

Placement Handbook for Employers



Introduction

This handbook aims to provide you with some information and advice on the placement process, your role within it, what you can expect from students and the support available from Solent University.

What is a Placement?

A placement is a role in your organisation undertaken by a student for a planned period of temporary work. For a student, it is an approved period of assessed learning within a workplace and should be relevant to their course. The aim of a placement is to bridge the gap between academic study and vocational graduate experience by providing the opportunity to apply the theory and skills gained during the course to a period of practical and professional work.



Placement Requirements

The student is required to gain a fixed amount of professional experience to successfully complete the placement unit.

This does not mean that you need to provide them with an official placement, only that they must complete the required amount of experience in a related role. Courses at Solent University require a range of placement lengths to be completed. Depending on the course, they can be six weeks, 13 weeks, six months, a year or more.

Employers may advertise a role and contract length that suits them and their company's requirements. Due to the variety of courses and placements, it is sometimes the case that the University will allow students to count relevant part-time work, volunteering or holiday jobs towards their placement hours.



Work Placement Process

- 1 At Solent students source their own placements with the support of Solent Futures and their course team. If you are looking for a Placement student, why not advertise on [Solent Futures Online](#).
- 2 Once a student has secured a placement, they will be asked to collect the details including, offer letter, job description and employers contact details. These details will then be submitted to their tutor to approve the placement as suitable.
- 3 Once approved an email will be sent to the line manager details provided to let you know as an employer your responsibilities while the student is on placement. You will have a chance to review the details and approve the placement. Students should not start a placement until this has been approved.
- 4 While on placement tutors may get in touch or visit the student in the workplace. Students may also have assignments that require them to have timesheets signed. It is the student responsibility to let you know about any assignment requirements they may have.
- 5 It is great to know if you have had a good Experience with our students on placement so please do get in touch via placements@solent.ac.uk if you have any feedback.

How to Advertise to our Students

Solent Futures Online is the University's tailored recruitment site for placements, graduate jobs, work experience, internships and volunteering, where you can post job advertisements at no cost to you.

Posting your role on Solent Futures Online will:

- allow users to click through to your own website
- drive more traffic to your website
- make your target audience aware of your company
- promote your company brand and recruitment activities.

If you would like to promote your company on Solent Futures Online and make the most of this service, please contact the team on employers@solent.ac.uk

We will ensure that your vacancy is promoted to the appropriate students and course staff. We require a job description, including details of the nature of the work that the student would undertake.

Payment

While not a legal requirement, most placement students receive an industry-appropriate salary.

Where salary is not stated, we find that employers receive fewer applications.

We encourage our students to consider their circumstances when applying for placements and advise that unpaid placements may cause financial difficulty.

If necessary, we can also arrange for you to give presentations to potential candidates and deliver interviews on campus.



Arrangements and Responsibilities on Placement

As the employer, we would expect that you will treat our students in the same way as you treat your other employees in respect of their health, safety, welfare and attendance.

The University also expects you to have met your country's legal obligation for health and safety, and to hold the relevant insurance – for example, your country's equivalent to employers' liability and public liability insurance. You should complete a risk assessment to cover the student's activities for the period of the placement. If the placement involves a student carrying out specific activities such as operating machinery, then additional training and supervision may be required for that individual.

In addition, if a student will be driving vehicles on your behalf, you should check that the relevant motor insurance policy covers this.

You can access further information on the Health and Safety Act and employers' liability insurance (UK) by visiting the Health and Safety Executive website:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/young-workers/employer/work-experience.htm>

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/hse40.pdf>

Placement Responsibilities

The employer or placement provider will:

- ✓ provide an offer letter/contract of employment
- ✓ provide the student with a full and clear induction to the organisation and its working practices, including health and safety arrangements
- ✓ comply with your country's health and safety legislation
- ✓ discuss and agree with the student the appropriate time allowed to focus on University assessment requirements
- ✓ ensure that you have appropriate employer and public liability insurance in place, if applicable
- ✓ nominate a supervisor who will conduct or make arrangements for day-to-day supervision of the student; in most cases this is the student's line manager and needs no extra arrangements to be made
- ✓ If your company has not already risk-assessed the student's role, undertake a risk assessment to identify any potential risks/hazards associated with the student's placement and ensure that adequate controls are put in place to address these risks.

Sole Traders

We understand that, as a sole trader, you may not hold employers' liability insurance.

Please be aware that in order for you to be able to provide a placement for a student, you are required to have appropriate public liability and employers' liability insurance cover in place prior to the commencement of the placement.

If you have any questions, please contact a member of the Solent Futures team at placements@solent.ac.uk



Equal opportunities, security and confidentiality.

The University has an equal opportunities policy which applies to employers providing placements.

The University recognises that matters relating to national security place restrictions on the employment of certain individuals.

The University will not disclose any commercially sensitive data or information externally. Where such information is made available, it will, with the employer's permission, be used for assessment purposes only and not subsequently discussed or divulged.

It is the employer's responsibility to make Disclosure and Barring Service checks on prospective employees.



Reasonable adjustments

It is unlawful for any employer to discriminate against a disabled person when choosing someone for a job or considering people for promotion, dismissal or redundancy.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission can provide information and offer practical guidance to employers and organisations to make sure that disabled people are treated fairly.

