feedback whilst helpful to the student is not enough to maximise the experiences gained. A number of different methods can be used to help students reflect on placement experiences and identify the tangible benefits that have accrued such as key skills and personal development.

This reflective process however will not happen for all students, if there are no strategies in place to foster it.

Performance on a course of study and performance in an industrial environment can be markedly different and it is not unknown for students who are academically gifted to find working life more challenging to excel in, and of course, some students who appear only average academically can really excel in the workplace.

Students may benefit from objective feedback but they learn much more by being reflective about the skills they have developed and what they found out about themselves in the workplace.

Completion of the placement period is certainly a time for students to reflect on the work experience in order to maximise its value and to develop their CV's. Contacts that have been made in industry should be noted and a fresh approach to career aspirations can be taken in the light of experience.

Both the employer and institution can play a part, using their experience of the post placement period, by helping the student to use reflective learning to its full potential.

The employer can help by conducting a post placement interview with leaving students to summarise their placement with them and provide an objective view of what they have contributed to the company and how they developed as individuals.

The institution can help by holding debriefing sessions with students in relation to key skill acquisition and also by organising presentations by returning students to staff, employers and students who have yet to commence work placement.

After > Student

1 > Reflective Learning

After completion of your work placement and subsequent return to your institution it is very easy to become immersed in your course requirements again that some of your memories of working for the company begin to fade. Of course you will recall the really memorable events like a particular report you prepared or working with new technology but many of the other aspects you experienced may be forgotten.

To make the most of your placement experience take time to stand back, review the things you did and sort them into the different skills, noting those skills you engaged in for the first time and the experiences that helped you develop existing skills.

Promoting reflection and learning

Your tutor can help you develop reflective skills but this is only really possible if you have taken responsibility for recording your work placement experiences in sufficient detail. As mentioned, depending on your memory alone is not the best way to maximise your placement experiences and you can use the results of your skill tracking log detailed in [During > Student > 2 > Keeping a Placement Diary](#).

Discuss your skills tracking with your tutor and draw out the key skills that you have developed. Learn to talk about your skills and do not assume that everyone knows what they are. You can supplement your explanation of skills developed with evidence from industry, which emphasise that you have practical experience of applying them.

The value of reflective learning is your realisation of your personal development and growing worth as a future member of your chosen industry. There are added benefits too, like being able to articulate your competence of your skills at job interviews.

Think honestly and objectively about your placement experiences and ask yourself:

- How quickly did I fit in to the placement?
- What different types of work did I do?
- In which areas did I make good progress?
- In which areas did I struggle and why?
- How can I improve any weaknesses?
- What kinds of new technology did I experience?
- What were the strengths and weaknesses of the company?
- To what extent were my learning objectives achieved?
- What kind of feedback did I get from the company?
- What kind of feedback did I get from my tutor?
- How did my employer benefit from my placement?

Feedback plays an important role in reflective learning so take responsibility for seeking it from employers and tutors and think objectively and critically about how others view you, your strengths and weaknesses.

After > Student

2 > Making a Presentation of Your Placement Experience to Peers and Staff

Communication is an essential key skill and you should take every opportunity to practise its many forms, including making presentations to groups of people.

If the thought of giving presentations fills you with anxiety and foreboding you are probably not alone. Your peers will feel equally nervous and practise will help develop your competence in this key skill.

Most educational institutions offering courses with integral periods of work placement organise appropriate forums for students to give placement feedback. Some will videotape the presentations so that you can review your presentation later to identify areas for improvement. The video recordings can also be used as part of the briefing procedure for the next group of students going on placement.

You may be asked to present your work placement experiences to your peers, staff and employers either as an individual or as part of a team who have been on similar placements.

The key to making presentations is *preparation*. If you want to do well and eliminate undue stress plan and rehearse your presentation.

After > Student

3 > Tips on Making Presentations about Work Experience

Here are a few tips on making presentations about work experience:

Plan

- Consider the purpose of the presentation. It could be sharing experiences, it could be assessed, it could be to inform staff about placements, it could be to develop your skill in giving presentations.
- Who is the audience? Is it your peers, staff or employers or a combination? What will they want to know?
- Look through your placement diary to abstract the interesting issues of your placement. Arrange them into cohesive groups such as:
 - history of company;
 - organisation structure;
 - present position in the market/position in the supply chain;
 - analysis of the company;
 - current product range;
 - projects worked on/results;
 - skills attained/developed.
- Consider appropriate ways of illustrating information in line with available technologies. Check if overhead projectors/PowerPoint/flip chart/white boards are available.
- Develop your presentation with clear introduction/main content/summing up phases leaving time for questions.
- Time is always an important factor. How much time has been allotted? You will not want to run out of material half way through and equally you don't want to be halted half way through because you have run out of time. How much time you have will define how much material you can get through.

Prepare

So far you have only planned for things to happen; now you must *prepare* for the production of materials and aids. You should arrange:

- to write up your presentation with its key elements and groupings in a logical sequence. The introduction is crucial as it sets the scene and tells your audience what is to come. A process of reading and re-reading will help you condense the work into succinct 'crib cards' (minimal notes to jog your memory) and it will also help you memorise the phases of your presentation;
- the production of visual aids.

Rehearse

The actual presentation should not be the first time that you have tried it out because it takes practise to actually speak about the topics and you should test out the timing of your talk. If you aren't used to using visual aids then practice with them is essential, even getting your overhead transparencies the right way round and the right way up takes practice.

Rehearsal helps you memorise content so that on the day you don't have to 'read' from notes.

Presentation

If you have prepared your presentation thoroughly you will not be so nervous; a manageable amount of anxiety can work for you as it helps you focus and stay alert. People often feel more anxious than they actually look so try to be relaxed and avoid body language that shows anxiety.

Try to talk *to* your audience rather than giving an anonymous speech; use eye contact and project your voice to the back of the audience, not just to the front row. Don't stand in front of your visual aids!

Show enthusiasm for your subject and point out examples of topics that bring life to the content.

Some people find it difficult to actually finish the presentation and come to an abrupt halt. Try to give signals that you are concluding the talk; perhaps you could try something like '.... and one final point I would like to make before inviting questions...'

Good Luck.

After > Student

4 > Requesting a Post Placement Reference

Your work placement will have helped you develop as an individual in many ways, and your own memories and recorded details in your placement diary will be evidence of your placement. Your CV is not an unchanging record but a dynamic description of your current status in terms of education and experience. A successful placement in a respected company will add credibility to your description of work experience and this will be significantly enhanced if accompanied by a testimonial/reference from the employer.

You should not leave the task of acquiring references until long after the placement has finished. Your employer will find it a lot less problematic if your stay is still fresh in mind. If you do leave it too long, the person who knew you best may have moved on to another job.

The type of reference you get will have been influenced by your performance during the work placement period, and will reflect how you have contributed to the company. If you have asked for periodic appraisals of your work and have demonstrated a strong commitment to developing and improving your work skills then there is a good chance that the reference will be a good one.

Make sure that you take copies of your reference, and place each in a plastic folder to keep it in good condition for future job applications.

Some students on graduation may get a position in the companies in which they did a work placement, so it is in your interest to leave the company having made a good impression.

