

Placement Student Handbook

**Southampton
Solent
University**

**MAKE
WAVES**



Introduction

This handbook is intended to help Southampton Solent University students understand and manage the placement experience. University staff will help students prepare for their placement and explain the assessment process. As a student, you need to attend the University's preparation workshops and upload all the required documentation.

UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS

A placement is an approved period of assessed learning in a workplace and must be approved by the University and appropriately supervised within the host organisation. The field of work should be relevant to your course to satisfy the requirements of the unit.



Student Responsibilities

Solent Students will:

Student

- ✓ Attend placement workshops at the University and familiarise themselves with all the relevant health and safety information provided.
- ✓ Abide by organisation guidelines regarding health and safety requirements, and other practices and procedures of the placement provider.
- ✓ Report any concerns about health and safety to the employers, including personal or health concerns or disabilities that may require adjustments.
- ✓ Report any accidents or near misses in the workplace to their employer.
- ✓ Consult with the University prior to seeking any changes in the terms and duration of the placement.



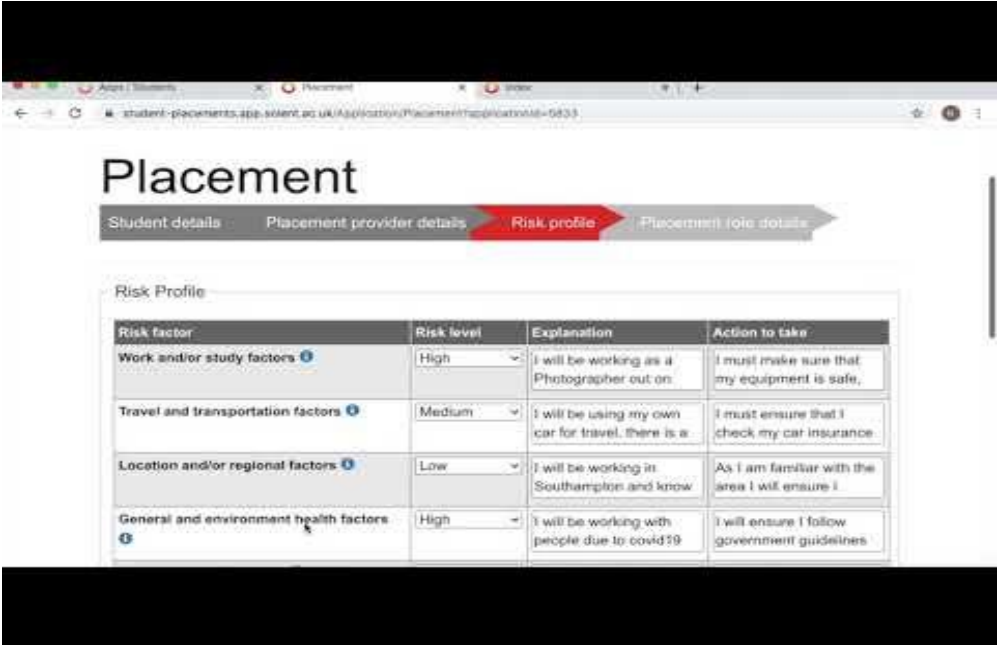
Work Placement Process

- 1 Your placement tutor will introduce the placement process to you. Depending on how many students are signed up for a placement module and what course you are on, this will take various formats and could be via presentations, online resources, email or one-to-one sessions.
- 2 You should be clear about who your placement tutor is and the placement requirements – as outlined in the module descriptor – prior to starting your placement search.
- 3 Students at Solent source their own placements; however, Solent Careers and your academic team are here to support you. If you are not sure how to start your search, you should check out Solent Careers Online – log in using your Solent email address and password. For more support you can email us via **placements@solent.ac.uk**
- 4 Once you have found your placement you must add this to the placement app. This can be found via the portal. Placements that are not signed off prior to you starting them may not be counted towards your degree. It is important that your placement tutor has the chance to check your placement before you go.
- 5 Once your placement tutor has signed off your placement, an email will go to your placement manager. They must also agree to your placement and confirm to Solent Careers before your placement starts. It is your responsibility to check that this has been completed prior to your start date.

