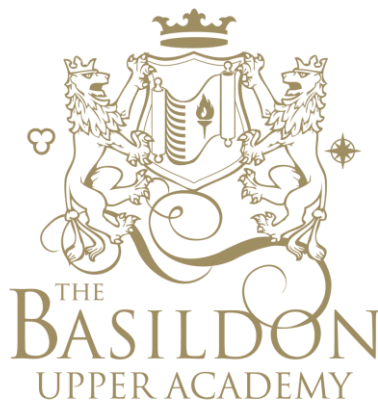


# Year 10

# Work Experience

# Handbook

Steps to support you to secure a placement  
Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024 – Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2024



*In year 10 you will have the opportunity to do a work experience placement. Work experience can involve work shadowing (observing someone else doing a job) or it may mean undertaking duties yourself. This is a government and Ofsted requirement following good quality careers education in line with the Gatsby Benchmarks.*

## **Why work experience?**

### **Find out about the world of work from the inside!**

You will have come across people doing various jobs when visiting shops, hotels and hospitals, hearing your family talk about their jobs - and perhaps going into their workplaces - but that's quite different from spending a week or two actually being part of an organisation. You'll get to know how people work together, how things get done and how work differs from school or sixth form.

You may have read careers information, seen the Job of the week poster, but being in the workplace, observing or doing a particular job yourself brings things to life. You'll be able to answer lots of questions. Is the job like you imagined? Can you see yourself in that setting, doing that kind of work? Would you enjoy the training or education needed for entry to the job? You also learn about the skills and qualities that employers look for.

### **Relate your studies to working life**

You will see how important good English, Maths and ICT skills are in the workplace. Depending on your placement, you may find out how things you have learned in Science, Design and Technology or Business Studies, for example, are put into practice. If you are inspired by your placement, it may help you set some career goals.

### **Find out more about yourself and develop useful skills**

You will learn how well you can cope in a new environment, working alongside people you don't know and taking responsibility for yourself. You will learn how to relate to adults as colleagues or managers, rather than as teachers or parents. You will find out which work activities you enjoy, and which you don't. You will practise your communication skills with other staff, and possibly with customers.

### **But I already have a weekend job...**

You will certainly learn something from any work - paid or unpaid - that you already do. However, you can add a lot to this through work experience. Firstly, you can choose areas of work that you couldn't get into through a part-time job. You are likely to learn much more about how the organisation works, the range of jobs within it, and so on. Work experience can also be valuable, or even essential, when you are applying for jobs or courses later.

## Preparation

We will help you to prepare and will also try to ensure that you get a placement in the career area that interests you, but this is not always possible. Competition for placements can be fierce, so it's important to start planning early. Some students find their own placements, perhaps through family contacts, but the school must give its approval.

Before your placement:

- Make sure you know exactly where to go and who to report to on your first day
- Find out as much as you can about the organisation, perhaps through the school or by looking at the organisation's website, or from previous students.

If you're anxious about any aspects of your placement, talk to your teachers in advance. You will feel more confident on the first day if you:

- Know where you are going - do a practice run and time your journey to allow for any delays!
- Know what happens about lunch (do you bring your own or use a staff canteen?)
- Wear appropriate clothes; dressing in neat, clean clothes creates a good impression.

## Get the most out of it

You may be given some tasks to do while on placement. You may have to find out about the structure of the organisation or interview someone about their job, for example. Whether or not you have assignments to do, you will gain more if you:

- **Ask questions** - don't be shy; people will expect you to be finding things out
- **Look interested** - people you talk to are likely to be more open if you appear keen
- **Keep a daily log of your experiences and thoughts** - useful for future reference
- **Review what you have learned each day** - about the work, the organisation and yourself. What have you found most interesting, and why? What skills have you used? Which situations did you find difficult to cope with, and why? How could you deal better with such situations?

Many of the actual tasks you will do are likely routine, such as filing or photocopying. After all, organisations can't risk letting a work experience student, without any training, do tasks that would have serious consequences if not done correctly. But you can learn a lot from observing, from the experience of being in the workplace, and from assisting other employees.