After > Student Summary

- ◆ *Use your placement diary/skills tracker to reflect on the skills you have learned and developed whilst on placement. Be able to link the skills to examples of practical experience.*
- ◆ *Treat the opportunity to make a post-placement presentation, as a chance to enhance your communication skills. Prepare thoroughly.*
- ◆ *Request a reference from your employer a short time after the placement and keep copies safe for future use.*

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Contacts

- **WORK PLACEMENT/WORK EXPERIENCE**

National Centre for Work Experience:

Prospects House, Booth Street East, Manchester, M13 9EP
Tel: 0845 6015510. www.work-experience.org

STEP (Shell Technology Enterprise Programme):

Harling House, 62 Copperfield Street, London SE1 0DJ
Tel: 020 7921 5450 www.step.org.uk

Student Employment Services Ltd:

3 Westbrook Court, Sharrow Vale Road, Sheffield S11 8YZ
Tel: 0114 266 9999

Student Support Services:

2 Park Avenue, Hutton, Brentwood, Essex CM13 2QL
Tel: 01202 739 181

TOPs (Training Opportunities Placement Scheme):

LGO, Layden House, 76-78 Turnmill Street, London EC1M 5LG
Tel: 020 7296 6508

Prospects - www.prospects.ac.uk

National Work Experience Bank - www.workbank.man.ac.uk

Jobs Unlimited - www.jobsunlimited.co.uk

Monster - www.monster.co.uk

Top Jobs - www.topjobs.co.uk

Ask Jeeves (has a number of job links) - www.ask.co.uk

- **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) www.eoc.org.uk

0161 833 9244 - Employment Department

Commission of Racial Equality (CRE) www.cre.gov.uk - 020 7828 7022

The Disability Law Service - 020 7831 8031

Disability Rights Commission Helpline – 08457 622 633

The Employment Law Website www.emplaw.co.uk/free/index.html

Lesbian and Gay Employment Rights (LAGER) www.lager.dircon.co.uk/index.htm

CANDO Database (Careers Advisory Network on Disability Opportunities)

www.cando.lancs.ac.uk

UKCOSA (The Council for International Education)

020 7354 5210 – www.ukcosa.org.uk

- **MISCELLANEOUS**

Environmental Health Department or Health and Safety Executive

www.open.gov.uk/hse/hsehome.htm

Public Enquiry Point 0114 289 2345

WorkExpo readymade work experience programs

www.infoplan.com.au/Features.htm

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust (National Charity for Personal Safety)

www.suzylamplugh.org

National Minimum Wage

Enquiries line - 0845 6000 678 Detailed guidance - 0845 8450 360

CV guidance - www.alec.co.uk/cvtips

List of Appendices

<u>Appendix 1</u>	The National Council for Work Experience Code of Good Practice	97
<u>Appendix 2</u>	Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education. Section 9: Placement learning: The precepts	98
<u>Appendix 3</u>	An example of a Work Placement Code of Practice	99
<u>Appendix 4</u>	Pre-Placement Information Sheet & Skills Audit	102
<u>Appendix 5</u>	'What employers want' - survey results	104
<u>Appendix 6</u>	Placement Programme Calendar - Bookmark Idea	107
<u>Appendix 7</u>	An example of a Learning Contract	108
<u>Appendix 8</u>	An example of an Employer Declaration	109
<u>Appendix 9</u>	Detailed Health & Safety Information	110
<u>Appendix 10</u>	A Guide to carrying out Risk Assessment of the workplace	118
<u>Appendix 11</u>	An example of a Student Induction checklist	121
<u>Appendix 12A-D</u>	Four alternative examples of Tutor Visit Questionnaires	122
<u>Appendix 13</u>	Example Skills Tracking Definition and Forms	130
<u>Appendix 14A-B</u>	Work Placement report assessment: Sample mark scheme and Assessment and Feedback form	133
<u>Appendix 15A-C</u>	Three alternative Employer Evaluation Forms	135

Appendix 1

The National Council for Work Experience Code of Good Practice



CODE OF GOOD PRACTICE

A definition of quality work experience:

Quality work experience is temporary employment of a student, usually off campus, within a framework of learning and assessment where the individual student takes control of the learning.

The following represents criteria for good practice based on the experience of practitioners:

- The student is taught by the HEI to identify and recognise potential learning outcomes, including key skills development and subject related skills, where appropriate
- Learning objectives are set by the HEI, employer and student within an agreed structure or framework
- Supervision is by an employer supervisor or mentor who understands the objectives and benefits and learning outcomes for both sides
- Regular feedback is given
- Where possible, academic supervision and visits take place at an agreed frequency
- A project or series of tasks is undertaken and a report is written
- Learning, development and achievements are articulated by the student in written form
- Guidance is provided to integrate this learning into longer term career planning
- An assessment is made of skills development
- Recognition, credit or a certificate is awarded

Employers need, therefore, to know what constitutes good practice on their side:

- Relevant legislation is adhered to, e.g. health and safety at work, employer's liability insurance and equal opportunities legislation
- Students who contribute to the profitability or objectives of the organisation are paid a proper wage for their work
- A job description is given and where appropriate a contract of employment is given
- Induction is given into the organisation and the job
- Learning objectives are set
- Supervision is given by an employer supervisor who understands the objectives, benefits and learning outcomes of the work experience
- Regular feedback is given
- Opportunities for training are given where appropriate
- An appraisal is given during and at the end of the placement by the supervisor
- An assessment is made of achievements and key skills development, with guidance, where necessary from the HEI.
- Access to a visit from the HEI to the workplace is made possible

Appendix 2

Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education.

Section 9: Placement learning The Precepts

General principles

1

Where the placement learning is an intended part of a programme of study, institutions should ensure that:

- their responsibilities for placement learning are clearly defined;
- the intended learning outcomes contribute to the overall aims of the programme; and
- any assessment of placement learning is part of a coherent assessment strategy.

Institutional policies and procedures

2

Institutions should have in place policies and procedures to ensure that their responsibilities for placement learning are met and that learning opportunities during a placement are appropriate.

Placement providers

3

Institutions should be able to assure themselves that placement providers know what their responsibilities are during the period of placement learning.

Student responsibilities and rights

4

Prior to placements, institutions should ensure that students are made aware of their responsibilities and rights.

Student support and information

5

Institutions should ensure that students are provided with appropriate guidance and support in preparation for, during, and after their placements.

Staff development

6

Institutions should ensure that their staff who are involved in placement learning are competent to fulfil their role.

Dealing with complaints

7

Institutions should ensure that there are procedures in place for dealing with complaints and that all parties (higher education institutions, students and placement providers) are aware of, and can make use of them.

Monitoring and evaluation of placement learning opportunities

8

Institutions should monitor and review the effectiveness of their policies and procedures in securing effective placement learning opportunities.

Appendix 3

An example of a Work Placement Code of Practice

In line with accepted codes of practice, the Work Placement Scheme, provides the following activities:

- the generation of placement opportunities;
- the negotiation of placement conditions;
- the preparation of students for placement;
- the overseeing of the applications of students for placements;
- the monitoring of progress of students on placement;
- the integration of feedback from students following their placement.

Objectives of placement

All placements have a common set of objectives which are:

- to develop student enterprise and **key skills** such as **communication, numeracy, I.T., working with others and learning how to learn**;
- to consolidate, complement and extend aspects of the academic programme carried out at the institution;
- to enhance students awareness of the work environment in both a professional and social context;
- to assist students to assess and develop their career focus;
- to maintain and develop links between the institution, employing organisation and the community.

Preparing students for placement

The stages in operation of students for the application process are:

- initial introductory talk to all beginning first level students;
- collective presentation to all interested students in their first year, involving representatives from Industry and the Institution;
- a workshop providing opportunity to research information on companies, discuss and prepare CV's, cover letters and application forms, and to discuss and practice interview skills;
- opportunity to read reports of past placement students.

Students are advised of materials available in the Careers Service. Feedback is sought from students on their views of pre-placement preparation.

Monitoring Progress

- Placement students are made fully aware of their responsibility to contact their placement co-ordinator and/or academic supervisor to seek advice and to inform them of any problems.
- The placement co-ordinator will endeavour to respond to any requests made by students in placement. Regular contact with students in placement is made by e-mail, telephone or post.

- Visits will be made to students on placement twice a year by their academic supervisor. Academic supervisors will meet with the industrial supervisor and student, both alone and in group discussion. The academic supervisor will provide a feedback form to the co-ordinator. Any problems can be discussed and acted on as necessary.
- In the case of placements abroad, the institution will attempt to make a site visit. However, regular contacts (by the student) with the co-ordinator are emphasised.
- Students will be provided with guidance detailing useful information and deadlines.

