



**Placement
Scotland**

Student Handbook

[for students on work placements]

Shaping the stars of tomorrow

to the stars
of tomorrow...

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Introduction

Congratulations on taking up the offer of a work placement. This is a fantastic opportunity, which if approached correctly will give you significant advantages in the employment market. We want to work with you to ensure you make the most of your time in industry.

We've put together this handbook to provide you with all you need to know to get started. We'll keep in touch to ask for feedback on your placement experience at the start, during and at the end of your placement.

e-Placement Scotland is a completely unique programme, so your role as an ambassador to the technology industry is an important one. We hope that by helping to ensure that you have a successful placement, we will be helping you, your employer and your peers. It is therefore really important that if you do have any problems, you contact the e-Placement team immediately (see section on contact information for more details).

The e-Placement programme is designed to complement academic-related placement schemes across Scotland. This handbook should be read in conjunction with any material provided by your home institution. If your placement is credit-bearing, additional requirements will certainly be specified by your college or university.

Status of Placement Students

During your placement, you will normally have dual status as both a full-time employee and a fully matriculated student. You will therefore usually have obligations to both your employer and (if on placement as part of your course) to your college or university. Whilst you will be eligible for most of the concessions available to full-time students, you may be required to pay UK income tax on your earnings; the exact rates and amounts will depend on the length of your placement and your personal circumstances.

Aims

The aim of the placement is to help you:

- benefit by learning from practical work
- gain experience alongside the more formal study of your course, putting theory into practice
- integrate into the work environment, conducting yourself in an appropriate professional manner
- develop the ability to see a task through to its conclusion
- develop personal skills including communication, problem solving and confidence
- move from academia to employment upon graduation

Contact Information

IMPORTANT: If you have any issues which you need to discuss, please get in touch with one of the team members for further guidance. We're always pleased to help.

e-Placement Scotland contact information:
Maureen Ronaldson (Academic Liaison) -
tel: 0131 455 2616
e-mail: m.ronaldson@napier.ac.uk

Professionalism in the Workplace

The importance of professionalism in the workplace cannot be overlooked. How you dress, speak, act, write and work determines whether you are seen as a professional or an amateur.

Attendance

Your conditions of employment will specify hours of work. Good time-keeping is essential to create a positive impression. You must make sure you are there on time; if there are any reasons for being late, do let the company know as soon as possible. If you are delayed on your way to work, for example, phone and tell your employer.

Sickness

Make sure that you follow the procedures required by your company. Let them know if you are unwell and can't attend work. Remember that future employers will ask about your sickness record.

Dress

The best policy is to be very smart at first, until you have the chance to see what other people wear. If everyone is casually dressed you can start to wear more casual clothes yourself but do not take this to the extreme. In the workplace, looking neat and being clean is very important.

Meetings

Always make sure you arrive at meetings in plenty of time. If you cannot attend, let the chairperson know in advance. Take a pen and paper, and be prepared to take notes (it creates a good impression). Don't use, or even look at your mobile during a meeting – if you need to know the time, use a watch!

Deadlines

Keep a list of 'things to do,' with deadlines and priorities - five minutes at the start of each day updating this should help you avoid problems. If you are unable to do a particular task, don't hide from it; tell your line manager. Your manager is there to help and sometimes it can take a while to know exactly what your capabilities are.

Confidentiality

All personal data is covered by the Data Protection Act. Company data - financial figures, plans for new products, etc, must all be treated as confidential.

Telephone

Answer the telephone quickly and formally - it could be your boss, or a customer.

E-mail

Make sure you address your e-mail appropriately 'Dear Mr Jordan'. Be careful what you write, use a spell checker, and always read through carefully before you send anything off. Never put anything in an e-mail that you wouldn't be prepared to see on a notice board. Always make sure that you keep a copy of the e-mails that you send out.

Office Equipment

The company phones, internet access, and photocopiers are not for private use. Many companies have logging to check this.

Mobile Phones

If you have a personal mobile phone, switch it off when at work. Do not use it as a clock, as this can be interpreted as using your phone.

Starting on Placement

Induction

During your first week, your employer will normally provide you with an induction to the company, introduce you to key staff members and explain their roles. They should also cover Health and Safety issues, including emergency procedures and First Aid arrangements.

Appendix A provides an induction checklist. Tick off items as they occur and use for your own records.