If you have problems, don't just walk away! First, talk to your supervisor. They will be keen for you to get good work experience and would rather you spoke up. If this doesn't resolve things, contact the school and speak to your tutor or Ms Stoddart for support.

## **Staying safe**

Work experience placements are checked, and you should not be exposed to any dangers. However, if you feel that you are being asked to work in situations that might put you at risk, whether to do with your health, danger from accidents or your personal safety, talk to your supervisor and contact the school as soon as possible.

Other sensible precautions are:

- Make sure someone knows what time you are expected home
- If someone at your placement makes you feel uncomfortable, be polite but try to remove yourself from the situation
- If it's suggested that you accompany someone on a visit away from the premises and this hasn't been agreed, check it out (or ask your employer to check it out) with your school or placement organiser.

Your time on work experience is likely to be something that you will never forget. It could affect the decisions you make about your future! So, make the most of it, and enjoy it. Almost every job involves working with people to some extent, and it's hard to name a job in which you don't come into contact with somebody at some time. You could sell things to people, provide them with a service, teach them, nurse them, care for them, entertain them, bring them meals... the possibilities are endless! While some jobs involve only casual contact with people, others involve working with people at a deeper level, perhaps over a long period of time.

## **Working with the public**

Jobs in this group are for people who are sociable, outgoing, confident and happy to talk to strangers, whether as customers, clients or patients. You may provide people with a service, answer enquiries, give people information or try to sell them something, but you don't need to get involved in sorting out their personal problems.

You may get to know certain people quite well, because you see them repeatedly, or you may be in a job where there are new people to meet all the time. Besides being able to get on with people, most of these jobs require other skills, such as:

- handling money or accounts
- finding out and passing on information
- specific job skills - such as sales - gained through training.

## **Caring, teaching and helping people**

These jobs involve a different, deeper sort of contact with people, and are mainly in health, education and social services. Some jobs are about offering support and advice to people who are ill or who have special needs. Others involve teaching people or caring for them physically. Some focus on helping

people with mental health problems, or people who are struggling with drug or alcohol misuse. In such jobs, you may be closely involved with the people you are helping over a long period of time.

You need to be an approachable sort of person, with an insight into the way people think and behave. You won't solve all the problems you come across or get thanks from everyone you try to help, and some people may prove challenging to work with but, for those suited to this kind of work, there is a lot of job satisfaction to be had.

### **Working for the benefit of the community**

This means undertaking tasks that need doing on everyone's behalf - you serve and help protect people in your work. In some jobs, you must deal with people who have broken the law, or those generally acting against the interests of the community. In other jobs, you could be checking or advising on matters to do with people's health and safety, helping to keep people informed or helping to make sure that important community and public services are provided. The work could be office based or out and about.

Many of the jobs are quite similar to those in the previous group, so you may need similar qualities to do them well. Some jobs require good negotiating skills - for example, you could be required to sort out conflicts between different people or even groups of people. You also may need to be prepared to take the lead and act as a spokesperson.

### **Teamwork**

Teamwork can mean anything from working with a group of people on a one-off, short-term project, through to working with the same group of people on an ongoing basis, sharing the same long-term aims and objectives. Working as part of a team is often mentioned in job vacancy adverts, as it is an important aspect of many jobs. Sometimes each member of the team is doing a similar task; in other situations, teams are made up of people with different skills, each taking responsibility for a particular aspect of the task or project.

If you are a sociable type of person and prefer to work jointly with others rather than independently, perhaps you'd like to work as part of a team. Remember that good teamwork means being able to work well with team members you might find more difficult to work with, as well as those you get on well with!

### **What it takes**

If your work involves a lot of contact with the public, whether in person or on the phone, you need to be:

- approachable and friendly
- able to talk easily to all sorts of people, listen to them and to understand what they are saying
- confident
- efficient
- tactful
- patient and tolerant, but capable of being firm when necessary

- smart and presentable, especially in uniformed posts, or if you act as a 'representative' of your organisation.

### **What next?**

This booklet has suggested some of the broad employment areas that provide opportunities for working with people. To help you decide which jobs might suit you, think about your answers to the following questions.