Assessment

Students should be advised of the assessment components and criteria in advance of the commencement of their placement.

(Insert outline of the assessment requirements of the institution for students on placement).

Accreditation

Final degree certificates are awarded as 'Programme of Study with industry' in acknowledgement of the work placement year.

Post-Placement

Following placement, a debriefing meeting will be held, where students are asked to reflect upon their placement and to discuss any difficulties encountered.

Health and Safety

- The institution has a duty of care to students in placement, although the placement institution has responsibility under the Health & Safety Act.
- Placement institutions are asked to complete a Placement Health & Safety Checklist to confirm they are registered with the Health & Safety Executive, or the Local Authority Environmental Health Department.
- Students must complete and return a Student Induction Checklist at the start of their placement, which is contained in their Work Profile.
- Although visiting academic supervisors are not expected to be experts in Health & Safety at Work, they should be aware of, and report on, any obvious safety shortcomings in the work environment.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTIES INVOLVED

Of the Institution

To the student:

- to appoint an academic supervisor to visit the student on placement;
- to monitor the performance of the student and advise him/her appropriately;
- to conduct assessments.

To the employer:

- to guide the employer in the assessment criteria used by the Institution;
- to co-operate with the employer on any aspect of concern regarding the performance or behaviour of the placement student;
- to maintain confidentiality concerning the employer's work.

Of the Employer

To the student and the institution:

- to plan the training and work programme to be undertaken by the student in consultation with the work placement co-ordinator;
- to offer a contract, with the duration of the placement and the terms of employment specified;
- to treat the student as a member of the workforce;
- to provide an induction to the organisation and its working practices;
- to nominate a supervisor for day-to-day care of the student;
- to ensure a safe working environment, in conformity with Health & Safety legislation;
- to provide appropriate liability and insurance cover;
- to facilitate communication between the student and academic supervisor;
- to participate in the assessment of the student;
- to advise the work placement co-ordinator of any case of breach of discipline.

Of the Student

To the employer:

- to abide by the company's employment rules;
- to maintain confidentiality concerning the company's work;
- to carry out the work programme specified by the employer under the supervision of the specified supervisor(s), with professionalism.

To the institution:

- to complete all reports and records for the institution as specified;
- to consult with the co-ordinator before making any changes in the terms and duration of the placement;
- to provide access to all records maintained during the placement for the visiting academic supervisor, except where there is an issue of commercial secrecy or national security.

Appendix 4 Pre-Placement Information Sheet & Skills Audit

Student:

The Placement Data Sheet is intended to present a focused view of your placement interests and also of the range of abilities/personal skills relevant to your placement situation. The information will be of value in arranging a placement for the year ahead. Every effort will be made to holistically consider all your interests and make the best use of all your skills.

Specific Areas

	Interested	Would be OK	Definitely Not
Marketing			
Advertising			
Publishing			
Event Management and Promotion			
Design/Project Development/Management			
Television/Radio/Music/Entertainment			
Architecture/Property Development			
Information Communication Technology			
Arts/Antiques/Heritage/Culture			
Tourism/Leisure			
Research			

Location

	Would like this	Would be OK	Definitely Not
Anywhere			
London only			
Anywhere except London			
Stay local to NTU			
Other (Please state)			

Accommodation Contacts

Do you have accommodation contacts e.g. relatives/friends in certain areas	YES	NO
If YES, what are the areas		
Do you wish to work overseas?	YES	NO
If YES, where would you like to go		
Do you have the use of a car?	YES	NO
If YES, do you have a clean driving licence		
Some Placements, particularly those overseas and in London may involve considerable additional expense in terms of accommodation and travelling. Have you considered the cost implications and are you in a position to support this? (i.e. the salary you earn may not be sufficient to cover all costs incurred).	YES	NO

Specific Skills

	Good	Fair	Not confident
Team work, negotiation and collaboration			
Planning and Organisational Skills			
Independent and self motivated			
Time Management			
Numeracy – analysis of financial information			
ITC Internet and e-mail PhotoShop Freehand Quark Supercard PowerPoint Microsoft Office Other – specify			
Research Skills and Methods			
Problem Solving			
Communication and presentation Written Verbal Visual			
Language (Please specify) e.g. French, level one			
Any other information			

Short personal statement that your placement officer could use to describe you as an individual to a prospective employer.

Appendix 5 'What employers want' - survey results

What do Employers want?

“The vast majority of employers want more than just a degree. They will be looking for other skills and attributes. A survey of graduate recruiters found the 10 most important to be...”

- Communication skills
- Teamwork
- Enthusiasm
- Motivation
- Initiative
- Leadership
- Commitment
- Interpersonal skills
- Organising
- Competence in a foreign language

“You can illustrate these skills by work experience even if not directly ‘relevant’ to the job you are going for.”

Source: AGCAS/AGR Subcommittee on Racial Equality
Autumn 1997

What Employers Want - The Top 25 attributes

Rank order of importance		Employer ratings (%) for	
		Importance	Satisfaction
1.	Willingness to learn	93	83
2.	Commitment	88	74
3.	Dependability/reliability	88	73
4.	Self-motivation	88	74
5.	Team work	87	70
6.	Communication skills (oral)	87	62
7.	Co-operation	86	77
8.	Communication skills (written)	86	57
9.	Drive/ energy	84	73
10.	Self-management	84	64
11.	Desire to achieve/motivation	84	76
12.	Problem-solving ability	84	63
13.	Analytic ability	83	67
14.	Flexibility	83	73
15.	Initiative	83	64
16.	Can summarise key issues	82	60
17.	Logical argument	82	66
18.	Adaptability	81	70
19.	Numeracy	81	71
20.	Adaptability (organisational)	80	67
21.	Can cope with pressure/stress	80	64
22.	Time management	80	58
23.	Rapid conceptualisation of issues	79	65
24.	Enquiry and research skills	79	68
25.	Self-confidence	78	69

Source: Employer Satisfaction: Summary by Lee Harvey and Diane Green. QHE project. University of Central England 1994.

Key Skills (Guardian Article 24.02.98)

‘Glaring mismatch between the skills employers value most and what students thought employers desire, according to a recent large scale research by the Department of Education and Employment. True, the majority of students rightly believe employers seek to hire graduates who can communicate. Students may need to think again about how much weight employers ascribe to the ability to learn new material and solve problems. Interestingly students rightly assume employers welcome students who are good at managing their own work, yet it is this particular attribute that employers find it hardest to recruit.’

Key skills

• Verbal communication	=	3
• Written communication	=	2.9
• Problem solving	=	2.8
• Numeracy	=	2.5
• IT	=	2.2
• Teamwork	=	2.7
• Self management	=	2.6
• Learning	=	2.8
• Technical	=	2.1

1 = Unimportant

2 = Indifferent

3 = Important

Source: The GET (Graduate Employment and Training) Report published by Hobsons.

