



Archway

A future without limits

Y12 Work Experience Guide

**Everything you need to know to make the most
out of your work experience**





Why bother having a work experience placement?

Doing a work experience placement is a great way to find out whether a certain type of career is for you. It gives you the opportunity to learn new skills, build contacts and experience what it's like working in a real 9-5 job.

But that's not all. According to an employer survey carried out by Gumtree, some 90% of employers thought that work experience was essential for anyone applying for jobs in the current climate. The survey found that job applicants with good work experience were seen as more knowledgeable, more confident and more committed.

Work experience enables you to gain relevant experience working with a company in the industry you're interested in, while developing the practical skills you will need to do the job. Organising a work experience placement is a smart move. The more experience you get under your belt, the more you will have to write about on your CV and speak about in interviews. Nowadays, having relevant qualifications, although essential, is only half of the equation. If an employer sees that you have the knowledge and the practical skills to fulfil their role, you will have a competitive advantage over someone who only knows the theory.

By organising relevant work experience, you will also have the opportunity to build up a network of contacts who may be able to help you secure a job in the near future. If you show that you're enthusiastic and can step up to challenges, you will also earn yourself some good references for future roles.

In some cases, work experience can also lead to a full-time job if there's a position available with that company.

To summarise, the main benefit of work experience is to ...





What type of work experience should I go for?

Knowing what you want to do with the rest of your life when you're 16/17 is no mean feat and unless you have a particular career in mind, finding good work experience places can be tough. Some of you will know whole-

heartedly that you want to be doctors, lawyers and teachers, but what about the rest of you? What about those of you who just don't know?

Well, as a starting point, we would recommend that you follow your passions. What are you interested in? If you're a music fan, maybe your perfect work experience placement would be in a music shop? If you're an animal lover, then why not contact your local farm, zoo or stables for opportunities? Whatever it is that gets you out of bed on Saturday mornings, could be the very thing that you would love to do for work experience.

Work experience does not necessarily need to be geared towards your final destination, but it is important to do some background work to make sure you are going for the right type and that you will enjoy it.

Your Career aspirations. If you know a particular occupation will require you to have work experience in a specific area, now is the time to get it. If you are not sure what you want to do, then select a career you think you might be interested in and use your work experience to find out whether that line of work is for you. Finding out a job isn't for you, it just as useful as finding out that it is.

Your values, interests and motivations. It is important to think about the things that make you 'tick'. For example: if you like working and interacting with people do not select a work experience position where you are working in isolation for long periods of time – it could make the day go very slowly!



The practicalities! Archway would like Y12 students to think about work placements outside the boundaries of Stroud and the local area. However, you need to consider the practicalities of any work experience opportunity you are thinking about. Is it actually feasible? For example: "How will I travel to work?" "If I need to stay away from home for the week is it affordable / logistically doable?"

Once you have a general idea of where you would like to work for your week's placement, the next step is to go out and find opportunities. Finding the best work experience places is all about reaching out to employers early.



How do I go about finding a work experience placement?

In the first instance, your best resource for finding work experience ideas is the internet. We recommend that you start your search by looking for companies in your local area that do the kind of work that you would like to try. A

general Google search should provide you with enough information to get you started. Write down a list of jobs you are interested in, then get online and make a list of local businesses that offer these kinds of jobs. For example, if you live in Stroud and you're interested in a law career, you could search "solicitors in Stroud".

This may come as a shock, but your parents can actually be quite useful, as can other family members and even friends' parents (not to mention parents' friends). You should tell them that you're looking for work experience in a particular role and ask them if they know anyone who may be able to help. We have all heard the six degrees of separation theory right?

The theory goes, that you can link with any person on the planet via a series of six connections. So taking this down to a local level - if you speak to lots of people about your work experience just think how many people they might be able to hook you up with that could help you.

If you find yourself struggling to come up with work experience ideas on your own, then you might want to start looking for structured work experience programme. A lot of the larger companies in the UK offer structured work experience placements to school students, however, competition can be tough. Most large companies will ask you to complete an application form rather than just sending your CV, so you need to make sure that you take the time to write a really good job application – a half-hearted effort just won't cut it.

Examples of companies who have structured work experience placements:-

My Uncle's cousin's neighbor's friend
Knew a guy who was the brother
of someone who worked at
a vet's and HE said.....



