GUISELEY SCHOOL

Guide to finding work experience



1. Here's our guide to finding your own work experience, from coming up with ideas about the jobs you might like to asking an employer to give you a placement.

2. Work experience is a great opportunity to learn about a job or an area of work. You'll use skills that you might not even know you have, and develop new skills that will help you work better with other people now and in the future.

3. Finding your own work placement can be a good experience. It means you have more choice and control over where you go, and it's a chance to show off your organisational skills. It's ok if you don't have any ideas about what you want to do yet - we'll show you how to get started.

4. We recommend you find and approach the placement yourself as you would getting a real job. Try not to be too nervous, often employers find your efforts a positive thing and will encourage you. If you can do this, you should be proud of yourself!

Take the first step.

How to decide on a work placement



1 You may already know what career you're interested in, if that's the case, good for you. The best thing to do is to look for work experience that's related to the job you want to do, or in the same sector or industry as your chosen career.

Here are some examples:

If you know you want to be a chef, you could try to find a placement in a restaurant or canteen

If you're interested in a career in medicine, you could try to find a placement in a hospital or GP surgery. All hospital placements run through the NHS – Step Into The NHS :: Work experience.
https://www.stepintothenhs.nhs.uk/work-experience

If you like travel, you could look for a placement with a travel agent or tour company

If you think a career in finance would suit you, you could try to get a placement in an account's office or at a bank

2

If you don't know what kind of job you want to do yet

Don't panic if you're not sure what career you want to go into just yet – lots of people aren't! Use the Unifrog career library search to give you some ideas about different types of jobs and industries. Or you could start by thinking about what subjects you are interested in.

Here are some examples of how different subjects can help with different jobs:

English – newspapers, magazines, publishing, writing, libraries, teaching

Maths – accountancy, banking, engineering, computer programming, finance

Geography – green charities, local borough town planning, environmental sciences

Science – vets, pharmacies, zoos, laboratory work, hospitals, teaching

Photography – local, news, fashion, portrait and nature photography, processing film

IF YOU'RE REALLY STUCK

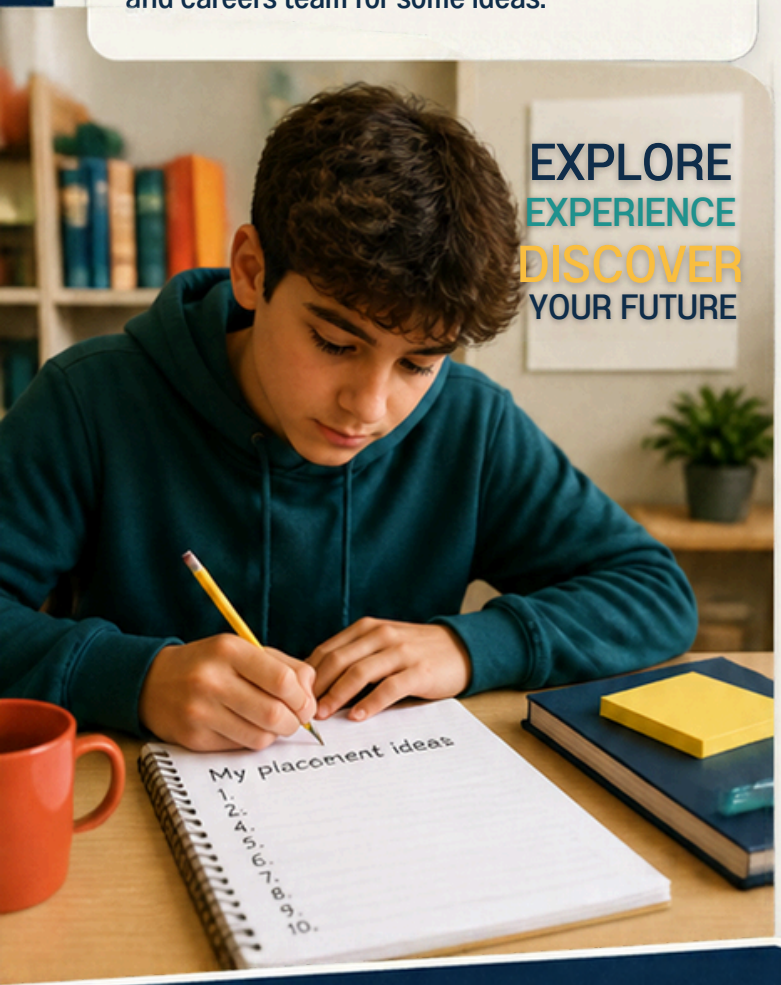
If you really can't think of an area of work you want to find a placement in, or decide which subject you like best, try asking yourself these questions:

- **What am I good at?**
- **What are my interests and hobbies?**
- **What jobs have I seen other people do that I think look interesting?**

Or, you could just go for something different, or for a job that you know little about. Work experience is all about giving you an insight into the world of work. It doesn't have to be in a career that you would choose in the future. Talk to your family, friends, teachers and careers team for some ideas.

