

# YEAR IN EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENTS

**Employer Handbook**



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Book a [Teams Meeting](#)

# WELCOME

What makes our programme exceptional?

Our students bring practical, industry-focused skills and experience to your organisation. They aren't just theory-driven; they've honed their abilities through rigorous coursework, real-world projects, and internships, and they're eager to apply their knowledge and make a tangible impact in real commercial environments. University of Southampton students are increasingly focused on employability, with the ability to choose modules based on the key employability skills that they can develop.

Moreover, through internships, volunteering, and societies, our students develop further key transferable skills. Our Year in Employment Placement Programme offers a golden opportunity to infuse your establishment with new energy, creativity, and innovative thinking. You're not just gaining a temporary team member but embracing a catalyst for transformation and growth. We are keen to work with local, national, and international employers of all sizes from all sectors and industries. The Employer Engagement Team will guide and support you through the whole process and want to ensure you have a memorable experience with positive outcomes.

We look forward to the opportunity to collaborate with you!

# WHAT IS A YEAR IN EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT?

All students on eligible courses at the University of Southampton have the opportunity to opt into a Year in Employment placement year. These are coordinated by the Year in Employment team, who sit within Careers, Employability and Student Enterprise. Placements are normally 12 months long; anything shorter will still be supported unless the opportunity does not meet the minimum requirement of 30 weeks.

Eligible students can complete a Year in Employment placement between their second and third years of undergraduate study. Students will receive support from a member of the Year in Employment Team throughout their placement. There are two check-ins with students during the placement, conducted either in person or online, with the option of an additional third check-in. Students are required to write a reflective report, which their Employability Lead at the University will mark.



**99% OF UOS STUDENTS WHO HAVE COMPLETED A YEAR IN EMPLOYMENT WILL ACHIEVE A 2.1 OR HIGHER**

Upon successful completion of the placement year, the student's degree title will include 'with a Year in Employment,' and the Year in Employment will appear on their degree transcript. This experience will help students demonstrate their sector knowledge and deepen their commercial awareness, positioning them well for future career success.



**It was a learning experience for both the student and us, as the placement programme should be a win-win situation for all. Our student was brilliant, proactive, and full of positive drive"**

**Lydia Martin, Frontier**



# WHAT IS A SUITABLE PLACEMENT ROLE?

To be eligible for acceptance under the Year in Employment programme, a placement role must contribute to the student's long-term career objectives and typically necessitate a degree-level qualification for permanent employment.

Placement students offer a unique blend of academic knowledge and practical ability. They are well-suited for tasks often assigned to recent graduates, making them valuable additions to your team. While they contribute meaningfully, it's important to remember they are still developing their skills and experiences.

While many students choose placements aligned with their degree, some may opt for roles in industries or sectors unrelated to their studies. This can provide them with valuable exposure to different fields and enhance their career prospects.

📌 **A Year in Employment placement cannot begin before July.**



## PAID PLACEMENTS

The average salary for a student placement year in the UK typically ranges between £18,000 and £23,000 (source: Rate My Placement).

Offering paid placement opportunities is essential, as it financially supports students and enhances their motivation.

Paid placements ensure fair and equal access for all students and allow them to immerse themselves in the work experience fully. It is important to remember that students on placement are still liable for a percentage of tuition fees and need to cover food, rent, utilities, and possibly travel expenses.





## UNPAID PLACEMENTS

The University prefers all students to undertake paid placements and recommends that all placement providers pay an appropriate salary. In special circumstances, however, we recognise legitimate 'unpaid' placements offered to students that are valuable in developing their employability. These opportunities are usually within, but not exclusive to, the sectors of heritage, politics, media, fashion, and the third sector, and support students in accessing highly competitive jobs.

We strongly recommend that you contact a member of the Employer Engagement Team to discuss the role and what support can be offered to enable the student to take up an unpaid placement.

Any student completing an unpaid placement must have the opportunity to work flexibly. For instance, they may work 21 hours a week over 3 days or 28 hours a week over 4 days, to allow the opportunity for part-time paid work.

In addition, the role must align with the student's future career goals and/or usually require a degree-level qualification to be employed permanently. The placement must not exceed 1 year, with similar placements in the same industry also being unpaid.



