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Written by **Seamus McConomy, Work Experience Development Officer, University of Ulster.**
Contributions by Deirdre Deery, Queen's University Belfast, are gratefully acknowledged.



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Why work experience?

Why is work experience valuable?

Today, work experience is more important than ever and, as recruiters will tell you, it's a valuable way to impress them. You can pick up critical employability skills to help you land your dream job when you leave higher education.

Employers look for more than a degree, and work experience can give you that extra edge. It helps you develop an understanding of the world of work and an awareness of your own skills and abilities. The experience may also help you get your first graduate job, as some employers use vacation, and longer placements to identify their future workforce.

You can learn from your experiences in the world of work. Work experience allows theory and practice to be closely linked. This relationship is essential to higher education, especially in engineering, business studies and vocational areas such as healthcare and hospitality.

As well as gaining vocational experience, you can use work experience to build on your strengths or work on your weaknesses. Understanding your strengths, skills and interests can be a good starting point for deciding what kind of work experience is best for you.

What recruiters say about work experience

According to most graduate recruiters, the best way of making sure you have the skills that they want is to complete an internship or industrial placement. Over 68 per cent of respondents to the gradireland *Graduate Salary & Graduate Recruitment Trends Survey 2009* believe this is a very effective way to develop core soft skills. Fortunately, many of these graduate employers offer work experience to students. While many companies operate co-operative schemes with universities such as the University of Limerick and Dublin City University, others run their own programmes over the summer months, or offer more substantial 6–12 month contracts and placements. Over 60 per cent of the employers surveyed offer work experience, and 84 per cent of these pay students for their work. The average salary for work experience placements is €351–€400 per week.



The experience gave me a clear idea of what to expect from a career in accounting, as well as a taste of what the working world is really like.

Sinead Quirke, accountancy intern

[Read more about Sinead on page 14.](#)

A placement does wonders for your confidence, and allows you to learn so much more through practical experience than you are able to just through study alone.

John Dolan, HR intern

[Read more about John on page 15.](#)

I'm enjoying my student life – why should I think about career planning?

- You will enter an increasingly competitive job market. Do you ever look around the lecture theatre and wonder where all these people who are academically similar will find employment?
- Your final year will be busy – your top priority may be your exams and project work, so you don't have much time to prepare your self-marketing strategy.
- Your course might include a placement next year and now is the time to prepare.

What could I do during my studies?

All work experience is valuable as long as you learn something from it. To get the most out of the experience it is worth taking some time to consider the type of experience you wish to gain and what you want from your working life.

Getting a good degree is vital but being able to demonstrate to an employer that you have a wide variety of other skills will improve your employment prospects. Plan now how you could build these skills.

Work experience will give you a competitive edge in the graduate employment market – it highlights to employers that you have some understanding of what it's like to work and that you will have gained some of the basic employability skills they want.

How to get a placement

Treat your work experience application as seriously as you would treat a search for a permanent job.

Where to look

Think local and see what is available in your area. Your own institution and careers service are the places to go to first; they are likely to have contacts with local employers and enterprise zones. They will probably also have a website or noticeboard with details of local job vacancies.

Networking can also help, especially if you are looking for work in the media or the arts. This is the process of exploiting contacts and other sources to find information, possibly work experience and maybe a job when you graduate. Ask yourself if you know anyone who might be useful to chat to about his or her job, or if you know anyone with a useful contact. Your university careers service will have a list of alumni or local organisations who are happy to talk with students and offer an insight into their work and possibly some work shadowing.

Applications

You should treat your work experience application with the same mentality as you would an application for a graduate job. However, you may have to adopt a slightly different approach to creating your CV at this stage, since you are seeking work experience and may have limited experience to present. You could include some of the modules or areas of study that make up your current qualification: a full list of subjects or modules will not say as much about you as a carefully selected



list of subjects or modules that you find interesting or perform well at.

You can get advice on writing CVs from your careers service and from the *gradireland* directory and **gradireland.com** website.

When to do it

The best time to get some work experience will depend a lot on your academic commitments and the other activities your institution has to offer that you might want to get involved in. It is for you to decide what your priorities are; for example, financial pressures mean many students do part-time work. But you can also develop employability skills through your involvement in societies and sports because you are bound to be involved in communication and teamwork as well as problem-solving.

find out more

Resources from your careers service

See the *gradireland* directory and **gradireland.com** website for details of employers offering work experience.

- *How to Work for a Charity* – Jan Brownfoot and Frances Wilks, Directory of Social Change
- *Doing Voluntary Work Abroad* – Mark Hempshell, How To Books
- *The Directory of Work and Study in Developing Countries* – David Leppard and Toby Milner, Vacation Work
- *Green Volunteers* – ed by Fabio Ausenda, WorldView Publishing
- *Working for a Better World* – Dervla King, Siobhan Sleeman and Barry Cannon, Comhlámh
- TARGETjobs *Work Experience*
- TARGETjobs *Work Experience Law*

Learning from experience

Make work experience work for you.



What to expect on a work placement

In the early days you are likely to receive a formal orientation. However, if you don't, the following suggestions will help you get established:

- Get to know who the other members of staff you will be working with are.
- Understand the aims and the culture of the business department where you will be working.
- Ask to be shown the work cycle in the department so you can understand the business and where your role fits in.
- Become familiar with the office procedures and workplace practices.
- Office dress: find out what is considered appropriate.
- Find out how you can start contributing: What is your role description? What are your objectives?
- What are the expected outcomes for you both during and on completion of your placement?
- How will your performance be measured?

Many people can achieve high marks in school, but the challenge is being able to apply that knowledge to the real world and succeed in doing so. Proof that they have done this in prior work experiences gives a good measure of how they will do in the future.

Eoin Mooney, Training Manager,
Geneva Trading

Practical work experience undoubtedly enhances the skills and abilities of potential graduates. It helps them in the interview process to draw examples from their previous work experience to show their competence in various areas.

