WHAT IS A ‘PLACEMENT YEAR’?

A PLACEMENT YEAR IS A PERIOD OF WORK EXPERIENCE EMBEDDED INTO A FOUR YEAR DEGREE PROGRAMME.

A work placement is a great way to gain an insight into a particular industry or role, improve your employability and gain valuable experience that will boost your chances of securing a graduate position. When you graduate, the work placement will be recognised on your degree transcript and HEAR.

Did you know? During your placement year you are still fully registered as a student at the University of Essex and so are entitled to full support and access to facilities.

WHO CAN DO A PLACEMENT YEAR?

MOST STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY CAN DO A PLACEMENT YEAR! TO GET YOU GOING, FOLLOW THESE 3 SIMPLE STEPS:

Step 1: Are you registered on a placement year? If yes, carry on to Step 3. If not, do not worry – take a look at Step 2.

Step 2: Check that your Department/School offer placement year courses. If so, get in touch with your Faculty Placements Team. They will advise on what to do next.

Step 3: Check the academic requirements for undertaking a placement year; this will vary across Departments/Schools. You may need to obtain a certain mark in first year and attend certain lectures or workshops. Have a look at the specific Rules of Assessment for your course to fully understand what you will need to commit to.

Did you know? Your 1st year really does count! Many organisations ask for your 1st year grade and very competitive schemes often request a 2:1 or above.

HOW DO I FIND A PLACEMENT YEAR?

WHilst you have many resources and areas of support from the university, it is your responsibility to find and apply for a placement.

The different Faculty Placement Teams can help you throughout the process. The majority of placements are advertised online; here are some key websites to get you started.

www.essex.ac.uk/see/careerhub
www.ratemyplacement.co.uk
www.targetjobs.co.uk
www.gradcracker.co.uk

Remember to check national job sites such as Indeed.co.uk and Monster.co.uk to see opportunities from organisations that may not be listed elsewhere.

Did you know? You can always check the organisation’s own website for opportunities, particularly with small and medium sized companies (SMEs).

www.essex.ac.uk/careers
Will I be paid for my placement?

Most organisations pay you a salary whilst on placement.

The amount paid varies depending on the industry sector and organisation but the average is £16,000–£18,000. However, in some cases, organisations may offer placements that are unpaid or offer remuneration for expenses only. We encourage organisations to pay but you can choose to undertake an unpaid placement at your discretion.

Did you know? You will not be charged a tuition fee from the University during your placement year and you may be eligible to receive student loans funding.

When should I apply?

There tends to be a typical cycle to recruitment, however it is never too early to start preparations!

The diagram below provides an overview of what you should consider doing at different times of the year.

Student case studies

Placement year at ARM

"Since I had a taste of working in industry for a year I feel much more confident. A lot of my technical skills, like programming, have been improved upon; even social skills as I was building demonstrations and presenting them to customers and business partners. My placement experience has also helped me to secure a graduate job with BT."

Dragos Donici
BSc Computer Science

Placement year at Universidad Francisco de Vitoria, Madrid

"I found my placement by emailing researchers asking for suitable roles, it took a lot of patience but eventually I was offered a position as a Research Assistant. A placement year abroad has given me a taste of another culture and I now know what I want to do after graduation, it’s totally worth it!"

Linda Olanrewaju Adeyemo
BSc Psychology

Placement year at Fleishman Hillard

"My placement year with Fleishman Hillard has helped me to develop as a young professional and make decisions for my future career. During the past 9 months on placement I have built a strong background of knowledge and a set of practical skills that I can use as the means to pursue my dreams."

Edita Butkute
BA International Relations

What can the employability and careers centre help me with?

We are here to help! The Employability and Careers Centre can support you in a number of ways, including:

- Careers Guidance Sessions
- CV and Cover Letter Reviews
- Mock Interviews
- Assessment Centre Practice
- General Placement Advice

You can get in touch with your dedicated Faculty Placements Teams for more specific placement information and support:

Humanities
hum-placements@essex.ac.uk

Science & Health
sh-placements@essex.ac.uk

Social Sciences
ss-placements@essex.ac.uk

All our handouts and information leaflets are available in other formats on request. The Employability and Careers Centre makes this information available in order to help students and graduates make well informed choices regarding employment opportunities, postgraduate study options and career paths. We make every effort to ensure that the information is accurate and up to date but can accept no responsibility for errors or omissions.

2016/17