



Transition Year Work Experience

Introduction

Work experience in Transition Year is the first taste many students have of the world of work, and it can be a real eye-opener. It can persuade some to pursue a career in their chosen field of work experience; it can convince others that that line of work is not for them. Whatever the experience, it is an invaluable one and for many students, it is their part-time job for years to come. So, we encourage students to research and choose wisely.

The aim of work experience is to obtain an insight into the daily tasks and responsibilities of an active working environment. Employers support our students in this important first step into the world of work by allowing them to experience the normal day-to-day activities of their business. These valuable experiences have been shown to be very influential in the choices students make at the beginning of their career path. Work placements allow students to not only learn about the world of work and explore possible career options but also to actively develop skills for future enterprise and employability.

Information for Students

Sourcing Work Placements

It is the responsibility of the student to source their own employment. Students should source two different types of work placements to maximise their learning experience. Many well-known organisations and public bodies run Transition Year work experience programmes every year. They usually have an application process, an early closing date and a lot of interested applicants. See www.ty.ie and [CareersPortal](#).

Students will be informed in the World of Work module of assignments they will need to undertake before, during, and after the work experience, e.g., logbooks or diaries in the e-portfolio. Work Experience involves students participating in the daily work of their chosen area. This is a hands-on placement and students are expected to perform some basic workplace activities, while striving to develop their skills in the process.

Advantages of work experience:

- Offers insight into the daily tasks and responsibilities of an active work environment.
- Helps to develop and improve a student’s personal, interpersonal, and organisational skills.
- Offers the opportunity to interact with new people in an independent and mature manner, and often requires dealing with customers or the public from a professional standpoint for the first time.
- Provides experience of the typical working hours, levels of pressure and responsibilities of the position.
- Students can make contacts for future work, gain experience for use in their CV, and acquire referees.
- The experience of the ‘real’ world can help motivate students to be more responsible and ambitious on returning to school.

Work Shadowing

Work Shadowing involves closely observing someone at work doing a role rather than taking on the working role itself. It can give excellent insight into what a job involves and the skills it requires. It is, however, unlikely that your child will develop their own skills or have the opportunity to make any contacts which might benefit them when looking for future work. Typically, work shadowing is shorter than a work experience, generally lasting a single day.

Advantages of work shadowing:

- Offers opportunities to experience positions that would not normally be available to do work experience in, e.g., Law, Social Work.
- May offer the opportunity to experience several careers as the placements are shorter.
- There is normally time allocated to allow questions and discuss observations with staff, and so it provides an opportunity to develop interpersonal and communication skills.
- Excellent opportunity to develop and grow listening and observation skills, and at the same time pick up a good sense of what the work is like. In terms of finding out what it is like to work in a new and different environment, it is usually recommended that students do not opt to work in a family business or where another family member is working. However, if a student has a family business, perhaps they could offer a placement to another student. We hope that despite the pandemic, work experience can proceed as normal for students this academic year.



Dates

The dates for work experience are as follows:

Week 1: Monday 18th - Friday 22nd October (the week prior to the mid-term break)

Week 2: Monday 14th - Friday 18th February (the week prior to the mid-term break)

Week 3: Monday 4th - Friday 8th April (Volunteering – more information to follow)

Students should start the job hunt early. When starting the job hunt, students should make sure to have their CVs ready. (Students will prepare CVs in the World of Work module) Then they should approach shops, businesses, organisations where they would like to work. Be prepared for refusal, but do not give up!

If a student is experiencing any difficulty with their work, they should immediately contact Lauren, the coordinating teacher. It is the responsibility of each student to give Lauren completed forms with details of their work experience.

To complete the learning process, it is important for students to have the opportunity to reflect on their experience and what they gained from it. This will take the form of evaluation worksheets that they will complete in their digital portfolio or in booklet form. Students are also encouraged to present a summary of their experience to the whole class as it develops many core skills as well as providing insight into the working life of a variety of career areas to all students. Students should also write 'Thank You' letters to the employers.

Participation in work experience programmes form part of a student's overall assessment at the end of a school year. Students' diaries and reports, employers' reports and perhaps notes made by a teacher will form part of the assessment. In addition, the assessment should reflect the effort a student has put into the whole process from preparation to evaluation.

Important documents

Important documents for students are:

- Letter to Employers Appendix 1
- Work Experience Placement Form Appendix 2



Work Experience Information for Parents and Guardians

How parents can help:

There is a lot that parents and guardians can do to support their child during work placements. While it is an exciting experience for most students, it can also be daunting and parental support and encouragement can contribute significantly to the potential success of the placement.

Below is a list of things to consider during your child's placement.

Before the placement, parents or guardians should ensure that their child:

- Knows where they are going, how to get there and the duration of the journey to work.
- Is dressed appropriately depending on the nature of the placement.
- Has money for travel costs and lunch breaks.
- Carries any required documentation.
- Knows who to ask for when they arrive at their work placement.
- Is familiar with start and finishing times as well as any break arrangements.

During the placement, parents or guardians should ensure that their child:

- Arrives on time every day.
- Gets enough sleep – workdays are longer than school days.
- Shares with them their experiences at work every day. (Students will only receive a debriefing in school at the end of the placement, so the opportunity to share daily experiences and receive encouragement and reassurance is important.)
- Completes their diary every day.

If your child is experiencing any difficulties during placement, it is advisable to first try to get them to work through the problem themselves. If they are unable to do so, please contact the TY Coordinator.

After the placement, it is recommended that parents or guardians:

- Chat with their child about what they learned from the experience and whether it influenced their career plans.
- Remind their child of the importance of saying thank you and prompt them to write to the work experience provider thanking them for the opportunity and experience gained.





Sandymount Park ETSS

Work Experience Dates: Week 1 – 18th October 2021 – 22nd October 2021

Week 2 – 14th February 2022 – 18th February 2022

To whom it may concern,

This school actively participates in a Work Placement programme for our students. As part of this programme, each student is encouraged to gain Work Experience during the school term.

The school's insurance policy has been extended to cover each pupil during this period of Work Experience.

The Pupils understand that they must comply with any conditions you lay down regarding activities, safety, and confidentiality. They are also given instructions beforehand about attendance, punctuality, and codes of behaviour in the workplace.

The school appreciates your assistance in accommodating one of our pupils. I would be most grateful if on completion of the work experience you could complete an evaluation form. Your evaluation is part of their end of year grade and provides valuable feedback for the student. If you require any further details, please do not hesitate to contact me at leccles@sandymountparketss.ie.

Thank you for your cooperation and time.

Yours sincerely,

Lauren Eccles

Transition Year Co-ordinator

Work Experience Placement Form 2021-2022

This form is to be completed by the student when the employer has confirmed that they are accepting the student.

It should not be sent to the employer. It should then be returned to your Co-ordinating teacher on or before **Friday 8th October 2021.**

Student Name	
Class	
Name of Employer	
Address of Employer	
Tel/Mobile of Employer	
Employer's Relationship to Student (e.g., Parent, friend, uncle, none....)	
What will the T.Y. Student be doing?	
Contact Person (full name)	
Work Start time	
Work Finish time	
Date placement begins	
Date placement ends	