Lorraine Toole, Graduate Recruitment Manager, PricewaterhouseCoopers

If you encounter any difficulties while on placement, in the first instance you should contact your college or university. Very often it is also important to speak to your supervisor or mentor at work to resolve the situation. It isn't recommended to leave your placement early without going through this process: remember that you are aiming to learn about the work environment.

Don't just look at being able to do your day-to-day responsibilities. Once you are competent in these responsibilities, get involved in other areas to develop your knowledge and skills – push yourself forward and ask questions. This will help not only your understanding of the role but also your understanding of your capabilities in the workplace.

Evaluating your experience

During a placement your line manager or mentor will assess your performance on an ongoing basis. This may be done informally and not always communicated to you. You should seek feedback on how you are doing. This will help you to be clear on how your performance is seen and you will develop a picture over the placement of how you are building your skills.

Always document what you have been doing through a log or a diary, since you will not remember everything you have achieved. At the end of your experience you can compare the skills you have developed against those listed opposite. Taking time to reflect: showing how you have changed and developed as a result is an important aspect of learning through the working environment.

Gaining skills

The key is to extract the maximum learning value from what you do and to present this in a relevant manner later. Analysis of national employer surveys suggests the desired skills for graduates fall into four areas:

Self-reliance skills: demonstrating that you can work independently.

Are you self-aware, knowing where your strengths are? Do you organise yourself and prioritise through rearranging commitments to get the job done? Have you developed a habit

of reviewing experience so that you are continually learning from it?

People skills: being able to demonstrate interpersonal skills.

Can you communicate effectively (in writing and in person)? Can you participate in team activity; do you sometimes take the lead?

General skills: those skills that could be used in any situation and across all sectors.

Are you a problem-solver who can weigh up alternatives and anticipate outcomes? Can you demonstrate flexibility? Don't forget your IT skills.

Specialist skills: these are often gained through your studies, such as subject-specific knowledge or technical skills. Do you have experience or understanding of how a particular organisation is structured or how it survives commercially?

Your future employers will want to see evidence of these skills, and work experience can help you to demonstrate them.

Relevant work experience is desirable. It shows initiative. It also shows ambition, self-financing, independence and self-development.

Maria Smiddy, HR Officer, Irish Distillers Pernod Ricard

Types of work experience

There are many options available, so you can choose one that suits your circumstances and interests.

The term 'work experience' covers a range of opportunities that enable you to experience the world of work. It can include open days with organisations, work shadowing, insight courses, internships, sandwich placements, clinical/professional practice, co-operative education programmes, summer/vacation placements, voluntary work, project work within companies, international programmes and casual/part-time work.

You know what casual or part-time work is, but what do some of the other terms mean?

Industrial placement/ sandwich course

This is typically a period of work experience that you undertake as part of a degree programme; it is usually in your third year and is spent in an organisation where the work is relevant to your degree. Other terms commonly used to describe formal work placements include co-operative education or intra placements.

Work experience or a placement as part of your course is a valuable opportunity to learn from professionals at work and put the theory you study into practice. A placement helps develop personal and interpersonal skills, fosters self-motivation, sharpens analytical skills, enhances subject knowledge and subject-specific skills, and provides an insight into what makes businesses function. Being in a real situation also



provides an enhanced understanding of the practicalities of the work environment and encourages you to consider future career paths.

The importance employers attach to work-related learning is evident by the number of students who are offered a permanent job after graduation on the basis of a successful placement. Support in preparing for and finding a placement is available from your careers service or placement office.

Internship

This is sometimes confused with an industrial placement; the main difference is that an internship is used as part of a protracted recruitment process. A student who has undertaken work for a company could be selectively recruited based on their performance.

Professional practice and training

Maybe you want to work in a profession such as healthcare, law or teaching. Work-based learning for these is a compulsory part of the programmes or can be undertaken after academic study; this prepares trainee professionals with relevant, realistic and quality learning opportunities. Students are required to undertake and demonstrate their competence for practice in a number of different field settings or placements.

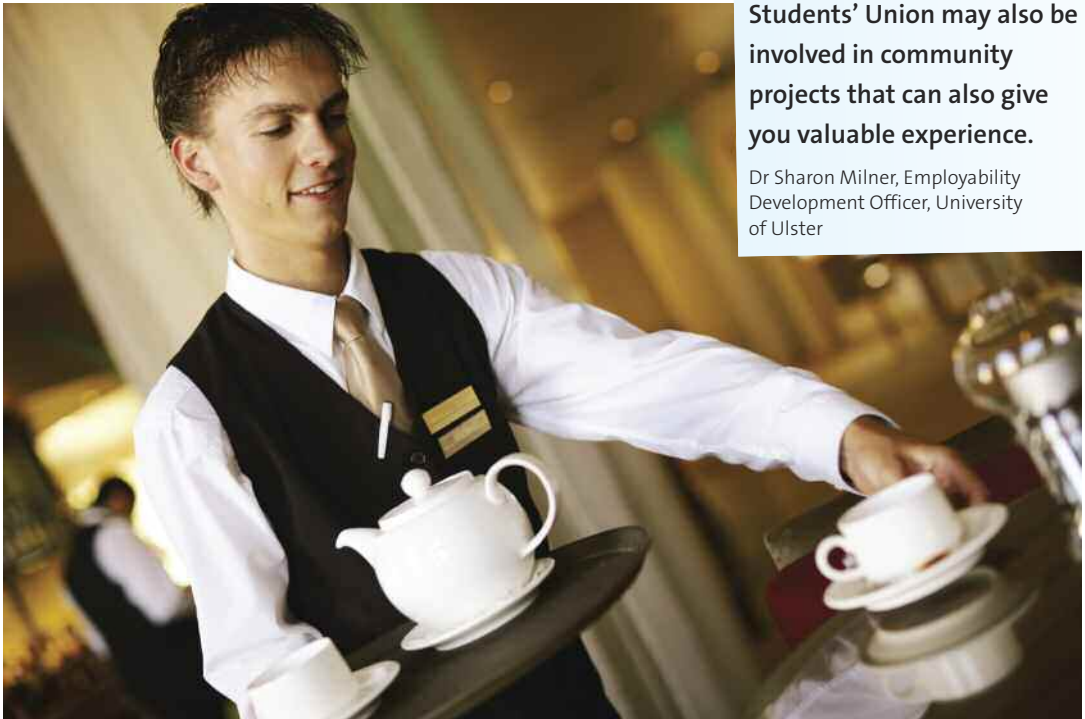
Your higher education institution may work closely with local employers and other agencies to set up placements offering excellent learning facilities and support to students who will enter these types of profession as graduates with eligibility for professional recognition.

