



Foundation Degrees

Providing Student Work Placements

Foundation Degrees are vocational qualifications which are designed to equip students with the specialist skills required by employers. Work-based learning is therefore a fundamental part of Foundation Degrees and students typically spend between 200 and 300 hours in the workplace. The support of employers is crucial in enabling students to gain practical business experience and apply the knowledge and skills they have gained from their course. The aim of this guide is to encourage and inform employers considering becoming involved with student work placements.

The Benefits

For you:

By taking a student on placement, you will gain:

- An extra resource who can develop specialist projects that your business needs but hasn't got the time to progress
- An injection of new skills, fresh ideas and up-to-date technologies from motivated and enthusiastic individuals
- A cost-effective way of recruiting new members of staff who have already started to gain the skills and experience relevant to your business, and who you know and trust
- A means of developing supervisory skills in permanent staff
- A sense of personal satisfaction from helping another person with their professional and personal development
- An active role in helping to train and shape the workforce of the future

For the student:

- The opportunity to put into practice the knowledge and skills they are gaining from their course
- First hand experience of the working environment, and an understanding of how an organisation operates
- Development of personal skills, such as team working, effective communication and problem solving
- An understanding of career options available to them
- Links for employment after graduation

The Employer's Role

The employer will actively support the student in their learning by:

- Working with the Foundation Degree provider to define a clear role for the placement student, which will enable them to apply what they have learnt to practical situations
- Appointing a placement supervisor, who has responsibility for the student throughout their placement and who will monitor their progress. The employer should also ensure the supervisor has access to sufficient training and support to enable them to successfully carry out the role.
- Making workplace resources available to the student and allowing the student to use business information in case studies for their assignments (within agreed limits of confidentiality)
- Ensuring that staff working alongside the student are briefed about the student's objectives so they can offer support if required
- Providing the support of a mentor (in addition to that of a supervisor), who can offer the student advice and assistance
- Treating the student as a valued and respected member of staff, and helping them to fully integrate into the organisation
- Being aware of any problems or difficulties facing the student and seeking the support of the Foundation Degree provider where required, so that issues may be addressed
- Allowing visiting tutors access to the student and their supervisor at pre-arranged times



Practical Considerations

Insurance

Throughout their programme of study, the Foundation Degree provider is responsible for the health, safety and welfare of all students. Whilst the student is working on placement this duty of care is shared with your organisation. All organisations in the UK must hold employer's liability insurance, which classifies work experience or placement students as employees. Therefore in the event of an accident at work the student is covered in the same way as an organisation's employees. Although it is not a legal requirement, all reputable employers in the UK should also have a current public liability policy, which will protect the student against claims brought against the placement provider by other third parties. Before the start of the placement, we ask all employer organisations to provide copies of their above insurance policies.

Health and Safety

The Foundation Degree provider has a duty to ensure that any students on placement are not exposed to risks to their health and safety. We ask all employers to inform the student at the start of their placement about the health and safety regulations that apply to their premises, including fire exits, emergency procedures, accident reporting policies, and the risks and precautions relating to the student's specific role. Employers are also asked to provide a copy of their current Health and Safety policy.

Criminal Records Disclosure

If a work placement involves working with under 18 year olds, a student will need to have obtained satisfactory clearance through the Criminal Records Bureau. Individual Foundation Degrees may be subject to other specific conditions and regulations. Please contact your partner educational institution for further details.

Working Hours

The number of hours worked by the student will be agreed between the employer and the Foundation Degree provider before the start of the placement, but generally this will not exceed eight hours per day or more than five consecutive days out of seven.

Confidentiality

Employers should brief students regarding any confidentiality requirements relating to business information at the start of their placement. This is particularly relevant where students may need to make business case studies for course based assignments.

The Foundation Degree Provider's Role

The Foundation Degree provider will support students and employers by:

- Helping employers understand the requirements of the student and ensuring the work placement is appropriate to the needs and capabilities of the student
- Engaging in the periodic review of the work-based learning experiences offered by the employer, to ensure that they link well with the theoretical training
- Ensuring the student is fully prepared for the work placement and is briefed on how to conduct themselves during the placement
- Ensuring the student is fully aware of attendance requirements and submission dates for assignments
- Responding to the needs and concerns of both the employer and the student by providing support and guidance
- Providing appropriate resources to support the student in their private study
- Providing support, training and assessment for workplace mentors

There also are many other ways you can be involved with Foundation Degrees. You could support our programmes by:

Assisting with the design and development of Foundation Degrees

Mentoring students on work placements

Allowing student groups to visit your workplace to see how your industry or business functions at first hand

Providing students with live projects

Giving guest lectures or presentations about the industry in which you work

To contact us about offering a work placement or to learn more about getting involved with Foundation Degrees in other ways please call 01225 386513, email learningpartnerships@bath.ac.uk or visit www.bath.ac.uk/learning-partnerships