

Your Placement experience

Essential guide for professional practice

The importance of developing a strong work ethic and professionalism during your internship or industry placement.



What you offer

Why do employers offer placements to students?
What's in it for them?

Before you start your industry placement, reflect on what you offer to the company. Think also about the skills and knowledge you will develop from this professional experience.

Fresh

As a young student you bring a fresh perspective



Innovative

You bring innovative ideas



Knowledge

You bring new learning and knowledge to the workplace



Tech savvy

You are tech savvy



Impression

If you are keen to learn you will make a good impression



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What they expect

Skills and attributes highly sought after by your supervisor

Work ethic

A willingness to work hard and demonstrate integrity. Perform with dedication with an emphasis on quality of work



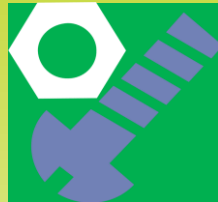
Communication

Strong communication skills: writing, reading, listening and presenting



Initiative

You demonstrate initiative by being on time to work and with a 'can-do' attitude



Motivation

Your motivation and enthusiasm for your placement and project



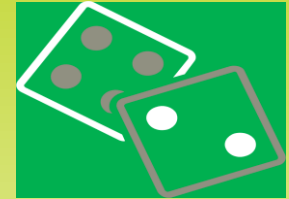
Attitude

Demonstration of a great attitude and a *CAN-DO, WILL-DO outlook*



Responsible

The ability to take responsibility and be accountable for the work you do



6 tips

For professional placement success



TIPS

The tips in 6 categories are further expanded here:

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Work etiquette

What your supervisor expects about work etiquette and working on task

1

Ensure you are respectful and polite with everyone at work

2

Be punctual and consistent. Find out before hand what the start and finish times are

5

Ask relevant questions and do your best to get an understanding of what the whole business is about

3

If you are unwell, call ahead and inform your supervisor

4

Ask permission to use your personal mobile during work hours

6

Dress neat-professional without going overboard, especially on day one. It will help with nerves and make you feel like you fit in

Note

On day one you will get overloaded with a lot of information.

Don't stress. It will all make sense in the days to come

WORK ETHIC

This is what employers say about

Communication

& non-technical skills

1

Do lots of reading and listening at work, especially in the first week

2

Be an effective communicator. Listen and speak sensitively

3

Be aware of your telephone communication skills. How do you present yourself when using the company's phone?

4

Remember your non-verbal skills say a lot as well. Your body posture, your facial expressions are forms of non-verbal communication

5

Ask lots of questions if you don't; understand something or need more information

6

Presentation skills are highly rated in the workplace. If you can present fluently you are an asset.

'Hello I'm the new intern':

Work on how to introduce yourself to others effectively and professionally.

While in the workplace, build networks outside of your main team and get to know the business and its operations

Note

Feedback: ask for it
Don't take negative feedback personally. Learn from it and use it to improve and further motivate yourself.

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▶ initiative

Motivation and passion

Put in effort and prove to your supervisor you are an asset to the project/organisation

Listen and be willing to learn.
Being overconfident could be seen as arrogance

Put in 110% when at work. Learn and contribute. Use your time at work effectively

Be specific

Set small measurable goals and discuss this with your supervisor

Solving a difficult problem?

And not getting anywhere? Don't go it alone. Talk it over with your colleagues or your supervisor

Celebrate success

Part of setting small measurable goals is the opportunity to celebrate small successes i.e. your hard work. Do this with your work team and supervisor.

team

Team attitude

Understand your role and how it links with other's ability to do their job well

Create strong bonds

Be polite, courteous and positive in the workplace and with your colleagues and your supervisor

Can do, will do

Remember you are there to learn. Be willing to learn and be part of the work team