International exchange

This is a period of time spent abroad in a reciprocal arrangement with a similar institution and usually organised or facilitated by a central body. The focus of such an exchange is often academic (studying part of your degree overseas) but can include work experience. See pages 12–13 for more on working and studying abroad.

If you don't have the opportunity to go on a work placement, there are a number of other ways that you can gain a wide range of transferable skills. For example, you could undertake voluntary work or get a part-time job. Your Students' Union may also be involved in community projects that can also give you valuable experience.

Dr Sharon Milner, Employability Development Officer, University of Ulster



Part-time work

Most students work part time in order to earn some cash to help fund their way through university. It is therefore very easy to see part-time work as a menial necessity for financial survival rather than as a learning opportunity. However, providing you realise the value of the skills you are developing, it is possible to turn casual work to your advantage for your future career.

The most important thing to remember is that all work gives you some experience, including bar work, volunteering and Saturday jobs. Like any other work experience, these will give you 'business awareness' and an understanding of how organisations work, and being able to articulate what you understand about work environments will contribute to your future success.

Think ahead and remember that when you are looking for work you will need to give the names of referees. Employers welcome evidence that someone fits well into the workplace.

Vacation work/courses

Make the most of long summer holidays by gaining paid work experience. Don't forget that some of the biggest seasonal employers such as department stores, supermarkets and hotels are also among the biggest graduate recruiters. A vacation job could lead you to your graduate career.

Vacation courses are an excellent way not only to show a company that you would be a suitable future employee but also to help in your future career decisions. Depending on the organisation, these programmes may be open to students of any discipline. A variety of employers offer such courses including Ernst & Young, Citi, Mars and Unilever. Vacation courses take place at various times of the year including Christmas, Easter and

summer, but you need to apply early. Keep a look out for where these are advertised.

Working for smaller organisations

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) might not immediately spring to mind when thinking of work experience providers. However, a large percentage of business is conducted in companies that employ fewer than 250 people, so you're more likely to find relevant work experience with one of them.

There are many attractions to working in a smaller organisation. For a start, your chances of early responsibility and independence are much greater. Because they're not exactly awash with staff, you can find yourself doing real work that actually makes a difference to the company.

find out more

Working for a smaller organisation

- FÁS www.fas.ie
- Irish Small and Medium Enterprises Association www.isme.ie
- Small Firms Association www.sfa.ie
- Invest NI www.investni.com
- Enterprise Northern Ireland www.enterpriseni.com
- The Prince's Trust www.princes-trust.org.uk

Work experience after graduation

It is best if you can do something before you leave the support network at your institution. Sometimes the eligibility requirements will bar you from some options after you leave study, as you may have to be a full-time student to be allowed to participate in some programmes. See below for organisations that provide

opportunities to get work experience after you graduate.

find out more

Organisations offering work experience after graduation

- www.introprogramme.com, www.ezprogramme.com, www.parity.net/plus
- A range of graduate management programmes
- FÁS – Overseas Graduate Programme www.fas.ie (click on quick links and chose Overseas Graduate Programme)
- Enterprise Ireland – International Internship Programme www.enterprise-ireland.com/iip
- Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC) – Export Orientation Programme www.ibec.ie/eop
- ICT Ireland Graduate Placement Programme www.ictireland.ie Internships and graduate placements in the IT and engineering sector

Other options

Ask your careers service about programmes that place students in a primary, secondary or special school, especially if you intend training to teach in the future. There are many schemes for science or engineering students that enable you to put specialist skills to work by carrying out a project or piece of research, perhaps for local voluntary and community groups or a developing business.

Explore what is available within your own institution. Your institution could help you achieve a recognised award for your extra-curricular activities and part-time employment. Explore this option with your careers service or placement office.

Voluntary work

Voluntary work is not only worthwhile and enjoyable but also helps to provide useful experience for the future.



There are many different ways of getting involved in voluntary work, from helping out at the local primary school to befriending someone who has mental health difficulties. Organisations in the community really value the help given to them by students.

Voluntary work ranges from administration and campaigning to practical support, advice and

counselling. There are opportunities for short and long-term involvement. Provided that you can show reliability, commitment, enthusiasm, patience and flexibility, you could be involved in very interesting projects alongside professionals who will provide you with support and may act as referees when you apply for employment.

Benefits of voluntary work

- It provides work experience that can be added to your CV.
- It provides employers with evidence of interpersonal skills and self-reliance.
- It allows you to 'give something back to society'.
- The voluntary sector is expanding rapidly and organisations are interested in recruiting more graduates. Having previous experience as a volunteer may give you an advantage at the selection stage.
- Some professions, such as social work, clinical psychology and teaching, require you to have a knowledge and understanding of what the work entails. Relevant voluntary work can provide the experience required.

Short-term voluntary work

Many organisations welcome students and graduates for a semester or an academic year. Check with your local advice/information centres or the public library. Many organisations offer training to help you cope and some provide courses in counselling skills. See 'find out more' for useful websites.

Long-term voluntary work

Residential voluntary work can be the easiest as it provides accommodation, food and travel expenses. Often you get pocket money or local wages if working abroad. You work closely within a well-supported team of like-minded individuals.

