

## PLACEMENT YEARS

### WHAT IS A PLACEMENT YEAR?

A placement year is a period of work experience embedded into a four-year degree program.

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 Higher Education Achievement Report (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 undergraduate students at the University can do a placement year!**

Are you currently registered on a 4 -year course including placement year? If so, then you're all set!

Not registered yet? Get in touch with the Industry and Placements Team and they'll advise on what to do next. Remember you need to pass your exams to proceed to the placement year, and some Departments/ Schools may have their own requirements.

**Did you know?** Your 1<sup>st</sup> year really does count! Many organisations ask for your 1<sup>st</sup> 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 an apply for a placement. But remember we're here to help you every step of the way. The Placements Team 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](http://www.essex.ac.uk/see/careerhub) (This is where we post opportunities exclusive to Essex) students.

[www.ratemypacement.co.uk](http://www.ratemypacement.co.uk)

[www.targetjobs.co.uk](http://www.targetjobs.co.uk)

[www.gradcracker.com](http://www.gradcracker.com)

Remember to check national job sites such as [indeed.co.uk](http://indeed.co.uk) and [monster.co.uk](http://monster.co.uk) to see opportunities from organisations that may not be listed elsewhere.

**Did you know?** Students have found placements by researching local employers and approaching them directly. This is particularly effective with charities, not-for-profit or small and medium sized companies (SMEs).

### WILL I BE PAID FOR MY PLACEMENT?

**Many 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?** Student loans funding (if eligible) is available, but this could be at a reduced rate depending on the type of placement that you have secured.

## 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

<b>Year 1</b> Research placements and prepare your CV
<b>Year 1 Summer</b> Self-enrol on the "Placement Preparation Programme" Moodle page Attend the Placement Preparation Series Look out for early deadlines
<b>Year 2 Autumn</b> Opportunities opening frequently so keep applying Make sure you're still building up experience
<b>Year 2 Spring</b> Organisations begin interviews and assessment centres Continue with applications and keep updating the Placements Team on your progress
<b>Year 2 Summer</b> Still time to apply. Check with the Placements Team for support Accept an offer and notify the Placements Team
<b>Summer Vacation</b>
<b>Start your placement!</b>

**Did you know?** Some national schemes close before Christmas but not all organisations advertise at the same time. Keep checking for opportunities as new ones are listed daily!

Get in touch with the Placements Team for more specific placement information and support: [placements@essex.ac.uk](mailto:placements@essex.ac.uk)

**Did you know?** The Placements Team run regular Placement Preparation events to help with your placement search. These are advertised on Career Hub so look out for these and book yourself on!

## Student Experiences

"I knew I wanted to go on a Placement Year since I first enrolled to university, but when the pandemic hit, it seemed like it would be impossible for me to do so. However, thanks to the guidance and support from the placements' team, not only was I able to secure a placement, but I also received the continued personal and professional support I needed throughout the year. Going on a placement has given me the tools, contacts, and experiences that I feel I needed to enter the professional world feeling prepared, confident, and validated as a professional."

**Marina Cusi Sanchez**  
BA Drama and Literature

"I have learned a great deal, mainly what it is like to work for a company in London and it is much better than I expected. My colleagues are great and so helpful when I need help, as well as my managers. I have learnt how to use SQL and other databases to help retrieve client information as well as communicate with a variation of people. Within my first 6 months here I have been moved up and am dealing with Multiple regions such as Spain, Italy, France, and DACH while also being trained on doing account management for DACH clients. I am looking forward to continuing my placement at Awin and I couldn't have asked for a better company to work for."

**Marc Maslen (Placement year at AWIN)**  
BSc Computer Science