



ACCESS STUDENTS

Work Experience Advice and Guidelines



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Why do work experience?

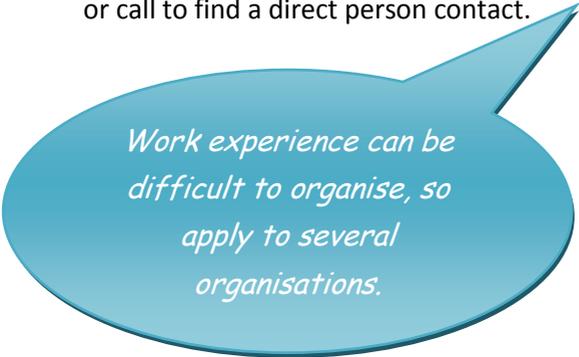
Work experience is essential when applying to University for courses in:

- Health care professions, eg. nursing, dentistry, midwifery, physiotherapy, podiatry
- Teaching
- Social work
- Law
- Journalism

If you do not already have relevant experience, we ***strongly advise*** that you organise an appropriate work placement or voluntary work before starting the Access course. You will then be able to include details in your University application which is made early in the Autumn term.

Tips for organising work experience

1. Ask family and friends if they have any contacts.
2. Identify organisations that you could apply to – see overleaf for suggestions. Use the organisation’s website or call to find a direct person contact.



Work experience can be difficult to organise, so apply to several organisations.

3. Prepare yourself as if you were applying for a job:
- write a list of personal qualities that make you good for the job – see overleaf
 - write down why you want to pursue a career in this area
 - find out about the organisations you are applying to
 - compose a covering letter / email using the information you have gathered from above
 - write an up-to-date CV
 - deliver your CV and letter by hand if possible
 - if asked for an interview, dress smartly and think about questions you would like to ask

4. **CHASE YOUR APPLICATION**

Employers are busy, so follow up your letters / emails with phone calls or a visit. Keep bringing your application to the top of their 'to-do' list.



Don't take a 'no' personally - it just reflects a busy organisation.

Organisations to apply to

Use the internet to find local businesses and organisations that you could volunteer in.

Health care - most organisations will need to complete a CRB check for you (takes 4-6 weeks). Good places to start are:

- Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust – look at the ‘work and learn’ section on their website for info about work experience and volunteering.
- Worthing Hospital – look on line and apply to direct to individual departments
- Hospices, eg. Martletts Hospice, and Nursing homes

Law work experience is very tricky to find, so if you know a solicitor / lawyer do ask them. You could also:

- contact Hove Trial centre and Lewes Combined Courts
- observe and makes notes of cases at local courts
- look at legal issues involved in your work, eg. in retail you could research customer’s rights, sale of goods, theft, citizen’s arrest
- volunteer at an organisation concerned with human rights, eg. Amnesty International, Citizen’s Advice Bureau

Journalism – local papers, magazines and publishers. It helps if you prepare a piece of writing as part of your application.

Teaching – local schools are usually grateful for an extra pair of hands. You will need to complete a CRB check (this takes 4 - 6 weeks).

Social work – this can be difficult to organise because of client confidentiality. Think about local youth clubs, centres for adults or children with special needs, nursing homes. You may need to complete a CRB check (takes 4-6 weeks).

Personal Qualities

Health professions: good communicator, able to concentrate for long periods of time, caring, interested in people, committed to excellence, self-motivated, responsible, flexible,

Teaching: dedication, commitment, good communication skills, good listening skills, energy, confident, imaginative, patient, tolerant, enthusiastic, need to like children, if secondary ed – then an interest in a particular subject

Journalism: able to understand people, creative, charming, determined, efficient, ideas person, fascinated by news, hardworking, inquisitive, good memory, resilient, persuasive, persistent, well-read, tactful, thick-skinned.

Law: trustworthy, hardworking, reliable, determined, good communicator, good problem-solving skills, methodical and accurate, able to maintain confidentiality.

Social work: problem-solver, open-minded, flexible, good initiative, non-discriminatory, tough, tolerant, observant, not easily taken in, thorough, patient, determined, sensitive

How to record your experience

Keep a diary whilst you are on work experience – to help you remember points to include in your personal statement or talk about at University interview. You could think about:

- What did I find out about my chosen career?
- What did I learn about myself?
- Would I do anything different next time?
- Were there any significant moments?
- What inspired you?
- What didn't inspire you?

Ask the employer for a reference and for feedback on how the placement went. This may be useful for your personal statement and future job applications.

PLEASE THANK THE EMPLOYER WITH A CARD / LETTER.

What do University admissions want to know about your work experience?

Admissions tutors want to know that during your work experience placement, you:

- gained an insight into your chosen career and environment
- gained an insight into your own capabilities (strengths / weaknesses)
- have shown commitment and responsibility

In health professions, they will also want to know that you gained an insight into the patient experience.