Volunteering abroad

Working overseas gives you the chance to demonstrate skills like adaptability, resilience and independence. Always check with the Department of Foreign Affairs (<http://foreignaffairs.gov.ie>) or the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (www.fco.gov.uk) for Northern Ireland when going overseas to be sure your destination is considered safe.

You will find specialist organisations set up to provide support, training and information. They act as a one-stop shop for voluntary agencies and maintain a database of current opportunities. They also provide training for volunteers, which can lead to recognised qualifications.

Why would I volunteer?

Even after your academic study you may still be uncertain about what to do next. You may want to travel abroad or get experience in a career area before specialising. You may also be motivated by the opportunity to make life better for others or to 'give something back'.

Where do I start?

Research the causes important to you – look at groups or organisations that work with issues you feel strongly about. Consider the skills you have to offer – many voluntary organisations will try to match your skills and knowledge to their needs. Be aware you may have to attend an interview or fill out an application form. Vetting procedures may be undertaken in the interests of children and 'at risk' populations, which the organisation has a legal responsibility to consider.

You should have questions too: ask for written information about the charity's programmes, finances and their credentials. Make certain you are comfortable with their fundraising methods and policies on expenditure of funds.

If you wish to develop a particular skill, look for a charity or volunteer group with a job profile that suits your aims and will incorporate supervision or appraisal sessions to assess your development. See below for some useful websites.

find out more

Voluntary work at home

- Volunteering Ireland www.volunteeringireland.com Supporting voluntary action in the Republic of Ireland
- Activelink www.activelink.ie See the Community Exchange section and also the Irish Links section which has links to not-for-profit organisations
- Do-it! www.do-it.org.uk Covers Northern Ireland (mainly Volunteer Bureaux generated vacancies)
- Voluntary Service International www.vsi.ie Promoting social justice and intercultural understanding.
- Simon Communities of Ireland www.simon.ie Working with homeless people in Ireland
- Suas Educational Development www.suas.ie Suas supports volunteer and education projects throughout Ireland and overseas
- Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action www.nicva.org An umbrella body for voluntary, community and charitable groups in Northern Ireland

Voluntary work abroad

- i-to-i www.i-to-i.com A non-profit volunteer travel organisation running accredited TEFL courses and volunteer placements worldwide
- Jesuit Sli Eile volunteer programme www.sli-eile.com
- VSO www.vso.ie or www.vso.org.uk Seeks a wide range of volunteers for projects worldwide
- Volunteering Options (Comhlámh) www.volunteeringoptions.org

Time out and international placements

Time out or an international placement can give you useful experience.

Taking a break from study is one way of broadening your horizons but there is a danger of wasting time if you have not planned it properly. It is essential to explore why you want to take time out and what you would like to gain from it so as to make the most of your time. Your reasons could be financial; health-related; to do with emotional/ personal circumstances; to retake part of your course; or, of course, to gain work experience.

Some people take a year out to decide what they want to do with their lives while others know exactly what they want to do but need relevant experience to get onto qualifying courses. The main ways that people take time out are structured work/travel programmes; teaching English as a foreign language; and expeditions and volunteering overseas.

Work and travel exchange programmes

Organisations such as USIT, the Council for International Educational Exchange and BUNAC organise programmes in a wide range of countries. They help with visas, job listings and offer support and advice for people wanting to work for three to twelve months.

Teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL)

This is a great way to spend time abroad as many countries

have English language schools. It's useful for learning a new language or brushing up on one you have already studied.

Expeditions and voluntary work

If you have skills that would be useful to a developing community you can consider volunteering (see 'Voluntary Work' on page 10).

International placements

Work Abroad and Study Abroad programmes suit students who dream of taking their academic abilities to foreign lands.

Every year, many students take the plunge and undertake an international placement experience. The main destinations are throughout North and South America, Europe, Asia and Australia. International/overseas

find out more

Organisations offering international work experience

- AIESEC www.aiesec.org
- Camp America www.campamerica.com
- Enterprise Ireland www.enterpriseireland.com
- Export Orientation Programme www.ibec.ie/eop
- FÁS Overseas Graduate Programme www.fas.ie
- IAESTE – International Association Exchange of Students and Technical Experience www.iaeste.ie and www.iaeste.org.uk
- Leonardo da Vinci www.leonardo.eu EU placements
- Washington–Ireland Program www.wiprogram.org
- Lattitude Global Volunteering www.lattitude.org.uk
- Volunteering opportunities for 17–25 year and Ireland
- Skillshare International www.skillshare.org

Advice on travelling abroad

- Foreign and Commonwealth Office www.fco.gov.uk
- Department of Foreign Affairs <http://foreignaffairs.gov.ie>

Tips for a successful break

- Talk to your careers adviser about the options.
- Research your options carefully.
- Clarify your motivations and what you hope to get out of your time out.
- Check government websites for destinations to avoid and ones that are safe.
- Keep a record of your experiences and the skills you have gained.



An international experience offers you all the advantages of regular work experience and also gives you opportunity to see the world and experience other cultures and work environments.

programmes offering opportunities to students are extensive, many of which focus on summer/vacation or 'adventure' type placements.

An international experience offers you all the advantages of regular work experience and also gives you the opportunity to see the world and experience other cultures and work environments. As well as being a great way of becoming fluent in another language, it shows your ability to be independent. For lots of students, international experience has provided a chance to do something different. What's more, it is an interesting addition to your CV and can give you a competitive advantage when you're applying for graduate jobs.

Finding opportunities

The internet makes it easy to organise work overseas and most organisations allow you to apply online for an information pack to be sent to you. Remember to find out:

- Information from other participants – is there an online forum?
- How long the company has existed
- Examples of successful programmes
- Cancellation terms for contracts – will you lose a deposit?
- Whether travel insurance is included
- What support is provided while you are away – is there an established network?

find out more

Organisations offering work and travel exchange programmes

- BUNAC www.bunac.org Working holidays
- USIT www.usit.ie
- Council on International Education Exchange www.ciee.org

My work experience

Four students talk about their placements and internships.

