

Faculty of Humanities

FAQs about Placements, Internships, and other work experience

July 2017

The [Manchester 2020 Strategic Vision](#) makes a clear commitment to “ensure that students have outstanding opportunities for work experience.”

The University of Manchester recognises the importance and value of work experience in improving student employability and graduate destinations, as well as in meeting students’ expectations that their higher education experience will deliver career benefits.

PLACEMENTS

1. *What is meant by the term ‘placement’?*

Placements (sometimes called industrial experience or ‘sandwich’ opportunities) are usually attached to academic programmes and allow students to ‘try a job on for size’. Many large employers often use their placement programmes to spot graduate talent and thus it can be an excellent way for students to secure employment after their studies.

2. *How long do ‘placements’ last?*

Placement opportunities typically last between 9 and 12 months, starting any time from June in one year until September in the next.

3. *Are students paid for undertaking a ‘placement’?*

Students undertaking a placement are usually paid a salary of between £13,000 and £16,000 per annum (depending on sector and role being undertaken) and are treated as other employees of the organisation i.e. receiving paid holiday allowance, access to the organisation’s pension scheme etc.

4. *Who can apply for a ‘placement’ and when?*

Placement opportunities are principally offered to students in their penultimate year of study. The key time for applying for a placement is typically between October and Easter break, though many of the large recruiters begin advertising their opportunities from July of the previous year.

5. *Where can students find details of ‘placement’ opportunities?*

Details of placement opportunities are available on [CareersLink](#), in weekly placement bulletins, on organisations’ websites and the appropriate School’s [Facebook page](#).

6. *Can all students go on placement?*

Not always. Across the University, it is standard practice for those courses offering a degree with a placement year to have a number of academic criteria which students have to meet in order to undertake a placement. This typically includes: students having achieved a certain pass mark (usually a minimum of a 2:2, more commonly a 2:1) during their first year and passing their second year without re-sits. Many employers require students applying for their placement programmes to be

on course for a 2:1, therefore it may be prudent to ensure that our academic requirements reflect this.

7. *What about the resource implications to the School in adding a placement year?*

It is recommended that prior to any placement year being added to an existing programme, or development of a new programme with a year in industry included, a stakeholder meeting is undertaken with the relevant stakeholders as per normal NPP process to discuss any resource implications. Some Schools have already begun to address this issue; the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures has already begun to consider the role of placements within the curriculum and have had discussions proposing to hire a grade 5 Placements Officer to manage all undergraduate placement activity. This could potentially be adopted by other Schools.

8. *What do academics need to do to support placements?*

Academics are asked to ensure that students understand the importance of a placement year in contributing to their increased employability as a graduate. Additionally, reminding students where they can access placement opportunities to apply for i.e. CareersLink.

In terms of academic support for those on placement, the level of input varies across the different Schools. Academics are typically required to conduct placement visits to review the students' performance and welfare and guide them on the completion of their academic tasks relating to the placement (which can range from: reflective diaries, workbooks or a project). After the placement has been completed, academics may be required to mark the placement students' work and/or coordinate a feedback session, where placement students share their experiences with those who are due to undertake a placement.

9. *A placement year wouldn't work within my programme; what other options can I offer?*

A 12 month placement year will not always be appropriate for every degree programme. In recognition of this, Schools from across the University are looking to give students work experience in other ways, for example; the School of Environment, Education and Development uses the Applied Study Period model for every student as follows: 2 weeks in Year 1, 4 weeks in Year 2 and 10 weeks in Year 3.

10. *I'm worried students won't return to complete the course once they have undertaken their placement.*

Employers require students to complete their degree to secure any graduate job offers, therefore all students who undertake a placement have an incentive to return and complete their final year. The Careers Service notes that 70% students who went on placement in 2015/2016 returned with a graduate job offer from the employer they did their placement with.

11. *What impact is there for students on Tier 4 visas who opt to take a placement year?*

The UKVI considers the addition of a placement or study abroad year to a 3-year degree to be a course change, which under April 2016 immigration rule changes means that the students need to cease study immediately the course change is applied to the student record and return to their home country to apply for a new visa for the 4 year programme; this is particularly problematic

where students are from parts of the world where there is no priority visa service and could mean the student missing up to 4 weeks' study. This situation can be managed when Schools are alert to the consequences of applying a course change to the system by the changes being made at the end of the academic year so that the student's study is not disrupted and they can apply for the new visa over the summer.

