



Kingsbury Green Academy Getting Ready for Work Experience 2019-20

YEAR 12 WORK EXPERIENCE 22nd to 26th June 2020

A Guide for Students

Preparing for work experience is an exciting activity and is most effective if it is planned in advance. It is worth spending time getting advice and guidance from your school, parents, guardians, friends and contacts so the experience runs as smoothly as possible and is valuable for everyone involved.

WHY IS WORK EXPERIENCE IMPORTANT?

You might think that the only point in doing Work Experience is to 'enhance' your CV. You may be wondering what tasks you may be given and if these will be meaningful and beneficial to you. Work experience is likely to involve doing some menial tasks at times, but remember that it is still important to develop those very important employability skills like perseverance and conscientiousness that all employers are looking for in their employees.

STILL NEED CONVINCING?

- Young people are more likely to be successful in their job hunt if they have had some work experience. In a recent study, over half of the recruitment agencies reported that: **'applicants who have had no previous work experience at all are unlikely to be successful in the selection process'**.
- If you don't know what career you might like to follow, it is an ideal way to 'sample' a career option. You may find something you are passionate about or identify something that you really don't like.
- Work experience shows an employer that you are motivated to work and develop business skills.
- It will give you an idea of the employability skills that you will need to thrive in the work place.
- It will help you identify your own skills and perhaps some areas that you might need to improve on – your strengths and areas to develop.
- You might impress the company so much that they offer you part-time work, or even an apprenticeship when you finish academic study.
- It is important to NETWORK. This allows you to build contacts which are always useful in the working environment.
- Of course, it will also give you great experiences to write about on your CV.



HOW DO I CHOOSE WHAT I DO?



For many students, choosing what to do for their work experience week is the hardest part. Remember, work experience is not always about choosing a career for the rest of your life; it is ultimately about gaining experience of the world of work. The decision should be led by you, but ask your parents or guardian and our school's Careers Team, for support and guidance.

When applying for placements you may get rejections. Do not take these rejections personally; sometimes an employer is unable to help at that time or perhaps they have already offered a placement to someone else.

WORK EXPERIENCE TIPS!

- Start early. Some employers recruit for work placements up to a year in advance. Check out websites of large companies in your area.
- If you have an idea, tell your parents, guardian, friends, teachers or the careers team - they may be able to help you.
- Decide what kind of work experience you are interested in. Use Careerpilot to help you come up with a list of the different industries you want to explore. Think about your interests and favourite subjects. Is there a local employer linked to these that could be approached?
- If you would like support, ask the Careers Team for access to the database of employers who have previously taken our students for work experience. They are not guaranteed to offer placements but it is worth contacting them to enquire.
- Practice the letter/e-mail you will send to employers when you are requesting a placement. Don't rely on your own proof-reading skills; get a fresh pair of eyes to check everything. Remember you never get a second chance to make a first impression.
- Follow up all applications with a phone call but don't pester them. This can be quite daunting so practice what you might say with your parents, guardian, tutor or the Careers Team first.
- The placement does not have to be local – we encourage you to look further afield, but there may be cost implications for your parents.



- You may be asked to attend a short interview – go prepared and practice some interview questions that you think you may be asked.
- Make sure all data/paperwork is submitted by **Friday 7th February 2020**, and any actions requested by the Employer are carried out.
- This is your work experience - the more you put into it, the more you will get from it.

When you have found your placement, you, a parent/guardian and the employer need to complete the KGA Work Experience Form. You can get a form from the Careers Team or your Tutor. The completed form must be handed in at the Student Reception in the Hub.

So you've got a placement – now what?

Day one may be a nerve-racking experience - going into an unfamiliar situation can be daunting for anyone. Think about the following key things to minimise your concerns:

TRANSPORT – How are you going to get there? Think about the cost; what's the most affordable method? Check timetables if using public transport.

WHAT TO WEAR – Make sure you have checked with your employer about what you should wear – for example, you may need protective clothing, smart office clothing or non-slip shoes. Think about the appropriateness of your appearance.

LUNCH – Do you need to take it with you or can you buy it on site?

CONTACT – Do you have a phone number for your parent/guardian and the school in case you need to get in touch?

WORKING HOURS – If your placement requires you to work specific hours (earlier in the morning or later at night) make sure you confirm this and have transport arrangements in place.

WHAT TO TAKE – Remember to take your work experience diary; it is very important to record your experiences and the skills learnt and developed.

DURING WORK EXPERIENCE...Please bear the following IMPORTANT POINTS in mind:

ATTITUDE – Throw yourself into your placement; be open-minded and inquisitive; take every opportunity that comes your way. Be flexible – it's a chance to learn as much as you can. Ask sensible questions – this will help you gain a wide understanding about the organisation. You are representing the school so ensure your attitude will be a good reflection on everyone.

SAFETY – On your first day your employer should provide you with an induction giving you the details about first aiders, fire safety and general health and safety information.

MOBILE PHONES – Most companies have a policy on mobile phones. Keep them in your bag/pocket and only use them at lunch times.

SOCIAL MEDIA – Be careful about what you say on Social Media – always seek permission before you tweet or put anything on Facebook, Snap Chat or Instagram. Remember, it is easy for people to get the wrong impression about posts. Don't share user names with other staff.

SICKNESS – If you are ill, make sure you call your employer and the school first thing in the morning and advise them.

RECORD – Make sure you record what you have learnt and the challenges you have faced. You can always ask if you can take photos (some employers have a no photo policy).

DON'T LIKE IT? Or something goes wrong. If you feel you cannot talk to your employer, call the school and discuss your concerns – but don't give up after just one day!

'Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it.' **Steve Jobs**



Work experience letter/email template

[Your name]
[Address]
[Postcode]

[Phone Number]
[Email Address]

[Date]

[Employer's name]
[Full address]
[Postcode]

Dear Sir/Madam [or name],

I am a [year group] student from [school name], studying [list of subjects].

I'd like to enquire about a potential work experience placement at [company name], which I would be available to carry out for [amount of time] from [start date] to [end date].

I'm keen on gaining some practical work experience in [chosen field of work], because [reason for pursuing a placement with this specific company and industry].

I'm [relevant skills and attributes], which can be shown in my [real-life examples that demonstrate your skills].

In my spare time, I like to [list relevant hobbies and interests], and I've also had some experience in/am a member of [list any groups/clubs/other work experience].

As an enthusiastic student with a keen interest in what your organisation does, as well as a passion to progress within this industry, I would be very grateful to be considered for an opportunity at [company name].

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours faithfully [Yours sincerely (if you have addressed the letter using the person's name)]

[Your name]

You do not need to include your address and the employer's address at the top if you are writing an email. This is only for a letter. However, you should finish your email like this:

[Your name]
Year 12 student at Kingsbury Green Academy
[Phone Number]
[Email Address]

AND ON YOUR LAST DAY OF YOUR PLACEMENT...

Try to get some written feedback from your employer. There is a place for your employer to write feedback in your work experience diary. The Careers Team at KGA will ask your employer for feedback too, but it is useful for you to reflect with your employer on what went well and where you might be able to improve. Look at the highs and the lows and learn from them.

Also, most importantly, thank your employer. They have put a lot of time and resources into your visit to make it as useful as possible, and this should be recognised. Perhaps take in a box of chocolates or some biscuits to say thank you!

For further WEX support contact: Mrs Young and Mrs Cook on
cyoung@kingsburygreenacademy.com or 01249 818100

