PLACEMENT YEARS

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 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 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. But remember we’re here to help you every step of the way.

The Industry and Placements Team can help you throughout the process. The majority of placements are advertised online, here are some key websites to get you started:

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. If you are undertaking a placement abroad, you maybe eligible to receive Erasmus+ 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Research placements and prepare your CV</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1 Summer</td>
<td>Get some experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Start to apply</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 2 Autumn</td>
<td>Most applications open so continue to apply</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Make sure you’re still building up experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 2 Spring</td>
<td>Organisations begin interviews and assessment centres.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Continue with applications and keep updating your Placements Team on your progress</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 2 Summer</td>
<td>Accept offers and prepare</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Or continue to apply</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Start!</td>
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Did you know? Many 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 Industry and Placements Team for more specific placement information and support: placements@essex.ac.uk

Student Experiences

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 two law firms in lagos, nigeria

“Although I had had legal internships before, working for a year really gave me an insight into not only the legal sector, but also the day to day life of what a lawyer actually does. It has taught me so much, such as developing a work/life balance, as well as helped to bring me out of my shell and pursue not only what I want but what I deserve. If I had to go back, I wouldn’t change a thing.”

Edwina Ola
LLB Law and Human Rights

Placement Year at Government Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)

“It’s been a remarkable and exciting year full of extraordinary skills, experience, knowledge and invaluable development opportunities. I feel honoured to have worked alongside some of the most influential economists, data scientists, policy advisors and legal advisors. Throughout my placement year I have been able to build on my key skills and acquire expert policy knowledge. I was inspired throughout my placement and am very grateful to have had this experience.”

Michelle Chingono
BSc Economics