12. How is student finance affected by undertaking a placement year?

If a student transfers from a 3 year programme onto a 4 year then the Student Services Centre inform student finance via an electronic Change of Circumstances (CoC), the student then applies for loans in the normal way. Tuition fees for the placement year are set at a reduced rate and there may also be other financial help available. Students can get detailed advice from the [student support centre](#)

INTERNSHIPS

13. What is meant by the term 'internship'?

Allowing students to actively engage with their prospective career via completing a specific project or set of tasks, an 'internship' is generally not part of an academic programme and is generally offered by employers during summer vacations.

14. How long do 'internships' last?

The duration of internships can vary, depending on employer; however, the typical length of an internship is between 2 and 12 weeks.

15. Are students paid for undertaking an 'internship'?

Students should be paid (at least) national minimum wage whilst undertaking summer internships. However, there are some exceptions where unpaid work can be undertaken, please see the Careers Service Vacancy advertising policy

at: <http://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/aboutus/policies/vacancypolicy/> for further details.

Students who are undertaking low paid or unpaid summer internship opportunities may be eligible to apply to the University's bursary programme. Typically supporting modest travel and accommodation costs, the University also offers bursaries for widening participation students.

Please see the Careers Service page relating to how to apply for a bursary

at: www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/findjobs/workwhilestudy/bursaries for more information

16. Who can apply for an 'internship' and when?

Internship opportunities are usually aimed at penultimate year students (second year on a three year degree programme or third year on a four year degree programme). Opportunities can start being advertised from July of the previous summer, with the key recruitment period being October to Easter break.

17. Where can students find details of 'internship' opportunities?

Details regarding summer internship opportunities are available on [CareersLink](#), on organisation websites, in fortnightly internship bulletins (circulated during term time by Jannine to programme administrative staff) and also on the Summer Internships [Facebook page](#)

GENERAL

17. Where can academics find details of placement and internship vacancies?

All placement and internship opportunities are advertised through CareersLink, the University's student jobs database. Academic advisers and employability leads can request an account be created by sending their Name, Email, University computer username (i.e.: mtcxxxx) and School name to careerslink@manchester.ac.uk, indicating their area(s) of interest, e.g. vacancies, student career events etc.

The Careers Service has produced a number of tutorial videos which explain how to use CareersLink to: find a vacancy, make an appointment with a Careers Consultant and book onto an event. These can be accessed at: www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/services/aboutcareerslink. Academic colleagues may wish to use these to help students orientate themselves round the system.

18. How are opportunities generated?

We are the most targeted university in the UK by employers wanting to offer placements and internships to our students, all vacancies received by the Careers Service are input onto CareersLink. In addition, the Faculty's Placement Manager, Jannine Andrew, proactively seeks to generate opportunities (both placement and internship) with employers who have recruited students from the Faculty previously and/or are noted as 'of interest' by School Employability Leads and Academic Advisers.

We also encourage students to seek their own opportunities. The [University Health & Safety Arrangements: Chapter 16, Student Placements](#) is intended to outline the principles of managing student placements from a health and safety perspective, rather than the detailed arrangements appropriate to the different placement types. The document covers general placement principles including risk assessment, preparation of students, communications during placements, gathering feedback from returning students and the endorsement/approval of placements.

19. How should we promote placement and internship opportunities to students?

Many Schools use Blackboard and other course related message boards (physical and electronic) to promote placement and internship opportunities circulated in the weekly and fortnightly vacancy bulletins provided by the Faculty's Placement Manager, [Jannine Andrew](#). These areas are also used to provide: profiles of students who have gone on placement, details of Academic Course Directors for placement programmes and information about support available from the School.

20. What are the guidelines relating to students who interrupt their studies having arranged their own placement/ industrial experience which is not attached to an academic programme?

Current institutional "[Guidance for staff on Interruptions to UG and PGT Programmes of Study](#)" notes that Schools have the flexibility to allow interruptions for circumstances which demonstrably enhance a student's employability, which may include exchanges / placements.