Appendix 6 Placement Programme Calendar - Bookmark Idea

This bookmark is an alternative method of presenting the calendar of the work placement process to students, and as it can be used day-to-day it will act as a regular reminder:

Industrial Liaison Unit	
<u>Timetable of Events</u>	
<u>Year 1</u>	
<u>June</u>	- Presentation introducing the different roles in industry
<u>Year</u>	
<u>Oct - Dec</u>	- ILU Induction - Presentations by M&S, Arcadia and Debenhams - Seminar giving tips on how to complete these application forms - Individual advice and help on completing these application forms from ILU officer
<u>Jan - Feb</u>	- CV Seminar - Interview Techniques Seminar - Individual 20 minute tutorials
<u>March Onwards</u>	- Student's CVs sent out - Interviews organised - Placements confirmed
Open Door Policy	
- Students encouraged to pop into the office to find out where their CVs have been sent and to gather more information on the company and job if they have secured an interview - Extra tutorials organised when necessary.	
<u>March - April</u>	- Presentation by previous placement students about their experience
Any queries contact:	Industrial Liaison Officer
Contact details	

Appendix 7 An example of a Learning Contract

Industrial Placement - Learning Contract

What we require from you:

1. To meet all deadlines as indicated by Course Team/Industrial Placement Tutor.
2. To provide a CV and covering letter, to a professional standard, by deadline identified by Course Team.
3. To attend all tutorials/appointments arranged or to notify tutor beforehand of unavailability.
4. To be available for work for a minimum of 6 weeks between May and September (or on release as negotiated with the Course Team).
5. To attend all interviews arranged by, and agreed with, the Industrial Placement Tutor, or your Course Director.
6. To carefully consider and discuss with the Work Placement Tutor or Course Director - all offers made as a result of interviews.
7. To start and finish work on dates agreed with employers and the Course Team.
8. To NEVER WALK OUT or leave a placement without prior consultation with the Course Team.
9. Once placement has been completed, to agree not to approach companies participating in the work programme on your own; discuss it first with the Course Team.
10. To keep the Course Team informed of any other work arrangements made directly or individually by you at any time.
11. To behave in a professional manner at all times during the industrial placement.

What you can expect of us:

1. A thorough initial briefing to outline key dates and assessment requirements.
2. Advice on the production of CVs/ covering letters.
3. An individual tutorial with the Industrial Placement Tutor to identify personal strengths/weaknesses and most appropriate areas of industry for placement.
4. Appropriate support and guidance in finding industrial placements.
5. To keep you informed of suitable vacancies and to assist in arranging interviews where necessary (ie where companies have contacted course team directly).

I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the above conditions.

Signed:..... **Group:**.....

Name: (*printed*).....

Date:.....

Appendix 8 An example of an Employer Declaration

BA (Hons) P.D.F.I./Industrial Liaison Unit

Organisation providing placement _____

Student _____

Duration of placement: From _____ to _____

Placement Providers Declaration

- a) We accept responsibility for the student under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- b) We confirm that the student is deemed to be an employee for the purposes of our Employer's and Public Liability insurances.
- c) Should the student be expected to work with restricted machinery, equipment or substances hazardous to health, safety precautions will first have been taken, first aid facilities will be available, training, supervision, and protective clothing will be provided.

Signed on behalf of the Organisation providing placement

_____ Position held _____

Date _____

Appendix 9

Detailed Health & Safety Information

Health and Safety for students on Work Placements

1. Action to be taken in an emergency

Due to the wide variety of work that is carried out and the possible complex layout of the various buildings, it is not possible to produce a set of valid and detailed emergency instructions to cover every situation that may arise. For this reason, each employer has its own emergency instructions relating to particular buildings. There should be in every building a notice setting out the procedure to be adopted in case of fire.

This instruction should be studied and committed to memory.

There are certain points that apply to all emergency situations:

- you should commit to memory the standing orders for emergency action. You will have no time to read them in an emergency;
- remember you are expected to act in the spirit of the instructions. There is no substitute for common sense;
- the most important consideration at all times is human safety;
- remember if you become a casualty someone must rescue you, possibly at personal risk to themselves;
- you should act quietly and methodically. You should not rush or attempt to pass others when leaving the scene of an emergency;
- the senior person present should assume control of the situation, ensuring the safe evacuation from the premises of all persons present and be prepared to warn the Emergency Services, etc, of known specific hazards.

If you have to telephone for assistance in an emergency, the following information must always be given:

- who you are;
- where you are: i.e. the location and telephone extension from which you are telephoning;
- the nature of the emergency and what services are required ;
- the exact location where assistance is required.

You should ensure that the message has been correctly received by asking for it to be repeated back to you.

It is essential that the location is clearly defined. Local terminology should not be used because for instance, 'the research site' means very little to the Emergency Services.

It is important always to give the correct name for the building and the street where it is located. If the postcode is known that should also be provided.

2. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASWA)

The Act is based upon the concept of a general duty of care for most people associated with work activities. The specific aims are to:

- secure the health, safety and welfare of persons at work;
- protect persons other than persons at work against risks to health or safety arising out of, or in connection with, the activities of persons at work;
- control the keeping and use of explosive or highly flammable or otherwise dangerous substances, and generally prevent the unlawful acquisition, possession and use of such substances;
- control the emission into the atmosphere of noxious or offensive substances.

Main provisions of HASWA

There have been a number of Regulations, etc, since HASWA but fundamentally they only amplify the basic concepts contained within HASWA. Those provisions applicable to people place various duties upon employers, employees and others. In brief, these are:

General duties of employers

Employers are required, as far as reasonably practicable, to:

- ensure the health and safety and welfare of employees;
- provides safe plant and systems of work;
- ensure safe use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances;
- provide information, instruction, training and supervision;
- maintain a safe place of work and safe means of access and egress.

General duties of employers to employees

The effect is to make criminally enforceable the common law duty to take reasonable care for the safety of employees. This includes the requirement, as far as reasonably practicable, to ensure:

- employees know the risks;
- employees know the precautions ;
- the precautions are available;
- employees know the precautions available.

General duties of employers to persons other than employees

Employers have a general duty to protect anyone affected by the undertaking, eg the general public. Regulations:

- require information to be given to persons affected, eg living near the plant;
- prescribe situations regarding emission of fumes, smoke, etc.;
- place duties on persons in control of premises in relation to harmful emissions into the atmosphere.

Duties towards the customer

Duties of those who design, manufacture, import or supply and install articles or substances are to:

- ensure that they are safe and without risk to health;
- carry out tests, examination and research (or have it done on their behalf);
- provide adequate information regarding proper use, maintenance, etc.;
- install erect plant and equipment safely.

The duties can be relieved by a written undertaking from the supplier that he/she will take the steps to ensure that the article or substance will be safe in use or while being cleaned, maintained, etc

Duties of employees

No levy on employees is permitted for the provision of statutory protective equipment.

Employees must:

- take reasonable care for themselves and others;
- co-operate with the employer and use safety appliances;
- not recklessly and wilfully interfere with safety appliances;

Written safety policies

Companies must prepare and revise, when necessary, a written statement of their general policy towards health and safety at work setting out:

- the organisation - i.e. who is responsible;
- the arrangements - i.e. what is to be done.

Safety representatives and committees

Trade Unions may, in accordance with Regulations, appoint safety representatives and ask for a safety committee.

There is a duty on an employer to enter into consultation with representatives, whose functions and rights are prescribed by Regulations.

Disclosure of information

Inspectors may tell safety representatives what they ask the firm to do.

Powers of inspectors

Inspectors have wide powers of:

- entry;
- inspection ;
- interview of persons;
- collections of information;
- photographing and recording;
- taking samples;
- seizing dangerous substances or plant;
- taking written statements.

Enforcement

• Improvement Notice

This requires an organisation to take remedial action within a specified period. Failure to comply incurs a large fine (or an unlimited fine on indictment).

• Prohibition Notice

Activities giving rise to imminent danger must cease on the date stated - which may be immediate. Failure to comply incurs a large fine (or an unlimited fine on indictment).

• Codes of Practice

These are admissible as evidence in determining practicable, reasonably practicable and by practical means.

• Other Offences

These can incur a large fine on summary conviction or, on indictment, an unlimited fine and up to two years' imprisonment.

• Appeals

Employers may appeal to an Industrial Tribunal within 21 days against Improvement and Prohibition Notices. Improvement Notices are suspended until the appeal is heard, but not Prohibition Notices.

Prosecution is the ultimate deterrent. Prosecutions can be taken out against corporate bodies or individuals but in all cases the onus of proof lies with the accused ie an organisation or individual is deemed to be guilty and must prove they

exercised all due diligence or took all reasonable precautions to prevent the incident happening.