'A taste of the working world'

Name Sinead Quirke

Education BComm (2006)

Work experience Summer

Internship with
PricewaterhouseCoopers

Currently Graduate Trainee,
PricewaterhouseCoopers



I decided to apply to PricewaterhouseCoopers Summer Internship Programme as I was unsure of what career I wanted to pursue once I finished university and accounting held some appeal. I wanted to see what different firms had to offer and I wanted to make sure that accountancy was for me before undertaking the commitment required of a three-year training contract.

My internship role was similar in nature to the work that new starting graduates do when they join the firm. I was placed in the Assurance practice and worked as part of a team, although each of us was generally given our own work to be completed to set deadlines on a wide range of projects. This involved liaising and dealing with lots of different clients and financial institutions. The work was full time over a period of three months in the summer before my final year at university.

A taste of the working world

The highlight of my internship has to be the people I worked with: I made so many friends during my three months. What I took away from the experience was the knowledge that I will never stop learning; on each new project there's always something new to learn as no two assignments are the same. For that reason, it is vital to be open to new experiences and to be prepared to learn from them.

After the summer internship I decided that I wanted to apply to PricewaterhouseCoopers for my accounting training contract. The experience was helpful because it gave me a clear idea of what to expect from a career in accounting, as well as a taste of what the working world is really like.

'Learning new design skills'

Name Elaine Mitchell

Degree BSc Interactive
Multimedia Design (2009)

Work experience Brett Martin
Ltd



During my industrial placement year I was a Junior Designer/Programmer at a multi-site plastics manufacturing company. The job was advertised to everyone on my degree programme and I was attracted to the opportunity because it allowed me to use the programs I had already been studying, such as Photoshop, along with HTML and CSS languages.

In my role I was responsible for updating various sections of the company's websites, ensuring that all editorial, design layout and technical guidelines were followed. I was able to undertake other duties such as creating CD-ROMs, online surveys and e-mail shots and re-designing the website. I created a CD-ROM that is used worldwide and contains brochures illustrating the company's products in different languages. Working for a large company developed my communication and design skills – I often consulted people in various other departments to gather feedback.

When I first started my placement I was given training in teamwork skills and also in asp.net, a programming language that was essential to my work. The person who trained me was a graduate from the same degree I am studying. I didn't realise I was already part of the IT industry network; knowing this made it easier to settle into the job.

Through this experience I learned what it is like to work as a web designer in a marketing department and also in an industry that was new to me. I've gained experience that will make me stand out from other Interactive Multimedia Design students and the placement helped me confirm that I want to be a web designer.

'Learning through practical experience'

Name John Dolan

Degree BA Human Resource Management, Liverpool John Moores University (2011)

Work experience Twelve-month placement at Waterways Ireland, Enniskillen, Ireland (2009/2010)



I've just started my placement year in the HR department of Waterways Ireland. During this time I'll be looking at all the different aspects that are involved in HR, including the company's policies and procedures, the recruitment and selection process and the HR Management System (CORE).

I completed three days of work experience with the company while I was at school, and that initial experience confirmed my desire to work in HR. When I saw an opportunity to come back here, I jumped at the chance.

I'm quite lucky as my parents live in Enniskillen, so I'm staying with them this year. I'm effectively doing the same job as the clerical officers. It's a paid placement, and I'm treated as a full-time member of staff. I get the same annual leave and I'm on the same flexitime system.

Self assessment

I've only been on my placement five weeks so far but I love it! Daily tasks include updating the personnel files of each employee, answering phones and dealing with staff issues such as special leave requests. Over the course of this year, I have to keep 12 learning logs, one for each month – rather like a diary. I record what I do on a daily basis and will hand it in to my tutor at the end of the year as a piece of coursework. This will allow me to 'self assess' the value of the experience, while enabling my tutor to measure my learning. My tutor is due to visit me twice during my placement and I'm also expected to return to Liverpool in January for a 'mid-placement conference' to keep my tutors updated on my progress.

One of the best bits for me so far was going to a careers fair at the University of Ulster. We were trying to recruit students for my intern position next year. It was great being able to advise other young people and to be on the recruiting end rather than the student end for a change!

Learning through practical experience

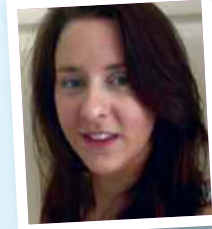
Before I came here I had very little experience of working life – even answering the phone was daunting. A placement like this does wonders for your confidence and allows you to learn so much more through practical experience than you are able to just through study alone.

'The travel aspect was a major appeal'

Name Sinead McIntyre

Degree BSc Hospitality Management, Dublin Institute of Technology (2010)

Work experience Six-month hospitality internship in a five-star hotel, Wellington, New Zealand (2009)



For my third-year internship placement, I spent six months in New Zealand working in a five-star boutique hotel. Although I had no idea what I'd be doing, the experience exceeded all my expectations.

I began organising my trip towards the end of my second year (the placement began in the second semester of my third year). DIT had connections with some US resorts, but these didn't appeal. I got in touch with Intern Options and after discussing my options with them, I decided to go to New Zealand. I found having the safety net of an organisation like Intern Options reassuring. DIT was also very supportive – no one from college had ever travelled that far for an internship although I think they will in the future.

Access all areas

I'd worked in hotels before, but always in their sales and HR departments. As I was able to experience all the different departments, I developed an in-depth understanding of how a hotel is run. As well as overall inductions to the hotel, for each area I worked in I had a day of training. To begin with I worked in housekeeping – this way I got to know my way around. Then I moved to reception where I worked full-time for five months. I also worked in the restaurant whenever I could.