- What level of personal contact would you most enjoy?
- What sort of environment would you like to work in?
- What are your skills and strengths and how can you best use them?

Have you been able to identify your preferred job group from among the four described above? The next step is to pick out a few jobs within that group so that you can research them further.

### **Working outdoors**

The attractions of being out in the open are easy to understand on a lovely sunny day but remember the British climate. It may not be so tempting to work outdoors on wet and wintry days! In general:

- There are few jobs where all the work is done in the open; but there are many more jobs that involve some indoor tasks as well as being outside
- There are more opportunities for working outdoors at unskilled and craft level
- Jobs at management and professional level that get you out and about may still involve a lot of office-based work.

Some of the main areas of employment, where outdoor work is possible, are described below.

### **The Construction Industry**

Jobs offering the most outdoor work include:

- general labouring and demolition work on building sites
- skilled craftwork, such as bricklaying, joinery and roofing
- specialist jobs, e.g. scaffolding, stone cleaning, thatching and steeplejack work
- jobs for operators of heavy plant, such as diggers, road pavers, bulldozers, cranes etc (although for much of the time you will be in a protective cab).

At the more highly skilled levels of entry, most of the work is office based, but involves going out on site visits to check on progress, deal with problems etc. Professional opportunities for graduates include architecture, planning, civil and structural engineering, surveying and estate management. There are also opportunities for technicians or technologists, who may carry out site visits.

## **Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry and Arboriculture**

Work on farms, in market gardens, plant nurseries, garden centres and in forests and woodlands naturally involves being outdoors. This is especially true at certain times of the year. Ploughing, sowing, fertilising, harvesting, planting trees, mowing, repairing fences, hedge trimming and so on can't be done anywhere but outdoors!

Some jobs involve a mixture of working outdoors and under covered areas, such as in glasshouse crop production and garden centre work. Looking after livestock includes working in milking parlours, indoor intensive pig-rearing units and lambing sheds, for instance. The number of people employed in all these areas has fallen dramatically over recent years, but there is still a range of opportunities.

### **Agriculture**

In agriculture, there are openings for people with qualifications at all levels. However, very few unskilled labourers are employed these days. At lower levels, the work requires a practical type of person; at higher levels, a scientific and technological understanding becomes more important. Managers and farmers themselves do a considerable amount of outdoor work - you can't farm without knowing your land - but there is also a lot of paperwork to deal with.

Apart from jobs on farms, there are also opportunities that can take you out and about, for example:

- as an agricultural contractor
- in land-based engineering
- in agricultural sales work - selling seed, feeds, chemicals, fertilizers and equipment
- in research and advisory work for government and other agencies - testing animals, advising about conservation on farms, etc.

### **Horticulture**

Horticulture covers everything from growing flowers, fruits and vegetables as commercial crops to working in parks, gardens, sports grounds and other public recreation areas. Again, there are openings for people at all levels. The practical jobs, usually requiring few entry qualifications, involve most outdoor work.

### **Forestry and Arboriculture**

Whether growing trees for timber production or to enhance our natural surroundings, there are jobs for craftspeople to plant, look after and fell trees, as well as to operate forestry machinery and see to fencing, drainage etc. Foresters (who are graduates) plan forest production and deal with issues such as conservation. Arboricultural managers and consultants plan and oversee amenity projects. Courses are available in forestry and arboriculture at a range of levels.

### **The Environment**

These jobs are concerned with the conservation of animal and plant life, or with planning the environment so that it is a pleasant place to live, work, travel or relax in. Jobs at professional level (with A levels/degrees or equivalents) include planning, landscape architecture, and a variety of research,

advisory and managerial posts in nature conservation. There are also jobs requiring fewer qualifications that may offer the most scope for working in the open, e.g. countryside warden.

### **The Utilities and Telecommunications**

Installation work for the gas, electricity, water and telecoms companies means working outdoors laying pipes and cables. There are some labouring jobs, such as trench digging - either being employed directly by the utility company or by a specialist firm contracted to do the work - but most of the opportunities are at craft and technician level. These involve being out and about dealing with repair and maintenance work.