## SUPPORTING YOU

The Employer Engagement Team is here to support you throughout the recruitment and placement journey. We can help you with the following:

- Guidance writing your job description
- Advertising and promotion of your opportunity via various promotional channels and student facing events, including directly to our students registered on the Year in Employment mailing list
- Use our interview rooms and teaching facilities to conduct assessment centres
- Signposting to further opportunities for collaboration with the University
- Online check-in meetings are offered to employers twice annually, and you will have a point of contact throughout the placement

In addition to the above, we offer bespoke advertising and administrative support for placement opportunities exclusive to the University of Southampton.

# YEAR IN EMPLOYMENT TIMELINE



## STEP ONE

Advertise your placement opportunity ideally between September- May, on our [MyCareer Jobs Board](#)



## STEP TWO

Complete your recruitment stages and make an offer



## STEP THREE

Receive and sign our Letter of Expectation



## STEP FOUR

Complete our Health and Safety form



## STEP FIVE

Receive an employer check-in 6-8 weeks following the commencement of the placement



## STEP SIX

Following the end of the placement, you are invited to submit feedback about your experience and meet with us to discuss the possibility of another placement for the next academic year



**The process for taking a Year in Employment student was very simple and straightforward and did not add to my workload which was great"**

**Helen Shaw, Autism Hampshire**

# STUDENT TOUCH POINTS

1

Placement begins following the summer exam period (July - September)

2

Student check-in happens 3-4 weeks after the placement starts. The student is required to complete an induction checklist as part of their check-in

3

A placement visit is completed around 3 months into the placement. A 15-minute meeting is requested with the supervisor as part of the visit

4

Optional mid-to-backend check-in online meeting, to check that the student is on track with assignments and answer any questions they might have about returning to university

5

End of placement email is sent to the student for feedback on their experience



## INDUCTIONS

To help students assimilate quickly into your organisation, an induction is crucial, and we highly recommend conducting it during the first week of the placement. To assist you, please download and view our induction checklist below which we ask students to complete after their first check-in to ensure that they have been appropriately inducted.



**A downloadable version of the induction checklist is available for your reference, you can view it [here](#).**

# DURING THE PLACEMENT

As a placement provider, you are required to:

- Ensure that the student is supported and encouraged throughout their period of employment
- Ensure that the student's working environment is supportive of different races, religions, genders, nationalities, disabilities, ages, or sexual orientations, and all protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act 2010

A Letter of Expectation will be issued once you have appointed a University of Southampton student. This letter will outline your wider roles and responsibilities as a placement provider, as well as those of the placement student and the University. All three parties will be required to sign this letter.

We encourage you to conduct an exit interview whenever possible. This not only helps your organisation identify areas for improvement for future students but also provides the student with valuable positive and constructive feedback on their performance over the year. Exit interviews, when conducted thoughtfully, are a powerful tool for organisational growth and student development.

If you ever have concerns about a student's wellbeing or progress (e.g. due to changes in behaviour, attendance, punctuality, or productivity), please contact the Work Experience Team via [workexp@southampton.ac.uk](mailto:workexp@southampton.ac.uk). We can discuss issues directly with the placement student, mediate between you and the student, and escalate if required. In addition, if your placement student requires health and wellbeing support during their placement, they can contact our Student Hub, a 24/7 support service.

## VISAS AND INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

We are required to monitor students on a Student Visa. Students on a Student Visa are eligible to complete a placement year, but they are required to use a remote monitoring system. As a placement provider working with one of our international students, it is not your responsibility to enforce, however please notify us immediately if there are any unexpected or unauthorised absences. There are additional requirements in recruiting an international student for a placement year, so please let us know if this is something you're considering.

# THANK YOU

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your interest in recruiting one of our students for a Year in Employment placement.

A placement year provides an invaluable opportunity for a student to utilise their talents and abilities, develop their skills, and prepare for their future career.

Offering a placement can create a talent pipeline, it provides a low-cost recruitment solution for 12 months and provides your employees the opportunity to develop their line management and mentoring skills. We value and appreciate employers who offer such a chance to our enthusiastic and highly capable students.

# FURTHER ENGAGEMENT

There are many other ways you can reach and engage with our students, such as:

- Employer Events
- Careers Fairs
- Undergraduate Internships and Graduate Internships
- Student Innovation Projects
- Career Mentoring
- E-Mentoring - Alumni of the University of Southampton only
- Advertising Opportunities
- Academic or Research and Development Collaborations with the University

If you would like to find out more about any of the above opportunities, please contact us on 023 8059 3501, [employ@southampton.ac.uk](mailto:employ@southampton.ac.uk), or book an appointment with the Employer Engagement Team [here](#)



**Find out more:**

[www.southampton.ac.uk/careers/employers](http://www.southampton.ac.uk/careers/employers)