During my time on reception, the morning was taken up with checking guests out and keeping in contact with housekeeping staff. I also had to keep on top of the cash and tills, answer the phone, take reservations, and deal with guests checking in early. I learnt a lot – reception really is the hub of a hotel.

I organised my own accommodation and lived in a backpackers' hostel for the first month. Although in some ways this wasn't ideal as I was working full time, I absolutely loved it! After a while though it was very nice to move into a flat where I didn't have to share a room with six others!

Living away from home

The travel aspect was one of the major appeals of my internship – I visited Hong Kong and Vietnam on my way back to Ireland. For me it was about more than just the work: it was about living far away from home, trying to find my own way and learning from the experience.

Companies offering work experience

This table shows all the advertisers in this year's *gradireland* directory that offer work experience. See the A–Z section starting on page 20 of this publication for more information about other organisations offering placements and internships.

organisation name	WHEN				NUMBER number of places	DURATION duration	APPLICATIONS			
	Summer Easter	Christmas	All year Placement				application deadline	CV & letter	Employer Application Form online	e-mail
Abbott Ireland	✓		✓	✓						✓
Accenture										✓
Allergan Pharmaceuticals Ireland										
Analog Devices			✓	✓	20-30	5-11 months	Sept-Jan	✓		✓
Asidua	✓			✓	5+	summer or one year				✓
Baker Tilly Ryan Glennon				✓						✓
BCM Hanby Wallace	✓					four weeks				✓
Beckman Coulter							ongoing			✓
The Boston Consulting Group	✓					about eight weeks	29/01/10	✓		✓
Canada Life										
Central Bank & Financial Services Authority of Ireland	✓					3 months				
Citco Fund Services (Ireland) Ltd			✓		varies	2 months – 1 year	ongoing	✓		
Colgate-Palmolive			✓				open	✓	✓	✓
Dairygold – Agri Division				✓	three	eight months	25/09/09	✓		✓
Deloitte	✓			✓		3-9 months	Feb 2010			✓
Deloitte (UK)	✓				120		open			✓
Delta Index Limited										✓
EirGrid	✓			✓		3-6 months				✓
Enterprise Rent-A-Car			✓		multiple	various	ongoing			✓
Ericsson Ireland	✓		✓	✓	variable	minimum 3 months	ongoing			✓
Ernst & Young	✓			✓						✓
Fáilte Ireland				✓						✓
FGS										
FSA	✓			✓	up to five	ten weeks	see website			✓
Hewlett Packard				✓	120	up to 13 months				✓
Hilti Fastening Systems Ltd	✓			✓	ongoing	various				✓

organisation name	WHEN				NUMBER number of places	DURATION duration	APPLICATIONS application deadline	CV & letter Employer Application Form	online e-mail
	Summer Easter	Christmas	All year Placement						
IBM Ireland	✓		✓	✓	20	11 months	open		✓
ICON Clinical Research	✓		✓	✓		3–9 months			✓
Information Mosaic	✓	✓	✓	✓	various	various		✓	✓
Intel Ireland Limited				✓					✓
International Fund Services (Ireland) Limited	✓			✓		3, 6 or 9 months		✓	✓
i-to-i TEFL Training Organisation	✓	✓	✓	✓	dependent on country	3–12 months, contract extensions possible			
KBC Bank Ireland Plc	✓			✓	numerous	6–9 months	ongoing	✓	✓
Kerry Group				✓	10–20				
KPMG	✓			✓	50+	summer: 10–12 wks placements: 6–9 mths	March 2010		✓
Marks & Spencer									
Microsoft	✓			✓	50–60	3, 6 or 12 months	Nov 2009		✓
Morgan Stanley	✓			✓		various	31/12/09		✓
NYSE Euronext				✓	6 minimum	9–12 months		✓	✓
Ocuco Ltd	✓			✓	6 +/-	3–9 months	none	✓	✓
PricewaterhouseCoopers	✓			✓		10 wks – 6 mths			✓
Procter & Gamble	✓				1–2	three months	31/03/10		✓
Quintiles Ireland Limited	✓			✓	15	flexible duration			✓
RPS Group	✓			✓	variable	variable	continuous	✓	✓
SAP SSC (Ireland) Ltd.	✓			✓	up to 20	6–12 months			✓
Schrader Electronics Ltd	✓			✓	8+	up to 12 months	ongoing	✓	✓
SITA Inc	✓			✓	5	one year for intern placements		✓	✓
Smith & Williamson Freaney	✓				2	6–12 weeks	2 April 2010	✓	
Special Olympics Ireland				✓	✓	flexible			✓
State Street International (Ireland) Limited	✓			✓		3, 6 or 9 months		✓	✓
Stryker Instruments				✓	varies	varies	continuous	✓	✓
Susquehanna International Group Limited	✓	✓	✓	✓			all year round	✓	✓
Takeda Ireland Limited	✓			✓	Varies	3–9 months	open		✓
Unilever									
Watson Wyatt	✓								
Wyeth Biotech						varies			



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student opportunities worldwide



work

www.iaeste.org.uk

Are you studying engineering, science, architecture or technology? If the answer is 'yes', IAESTE can offer you paid, course related, international work experience in one of over 80 countries around the world.



teach

www.britishcouncil.org/languageassistants

Do you have a passion for languages? Would you enjoy the challenge of teaching English abroad? The Language Assistants programme spans five continents placing people in 18 countries around the world. You'll improve your language skills, discover a new community and build your sense of independence.



study

www.britishcouncil.org/northernireland-education-intstudlinks-bei

The Business Education Initiative gives any HND or degree student the opportunity to study for a year in a college in the USA. You'll study business and management related subjects but you don't need to be from a business background to apply.

Get a once in a lifetime experience and give your CV a boost at the same time

THE BRITISH COUNCIL HAS THREE EXCITING PROGRAMMES SPANNING THE GLOBE TO CHOOSE FROM. EXPERIENCE A NEW AND EXCITING CULTURE, MEET OTHER STUDENTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD AND IMPROVE YOUR EMPLOYABILITY FOR THE FUTURE – WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural relations.