### **The Armed Forces**

Much more a way of life than a particular job, the Armed Forces certainly offer opportunities for being outdoors - while training and on exercises, as well as during active service. Some jobs within the Forces offer greater opportunities for being outdoors than others.

### **Travel and Transport**

Driving and delivery jobs offer the freedom of being outdoors; however, unlike most of the other jobs listed here, being in a vehicle protects you from the elements and offers you some 'indoor' comforts! Drivers are needed to work on buses, coaches, lorries, vans, trains and taxis. Perhaps some less obvious driving jobs include driving instructor or examiner, and Highways Agency traffic officer, as well as those involved with furniture removals and ambulance driving. Other travel and transport work is available on ships and planes, driving motorcycles or even operating lift trucks.

Driving jobs do not normally need qualifications other than an appropriate driving licence. However, there is more to work than just sitting behind a wheel. You'll need to learn the wider aspects of a driver's job. For example, you have responsibility for your load or your passengers, and there's usually some paperwork involved. Obviously, flying planes and steering ships are far more technical jobs, requiring much higher-level qualifications.

There are also supporting jobs at air- and seaports, bus depots and railway stations etc. that involve outdoor work. Patrol staff who work for road rescue organisations repair vehicles at the roadside. Other jobs in transport and travel that require you to be out and about include working as couriers and guides on tours in Britain and abroad.

### **Working with Animals**

Besides the work with farm animals described under agriculture, there are other opportunities offering a chance to be in the open air. These include:

- work with horses (jockey, groom, stablehand, riding instructor, mounted police)
- work with dogs (kennel staff, guide dog and hearing dog trainers, police and security guard dog handlers)
- work in zoos, wildlife parks, bird gardens and with organisations such as the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust
- some jobs in animal welfare work.



Management-level posts generally require formal qualifications, but many other jobs involving work with animals do not. Veterinary surgeons, who are highly qualified, may undertake a lot of outdoor work in livestock-farming areas.

## **Sport and Leisure**

Professional sport offers the chance to work and train outdoors, but, obviously, this is a career option only for the very talented. Other sports opportunities include:

- Teaching sport/PE in schools and colleges - as a qualified teacher
- Coaching and instructing jobs in sports (such as golf, tennis or football) or outdoor pursuits (e.g. skiing, mountaineering or caving); you normally need qualifications from the appropriate professional sports body, health and safety training etc
- Physical training (PT) instructor posts in the Armed Forces, police and prison services.

## **And finally...**

The jobs described in this booklet are not the only ones that allow you to work outdoors. In fact, if you look for the opportunities, many jobs can involve some getting out and about alongside indoor work. Below are a few examples of jobs you may not have thought of.

- **Community nursing** may make you feel less tied to base than hospital nursing.
- **Some selling** jobs and sales representative posts get you out and about.
- **Archaeologists** may divide their time between 'digs' at historical sites and work in museums and laboratories.
- **Outdoor clerks**, who work for firms of solicitors, spend a lot of their time running errands between their office, local barristers' chambers and courtrooms - often on foot.
- **Press photographers and reporters** must go to where the stories are happening, often outdoors.
- **Playworkers** may work part of the time outdoors, e.g. in adventure playgrounds, playing fields and parks.
- **Estate agents** visit homes and business premises to measure up the plot and to show prospective buyers around

***If you like being active and using your hands, a practical job may suit you.***

If you are asked to think of a practical job, what springs to mind? Plumber? Gardener? You might not think immediately of a surgeon or dentist - but you will probably agree that these jobs need a high level of practical skill! So, a great range of jobs can be called practical, requiring different levels of qualifications.

The areas of work listed in this booklet all require practical skills but are all very different. You will have to take a lot of other things into consideration before making up your mind about which interests you. Ask yourself...

- What qualifications am I likely to get?
- Do I want to go to college or learn skills in the workplace?
- Do I want to work indoors or outside? • Am I interested in working with the public?
- Do I want to use tools or equipment?
- Will I get the most satisfaction from making something or from being out and about and active?

