

## Work Experience



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### Why?

The main objectives of work experience for Y12 are:

- To allow students to understand how commerce and industry operate
- To help students to see the relevance of school subjects to the world of work
- To help students gain greater self-confidence and maturity
- To enable students to find placements that are related to the career / university course they are considering and also to their AS / A2 subjects and, hopefully, increasing their motivation
- To allow them to prepare for their personal statement for their UCAS form for university applications / CV for the workplace.

### Do I have to do it?

There are many activities and experiences that a student can engage in to make him or her a more 'rounded' applicant e.g. extra-curricular activities, clubs, sports, volunteering, gap year plans - all very important strings to a student's bow. However, relevant work experience is increasingly viewed as an essential part of any good application for higher education and the world of work. For candidates equally good on paper applying for courses / jobs, it could well be the work experience which tips the balance in favour of one candidate over the other. This is the case more than ever given the greater competition for places in Higher Education and for the job market. Indeed, more and more universities are offering work experience years as part of Higher Education courses and many graduates owe their jobs to such placements. Work Experience matters!

Students who plan to go into medicine, dentistry, teaching or veterinary science have already been advised to secure some form of regular work experience because of the importance given to this in university applications and interviews.

### When?

To allow students time to do this and as a reward for their commitment to this, please note that the start of the summer holiday for Y12 will be a week earlier than for the rest of the school. **Year 12 studies will end on the 10th July 2020.** There is still a good degree of flexibility in this – if this week is not possible for an employer, work experience can also be completed during the summer holiday. Either way, it will be important that it is completed before the start of the very busy Autumn term in Y13.

### Will I get help?

Students are encouraged to find their own placements and the school will give them support and guidance in order to do so.

There are various sources of help:

- Personal contacts - family / friends / neighbours / teachers

- Yellow Pages ([www.yell.com](http://www.yell.com)). This has a search facility by area to home in on categories of employers.
- Students should be prepared to telephone prospective placements.
- Placements need not be home-based if suitable accommodation can be arranged in another part of the country

A sample letter is also available in this work experience section of the school website. This can be downloaded and used as a template.

Students are advised to make multiple requests for work experience as demand for placements can be heavy and early application is necessary. Be pro-active – repeatedly contact employers - it will be worth it!

#### **What if I don't know yet what I want to do in life?**

Students may have a very clear / vague or no idea at all of the area of further study / work they may wish to go into so this will affect what – and when - they apply for work experience. We hope that students will apply as early as possible and we would ask for parental support and encouragement in this. If a student knows the area they wish to pursue further, then our advice is to try and find work experience as soon as possible.

#### **Can you help the school?**

Any parent who can offer work experience in their place of work is invited to contact the school. A letter outlining this help is available on the school website for this purpose.

#### **Is the placement suitable?**

As we have said, it is up to the student to organize work experience. Ideally, the placement should fit in with a definite career or higher education plan. Please note that parents and students must ensure that they are happy with the working conditions of the placement (especially Health and Safety). Employers used to taking on work experience students will have health and safety procedures in place. However there is any doubt about a particular placement arranged, then the student **MUST NOT embark upon a work experience placement there. Another placement will need to be found.**

#### **After the placement?**

On completion of their work experience, students may like to ask the employer to produce a short testimonial which they can give their tutor in order to inform the reference-writing process for UCAS or a future employer.