1,000s of vacancies 100s of employers

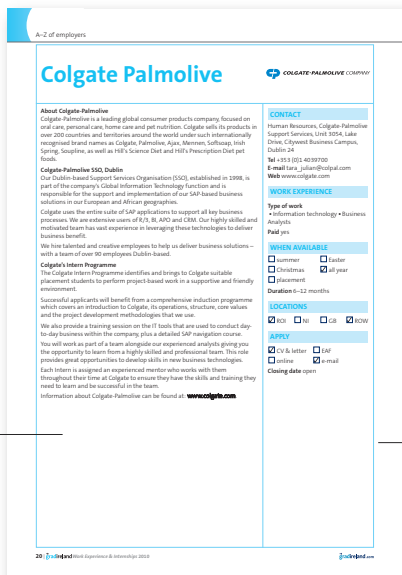


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register now
for job alerts,
careers advice,
employer & sector
profiles & more!

→ gradireland.com
first for graduate jobs and careers advice

A-Z of employers



Use the A-Z directory to research advertisers

Essential contact information

Don't forget the advertisements that you find throughout gradireland *Work Experience & Internships* – these give additional vital clues as to how an organisation views itself.

- And for further help with searching for jobs, go to gradireland.com/work-experience

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KEY TO A-Z SECTION

Locations

- ROI = Republic of Ireland
- NI = Northern Ireland
- ROW = Rest of the world
- GB = Great Britain

Means of application

- EAF = employer application form

Remember to quote gradireland *Work Experience & Internships* on your job application

Colgate Palmolive



About Colgate-Palmolive

Colgate-Palmolive is a leading global consumer products company, focused on oral care, personal care, home care and pet nutrition. Colgate sells its products in over 200 countries and territories around the world under such internationally recognised brand names as Colgate, Palmolive, Ajax, Mennen, Softsoap, Irish Spring, Soupline, as well as Hill's Science Diet and Hill's Prescription Diet pet foods.

Colgate-Palmolive SSO, Dublin

Our Dublin-based Support Services Organisation (SSO), established in 1998, is part of the company's Global Information Technology function and is responsible for the support and implementation of our SAP-based business solutions in our European and African geographies.

Colgate uses the entire suite of SAP applications to support all key business processes. We are extensive users of R/3, BI, APO and CRM. Our highly skilled and motivated team has vast experience in leveraging these technologies to deliver business benefit.

We hire talented and creative employees to help us deliver business solutions – with a team of over 90 employees Dublin-based.

Colgate's Intern Programme

The Colgate Intern Programme identifies and brings to Colgate suitable placement students to perform project-based work in a supportive and friendly environment.

Successful applicants will benefit from a comprehensive induction programme which covers an introduction to Colgate, its operations, structure, core values and the project development methodologies that we use.

We also provide a training session on the IT tools that are used to conduct day-to-day business within the company, plus a detailed SAP navigation course.

You will work as part of a team alongside our experienced analysts giving you the opportunity to learn from a highly skilled and professional team. This role provides great opportunities to develop skills in new business technologies.

Each Intern is assigned an experienced mentor who works with them throughout their time at Colgate to ensure they have the skills and training they need to learn and be successful in the team.

Information about Colgate-Palmolive can be found at: www.colgate.com.

CONTACT

Human Resources, Colgate-Palmolive Support Services, Unit 3054, Lake Drive, Citywest Business Campus, Dublin 24

Tel +353 (0)1 4039700

E-mail tara_julian@colpal.com

Web www.colgate.com

WORK EXPERIENCE

Type of work

• Information technology • Business Analysts

Paid yes

WHEN AVAILABLE

- summer Easter
 Christmas all year
 placement

Duration 6–12 months

LOCATIONS

- ROI NI GB ROW

APPLY

- CV & letter EAF
 online e-mail

Closing date open

IBEC - GRADLINK



IBEC, the Irish Business and Employers Confederation, is the national umbrella body for business in Ireland. IBEC's latest programme Grad Link is a website that matches the graduate with internship opportunities. Some of Ireland's biggest companies are involved. These internships are for all disciplines and backgrounds. This programme is open to graduates who have completed their studies in 2008 and 2009. Internships will be placed up at different points during the year and can be found at www.ibec.ie/gradlink.

After deciding the type of internship you are interested in, you can then apply directly to the company. It will then decide whether to progress your application. The aim of this programme is to provide graduates with an opportunity to gain useful workplace experience and to give you an opportunity to apply the skills you gained in college. Internships are a way of allowing graduates to gain valuable experience while applying their skills in a real-world setting. This is also a chance for you to gain experience in industry and determine if you're interested in pursuing a career. There is also an opportunity to gain a HETAC accredited qualification. The IBEC 'Futures Leaders' programme is a chance for you to gain a National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) level 7 qualification.

CONTACT

www.ibec.ie/gradlink
E-mail gradlink@ibec.ie
Web www.ibec.ie/gradlink

WORK EXPERIENCE

Type of work

- a range of internships – please check website for further details

Paid depending on internship – check website for details

Number of vacancies varies

WHEN AVAILABLE

- summer Easter
 Christmas all year
 placement

Duration approx 9 months

LOCATIONS

- ROI NI GB ROW

APPLY

- CV & letter EAF
 online e-mail

Closing date annually

i-to-i TEFL Training Organisation



A TEFL course is your passport to earning money overseas!
i-to-i is an award-winning TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) training organisation that offers paid teaching placements and internships abroad, training over 15,000 people in TEFL each year!

'You can go anywhere in the world and be nearly guaranteed a job!'
– **Claire Brazil, Slovakia**

Why TEFL?