3. General safety

INTRODUCTION

The prevention of accidents in laboratories, stores, workshops and all other places of work is a duty of every individual using or entering them. Ensuring the safety of others is as important as the avoidance of personal injury.

Everyone should make it his or her first task to become familiar with any special instructions issued for dealing with emergencies peculiar to the place in which he or she is working.

GENERAL SAFETY RULES

Eating, drinking, smoking and the application of make-up in laboratories or when handling or working with chemicals is prohibited. Smoking may also be prohibited in many other areas as well.

You should familiarise yourself with:

- the layout of the building;
- the location of fire-fighting appliances and how they work;
- ways to get out of the building in an emergency, which may be different to the way you came in;
- the siting of telephones; and
- first aid arrangements.

Remember: it may be too late to find out the appropriate action to take when an emergency actually happens.

If you have any queries on safety matters: consult your supervisor or safety representative.

4. Specific Topics

FIRE

General information

Most fires can be prevented by applying routine precautions, some of which are set out below. When a fire occurs, the principal hazard to people is the smoke that is generated and most deaths at fires are due to asphyxia by smoke. Double doors in corridors and doors leading from kitchens, for example, are designed to retain the smoke to allow the remaining corridors to be used for evacuating the building. The walls of corridors have a specified fire resistance so that the fire can be contained in a small section of the building.

Means of escape

Ensure that rooms, passages, corridors and stairways are not obstructed and that corridor fire doors are kept closed. If a room contains an emergency exit, make sure that it is unobstructed so that it is immediately available for use in an emergency.

Fire extinguishers

Do not attempt to use an extinguisher unless you have received appropriate instruction and training and if it is safe to do so.

Discretion is essential in deciding the lengths to which fire-fighting is pursued. Portable fire-fighting equipment is not designed to cope with extensive fires and it is important that fire-fighting should cease and the location should be evacuated as soon as the effects of fire threaten the means of escape, the building structure, or otherwise indicate that it is out of control.

Although further action might reduce material losses no such saving can compare in importance with human safety.

Before attempting to fight a fire: always ensure the alarm has been raised and you are able to leave the area if the fire escalates out of control.

Ensure you know: the correct fire extinguisher to use and have received instruction in its use. For example, in a laboratory situation, use of the wrong choice of extinguisher can turn a minor incident into a major disaster.

Use carbon dioxide extinguishers with care: they can reduce the oxygen content of the atmosphere in a confined space to a dangerously low level.

There are many kinds of fire-fighting equipment in the workplace: it is the duty of everyone to know where they are located, and for what types of fire each one is intended. Whenever fire-fighting equipment has been used an immediate report should be made to the supervisor so that the equipment may be recharged or replaced.

Use of fire extinguishers

- **Carbon Dioxide** (usually black in colour) extinguishers are the type most generally used for electrical fires or in laboratories, and have several advantages in dealing with small fires. No mess is made and there is little danger of apparatus nearby being knocked over or damaged. They can be used where live electrical circuits are involved. However, they have little cooling effect and until the extinguished material has cooled below the ignition temperature care must be taken that the fire does not re-ignite.
- **Water** (usually red) extinguishers discharging water under pressure from a carbon dioxide cartridge are recommended for use on fires involving paper, wood, etc. They must not be used on fires where there are live electrical circuits.

They may be used for solvents miscible with water. It should be noted that the strong jet of water can itself cause damage.

- **AFFF (Aqueous Film Forming Foam** - usually cream) multi-purpose extinguishers are suitable for most types of fires (materials, etc) and are ideal for dealing with the majority of fires involving flammable liquids. The aqueous film prevents re-ignition of the fire with limited cooling properties. Foam extinguishers may be used on immiscible liquids that are lighter than water, eg petrol and most oils. They must not be used where live electrical circuits are involved.
- **Hose reels** are usually sited in corridors or in large rooms, for use where extinguishers discharging water may be inadequate for the risk involved. They are intended to be used on fires involving wood structures, paper, fabrics etc. The hoses are usually of 22mm diameter and from 25-40 metres in length. Where a control valve is fitted, it is important to ensure that it is fully open before the hose is run out. Hoses fitted with automatic valves operate when between 1 to 3 metres of hose has been run off the wheel.

Fire/smoke-stop doors

Fire/smoke-stop doors may be installed throughout buildings so as to prevent smoke and hot toxic gases circulating along routes to safety. These doors must not be wedged or propped open. They must be kept closed at all times after access and egress has been effected.

Fire instructions

These appear in the Emergency Procedures for the organisation and possibly in the internal telephone directory. They should be displayed on notices in all buildings.

Fire detection systems

Fire detectors give an early warning of a fire, particularly if the fire starts in an unoccupied area. There are generally two types of detector used.

- **Heat detectors** contain either a bimetallic or thermistor device and operate when a rapid increase in temperature occurs. They are fitted in some kitchens, laboratories and corridors. Other heat detectors operate when a fixed temperature, normally 60-70°C, is exceeded and they are used when a rapid rise in temperature can be anticipated in normal operation, eg oven rooms and kitchens.
- **Smoke detectors** contain an ion-chamber and detect the products of combustion. They are the most sensitive of the automatic detectors. Because of their high sensitivity, larger areas can be protected by a single detector and these systems are found in most buildings.

All fire detectors are necessarily sensitive devices and can be easily activated to give a false alarm. Smoke detectors for instance can be activated by dust, steam, or exhaust from petrol or diesel engines. Misuse of fire-fighting equipment, eg hose-reels, fire-extinguishers and fire-alarms, may render it inoperable when required in an emergency and could even result in loss of life. Moreover it is a criminal offence that may result in the imposition of severe penalties by the Courts and disciplinary action by the employer.

PRECAUTIONS IN OFFICES, LIBRARIES ETC

A recent nation-wide survey has revealed that offices are the scene of a substantial number of serious accidents every year. Most of these are avoidable. There is an increasing use of machinery in offices, eg paper-guillotines, duplicators etc, which should be operated only according to the makers' instructions. Only maintenance personnel should remove the enclosing panels of machines.

All portable electric appliances should carry a current Portable Appliance Test label. Leads should not be allowed to trail in a manner likely to cause persons to trip over them or to pull

over the item. You should not leave appliances in precarious positions not use waste-paper baskets as ashtrays.

Care must be taken to avoid spillage of water in rooms in which there are electric power points set in the floors. It is possible in some circumstances for a person standing on such a wet floor to receive a severe, possibly fatal, electric shock.

When carrying files, you should not carry so many that your vision is obscured. Filing cabinet drawers should always be closed as soon as you have found what you want. The corner of a metal drawer can inflict a very painful injury. Open only one drawer at a time because more than one drawer open may cause a filing cabinet to tip forward.

You must never stand on revolving stools or chairs and should avoid using any chair or stool where steps are provided. A fall on to the end of a desk or an open drawer can cause a very serious injury.

You should not leave stacks of boxes, kit bags or files on the floor near doorways for people to fall over. Polished floors, particularly if waxed or wet, offer a hazard. You should never run on the polished floors of corridors or common rooms.

WORK OUTSIDE NORMAL HOURS

Many companies have their own rules with regard to work outside normal hours, eg 0800 to 1800 hrs, Mondays to Fridays. Saturdays, Sundays, Bank Holidays and other official holidays are usually regarded as outside normal hours.

Extreme care should be exercised when working outside these times and then only with the explicit authority of the management of that organisation. It should be forbidden to perform operations deemed hazardous by the employer, or his/her nominee, unless some other person is within calling distance, and only after prior permission has been given by the Head of the Section or his/her nominee for the particular work involved.