Often quite simple adjustments help not only disabled people but the general public as well. You can also access further information through the Equality and Human Rights Commission website:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/multipage-guide/employment-workplace-adjustments>



Induction and Training

It is important that you give the student an induction to your organisation, which should include:

- An overview of the organisational and team structure
- The role requirements
- The use of equipment
- Relevant health and safety policies.

A Positive Placement experience

Most placements progress very smoothly. However, occasional problems do arise. If issues are raised at an early stage, they are usually resolved quickly.

In our experience, students respond best when they know:

- who they are working with
- what tasks are expected of them
- what deadlines they have for completion of work.

Initially, students are encouraged to discuss any difficulties with their line manager or in accordance with the procedures of their employer. If an issue is not satisfactorily resolved, the student and employer may discuss the matter with their placement tutor who will, with the consent of both parties, aim to help, if appropriate.

Employers with persistent issues are encouraged to deal with matters through their internal procedures, which may include disciplinary processes.

Please keep the University's staff informed – with the student's permission – of any matters that could jeopardise the continuation of the placement. Employers are welcome to contact Solent Futures at any time – via placements@solent.ac.uk – and we can put you in contact with the correct placement tutor.

Attendance and Withdrawal

Attendance at the placement is just as important as it is when students are at the University.

To enable the University to complete its 'duty of care' and for visa purposes (where applicable), we ask that you:

- Promptly inform Solent University of any serious accidents involving medical treatment that goes beyond first aid, or of incidents relating to breaches of discipline by the student
- Advise the University promptly of any unexplained periods of non-attendance.

Should the situation arise where you deem it necessary to withdraw the student or terminate the contract, please contact us immediately at placements@solent.ac.uk so that we can discuss this and develop an action plan



Students on a Visa

Students on a Student visa can take part in a work placement if it counts towards an assessed unit on their course and does not take up more than a third or a half of the course, depending on their level of study.

As the visa sponsor, Solent University has an obligation to monitor the attendance of sponsored visa students while they are away from the University on a placement, and to advise the Home Office if these students' attendance or engagement is unsatisfactory. Therefore, it is essential that employers advise the University if a student has not arrived for work and has not communicated why by 1pm that day, or if there are concerns about any aspect of their performance.

Please note: visa students are not permitted to be self-employed or engaged in business activity, including setting up a business, being employed for a company in which they hold shares of 10 per cent or more, or holding a statutory role, such as a director.

Students on a Visa (continued)

In line with immigration rule ST 26.2: 'Students are permitted to undertake work related to a work placement, assessed as an integral part of the course, that meets the requirements at ST 17.1. to ST 17.3.' Students undertaking a work placement are required to submit an online form detailing their placement.

Solent University will assess the placement content and its duration to ensure that a work placement is an integral and assessed part of the student's course and in line with immigration rules ST17.1 to ST 17.3.

Once Solent University has signed off the placement, employers will be sent an email with details of the placement and outlining employer responsibility. For more information regarding employing students on work placements, please refer to the Home Office guidance: '[An Employer's Guide to Right to Work Checks](#)'.

Placement Requirements

Students receive accreditation for their placement within their final degree, and consequently the nature and level of work must provide an appropriate learning experience.

Potential placements need to be approved for suitability, and the criteria for approval will be:

- Suitability of work in terms of level and relationship to academic course.
- Evidence of intended contractual employment for the period of the placement.
- Suitability of the working environment, with availability of experienced practitioners.

Students have a placement module leader whose role is to provide academic support and advice, and to monitor progress and development. The placement module leader may make contact and visit the student during the placement.

Not all placements require a visit to the site. However, if a visit is needed, we ask that the student's line manager is available – this will be arranged in advance via the student.

Assessment

Students are required to gather information relating to this. Any assessment is designed to encourage the student to:

- reflect upon the relationship between the work they do during their placement and concepts and theories discussed during their course
- evaluate their personal development during the placement.

Details of work that a student undertakes for an employer may be submitted as part of a portfolio of work for assessment purposes. If you, as the employer, wish this to remain confidential and not be used, please make the student aware and contact the placement module leader or tutor.



Help from Solent and other support

Solent University provides other services for students including health and wellbeing support, as well as academic and financial advice.

If you have any concerns while our students are on placement with you, please note that these services are here to support students.

University services such as the Student Hub and the health and wellbeing teams are still available to students on placement, and you can view all the support on offer to them from [student services here](#).

Support available includes:

- [Student Hub](#)
- [Wellbeing and Counselling](#)
- [Solent Futures](#)
- [Find out here what to do if you need help urgently](#)

We ask that you contact placements@solent.ac.uk as soon as possible regarding any concerns you might have. We can put you or the student in touch with the appropriate placement tutor or department to ensure that our students feel supported while on placement.

Contact us

Solent Futures is a central professional careers service that supports placement provisions at Solent University. Solent Futures greatly appreciates the placements provided for our students and the range of employment opportunities that employers offer. We welcome any suggestions or comments from employers. Contact us at placements@solent.ac.uk

We work with organisations from all sectors to identify how the University can help move your organisation forward. We have a range of options, from advertising opportunities to our students and graduates, to working with our courses to source live briefs from businesses. Contact us for further information: employers@solent.ac.uk