## **Engineering**

Mechanical work, electrical and electronic work and working with metal are all different aspects of engineering. Operative, craft and technician-level jobs all involve using tools and different machinery. Technicians combine the use of practical skills - such as fault-finding or testing - with work involving calculations, planning or drafting. ICT skills are necessary for many jobs at this level, and for graduate-level jobs that involve project development, design etc.

## **Agriculture, Horticulture and Forestry**

There are several practical jobs that involve working on the land - with livestock, crops, trees and machinery. Some conservation work can involve practical tasks. Horticultural jobs include working in plant nurseries, in parks and gardens or looking after sports fields.

## **Construction**

Practical jobs of many types are found in the construction industry, ranging from unskilled work, such as being a labourer, through to jobs for skilled craftspeople, e.g. bricklaying or carpentry. People working at a professional level - civil engineers, construction managers, architects etc. - although not undertaking the practical work themselves, need a very good understanding of all aspects of construction projects.

## **Working in Industry**

There is an enormous range of practical jobs in factories and workshops, many at a basic level. Think about the major industries where you live and find out about the kinds of practical jobs they offer. Leaflet N 01 in this series is a good starting point for discovering more about different industries, such as those relating to rubber and plastics, food processing, clothing and paper making.

## **Scientific Work**

Although experimental work can be part of higher-level scientific jobs, most of the practical work is done by technicians and assistants. This could involve working in laboratories or field work.

## **Catering, hospitality and Leisure**

Many of the jobs in this area of work require good practical skills. Catering, for example, can involve either cooking or serving food. Practical jobs in hotels include room service, portering and cleaning. There are also many practical and active jobs in the sport and leisure industries.

## **Health and Care work**

Most healthcare jobs have a practical element, combined with an interest in caring for people. Jobs are available at all qualification levels, from hospital portering or healthcare assistant through to nursing,

clinical physiology, the various therapies and surgery. Many jobs involve contact with patients, while some, such as those in dental technology or biomedical sciences, are behind-the-scenes jobs.

### **Craft and Artistic Jobs**

Many of these jobs involve practical work. Examples are modelmaking, sign making, floristry, retail display and working as a designer craftsperson - such as in jewellery making, stained-glass work or pottery. Fine art, sculpture, art conservation and some jobs in TV and film also involve practical skills.

## **Before your work placement**

Before finding your work placement think about what your interests are and what you are good at. Employers always look for specific personal and social skills and qualities in their workers and some of these skills are key skills (communication, numeracy, literacy, working on own initiative, team working, IT skills etc) which you may need to demonstrate.

You should also understand that we are all different - our personalities are who we are and sometimes our personal attributes/personalities do not always suit the type of job we think we would like to do. For instance, someone who is quiet, shy and who prefers to work on their own may not be best suited to a job in a busy shop or in a sales role where they would have to approach strangers.

Try to identify your personal and social skills and attributes from the list below (please be honest) and then tick the type of career you want. Remember as you learn in life your skills and personality may change as you learn and develop as a person.

<b>SKILLS</b>		<b>PERSAONAL QUALITIES</b>	
Here is a list of skills that you may have, Tick the ones that apply to you - <b>Don't just pick lots of words</b>		Here is a list of personal qualities that you might have. Tick those that apply to you.	
Administration		Active	
Advising		Adaptable	
Assembling		Adventurous	
Attention to detail		Artistic	

Budgeting		Capable	
Calculating		Careful	
Caring		Cheerful	
Classifying		Considerate	
Coaching		Co-operative	
Communicating		Courageous	
Computing		Creative	
Creating		Determined	
Customer Service		Hardworking	
Decision Making		Enthusiastic	
Delegating		Extrovert	
Designing		Flexible	
Diagnosing		Friendly	
Evaluation		Helpful	
Innovating		Honest	
Instructing		Imaginative	
Managing		Lively	
Methodical Approach		Mature	
Organising		Observant	
Observation		Polite	
Persuading		Patient	

## Putting your skill into sentences

Here are some phrases that you can use to describe your skills. You can use them as they are or write your own.