ELECTRICAL HAZARDS

Two of the worst electrical hazards are careless or unskilled workmanship and faulty or worn out equipment. Neither of these hazards need arise. Electric and electronic supplies and equipment, including batteries and electrolytic capacitors can be responsible for personal injury and even death. They can also cause fires and explosions. Remember, some foreign colour coding of electrical leads differs from British practice. If in doubt, ask.

Electricity and fire

All portable electrical appliances should have a current PAT Certificate. This involves mechanical and visual check that all sockets outlets, switches, flexible leads and electrical appliances are in good condition. In case of fire involving electrical equipment, the first action to take must be to switch off the power supply to that equipment. You should extinguish and electrical fire with carbon dioxide, never with water or foam.

Use of electric points and equipment

Lead length should be adequate for the particular job for which the equipment is currently being used. In no circumstances should you interfere with the wiring or connections of any electric point or appliance. All necessary adjustments or modifications to wiring will be carried out by a duly authorised, competent person.

NOISE

Noise can cause damage to hearing, reduce efficiency or merely annoy. Damage to hearing can result from a sudden violent sound producing an effect as dramatic as the rupture of an eardrum. Continuous exposure to lower noise levels can, however, produce deafness. In

the latter case the impairment to hearing may pass unrecognised for a long period of time due to the insidiousness of the effect. For advice on noise problems you should consult the organisation's Safety Officer.

FIRST AID

It is a legal requirement to report all accidents in the workplace. Medical advice should always be sought, however serious the injury. Initially, simple first aid measures may be applied.

Minor cuts

Cuts and grazes are best treated by cleansing under running water and then dried. A dry dressing or plaster should then be applied.

Severe bleeding

Bleeding will be stopped by applying direct pressure on a dressing covering the wound and if possible elevating the affected part.

Burns and scalds

The affected parts should be immersed under running cold water for at least 10 minutes and then a dry dressing only applied.

Chemical spillage

All chemicals must be washed off the body with copious amounts of water. Some laboratories have emergency showers and these should always be used when available.

Needle stick injuries

Allow all puncture injuries to bleed freely and then wash under running water using soap or a hand cleanser. The injury should be reported immediately to the Medical Centre or First Aider.

Eye injuries

All eye injuries must be irrigated thoroughly then treated at the Medical Centre or local hospital. You should never attempt to remove foreign objects from the eye. Always seek medical assistance.

It must also be remembered that any sudden illnesses, bouts of ill health and injuries, should be reported to the Medical Centre or First Aider, as soon as possible.

Further Reading:

Health and Safety Guidance for the Placement of HE Students - Management Guidance, Universities and Colleges Employers Association.

Appendix 10

A Guide to carrying out Risk Assessment of the workplace

The following information is taken from a **Health & Safety Executive guide**, and sets out the key stages in 'risk assessment'.

Five Steps to Risk Assessment

1. This information is intended to help employers and self-employed people to assess risks in the workplace. It is aimed at firms in the commercial, service and light industrial sectors.
2. An assessment of risk is nothing more than a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken precautions or should do more to prevent harm. The aim is to make sure that no one gets hurt or becomes ill. Accidents and ill health can ruin lives, and affect your business too if output is lost, machinery is damaged, insurance costs increase, or you have to go to court.
3. Don't be put off by the following words:
 - 'Hazard' means anything that can cause harm (e.g. chemicals, electricity, working from ladders, etc.)
 - 'Risk' is the chance, great or small, that someone will be harmed by the hazard.
4. The important things you need to decide are whether a hazard is significant, and whether you have it covered by satisfactory precautions so that the risk is small. You need to check this when you assess the risks. For instance, electricity can kill but the risk of it doing so in an office environment is remote, provided that 'live' components are insulated and metal casings are properly earthed.

How to assess the risks in the workplace

5. Don't be overcomplicated. In most firms in the commercial, service and light industrial sector, the hazards are few and simple. Checking them is commonsense, but necessary. You may have already assessed some of them - for example, if you use toxic or dangerous chemicals, you should already have made an assessment of the risks to health and precautions you need to take under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH). If so, you can consider them 'checked', and write that down if you are making a written assessment. For other hazards, you probably already know whether you have machinery that could cause harm, or if there is an awkward entrance or stair where someone would be hurt. If so, check that you have taken what reasonable precautions you can to avoid injury.
6. If you are a small firm and you are confident you understand the work, you can do the assessment yourself. If you are a larger firm, you could ask a responsible employee, safety representative or safety officer to help you. If you are not confident, get help from a competent source. But remember- you are responsible for seeing it is adequately done.

Step One - Look for the hazards

7. If you are doing the assessment yourself, walk around your workplace and look afresh at what could reasonably be expected to cause harm. Ignore the trivial and concentrate only on significant hazards that could result in serious harm or affect several people. Ask your employees or their representatives what they think. They may have noticed things that are not immediately obvious. Manufacturers' instructions or datasheets can also help you spot hazards and put risks in their true perspective. So can accidents and ill-health records.

Step Two - Decide who might be harmed, and how

8. Think about people who may not be in the workplace all the time, eg cleaners, visitors, contractors, maintenance personnel, etc. Include members of the public, or people you share your workplace with, if there is a chance they could be hurt by your activities.

Step Three - Evaluate the risks arising from the hazards and decide whether existing precautions are adequate or more should be done

9. Even after all precautions have been taken, usually some risk remains. What you have to decide for **each significant hazard** is whether this remaining risk is high, medium or low. **First**, ask yourself whether you have done all the things that the law says you have got to do. For example, there are legal requirements on prevention of access to dangerous parts of machinery. **Then** ask yourself whether generally accepted industry standards are in place. But don't stop there - think for yourself, because the law also says that you must do what is reasonably practicable to keep your workplace safe. Your real aim is to make all risks small by adding to your precautions if necessary.

10. Improving health and safety need not cost a lot. For instance, placing a mirror on a dangerous blind corner to help prevent vehicle accidents, or putting some non-slip material on slippery steps, are inexpensive precautions considering the risks.

11. If you find that something needs to be done, ask yourself:

- a) can I **get rid of the hazard** altogether?
- b) If not, how can I **control the risks** so that harm is unlikely?

Only use personal protective equipment when there is nothing else that you can reasonably do.

12. **If the work you do tends to vary a lot, or if you or your employees move from one site to another** select those hazards that you can reasonably **foresee** and assess the risks from them. After that, if you spot any unusual hazard when you get to a site, get information from other on site, and take what action seems necessary.

13. If you **share a workplace**, tell the other employers and self-employed people there about any risks your work could cause them, and what precautions you are taking. Also, think about the risks to your workforce from those who share your workplace.

Step Four - Record your findings

14. If you have fewer than five employees **you do not need to write anything down** but if you have five or more employees you must record the significant findings of your assessment. This means (1) writing down the more significant hazards and (2) recording your most important conclusions - for example, 'Electrical installations: insulation and earthing checked and found sound', or 'Fume from welding: local exhaust ventilation

provided and regularly checked'. You must also inform your employees about your findings.

15. **There is no need to show how you did your assessment**, provided you can show that:

- a proper check was made;
- you asked **who** might be affected;
- you dealt with all the obvious significant hazards, taking into account the **number** of people who could be involved;
- the precautions are reasonable, and the remaining risk is low.

Assessments need to be suitable and sufficient, not perfect. The real points are:

- **Are the precautions reasonable; and**
- **Is there something to show that a proper check was made?**

16. Keep the written document for future reference or use; it can help you if an inspector questions your precautions, or if you become involved in any action for civil liability. It can also remind you to keep an eye on particular matters. And it helps to show that you have done what the law requires.

17. To make things simpler, you can refer to other documents, such as manuals, the arrangements in your health and safety policy statement, company rules, manufacturers' instructions and your health and safety procedures. These may already list hazards and precautions. You don't need to repeat all that, and it is up to you whether you combine all the documents, or keep them separately.