Health and Safety

Placement providers have the primary duty to ensure the health and safety of all employees, including placement students. It is each student's responsibility to pay due care and attention to their personal safety in the workplace and report any concerns. See Appendices for Health and Safety information.

Dealing with Problems

For many of you, this placement will be your first experience of full-time employment and in most cases, your first experience of employment in the computing sector. The transition from student to full-time employee may be difficult and stressful at times and it is important that you deal with any such difficulties in a timely and professional manner.

Problems that arise may relate to your workload, supervision arrangements, interpersonal issues or difficulties with completion of college/university assessments. If you experience any difficulties during your placement you should try, in the first instance, to discuss these with your manager (or workplace mentor) through your normal supervision arrangements. In the majority of cases, problems can be resolved simply and informally but it is important that this be done quickly, before they escalate.

If any issue cannot be resolved through these channels you should bring it to the attention of the e-Placement Scotland contact (see section on contact information) as soon as possible for advice.

Assessment

Some students will be assessed whilst on placement, depending on the requirements of their course. If this applies to you, additional requirements will be specified by your college or university.

Certificate

Once you've completed your placement, we will send you a signed certificate of achievement. This will include reference to your employer and the duration of your placement. You may find this useful for future job applications.

The e-Placement Scotland team would like to wish you luck in completing your studies and with your future career; we are sure your placement will have helped.

Appendix A - Student Induction Checklist

The following items should be included in your induction into the organisation, preferably on your first day. Please check off the items below when they occur. This list is not exhaustive and other topics may be covered, which you may note if you wish:

Task	Date
Introduced to key staff members and their roles explained	
Location of toilet facilities	
Location of rest room, canteen (if relevant), etc	
Lunch, tea and coffee arrangements	
Place of work	
Dress code	
Work space	
How to answer the telephone, transfer calls and make calls; both internally and externally	
Mailing arrangements	
Car parking (where relevant)	
Payment of salary – bank account details, etc	

Health and Safety Issues	Date
Emergency procedures	
Safety policy received or location known	
Location of First Aid box	
First Aid arrangements (including names of First Aiders). NB. very small businesses don't have to have nominated First Aiders	
Fire procedures and location of fire extinguishers	
Accident reporting and location of accident book	
COSHH regulations	
Display Screen Equipment regulations/procedures	
Protective clothing arrangements	
Instruction on equipment you will be using (list equipment)	
Other issues	

Appendix B – Health and Safety Notes for Students on Placement

It is important that all placement students make every effort to avoid risks to themselves and to others by acting in a safe and responsible manner. Placements provide an opportunity for you to apply skills acquired at your college/university to 'real life' situations. Many qualities can also be learned and developed during a placement that could improve your employment prospects. However, there are health and safety aspects to every placement, namely:

- being under the supervision of a third party
- being involved with, or undertaking, activities where you have little or no experience
- working in and visiting environments and locations that you are unfamiliar with

Health and Safety Responsibilities

Organisations providing placements have:

- a general duty to ensure your health and safety whilst on placement
- to take account of your potential inexperience for activities you will be expected to undertake and put into place appropriate controls
- to provide you with information, instruction, training and supervision

As soon as possible after commencing a placement you must receive a health and safety induction. If you do not receive an induction then raise this with your placement provider.

As your placement progresses, so will the information, instruction and training you receive. Never undertake an activity or go into an area unless you have received appropriate information, instruction and training for you to feel competent and confident to carry on.

Levels of supervision will vary from placement to placement and at points within a particular placement. Don't be afraid to ask questions of your supervisor and if you feel there is a lack of supervision, then raise this concern.

Your Responsibilities

In particular you must:

- Ensure you are aware of the emergency procedures
- Pay attention to instructions from staff with regard to safety
- Work safely, for your own sake and that of others
- Take care as you go about the premises
- Report any accident and get first aid treatment at once
- Report any hazard you spot to a member of staff
- Wear any personal protective equipment you are issued with
- Think before you act – carelessness causes accidents
- Take care and ask staff for advice with lifting heavy objects

What to do in the Event of a Fire or Emergency

All employers will have their own emergency instructions relating to their office buildings. In every building there should be a notice setting out the procedure to be adopted in case of fire.

You must familiarise yourself with the workplace fire procedures. In particular, check the green and white directional arrows to the fire exits from your workplace. If you have any doubts, please ask your supervisor.

keep in touch!



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