

Work Experience 2012

**Monday 25th June–
Thursday 5th July**

**Parent & Pupil
Guide to securing a
placement**

Some general information about Work Experience

Finding a placement should not be left to chance you need to be proactive and do something now.

The most important point to realise is that it does not have to be related in any way to a future career choice.

Whilst it may be desirable to experience an area of work you are considering you probably will not be able to do the actual job and in many cases may not even be allowed to even observe. For example the work of Doctors and Lawyers is confidential and often employers restrict access to office based tasks. Likewise jobs that appear glamorous and appealing like beauty therapy and hairdressing are hard work and tedious with cleaning and tidying the main element of the work.

These are the benefits of doing work experience:

- An opportunity to work with adults of differing ages, experience and personalities.
- An opportunity to experience life from the perspective of an employee (employer expectations, skills required to do a job, dress code, working conditions etc)
- An opportunity to experience a type of working environment (office based, practical manual, challenging, skilled, caring etc)
- An opportunity to develop and practise your personal skills
- An opportunity to rise to a challenge to prove to your self and others how mature and responsible you can be

When choosing a placement it is important to consider the following factors:

- Will you be mainly indoors or outside whatever the weather?
- Do you mind getting dirty?
- Do you want to dress smartly?
- You may be required to work longer hours (9.00 – 5.30 is typical)
- You may be given tasks that seem very simple and boring. The employer does not have time to train you in the short amount of time you are with them.

Remember you will be expected to:

- Complete the normal duties of an employee
- Work the normal hours of that type of employment
- Be supervised by older, more experienced employees

- Obey the employer's Health and Safety Regulations
- Co-operate with other staff
- Wear suitable clothing
- Make your own travel arrangements

It is a wonderful opportunity and the vast majority of our pupils return from their work experience having learnt a great deal about themselves and with a clearer understanding of what they might aspire to do in the future.

How to find a placement

Placements can be arranged in one of two ways:

OFFLINE PLACEMENTS

Find your own placement by approaching an employer with the work experience dates and asking if they will be willing to take you.

Many employers do this and they are used to this direct approach. If you have a particular career area or employer in mind it is important to start approaching them now do not leave it. Many companies only take a few pupils over the year and they do get booked up very early.

You can approach them either by letter, phone, email or in person. If you have not had a reply after 2 weeks follow up your original enquiry with a call or personal visit if appropriate. Approach more than one at a time to keep your options open.

Once an employer says yes ask them to fill in the offline placement form attached. You will also need to fill in the other personal information about yourself and have parents sign to confirm the placement.

This form is then returned to Mrs Illsley and sent to Solent EBP for the required checks.

ONLINE PLACEMENTS

You search the WEX online database for potential placements and select from the jobs shown.

The process is explained below. It is worth noting that you may not get your first choices and may be asked to reselect. Other schools across Hampshire use the same database and obviously places are taken quite quickly.

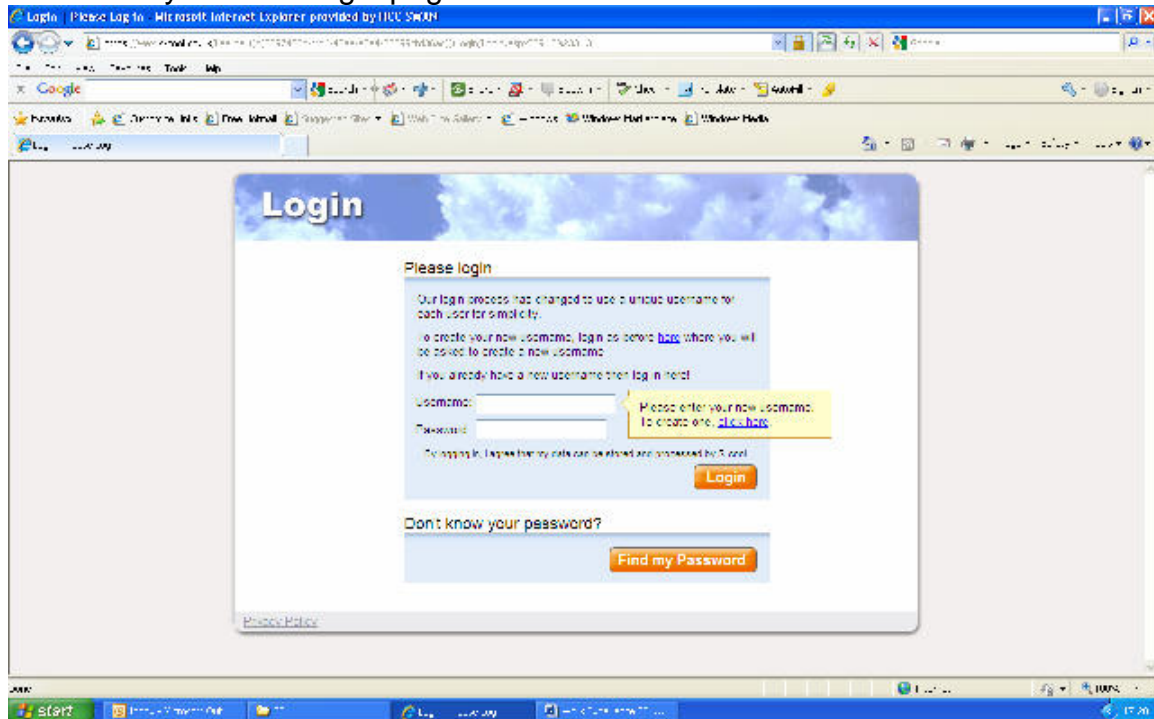
I would suggest you only use this method if you are having difficulty securing an offline placement or you are quite flexible in the type of area you work in and are prepared to travel to perhaps Southampton, Fareham, Eastleigh, Winchester or Portsmouth.