Step Five - Review your assessment from time to time and revise it if necessary

18. Sooner or later you will bring in new machines, substances and procedures which could lead to new hazards. If there is any significant change, you should add to the assessment to take account of the new hazard. In any case, it is good practice to review your assessment from time to time. Don't amend your assessment for every trivial change, or still more, for each new job, but if a new job introduces significant new hazards of its own, you will want to consider them in their own right and do whatever you need to keep the risks down.

Getting help

It is a legal requirement to assess risks. In the unlikely event that you get stuck on the assessment, your local health and safety inspector can advise you on what to do.

Appendix 11 An example of a Student Induction checklist

Name of Student:

Start Date:

Employer:

The following items should be included in your induction into the organisation, preferably on your first day. Please check off the items below when they occur and send a copy of this checklist, together with your placement details, to the work placement co-ordinator, as soon as possible after starting. This list is not exhaustive and other topics may be covered, which you may wish to note.

Task	Date
Introduction to key members and their roles explained	
Location of refreshment and recreational facilities	
Place of work	
Dress code	
Work space	
Internal and external communication facilities (telephone, e-mail, post etc)	
Car parking or public transport	

Health and Safety Issues	Date
Emergency procedures	
Safety policy received or location known, informed as to safety organisation and how to raise health and safety issues	
First-aid arrangements and accident reporting	
Fire procedures	
COSHH regulations	
Safe handling procedures	
Protective clothing arrangements	
Instruction on equipment use	
Other issues	

Contacts

Contact with overall responsibility for placement students:

Named supervisor:

Contact for compliance with Health & Safety legislation:

Signature of Student: Date:

Appendix 12A-D Four alternative examples of Tutor Visit Questionnaires

Appendix 12A Work Placement Tutorial Report

Section A:	Routine Information
Student	Name:
Company	Name: Address:
Placement Position	Indicate by Title, Role and/or Brief Description of attachment:
Start Date	
Termination Date	
Date of tutorial visit	
Visiting tutor	Name:
1 st , 2 nd , or 3 rd visit	Please indicate:
Company staff with whom student's progress was discussed	Name: Title:
Student's acknowledgement of tutorial	Signature: Date:

Section B	Progress of Placement
Outline of specific tasks, duties, activities undertaken by the student to date:	
Summary of student's view of placement:	
Summary of employers view of student's performance:	
Visiting tutor's overview of placement:	

Section C	Placement Report and Dissertation
Summary of Student's progress in relation to placement project and report	
Summary of Student's progress in relation to identification of an appropriate topic for dissertation	

Section D	Further Action
<p>Any significant problems or recommendations:</p>	
	<p>Placement deemed: satisfactory/ *unsatisfactory.</p> <p>* If unsatisfactory please ensure that the report contains adequate information regarding the placement from employer/ student and visiting tutor. Reports must be processed with the utmost urgency.</p>

Appendix 12B Alternative Example of a Work Placement Questionnaire

Visit 1

Date of visit..... Academic supervisor.....

Student's name..... Industrial supervisor.....

Company.....

To the student

- (a) Do you feel that you have settled into your new environment?
- (b) Are your workplace colleagues helpful and supportive?
- (c) Do you feel you are coping with the academic demands?
- (d) Is your accommodation satisfactory?
- (e) At present, do you have any concerns?

Yes	No

Please note any concerns/observations. Continue overpage if necessary

To the employer

- (a) Are you satisfied with the student's performance in the workplace?
- (b) Is he/she coping academically with the work?
- (c) Does he/she appear to be socially adept?
- (d) Do you feel that he/she has any obvious weakness at this stage?
- (e) Will the student be given the chance to attend training courses and/or interact with other company departments?
- (f) Have you previously supervised work placement students?

Yes	No

Please note any concerns/observations. Continue overpage if necessary

Appendix 12D Alternative Example of a Work Placement Tutor visit report

Student Name

Company Name

Company Supervisor

DATE COMMENCED

1. Student integration into the company

- a) Knowledge of what the company does and how the product/s are produced from conception to supply.
 - b) Who are the main clients/sources of income.
 - c) How does the company train its employees/follow standard protocol.
-

2. Flexibility to company requirements

- a) Understanding of how an organisation achieves its aims with reference to its internal organisation and management.
 - b) Indicate how design fits into this organisation.
 - c) Knowledge of aspects of design management.
-

3. The acquisition of work based skills

- a) Understanding of drawing practise used in company.
 - b) Draft reports, assignments, evaluations.
 - c) Knowledge of appropriate level of responsibility.
-

4. Project development knowledge

- a) Explains principles and theories necessary for development work with the company.
 - b) Uses information/research as supplementary experience
 - c) Recognises the impact of own work on the effectiveness of the company/uses critical judgement.
-

5. Production involvement knowledge

- a) Shows a use of equipment and technical resources effectively.
 - b) Understands the need for confidentiality and takes appropriate action.
 - c) Explains terminology, principles used by the company in production.
-

6. The acquisition of personal skills

- a) Understands the need to prioritise work load.
 - b) Shows plans of motivation during period of placement.
 - c) Demonstrates competence in forms of communications.
-

7) Company response to student

- a) Responds to instruction, advice and criticism.
 - b) Follows standard procedures with competence.
 - c) Uses equipment and resources to required standards.
 - d) Apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations.
 - e) Works effectively and safely as a team member.
 - f) Approaches work with an active interest.
-

8. Any other suitable evidence which may affect the students work based learning programme.

Tutor Date

Appendix 13 Example Skills Tracking Definition and Forms

Definition of skills and attainment levels.

	Unsatisfactory	Fair	Good	Very Good	Outstanding
Social and Communication Skills: Working effectively with others, individually and/or as a member of a team.	Has not worked effectively with others. Communicates poorly.	Has some difficulty in communicating and working with others; needs to improve	Has worked effectively with others in straightforward situations.	Has worked and communicated well, even in difficult situations.	Has demonstrated excellent personal and communication skills in a wide variety of situations.
Working to Plans: Using time, people and other resources effectively to deliver work on time.	Has wasted time, or has not used available resources or has refused to help.	Has attempted to meet deadlines, but needs to make better use of time and/ or resources.	Has met deadlines, where these were not exceptionally demanding.	Has consistently met deadlines even where this involved extra effort or re-planning.	Has planned own work, obtained resources, and met deadlines in demanding situations.
Practical Ability: Applying laboratory skills effectively to carry out laboratory-based procedures.	Has little or no practical ability; constantly makes errors; is dangerous to self and others.	Is easily distracted; makes errors: poor grasp of experimental design.	Produces reliable data with practice, is able to recognise sources of error.	Is comfortable with new techniques and situations; produces accurate reproducible data.	Analyses new and existing protocols and techniques; suggests improvement.
Written Work (includes completion of laboratory records): Producing work that is clear, concise and fit for the required purpose.	Badly written, numerous errors made; has had to be re-done.	Work has needed extensive correction; shows only basic grasp of principles.	Work has been well written, only a modest amount of correction needed.	Work has been very well written, showing an appreciation of the importance of accuracy and clarity.	Exceptionally high quality, always accurate, clear and concisely organised.
Understanding: Grasping complex concepts, recognising and solving problems.	Slow on the uptake; has not recognised problems; inadequate technical grasp.	Takes longer than usual to grasp new concepts; does not readily offer solutions to problems.	Generally quick on the uptake; can analyse problems and contribute to solutions.	Grasps new information well; analyses problems well and makes good suggestions.	Has readily grasped complex concepts; perceptive analysis of complex problems.
Learning Ability: Accepting criticism, reflecting on their performance, using this information to raise their level of performance.	Refuses to take criticism; unable to improve level of performance.	Needs prompting to reflect on experiences; makes only fair use of criticism.	Able to reflect on what has been learnt, and change behaviour accordingly.	Actively seeking learning experiences; can improve performance from feedback.	Exceptionally high ability for self reflection; excellent use of feedback.
Student Defined Skill:					

Student's Assessment of their Skills Proficiency

Complete each box by writing in the level that you believe you have attained. Use the rest of the space to add additional comments and notes, if you wish.

