The Benefits of Work Experience

Work experience is highly recommended whilst still studying. It allows you to not only gain experience of what it would be like to work in the industry and develop your skills; it gives you a chance to be remembered whilst putting theory into practice.

Summer placements, sandwich placements, internships and voluntary work are all examples of work experience. These can help you enhance your CV and demonstrate that you have a pro-active state of mind; an employer will be more impressed that you required work experience whilst still studying and that you have an understanding of the industry prior to obtaining a graduate role.

Many placements aren’t paid which can make finding experience difficult if you can’t afford to relocate or travel without an allowance. All Step internships and placements are paid with a training allowance and we believe that as well as enhancing your skills, you should be paid for doing so. You can find out more about our current opportunities here.

To find out more about paid work experience, visit your University’s career centre.

Some tips on what to think about:

Relocating

If a placement is in a different city, think about how easy would it be for you to relocate? Although relocating shows dedication and independence if you don’t have the funds to do so, especially if your placement isn’t paid then think about placements closer to home.

It is wise to budget whilst on placement, put money aside for food, travel and accommodation. Also research and look for properties with short –term contracts (good places to look are Gumtree, easyroommate.com and spareroom.co.uk).

If you are commuting, rather than relocating then plan your commute and how long it will take you to get to your placement. The key is to plan ahead.

Time

Think about the long term too! Think about how long you can commit to a placement for and if you have any other commitments such as holidays, etc tell your employer as soon as possible.

If you are a graduate, think about if you were to be offered a permanent position after placement and if developing your placement into a permanent role is what you want.
Why?

There is a strong possibility that work experience will help you to gain a permanent position upon completion of your placement.

You will gain more of an understanding about the industry and will meet new people which will help with professional networking.

The main reason for work experience is that you will gain transferrable skills and have a chance to stand out in a company. All of our placements at Step are project focused which means you are given a chance to develop something new within a company and implement it.

Furthermore, a placement looks impressive on your CV and will provide you with worthy references for future roles.

Here are some case studies from Step placements past and present. You can find all of our case studies here.

Bethany Pickles – 12 Month Merchandising Sandwich Placement at Puma

“Naturally whilst learning the ropes your team members are there to teach you the first steps, but once fully confident I was allowed and encouraged to take ownership of my responsibilities.”
Jordan Burton – Three Month Graduate Design Placement at Benchworks

“Whilst creating fictional designs at university is both exciting and demanding, the idea of your work being produced in reality is something I much anticipated.”

Elliot Spaull – Three Month Graduate .NET Developer Internship at IC Design

“The biggest benefit of this placement was that I now have a full-time job! I was offered the job about half way through the placement and immediately accepted. It has also been a huge confidence booster for me, as well as giving me valuable professional experience.