It is an excellent search tool especially if you do not have any idea what type of job you want to do.

How to use WEXonline

This is a web based search engine that requires a password to enter it. The web site is: wex.s-cool.co.uk/learner.

This takes you to the login page as shown below



Username is written in this format:
Firstname.Surname.Day.Month.Year of birth

For example Jacob.Stone.22.February.1996

You must use your full first name i.e. Christopher not Chris .**The password is set as – school1** for everyone to start with but after first login it asks you to change it. I do suggest you leave it as school1 as too many pupils forget what they have changed it to.

Once you have logged in you can then follow the instructions and use one of the search categories listed to help you find placements. When searching remember to input a distance from home that is realistic – think where you can travel to and how far it is from your home.

If you find placements that appeal you can save them in **favourites** and **apply** later or you can **apply** for them straight away.

To apply for a placement using this system you must follow these simple instructions:

- Apply for at least 4 different placements
- Print off your choices
- Ask your parent to **check and sign** to ensure you can travel to the placement and they are happy with your choice
- Bring the printed and signed placement forms to school and give them to Mrs Illsley

Mrs Illsley will then action the placements and the WEX team will begin to approach the employers on your behalf to see if they are able to take you.

You will receive messages from the WEX team informing you of your applications progress. You must log in weekly and check for messages.

Sometimes you get your first choice other times you may be unlucky and be asked to reselect further choices. It is important that if you use this method you are flexible and keep checking for messages. It can take a long time to secure a placement this way so you do need to be patient.

You CANNOT get an OFFLINE placement AND apply for a place with WEX online.

However, you can SEARCH WEX online to browse for placements before you decide which way to apply.

Once you have been offered a place online or you have given in an offline form you cannot change your mind unless;

a) you pay an administration fee of about £25 or

b) you have a very genuine reason why you would not be able to take up the placement (changing your mind because you have been offered something else is not a suitable reason) in which case you should speak to Mrs Illsley ASAP.

Some important information about placements

- All pupils are expected to participate in the work experience programme.
- As work experience coordinator Mrs Illsley is the person you should contact if you have any problems or concerns at any time during the process. She can be contacted via the regular college number 01489 892256.
- All placements have to be checked by our Education and Business Partnership, Solent EBP. The checks ensure that the employer has the correct insurance and risk assesses the work placement.
- Offline placements can be with virtually any employer as long as they have:
 - Employee Liability insurance and
 - are prepared for Solent EBP to visit them to discuss the placement and undertake a risk assessment (many employers have already had this done).
- The placement has to be within the local area. Placements outside of the UK are not permitted. Placements within the UK but outside our local authority area need to be discussed with Mrs Illsley before they can be arranged. In many cases they can be authorised but each one needs to be considered individually. Please contact her as soon as possible if this applies to you.

Important Dates

The following dates are important and need to be adhered to. Failure to meet these deadlines may result in a placement not being approved and an alternative offered. If you have secured a place do not delay in passing me the details I would prefer them earlier than these dates if possible.

- Out of area placements given to Mrs A Illsley – 2nd March 2012
- Online applications to be made and signed parental approval printouts given to Mrs A Illsley – 30th March 2012
- All other offline placements to be given to Mrs A Illsley – 30th March 2012