Placement App

Once you have successfully found a placement, you must submit the details to your placement tutor, using the placement app on the portal. Failure to do so could result in your placement not being considered as part of your course. One of the main reasons we ask you to complete the placement app is to ensure your safety while on placement; therefore, it must be done prior to your placement starting.

Watch our short film on how to use the placement app to find out more.



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL `student-placements.app-student.southampton.ac.uk/PlacementApp/PlacementApp/5833`. The page title is "Placement". Below the title is a navigation bar with four tabs: "Student details", "Placement provider details", "Risk profile" (which is highlighted with a red arrow), and "Placement role details". The "Risk profile" section contains a table with the following data:

Risk factor	Risk level	Explanation	Action to take
Work and/or study factors	High	I will be working as a Photographer out on	I must make sure that my equipment is safe,
Travel and transportation factors	Medium	I will be using my own car for travel, there is a	I must ensure that I check my car insurance
Location and/or regional factors	Low	I will be working in Southampton and know	As I am familiar with the area I will ensure I
General and environment health factors	High	I will be working with people due to covid19	I will ensure I follow government guidelines

[How to use the Placement app click here](#)



[Access the placement app click here](#)



Documents you need to complete the app

Written confirmation of your placement: this could be an email or a letter with a company logo or email signature.

Task list or job description: this needs to outline your tasks as an employee on placement; without this, your tutor cannot assess if the role is suitable.

Employment contract: this outlines your rights with the placement provider and allows your placement tutor to see that you will be treated as an employee. It will also include the hours and weeks you are contracted for. All larger companies should be able to provide you with this paperwork, while smaller companies or sole traders should provide you with enough information to allow your placement tutor to assess the placement fully.

Your tutor will need to see and approve all the details and documents. Tutors have the right to reject a placement on the grounds of lack of clear information. A rejected placement will need to be amended and resubmitted. If the placement remains rejected, this will not count towards your degree.

Preparing for the workplace

The world of work is different to university life, but most students quickly adjust and gain an excellent insight into the working world.

Many companies have established procedures for students on work experience and the placement runs smoothly.

Find out more about preparing for the workplace on the links below:

Tips for the workplace

How to impress on the first day of a new job.

How to ace your first day



Relationship with your Placement Provider



Contract of employment, Leave and other issues

Before the placement starts you need to have received an offer letter and/or contract of employment.

Depending on placement length, you may be entitled to holiday leave, which the employer should explain.

In addition, before commencing the placement, employers may require you to undergo security clearance checks; where work includes access to children/vulnerable adults, checks will be made through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Each company will have its own set of procedures for dealing with problems or disciplinary matters, so you may request a copy. Your line manager or the company human resources team will be initial points of contact.



Health and Safety while on placement

As part of its 'duty of care' to students, the University aims to ensure your health and safety during your placement.

Employers are asked to return an agreement on their responsibilities for the student, including health and safety.

Be careful and do not put yourself at risk. NB: If the work involves special qualifications (for example, driving company vehicles), it is your responsibility to ensure that you meet the requirements in terms of training and documentation. You should expect to receive health and safety information from your placement provider as part of your induction training. If you have any concerns about your health, safety or wellbeing while on placement, you should contact your tutor immediately.



Liability Insurance

By law, most UK employers are required to have employers' liability insurance cover in place.

While you are on placement you are considered to be an 'employee' of the company, irrespective of whether it is paid or unpaid work. If you have decided to carry out a work placement which is not at the University, then your placement provider (employer) is responsible for providing employers' liability insurance – not the University.

The company may also hold public liability insurance which indemnifies the company against claims made by any visitors or customers.

If you decide to undertake a work placement abroad, you need to check if the placement provider has insurance in place to protect you while completing your placement. You will also need to check the country's guidelines on insurance, as some countries do not require employers to have such insurance or may have insurance schemes in place which are similar but do not provide the same level of liability cover. If your work placement provider does not have the necessary liability cover in place, speak to your placement tutor for further guidance.