### Communication Skills:

- I have good communication skills, with the ability to deal with people in a polite and friendly manner.
- Able to communicate well at all levels.
- Excellent telephone manner
- Excellent communication skills with customer the ability to build a good rapport

### Time Management:

- Ability to prioritise own workload and to meet deadlines
- Good organisation skills
- Experience of working towards deadlines
- Good time keeping and attendance record
- Ability to plan and implement tasks

**Working as part of a team or alone:**

- Reliable and co-operative team member
- Ability to work as part of a team or alone using own initiative
- Ability to contribute effectively to a team approach

**Here are some more general phrases:**

- Experience in using ...
- Proven practical skills and knowledge of...
- Proven customer care skills, with experience of working with children/animals/people
- Computer literate with basic keyboard skills and excellent knowledge of ..
- Quick to learn new skills

**Putting your personal qualities into sentences**

Look at these examples and use them to write a few of your own.

- Sensitive and understanding towards others
- A responsible and reliable individual
- Good sense of humour and a friendly disposition
- Fast learner, with the ability to master new skills quickly
- Ability to quickly adapt to new situations
- Good time keeping and attendance
- Able to demonstrate good attention to detail
- A practical and active individual, who enjoys problem solving and logical thinking
- Able to remain calm whilst working under pressure
- A self-motivated individual, with a flexible attitude towards work situations
- I am able to.....
- I am a.....individual
- I am ..... and.....

Well done - you have collected a list of your skills and personal qualities. This is often the hardest part of doing a CV or job application. You can now write your personal profile - A personal profile in a few sentences. It tells an employer about your skills, qualities and what job you are looking for.

### **These examples might help as well.**

Beginnings:

A practical, hardworking and reliable individual

A punctual and dependable student

A reliable and confident person

A caring individual with good ...

A self-motivated, enthusiastic young person who .....

A sociable and lively individual who enjoys.....

Middles

- With previous experience of working in...
- With proven administration and keyboard skills
- Who is a quick learner, flexible and enjoys working as part of a team
- Seeking a work experience
- Seeking experience with the opportunity to develop further in ...
- Seeks the opportunity to gain new skills in ...

Here are some other words that may be useful:

- Good
- Participated
- Experience
- Successfully
- Achieved
- Proficient at.....
- Effective at .....

## **Your Personal Profile**

Now write your own sentences,

I am a practical, hardworking individual with .....

A reliable honest school student who is willing to learn .....

## **How to find a work experience placement**

**Keep a note of things**

It's helpful if you can keep a note of which firms you have approached, the date you applied and the date they replied. This will give you an instant reminder of how many applications you have sent and who you have contacted.

## **How to apply for a placement by letter**

### ***Important points to remember***

Writing a speculative letter is probably one of the most important types of letters you'll write.

The employer may receive hundreds of letters for work experience and will choose only a few for interview. There are some basic rules you must follow:

- Carefully research the company
- Choose suitable writing paper (plain, not lined) and matching envelope.
- The letter will be the employer's first impression of you and will create either a good or bad impression.
- If the letter is to be handwritten make sure you write clearly and neatly, (preferably in black ink or biro). Alternatively you could word process your letter; however, some employers may ask for you to write the letter by hand.
- If you have a specific person's name, use it. Otherwise the letter may end up on anyone's desk.
- Make sure there are no spelling mistakes, use a dictionary or spell check on the computer if in doubt.
- Don't get any smudge marks on the paper or crumple it.
- Make sure the letter is properly set out (see examples).
- Do not overload the letter with information, but do not 'sell yourself short' either. Make sure you give the employer enough accurate information to be impressed.
- Keep a copy of the letter for reference.

## **Put together a Letter / Email to ask an organisation for Work Experience.**

### **Checklist**

Say:

- Who you are
- Which area of experience are you applying for
- Where you can be contacted (your postal and email addresses; your home telephone number)
- The date

- The name of the specific person you are writing to and the firm's address
- How you heard about the opportunity, i.e. family friend/ relative
- Why you think you are suitable, show you're keen • You are enclosing your C.V.
- You are willing to attend an interview at any time
- Your vocational interests or experience

Make sure you 'finish' the letter correctly. If you started with 'Dear Sir or Madam', finish the letter with 'Yours faithfully'. If you had a specific name, (Dear Mrs Wood), finish with 'Yours sincerely'.