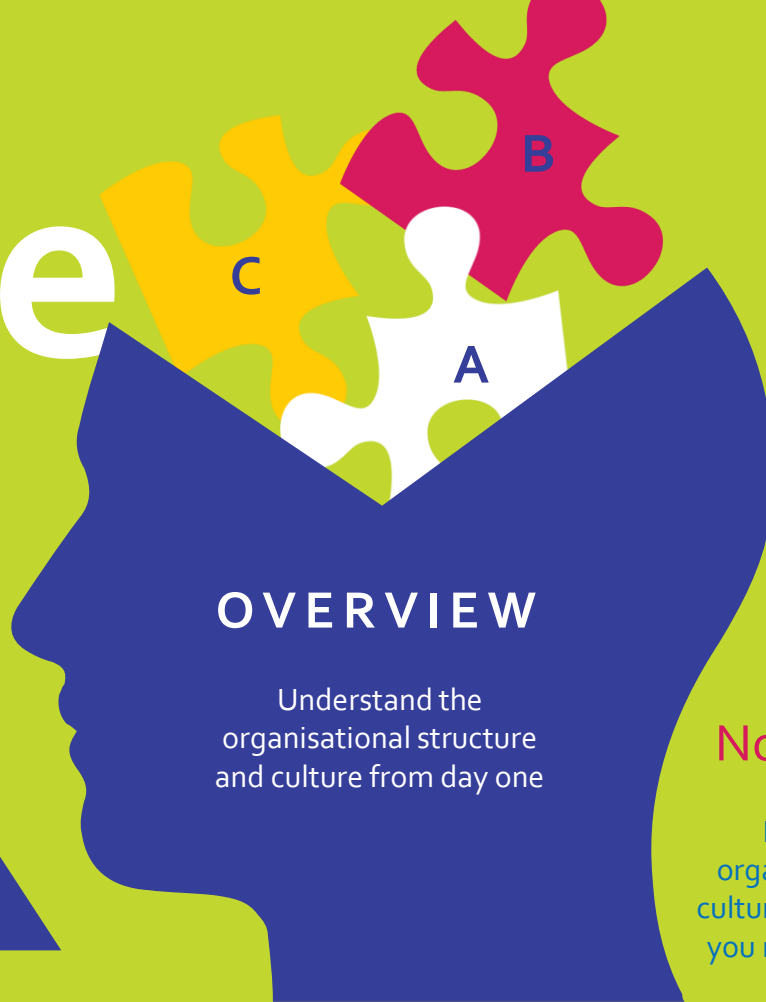
Note: relationship building

In the workplace you have to work with others. Remember that work ethic is shaped by relationships.

Not being able to work in a team will put your work ethic into question.

Keep in mind teams are not born, they are made. Understand your team dynamics. Keep communication lines open by building rapport with others.

organisational Culture



A.
Understand

B.
Avoid

C.
Attend

The
organisation's
mission,
purpose and
contribution of
your role

Avoid getting
mixed up in
workplace
gossip or
negativity

Attend office
events and staff
activities.
Build links.
Network, network, network

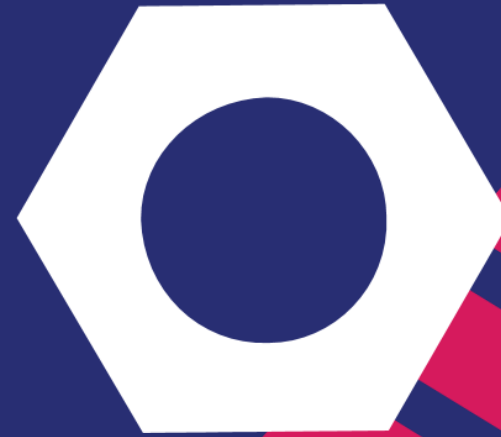
OVERVIEW

Understand the
organisational structure
and culture from day one

Note

Remember every
organisation has its own
culture; while you are there
you represent it as you do
your university

responsibility



**IT'S your
placement.
OWN IT**

Note

Understand the organisation's business model

Understand too your role and how it impacts on the roles around you

reflect

regularly

Reflect

Your placement
experience is
ripe for
reflection

From day 1
keep a journal
and update it
every week

Be honest and
document your
learning

OVERVIEW

Your reflective journal will show
you how far you've come and how
much you've learned during your
industry experience

Share relevant reflections with
your supervisor

*I have not failed. I've
just found 10,000
ways that won't
work. Thomas Edison*

Your reflections should
celebrate your successes
and any mistakes because
this is where you learn the
most.

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Develop your placement plan

...My placement goals are:

Develop a good cover letter and resume to send to companies I've researched and want to do my placement in

In the workplace I invest in, I want to manage my time wisely by being punctual, maintaining good attendance, being honest.

I want to maintain a balanced work performance by doing quality work and showing consistent results. I will show respect, follow company rules and work with others.

I want to learn about how this workplace functions, I want to contextualise my uni learning with professional learning. This will develop my work ethic, skills and knowledge for the future.

I want to work well with my workplace colleagues and get a good reference from my supervisor for my future career prospects

Tailor your plan to your career goals and professional outcomes.

Questions to ask yourself:

- What do you want to learn from your professional placement?
- What does this experience mean to you?
- How important is it to your future employment?
- Start developing your placement plan today.

Support

1

Your course coordinator and school support

2

The PPP team

3

Placement supervisor

4

Career services

5

Student network
Include ones who have already done placement

6

Your family

Remember your support network.
Access when required.

Don't go it alone.
If you need help, ASK.

Organise your support crew

Note

Need advice? The university's counsellors and learning advisers are on hand for you. They are an appointment away.

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Thank you for reading this placement preparation information.

References

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