TOP 10
PLACEMENT CHECKLIST

1 _____ ☐
2 _____ ☐
3 _____ ☐
4 _____ ☐
5 _____ ☐
6 _____ ☐
7 _____ ☐
8 _____ ☐
9 _____ ☐
10 _____ ☐



NOW THAT YOU HAVE SOME IDEAS

Write down your thoughts and:

- Make a list of the top 10 placements you would like
- Imagine the kinds of things you might do on your placement
- Try to be realistic
- Remember that you won't be given a lot of responsibility
- Ask yourself if the placement is realistic for someone your age
- Expect to do some repetitive and easy tasks

Start your search

Now you've got a list of the type of placements you want, it's time to find one! Remember that you won't be the only student looking for a work placement – not in your year group at school or in your local area either.

Step-by-step guide to finding companies and organisations you can ask for work experience

1. **Step 1** – If someone in your family works somewhere interesting, you can ask them if they'll contact their human resources department for you
2. **Step 2** – Ask neighbours and family friends if their work would consider you for a work placement
3. **Step 3** – If you already know of an organisation that interests you, do a web search for their contact details
4. **Step 4** – Find employers in your local area by doing a google search. Just type in your postcode and the kind of company you're looking for
5. **Step 5** – Read job adverts in the local newspaper to find employers in your area
6. **Step 6** – Think of companies you pass by when you are on your way to school or out shopping. Many students think of shops and local hairdresses as good placements, so there may be lots of you trying to go to the same place. Try to think of some different companies too
7. **Step 7** – Be willing to travel to other areas, as long as it's not too far or expensive to get there. This will give you more choice and open up other opportunities

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GET IN TOUCH

Once you have a list of companies, the next step is to contact them:

- If the company is small and in the local area you could drop in and speak to them
- Larger companies may require a letter and CV. You will need to ring up the company and ask who organises work experience. Some larger companies put this information on their websites. Once you have the name of the person you should speak to, you will need to phone them to introduce yourself
- Emails are easy to ignore or overlook, so always try calling or visiting places



MAKE THE CALL

Lots of young people find it a bit scary to call an employer. Even some adults get nervous phoning companies. The more you do it, the easier it will be – you'll soon wonder what you were worried about. Here are some tips that might help:

- Think about what you want to say before you make the call
- Write it down on a piece of paper and keep it in front of you
- Have a pen and paper ready to take down any names or notes
- Take a deep breath and relax before dialling the number
- Always be polite and try to speak clearly
- Start by introducing yourself – give your name, say which school you go to and explain that you're looking for work experience
- Be prepared to say why you are interested in a placement with that employer
- Say what interests you about that company or the kind of work they do
- Don't be discouraged by employers saying no – it's nothing personal
- Keep trying other employers – don't give up
- If you're other nervous, you could ask a parent or teacher to be with you when you make the first phone call

YOU CAN DO THIS

Send a CV if they ask you to

If an employer asks you to send in a letter and CV, always say yes and then find some help to create one

If you've never had to write a letter to a company before, the carers team, a teacher or someone at home will be able to help. You can find cover letter templates online too. Make sure you double-check it for spelling mistakes and have a teacher check it over too

Remember to ask for help if you need it. You're already showing loads of initiative by looking for a placement on your own



More ways to get work experience

You can also gain work experience if you:

- Do some volunteering
- Get a part-time job
- Go to face-to-face or virtual company events and open days
- Help friends or family with a business
- Enter competitions and skill challenges like world skills

Useful links

- **Future Finder - Futures For All:** https://finder.futuresforall.org/
- **Careerbay – Find Year 10-13 Work Experience and Apprenticeships near you:** https://careerbay.co.uk/
- **Step Into The NHS :: Work experience:** https://www.stepintothens.nhs.uk/work-experience
- **Barclays LifeSkills WEX:** https://barclayslifeskills.com/i-want-virtual-work-experience/school/virtual-work-experience/
- **Medic Mentor:** https://medicmentor.org/
- **Springpod WEX:** https://www springpod.com/virtual-work-experience
- **Young Professionals – YPUK:** https://young-professionals.uk/
- **Unifrog - The universal destinations platform.:** https://www.unifrog.org/
- **How to get work experience | National Careers Service:** https://nationalcareers service.gov.uk/careers-advise/types-of-work-experience

Good luck