Always sign your name and print your name in capitals underneath.

Before writing the 'real' letter, have some rough attempts (on scrap paper) at planning what you're going to write and how it will look on the paper (the layout).

Think about the person receiving the letter - what will they want to know? Research the company. They want to know if you are interested in spending a week shadowing an employee of that company.

By planning your letter and roughing it out first, you can make sure it is logical, orderly and well presented, and that nothing is missed out, before you start writing the real thing.

Employers ask you to apply in different ways. Letter, phone call, call in and see them. Some ask you just to write for an application form, some ask you to apply in writing with a C.V. and others may ask you to telephone instead of writing. So, make sure you apply accordingly.

That's the theory, how does it work in practice?

## **The Letter / Email Content**

Your address  
Email  
Telephone Number  
The date



Contact name (if you have one)

Job Title (HR Manager)

Company Name

Address

Address

Town

Post Code

Dear Mr/Ms/Mrs (Surname)

Re: Work Experience Placement - Week beginning .....- .....

**Introduction** - Introduce yourself, say you attend The Basildon Academies, Wickford Avenue

**Why the area of interest?** - Say what draws you to the job or industry. You could also explain why you think you are a suitable candidate. You need to sound motivated and extremely interested in the opportunity.

**Why the company** - It is important to make it clear that you have done your research and understand the role you are applying for.

**Why you?** - This is your chance to sell yourself. Explain any relevant experience and why these would be of great use to the company or the role you have applied for. Be positive and enthusiastic. Try not to exaggerate too much, if you are invited for interview you will have to back up any statements you make here!

**Conclusion** - Finish with "I look forward to discussing my application with you in further detail" or "I am available for interview at your convenience"

Yours (sincerely or faithfully)

Your signature

Your name - printed

**How to make a speculative phone call to a company to gain a work experience.**

## What to do

The telephone is the fastest means of communicating with an employer. Learning how to use the telephone correctly could help you to get an interview.

### 1. Before you make the call know: -

- Where you are ringing, get the number right!
- Who you want to speak to
- What you are going to say

### 2. Be Organised

- This is your chance to make your first impression, be prepared and confident:
- Write the person's name on a notepad
- Have the notepad and pen ready
- Make a list of things to ask
- If you are using a mobile phone, make sure you have plenty of credit

### 3. Make the Call

- Make sure there are no loud background noises, i.e. music, loud voices and laughter.
- Speak confidently and clearly, don't mutter
- Use your natural speaking voice; don't 'put on' a posh one!
- Listen to the person and answer their questions concisely, but not abruptly
- Understand what you are told
- Never eat, drink whilst making the call

The telephone call to ask about work experience with a builder would go something like this:

**You** "Hello, is that Watsons Builders?"

**Watsons** "Yes, it is."

**You** "I'd like to speak to Mrs. Ambrose, please."

**Mrs. Ambrose** "Mrs. Ambrose speaking, how can I help you?"

**You** "I'm a student from Basildon Academies and I have a work experience week coming up in April. I am really interested in becoming a builder in the future and wondered if you could offer me two weeks' work experience with your company."

**Mrs. Ambrose** "When is the work experience week?"

**You** "Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024 until Friday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2024"

**Mrs. Ambrose** "Would you be able to come for an interview this Friday afternoon at 3.30?"

**You** "Yes thank you, that's fine, where exactly do I go?"

**Mrs. Ambrose** "Come in at the main reception area, ask for me and bring your references and C.V."

**You** "Thank you Mrs. Ambrose, I'll be there for 3.30 on Friday."

If you have to make an application by telephone it's best to practice what you will say with a friend or relative first. If the person you want to speak to is not available when you telephone, ask when they will be there so that you can ring back; don't leave it up to them to make contact with you.