	Start of Placement	By Visit 1	By Visit 2	End of Placement
Social and Communication Skills: Working effectively with others, individually and/or as a member of a team.				
Working to Plans: Using time, people and other resources effectively to deliver work on time.				
Practical Ability: Applying laboratory skills effectively to carry out laboratory-based procedures.				
Written Work (includes completion of laboratory records): Producing work that is clear, concise and fit for the required purpose.				
Understanding: Grasping complex concepts, recognising and solving problems.				
Learning Ability: Accepting criticism, reflecting on their performance, using this information to raise their level of performance.				
Student Defined Skills:				

Placement Supervisor's Judgement of the Student's Skills Proficiency

Complete each box by writing in the level that, in your judgement, the student has attained. Use the rest of the space to add additional comments and notes, if you wish.

	By Visit 1	By Visit 2	End of Placement
Social and Communication Skills: Working effectively with others, individually and/or as a member of a team.			
Working to Plans: Using time, people and other resources effectively to deliver work on time.			
Practical Ability: Applying laboratory skills effectively to carry out laboratory-based procedures.			
Written Work (includes completion of laboratory records): Producing work that is clear, concise and fit for the required purpose.			
Understanding: Grasping complex concepts, recognising and solving problems.			
Learning Ability: Accepting criticism, reflecting on their performance, using this information to raise their level of performance.			
Student Defined Skills:			

Appendix 14A-B Work Placement report assessment: Sample mark scheme and Assessment and Feedback form

Appendix 14A Sample mark scheme for Work Placement report assessment

BA (Hons) Product Design for the Fashion Industry Year 3 Industrial Placement Report Marking Scheme

- | | |
|--|----------|
| 1. INTRODUCTION | 10 MARKS |
| 1.1 An appropriate title page. | |
| 1.2 A general introduction including acknowledgements and details of the placement. | |
| 1.3 A rationale, context, terms of reference of the report to define boundaries and objectives, methodology. | |
| 2. THE COMPANY | 30 MARKS |
| 2.1 A description of the company, departments, current practices, etc. This could include, environment, health and safety, layout, staffing, training, output, quality issues, technology, paperwork systems, interactions, etc. | |
| 3. ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION AND /OR PROBLEM | 20 MARKS |
| 3.1 An analysis of the findings evaluating the important factors. | |
| 4. RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION PLAN | 20 MARKS |
| 4.1 Recommended course of action with supporting reasons. | |
| 4.2 Time schedule for implementation. | |
| 4.3 Implementation and communication, e.g. responsibilities of personnel. | |
| 4.4 Additional resources, e.g. equipment and training. | |
| 4.5 Monitoring of progress. | |
| 4.6 An indication of the effects on personnel, costs, etc. | |
| 5. CONCLUSION | 10 MARKS |
| 5.1 Summary of the main points of the report with references to the introduction. | |
| 6. PRESENTATION | 10 MARKS |
| 6.1 The body of the report (excluding appendices) should be contained within 4000 to 5000 words. | |
| 6.2 Structure and neatness of written and visual material. | |
| 6.3 Accuracy of spelling and grammar. | |
| 6.4 Report Style. | |

Appendix 14B Example Report Assessment & Feedback Form

Name of Student:

Name of Supervisor:

	Very Good	Good	Average	Below Average	Poor	Comments
Structure						
Summary						
Background						
Methods						
Results						
Discussion/ Conclusion						
Content						
Relevant to topic						
Logically developed						
Critically analysed						
Understanding						
Insight and originality						
Presentation						
Legible						
Spelling						
Grammar						
Diagrams/ Illustrations						
References						
Length (Max 6000 words)						
Overall						

Tick each section as Very Good, Good, Average, Below Average or Poor, giving suggestions for improvement in the Comments column.

Appendix 15A-C Three alternative Employer Evaluation Forms

Appendix 15A Employer Evaluation Form

Dear Placement Supervisor,

In order to ensure the success of our Work Placement Programme it would be helpful if you could fill out the following questionnaire.

Name of Supervisor: _____

Name of Company: _____

Address of Company: _____

Telephone: _____

Name of Student: _____
Job Title: _____
Dates of Placement: _____

Personal and Interpersonal Skills

<i>Skill</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Poor</i>
Maintains effective relationships with colleagues				
Kept to deadlines and schedules				
Time keeping				
Ability to work on own initiative				
Quick to grasp the main point of the job				
Committed and motivated				
Attitude and aptitude				
Accuracy and presentation of work				

Comments: _____

Industrial Skills

<i>Skill</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Poor</i>
General workshop duties				
Designing				
Pattern Cutting				
Sewing				
Grading				
Specifications				
Customer supplier liaison				
Sales and promotions				
Computer skills				
Other:				

Comments: _____

Was the student financially supported/rewarded during his/her placement? Yes/No
 If so please give details _____

Other comments: _____

Would you consider a student placement for next year? Yes/No

Thank you for your co-operation in supervising the student and answering this questionnaire.

Appendix 15B Alternative Example of an Employers Evaluation Form

Within the first third of the placement an assessment of the student's performance is requested against the following criteria. Please indicate the student's ability against a five point scale by circling the appropriate letter. Please use a separate sheet if you wish to make further comment. As a guide:

A = Excellent B = Above Average C = Average D = Below Average E = Poor

Student:	Visiting Tutor:				
Employer:	Date of Visit:				
Relationship with other workers/employees	A	B	C	D	E
Standard of personal behaviour	A	B	C	D	E
Punctuality	A	B	C	D	E
Enthusiasm	A	B	C	D	E
Self confidence	A	B	C	D	E
Reliability	A	B	C	D	E
Acceptance of responsibility	A	B	C	D	E
Standard of dress (if appropriate)	A	B	C	D	E
Ability to organise themselves	A	B	C	D	E
Initiative and desire to look for work	A	B	C	D	E
Quality and accuracy of work	A	B	C	D	E
Ability to work under pressure	A	B	C	D	E
Communication - oral	A	B	C	D	E
Communication - written	A	B	C	D	E
Ability to learn	A	B	C	D	E
Reception to constructive criticism	A	B	C	D	E

Supervisor's signature

Visiting Tutor's signature

Student's signature

Appendix 15C Alternative Example of an Employers Evaluation Form

Student Name

Company Name

Placement Period from/...../..... to/...../.....

In accordance with the assessment criteria for the industrial placement certificate/diploma, a satisfactory report is required from the host company. This may be reflected through the companies own appraisal system or by completing the proforma below. May I thank you for your taking the time to evaluate on the students progress to date.

	Company understanding of skill level				
	5	4	3	2	1
Demonstrates knowledge of the company and its operation					
Demonstrates an understanding of external factors which may impact on the operation of the company					
Understands the management structure, line of authority and accountability in the company					
Demonstrates professionalism in terms of timekeeping and an appropriate level of responsibility, and approaches work with active interest					
Demonstrates a level of ability in the following areas (where appropriate):					
Verbal Communication					
Written Communication					
Visual Presentation					
Teamworking					
Professional relationship with members of staff					
Professional relationship with clients					
Ability to accept responsibility and adapt to different roles					
Time management in terms of setting and achieving goals, and prioritising work loads					
Finishing tasks set or undertaken					
Forward thinking and anticipating problems, demonstrates initiative in planning how to deal with problems					
Generates and initiates ideas					
Critical, logical and reflective thinking					

Any Additional comments you may like to add which may help the student in their final and future studies.

Name Position

Signed Date

Thank you once again

Please return / fax to:

The Placement Office

Key to tick boxes	
5	Excellent understanding
4	Good understanding
3	Average understanding
2	Poor overall understanding
1	Very poor overall understanding