It is important that you fully understand the duties you will be completing and the environment you will be working in. The risk profile within the placement app will be able to guide you when considering the various factors involved when carrying out a work placement.

Travel and medical insurance

Overseas placements:

For overseas placement insurance details, please contact **placements@solent.ac.uk** and we can provide you with the most up-to-date information.

If you are going on placement overseas you will need to **read our advice pages**.

UK placements:

For placements within the UK, free medical treatment is available on the NHS, so you don't need additional medical insurance, provided you are registered with the NHS or have a National Insurance number.

Overseas students on a UK placement should either be registered to receive NHS treatment or have taken out appropriate medical insurance prior to their arrival at the University.



Attendance and Sickness

Attendance

Attendance at the placement is important and is expected by the employer and the University. Employers are requested to notify the University if there are any unexplained periods of absence. For any non-emergency absence, please arrange and agree this with your line manager in advance.

Sickness

Find out what the company's policy on sickness notifications is. Normally you are expected to notify your line manager on the first day of absence. Placement students should register with a local doctor if the work is away from their existing practice. A doctor's certificate is not required for the first seven days of any illness, and you should follow the employer's procedures for this. Sickness-related absence would not normally affect accreditation of the module, but you should inform the course team if sickness absence exceeds 10 working days.

**On Placement
the relationship with
the University.**



Ongoing enrolment as a student

Students on a year-long placement are required to enroll as students at the University as usual and will receive information explaining this process.

You need to contact the Student Hub if you do not think you have the correct information.

Students undertaking a placement as part of their normal academic year will receive confirmation from their placement tutor as to the appropriate time frame to complete their placement.

Students who need to re-sit examinations or submit outstanding work are required to do so at the earliest opportunity, in line with University policy.



Help from Solent and other support

We hope you enjoy your time on placement and would like you to know that the University is still here to support you. If you have any concerns, including harassment or sexual misconduct, please contact your placement tutor as soon as possible – they will be able to provide some support and can direct you to other departments who can support you further. If you are unable to get hold of your tutor, you can contact **placements@solent.ac.uk** and we can provide advice and put you in touch with the correct team to help you best.

University services such as the Student Hub and the Mental Health & Wellbeing Team are still available to you, and you can view all the support on offer to you from **[student services here](#)**.

Support available includes:

- **[Student Hub](#)**
- **[Mental Health & Wellbeing](#)**
- **[Report a Concern](#)**
- **[Safer Solent](#)**
- **[Solent Careers](#)**
- **[Find out here what to do if you need help urgently](#)**

Student Assistance Programme

The University offers access to external 24/7 counselling helpline in collaboration with Pam Wellness. **Student Assistance Programme** offers expert advice and compassionate guidance, covering a wide range of issues.



Contact and Visiting Tutors

You and your placement provider may receive contact from your placement tutor.

This can take the form of a visit, email or phone call.

It is your responsibility to liaise with your work supervisor so that he/she is available to meet University staff for 15 to 40 minutes to discuss your progress.

Remember: your placement tutor is the first point of contact for you at the University, so you should ensure that you contact them prior to starting your placement to check the best ways for you to get in touch with them.



Students on a Visa

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

As your visa sponsor, Southampton Solent University is required to notify the Home Office if you will be carrying out a work placement. Therefore, it is essential that you log your placement on the University placement app prior to starting the placement; failure to do so could result in you breaking the work conditions attached to your visa.

As a visa sponsor, the University is required to monitor the attendance of visa students while undertaking a placement and will receive regular attendance reports from your placement provider. After your placement is approved on the placement app, you will be directed by your course team or UKVI Compliance team regarding our monitoring process. Note, the process will vary depending on the course you are studying and the type of placement you are on.