## What to Do at an Interview

Remember, you've got as far as the interview stage, therefore the employer is very interested in you - you wouldn't be there otherwise. This is your big chance to impress and convince the employer you are the best person for the job. It's up to you to make the best impression - You don't get a second chance to make a first impression.

Not all interviews are with just one person. You may have 2 or 3 interviewers, answer directly to the person who asks the question (don't try answering the panel generally), keeping good 'eye contact' with them but don't stare. You may have to meet the manager, and then he may introduce you to the employee you will be working with.

Remember, interviewers are human too!

### **Before the interview**

Do - find out about the firm, what it does, how many people work there and the range of work. This shows you're interested in working for them. Look them up on the internet.

Do - think very carefully about your appearance and plan what you're going to wear. Even though you are applying for work experience, the employer will expect you to try the interview. You and your clothes, must look clean, tidy and smart.

Do - prepare a list of questions and take it with you - use the list in the interview. It is quite acceptable to read them out, it shows that you have thought about your interview.

Do - try to rehearse questions beforehand - why are you interested in coming to work with this company?

- What do you know about what it will be like working in construction?
- If you have had any experience in the industry. Do you attend a college course, helped a family member build a wall? (this doesn't have to be paid work, it could be building or repairing things around your home).
- What do you do in your spare time?
- Do you have interests or hobbies that might be relevant to construction work?

Do - set off in plenty of time and make sure you know exactly where to go and who to ask for. Try to arrive 10-15 minutes early to 'settle' yourself.

Do - make sure you have everything you need with you, bus fare and the letter inviting you for interview.

Don't - leave everything to the 'last minute'.

### **When You Get There**

- Make sure the receptionist, or interviewer knows you're there
- If you must wait, run through your questions in your mind
- Chat to other people, it will help you relax
- Think of the interview as a two-way process. You have the chance to find out about the company and see if you'd like to work for them and the company has the chance to see if it wants to work with you for a week.
- Being nervous is a good thing; everyone (even the interviewers) gets nervous at interviews
- SMILE! They will want cheerful employees who enjoy their work.

## **The Interview**

Do - enter the room confidently, but don't rush in!

Do - be polite, offer your hand, look the person in the eye and smile and wait to be asked to take a seat

Do - listen carefully, determine exactly what you are being asked and answer accordingly

Do - talk clearly at your own pace

Do - sell yourself positively and relate your school work to the questions they ask

Do - Thank them for their time and ask when they will decide if you can do your placement with them

Do - Ask if it would be ok to give their details to the School, so that they can contact them and confirm.

## **Some Things Not To Do**

Don't - slouch

Don't - scowl, appear aggressive or sit down without being asked

Don't - mutter

Don't - pretend to know more than you do, you can easily be caught out

Don't - answer abruptly. Try to avoid 'yes' and 'no' type answers, try to get the conversation going

Don't - eat or drink unless they say you can

Don't criticise other companies or school

Don't be afraid to ask questions, but don't feel you have to.

At the end of the interview, you could well be asked if you have any questions. Don't just say "No".

Instead say something like "No, thank you. You've covered all the points I wanted to bring up during the course of the interview". Thank the interviewer and offer your hand and leave, don't hover about afterwards.

## **Afterwards:**

- decide how well you think you did;
- write down what you were asked and what you said;
- decide how you could have improved your performance.
- If you are not offered the position, do not be afraid of asking for 'feedback'

## What you need to do next.....

**It is ESSENTIAL THAT YOU LOG Your PLACEMENT ON UNIFROG.**

### And finally.....

- You must try and find your own placement. When you have your placement sorted add it to Unifrog
- Placements will only run if ALL insurance / risk assessment checks are in place with an employer as the safety of students is essential. (\*Wavier forms are available if Employment Liability Insurance is not in place)
- If you **DO NOT** secure a placement during these weeks of the work placement you will be expected to **ATTEND SCHOOL AS NORMAL**
- For more information on the role of a student when undertaking Work Experience please visit, Students and young people ([hse.gov.uk](http://hse.gov.uk)) Good Luck.