

Placement Year: Employer guide

Introduction

This guide is written for placement providers who are supporting a student on placement year. If you are wanting to develop a placement opportunity for the first time, then please get in touch with our employer team who can support you at employers@lincoln.ac.uk

The placement aims to give students a continuous experience of full-time work within an organisation. Work placements should enable students to experience at first hand the daily workings of an organisation while setting that experience in the broader context of their studies. It should be a three-way co-operative activity between employer, student and University from which all parties benefit.

Placement year constitutes a work placement during an academic year, funded by full-time paid employment taking place between year 2 and 3 of an undergraduate (BA/BSc) degree. There are some occasions when payment is not provided to the student, however these are the exception to the rule and should be discussed with the student and the University before a placement is agreed.

The placement can take place anytime the student finishing 2nd year and beginning 3rd year. The minimum duration of placement is 24 hours a week for 24 weeks (this does not include holiday which must be taken in addition to the agreed hours/weeks). If the student's course requires more than the minimum and/or the student has signed a contract with you that exceeds these hours, then these need to be adhered to by the student.

This guide should be read in conjunction with the Placement year Handbook that the student will share with you.

What is involved

As the placement provider we would ask that you:

- Provide a work-based opportunity that meets the minimum hours and days cited above.
- Provide tasks which are relevant to the student's course of study.
- Provide a contract for the student outlining the duties and responsibilities involved in the placement.
- Complete the required Health and Safety documents required by the university.
- Provide a named supervisor to support the student and partake in a minimum of 2 meetings with the university.
- Provide a short testimonial in respect of the student at the end of the placement.
- We would ask you to employ the student through the same process as you would any other new starter.

Who does what, when?

Before a Placement

When advertising a placement opportunity, there are several key pieces of information that students will look for, including the purpose of the role, the skills required, relevant subject areas, and details of how to apply. For further information on advertising a vacancy through the University of Lincoln, please visit [CareerLinc posting advice](#) and our [Post a vacancy](#) page.

If you would like support with writing a job advert or job description, please refer to our [job advert guide](#). Pages 5–6 include an example advert, and the 'What will you be doing?' section provides a useful example of a clear and concise job description.

Once you have identified a suitable student, you should agree the terms of the placement with them. This may be done through the provision of a contract containing all relevant placement details.

After the student has registered their placement, the Placements and Work Experience Team will send you a Placement Provider Form to complete. This form relates to health and safety requirements and helps us ensure that the placement environment is suitable for the student.

If you have any questions about the Placement Provider Form, the job description, or any other aspect of setting up a placement, please contact placementsandwexp@lincoln.ac.uk We will be happy to support you throughout the process.

Health and Safety

The university has a duty of care for all students who undertake a placement. It is important that all parties understand their role in ensuring that the duty of care is provided.

As stated in Section 2.1 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

‘Primary responsibility for the management of the health and safety of a student while they are on placement lies with the placement provider. The student will be treated as equivalent to one of their own employees in relation to health and Safety matters.’

To confirm that the opportunity and placement provider are suitable for a placement year, we ask all employers to complete our [Placement Provider health & safety checklist](#). This will be sent to you when a student registers their placement.

The placement provider form will confirm information such as:

- Either a Companies House number or Charitable Status number, or in the case of a Sole Trader or Family Business some form of documentation that evidences they exist as a business, such as a HMRC number.
- Details of the learning opportunities that will be afforded to the student in a job description.
- Relevant insurance: Employers' Liability Insurance for a minimum of £5 million, Public Liability Insurance for a minimum of £1M (office/clerical placements) or minimum of £5M (other placements). Certain State/NHS/Public bodies may be covered by Crown Indemnity.

Once we receive a copy of the role description, this will be shared with the relevant academic to approve the role from a subject specific viewpoint.

Students will not be allowed to commence their placement before it has been approved by the University.

Student Academic Progression

Please note that students must successfully complete their previous year of study before commencing a placement year.

Where a student is required to undertake reassessments or resits, they may not be able to begin their placement until their results have been confirmed (usually at the end of August) and progression to the next academic year has been approved by the University. In these circumstances, placement start dates may need to be adjusted.

During a Placement

Responsibilities of placement providers are to:

- Complete the induction checklist which your student will provide – this is to make sure that students have been provided with the information they require in the workplace.
- Attend a meeting with the student and their university placement lead to discuss the goals for the placement – these will be reviewed at a second meeting towards the end of the student's placement.
- Continue to provide appropriate learning experiences to the student which enables them to explore areas of their role and meet the outcomes of their placement.
- For **International students on a Student Visa**, monthly attendance reports are required which will be shared to you by the placements and work experience team.

If any issues arise, please contact placementsandwexp@lincoln.ac.uk and we will be happy to discuss and offer any solutions.

What students need to learn during their placement

Students are provided with several learning goals for the placement. These do differ between courses but are likely to include:

- Able to make an effective contribution to the work placement organisation.
- Gain first-hand experience of a working environment.
- Able to demonstrate an understanding of their role within the work placement organisation by accepting instructions and directing, understanding and assuring appropriate action to successfully carry out all tasks assigned.
- Acquire technical and interpersonal skills necessary for the successful completion of work developed.
- Develop critical thinking skills and habits of observation, enquiry and analysis developed, and an understanding of decision-making in the workplace.
- Familiar with the day-to-day challenges of practical work life
- Develop self-confidence and, through widening individual experience, enhances personal development in the areas of initiative, drive, authority and responsibility.
- Have clarification of personal career ideas, aims and objectives.

Escalation of concerns

We understand that there may be situations of concern whilst hosting a placement student. This may be related to performance, attendance, or other factors. If this happens whilst a student is on placement with you, we ask you follow the below steps to support the student.

1. **Student:** Begin a conversation with the student around the identified problem. Our [planning for difficult conversations](#) can support with this. If the concern continues or you haven't been able to contact the student, please get in touch with the University.
2. **Placement tutor:** Students will have an academic from the University who will act as their main contact. You will have contact with both the student and their tutor during a placement. If there are any issues to report, please contact the placement tutor.
3. **Placements team:** If you haven't been able to make contact with the student or placement tutor, please contact placementsandwexp@lincoln.ac.uk and the Placements team will be able to talk through your concerns with you and plan next steps.

After a Placement

There will be feedback to complete which will help to form part of the student's assessment and will be reviewed by the academic team.

We also ask that you complete our post placement feedback form so we can keep in touch with you. For further information on how you can work with the University of Lincoln, please see our [employers information](#) page.

Thank you for offering an opportunity to University of Lincoln students, this will provide them with a fantastic opportunity for professional development and will support your organisation in finding new talent.