Students on a Visa (continued)

Unexplained absences or a failure to engage in the attendance monitoring process could result in the University withdrawing your visa sponsorship and reporting this to the Home Office, who will curtail (cancel) your visa. Therefore, if you are unable to attend the placement for any reason, it is essential that you let your employer know as soon as possible, and by 1pm on the day of absence at the very latest.

Please note: Student 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.

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.

Southampton 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.

Students on a Visa (continued)

Once Southampton 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**'.

If you were granted a Student Route visa for a course without a placement, you will need to apply and be granted the new Student Route visa before your placement starts.

You may be in breach of your working conditions if you undertake work over the permitted term-time hours without Home Office approval. For advice on visa extensions, contact the international support team: **internationalsupport@solent.ac.uk**

You can still access:

- 1 Students are entitled to remain members of the Students' Union (SU) while on placement. The NUS Extra Card is useful evidence of this when using reciprocal facilities at other colleges and in obtaining student discounts
- 2 Solent Careers is your careers team, and we are here to support you in both looking for a placement and moving forward with your career. You can contact us on **placements@solent.ac.uk** and you can also check out our online resources on **Solent Careers Online**, available via the portal. You can log in using your student email address and password.
- 3 Disability Advice Team This confidential service is designed to help disabled students achieve their academic potential, including while on placement. Early contact with Disability Advice Team by students will help to ensure that appropriate support is in place – this includes advising employers. Find out more on the **Disability Advice Team**, or email **disability@solent.ac.uk**.
- 4 While you are out on placement you can continue to use the library. If you are in the local area, you can visit and use it in the normal way. If you are further away, there are many online resources and services for you to access. Check out the library portal pages for more information.

Financial Information

For information about funding on a Year-long placement please read the Funding team's guide **Funding for Placement Years**.

Students may be entitled to a loan or grant, depending upon circumstances, placement length and whether it is paid or unpaid. For more information, email the student funding team: **student.funding@solent.ac.uk**.

Contact Student Finance England or your local authority for further information and application details.



Unpaid Placement Fund

This grant is to support students who have been offered a short-term unpaid placement of between 10 and 20 working days. Placements must last a minimum of 10 working days (or 100 hours) and a maximum of 20.

If it lasts more than this, students may still apply, but only the maximum of 20 working days will be considered. This grant can only provide a contribution towards your costs; it cannot cover them 100 per cent.

Please be aware that if you are undertaking a long-term unpaid placement, this will affect your ability to work, and the fund cannot be expected to cover your costs. Placements outside the UK will need to be justified and will affect the level of funding you may receive.

Find out more and apply.



National Insurance, Tax and Sick pay

National insurance

Students on placement in the UK earning over £100 per week (approximately) are likely to pay some National Insurance contributions and be subjected to income tax for any earnings that exceed personal allowances. Go to www.hmrc.gov.uk for more information.

Sick Pay

Almost all employees in the UK receive statutory sick pay if they are away from work owing to illness. If excluded from this because of 'insufficient National Insurance contributions credited', students may claim sickness benefit through the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Council Tax

Students on placement will still be classed as students for council tax purposes. The Student Hub can provide a letter as proof of this. However, if a student is the owner or leaseholder of a property and one or more of the residents is not a full-time student, they may be liable for a proportional amount of council tax.



Assessment

Assessment may take the form of an individual learning contract, objectives, a reflective journal or gathering a portfolio of evidence. Students are required to ensure they have all the information relating to this.

Your placement tutor will explain what is required. Any assessment of the work experience is designed to encourage you to:

- reflect upon the relationship between the work you do during your placement and concepts and theories discussed during your course
- evaluate your personal development during the placement
- keep a diary or make a note of the projects, events and activities you are involved in
- list any resources you have developed, and skills learnt.



Ready to go on placement

Remember to make sure you have your course leader or placement tutor's contact details, and a copy of this handbook saved so that you know how to get in touch if you need any support.

More information and support:

Placement portal pages

Placement SOL support pages

Now you are ready to go on placement! Good luck – and if you have any questions, you can email us on **placements@solent.ac.uk**