With TEFL, people have a passport to work anywhere in the world, while earning salaries up to €1,820 per month, in addition to bonuses, flight reimbursements, complementary language classes, free fully-furnished accommodation, holiday leave and insurance for some locations.

'Instead of going into debt, I can travel all over the world and really enjoy myself'
– **Aisling Egan, South Korea**

With training done in as little as one weekend or online work, the process to find employment abroad couldn't be easier. No prior teaching experience necessary, plus i-to-i offers a free job-placement service with over 8,000 job contacts and personal in-country agents in nine countries.

With unemployment rates at a new high, now is the perfect time to jump on the TEFL bandwagon as a way to avoid pay cuts and travel the world while earning money!

CONTACT

i-to-i
Exploration House, 32 Grattan Square, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford
Tel +353 (0)58 40050
E-mail ireland@i-to-i.com
Web www.onlinetefl.com

WORK EXPERIENCE

Duration three to twelve months, contract extensions possible

LOCATIONS

ROI NI GB ROW

APPLY

CV & letter EAF
 online e-mail

Closing date ongoing recruitment

1,000s of vacancies
100s of employers



1 place to find your job

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for job alerts,
careers advice,
employer & sector
profiles & more!

KPMG



About KPMG

KPMG brings together business advisers from many different disciplines – working together to provide our clients with the cutting-edge business advice they need for their continued success. Our firm has 80 partners and more than 1,900 people in offices in Dublin, Cork, Galway and Belfast. We work with clients in all sectors of Irish business providing a range of services. The cornerstones of our business are the quality of our advice, our services and our people.

Work placement programme

Our work placement programme offers students the opportunity to join one of our business groups to work alongside KPMG professionals for a period of 6–8 months. All students follow a structured training programme which enhances the students' skills that are relevant to both a working and academic environment. The programme helps you to prepare for a career in business by allowing you to use your own initiative while working alongside a team of leading business advisors.

Summer internship programme

Thinking about a career in accountancy, but not sure what it is all about? Our summer internship programme offers you a fantastic opportunity to discover at first hand what it is like to work at KPMG and to find out more about the range of services that we provide for our clients.

You will join one of our business groups where, working alongside KPMG professionals, you will have the opportunity to learn about business and develop your business skills. During your time with us, you will follow a structured training programme aimed at enhancing skills relevant to both working and academic environments (eg CV and interview preparation, team skills, presentation skills). Your internship with KPMG aims to prepare you for a career in business through both client experience and working with a team of leading business advisers.

Where will I work?

In our Dublin, Cork and Belfast offices we have vacancies in our Audit, Tax and Advisory practices. To find out more about working in these areas go to www.kpmg.ie/careers.

Who can apply?

Our summer internship programme is open to all penultimate-year university students from any discipline. Our work placement programme is open to all students that have a work placement as part of their degree course.

How do I apply?

To apply, please complete our online application form which will be available from March 2010. For work placement programme you can apply through the careers office in your college.

For further details please contact:

Roisin Lally,
KPMG
1 Harbourmaster Place,
IFSC,
Dublin 1
gradrecruitment@kpmg.ie

CONTACT

Roisin Lally
Graduate Recruitment,
1 Harbourmaster Place, IFSC,
Dublin 1

Tel +353 (0)1 410 2323

E-mail gradrecruitment@kpmg.ie

Web www.kpmg.ie/careers

WORK EXPERIENCE

Type of work

• accountancy and financial management • banking, insurance and financial services • fund management/administration and investment banking

Paid competitive

Number of vacancies 50+

WHEN AVAILABLE

- summer Easter
 Christmas all year
 placement

Duration Summer internship:
June–September, 10–14 weeks;
Work placement: 6–8 months

LOCATIONS

- ROI NI GB ROW

APPLY

- CV & letter EAF
 online e-mail

Closing date April 2010



PricewaterhouseCoopers



About PricewaterhouseCoopers

As the leading professional services firm in Ireland, our work is hugely diverse. The PwC network employs over 155,000 people worldwide, and the Irish firm has over 2,000 people working for us in Dublin, Cork, Galway, Kilkenny, Limerick, Waterford and Wexford. Wherever you join, we have an eye-catching client list, ranging from no fewer than 70 per cent of Ireland's Top 200 Irish Companies through to medium-sized enterprises and small start-ups. We work in partnership with all our clients to create leading-edge solutions. This makes PwC the ideal employer for any budding business professional. It's our combined strengths as individuals that make us succeed as a firm: a firm that has been voted one of the top ten companies to work for in Ireland in 2008 and 2009 and the gradireland most popular graduate recruiter for 2008 and 2009.

Undergraduate opportunities

We have opportunities for undergraduates to join our assurance, tax, advisory or actuarial practices. We run programmes for talented undergraduates which allow you to experience work and life at PwC, offering you a valuable insight into our business and culture.

We offer a Placement Programme as part of your four-year degree or Co-operative Education Programme placements (Co-Op). We also offer a ten-week Summer Internship Programme to penultimate year students and a one-week Work Shadow Programme.

What we look for

To get on in a business like ours, you will need to be commercially aware, willing to take ownership of projects and relate well to clients and colleagues. In many ways, these qualities are just as important as your strong academic credentials. Your precise degree discipline certainly isn't the issue.

How to apply

We will be accepting online applications only. Please visit our website at www.pwc.com/ie/graduate to find out more about our undergraduate programmes and recruitment process.

CONTACT

Graduate Recruitment Team
One Spencer Dock
North Wall Quay
Dublin 1

Tel +353 (0)1 792 8550

E-mail ireland.graduate@ie.pwc.com

Web www.pwc.com/ie/graduate

WORK EXPERIENCE

Type of work

• assurance • tax • advisory • actuary

Paid yes

WHEN AVAILABLE

- summer Easter
 Christmas all year
 placement

Duration 10 weeks–6 months

LOCATIONS

- ROI NI GB ROW

APPLY

- CV & letter EAF
 online e-mail

Closing date please visit our website for further information



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