21. We have a lot of international students on our courses; can they undertake a placement or internship?

International students wishing to do a placement can do so if they have registered for a four year degree programme and hence the placement year is included. Therefore they must have applied for (and been awarded) a four year study visa. Further information on this and other topics relating to international students is available on the Careers Service website: www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/international

As international students on three year degree programmes are able to work in the UK during their studies for up to 20 hours per week and full time during vacations, they should be able to engage with the summer internship programme, as any other undergraduate student.

Masters students cannot work full time over the summer because they are expected to be working full time on their dissertation. There are also regulations surrounding 'vacation periods' for postgraduate students which include that any vacation dates must be agreed in writing with their supervisor. PhD students are not allowed to start full-time work until they have passed their viva examination and completed any corrections. [My Manchester](#) includes more information on students working during studies.

The International Office has a designated Tier4 Visa team who can provide advice regarding international students, they can be contacted directly via email at visa@manchester.ac.uk or via telephone on 0161 275 1203.

22. What other work experience options do students have?

Work experience opportunities typically vary depending on where a student is in their academic career however;

First Year Students: Many large organisations offer Spring Insight opportunities to first year students. Typically lasting between 3 and 5 days in the Easter break, these opportunities, which are usually unpaid, provide students with the opportunity to work shadow someone within an organisation, enabling them to gain a deeper understanding of the organisation, job role and sector.

Advertising for Spring Insight opportunities can begin as early as July of the year before the opportunity will be undertaken e.g. July 2016 for Easter 2017. Details regarding opportunities can be found on CareersLink and also on organisations' websites.

Final Year Students: Graduating students are eligible to apply for opportunities advertised via the Manchester Graduate Programme (MGP) programme. Developed and sourced by the Careers Service, MGP opportunities are typically based at the University or in companies with a Greater Manchester/North West base. All vacancies offered via MGP offer salaries of around £16,000 pa/pro-rata and usually start in June or July each year. Opportunities are advertised for each year's graduating class from March onwards via CareersLink, the MGP Facebook page and the weekly newsletter.

Graduating students can also find details of full and part time employment opportunities in organisations outside Greater Manchester by conducting a vacancy search in CareersLink.

23. What support does the Careers Service offer?

The Careers Service offers a range of services to students including:

- CareersLink; where all opportunities are advertised
- One-to-One appointments which students can use to review applications, practice interviews etc.
- Events such as; getting started workshops, skills sessions, employer information sessions and fairs
- Books, journals and free guides on all aspects of a student's careers search including; psychometric testing
- Interactive services i.e. Facebook, Twitter and Blogs.

24. Who can be contacted within the Careers Service to provide further guidance on work experience?

Jannine Andrew, Placement Manager,

The Careers Service, Directorate for the Student Experience
The University of Manchester, Crawford House, Booth Street East, Manchester, M13 9QS
Tel: 0161 275 0826 jannine.andrew@manchester.ac.uk

Anne Milligan, Employability Manager

The Careers Service, Directorate for the Student Experience
The University of Manchester, Crawford House, Booth Street East, Manchester, M13 9QS
Tel: 0161 275 4041 anne.milligan@manchester.ac.uk

Tammy Goldfeld, Head of the Careers Service

The Careers Service, Directorate for the Student Experience, the University of Manchester
Tel: 0161 275 2828 (direct 2835) tammy.goldfeld@manchester.ac.uk

25. Who can be contacted locally within Humanities schools to provide further guidance on work experience?

The Faculty of Humanities has set up an Employability Network with representative leads from each school as follows:

School	Academic Contacts	Email
SEED	Miriam Firth	Miriam.Firth@manchester.ac.uk
SOSS	Jackie Carter	jackie.carter@mancehester.ac.uk
AMBS	TBC	

LAW	Fae Garland	Fae.garland@manchester.ac.uk
SALC	Chris Godden	Chris.godden@manchester.ac.uk

26. How do I seek approval to incorporate an internship or placement within my programme?

Contact your [Faculty Teaching & Learning Officer](#) for advice. The Faculty has guidelines on the approval of student placements.