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NHS

BBC

If you don't have any success with your online efforts, then the next step we would recommend is finding out where Archway students have gone in the past - see next page. However if you are really stuck come and talk to Mrs Ryall, the school's Careers Coordinator, or request a 1-1 session with Mrs Hammond, the school's independent Careers Advisor. Both ladies will be able to point you in the direction of the best places to look.



Where have Archway Students had work experience in the past?

Bliss Hairdressers	AAS Veterinary Services Ltd	John Kerry + Sons	Lakefield Nursery
A P Fletcher	D Warner Heating Services	Just Hair	Lansdown Veterinary Services
A Remus Sound	Delphi Diesel Systems	Kestrel Valve & Engineering Services	Lechlade Garden Centre
A+Bility Ltd	The Blanket Box	Kingsway Primary School	Lloyds TSB
ARC Energy Resources Ltd	E C Merrett Ltd	World of Water	Lobbys Tackle
Atkins Autos	The Fifth Dimension	Rush Skatepark	Love Bug Mnotors
Bar Bar Nursery	Envisage Beauty	TWENTY 12 Hair Boutique	Love Bug Motors
Barclays Bank	Extra Care	Randall & Payne LLP	Meningitis Trust
Barnardos	Fifth Dimension	RD Marshall	Middle Street Garage
Birdie Travel	Finlay Community School	Red Horse Foundation	Minchinhampton Golf Club
Blacks Outdoor Retail (Millets)	Frome House	Reds	Minchinhampton Old Course
Bookcraft Ltd	Gastrells Primary School	Rodborough CP School	Nailsworth C of E Primary
Bowbridge Veterinary Group	Gill Mew	ARION EQUINE	Renishaws
Cabot Design	Gloucester Martial Arts	Sawyers Estate Agents	Nailsworth Primary School
Café Max	Gloucestershire College	SFH (Hairdressers)	National Trust
Callowell Club	Griffith Clarke	Shambles Nursery School	Nu-Pro Ltd
Callowell Primary School	H Wiggall & Son	Shaws (Cardiff) Ltd	Order of Saint John Care Trust
Cherryhill	Woodchester Cabinet Makers	Ship Inn	Painswick Playgroup
Church House Designs	Hewlett-packard	Simones Health Club	Parliament School
Cirencester Primary School	GE Aviation	Sir Charles napier Restaurant	Wilkinsons
Confection Affection	Highnam Under Fives	South Gloucestershire and Stroud College	Pets Barn
Crazy Daisy Flowers Ltd	Homebase	St Matthews Cof E Primary school	Polly's Day Nursery
D A Cook Heating Ltd	HXPUK3 (Pure Offices)	St Rose's School	Psalms
Tesco Stores	JKC	Stanmar Ltd	Randall & Payne LLP
Westonbirt Restaurant	Cotswold Appliances	Stonehouse Court Hotel	Travelling Light Theatre Company
Tarmac and Trial Ltd	Legion Beer Co Ltd	Waitrose Ltd	John Lewis
Summerbee's	Stroud Valley School	Stroud District Council	The Mudshack



The processes of applying for work experience

Treat applying for work experience like applying for a real job, be professional and well presented. You may even be able to find work experience using social media.

If applying early you may wish to contact an organisation by sending them a copy of your CV with a short covering email or letter. This will show that you are making the effort and will give a great first impression. Make sure to say in your letter why you would like to work there in particular, it shows you have done your research and are thinking about them. Rules of letter writing.

1. Address it to the right person - it shows you care enough to do your homework
2. Get the basic grammar right - treat your speculative cover letter as a piece of work
3. Decide what you're applying for - tailor it to the kind of work you're interested in
4. Show them what you have to offer - relate your skills to the company's activities
5. Do your research - Find out what the company is trying to achieve
6. Don't be pushy - Don't sign off "I expect to hear from you by the end of the week"
7. Follow up - If you don't hear back within a week, make a polite phone call

Many larger organisations will have their own application process - be sure to make a note of when their closing date is.

For smaller businesses you may wish to call them up and introduce yourself and ask if you could make an appointment to visit them to discuss the possibility of work experience.

REMEMBER:- An organisation is doing you a huge favour by offering you a work experience placement - please be suitably grateful to them for providing you with this opportunity.



Useful websites



<https://successatschool.org/advisedetails/506/Work-Experience-Ideas>



<https://targetcareers.co.uk>



<http://www.totalprofessions.com>



<http://www.studentladder.co.uk/>



<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk>



<http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk>



<http://www.allaboutcareers.com>