

Dear Sir / Madam

SEEKING PLACEMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PLANNING GRADUATES

The School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape at Newcastle University is one of only 3 schools of planning in the UK which offers a placement year as part of its Town Planning degree programme.

The placement year is undertaken in the fourth year of the five year programme, at a point where the students have gained their BA Honours degree and developed knowledge and skills in: interpreting the environment; collating, processing and analysing information; development management; built environment design issues; the planning strategy making process; and current agendas affecting town planning in the UK. All students will have also completed their dissertation on a specialist planning related interest.

Previous students and placement employers have confirmed the value of the Year Out as being the time when both parties gain enormously from each other. When students have completed their placement year, they return to Newcastle University to undertake the Diploma in Town Planning which affords the full accreditation of the Royal Town Planning Institute. Returning students are able to develop their new specialist fields that have been nurtured during their year in professional practice.

We are now contacting you in the hope that your organisation may be in a position to consider the possibility of taking on a planning graduate for a period of approximately 12 months. Vacancies will be advertised from February 2012 and we would advise employers to hold their interviews around Easter time. However, we would be happy to circulate details of any placement opportunities that became available up until the middle of September 2012. We understand that many organisations have recently experienced significant redundancies and financial restrictions and that creating new posts in this environment can be extremely difficult. However, we believe that our student planners can often create an opportunity for an employer to secure short term professional support which can assist them on a particular project or programme. Also, we do not insist on a placement of 12 months and would be equally happy to look at 6 - 9 months full time, or a period of part time work. We would be delighted to discuss any opportunity that would give the student the chance of a gaining some planning experience in areas such as development management, regeneration, policy, tourism and conservation.

Whilst on placement, our students undertake a number of pieces of work to enable them to gain a Certificate in Planning Practice, which is a qualification unique to Newcastle University. This comprises completing a monthly logbook (similar to that required for APC purposes), a presentation and a Practice Issues Report. In many instances, the employer has found that it has been able to commission the student with a piece of research/problem solving that has been of benefit to its own planning procedures and practice.

If you would like to consider the possibility of offering a placement for one of our planning graduates, then we would be delighted to discuss this with you. Please contact Liam Fisher on 0191 2226024 email liam.fisher@ncl.ac.uk or Teresa Strachan on 0191 222 7801 email teresa.strachan@ncl.ac.uk. We would appreciate it if you could forward this message on to anyone you think might be interested in provide placement opportunities.

Yours sincerely,



Telephone: 0191 222 6024

Fax: 0191 222 8811

Email: liam.fisher@newcastle.ac.uk

Newcastle University

School of Architecture Planning and Landscape

10 Frequently Asked Questions about the Year Out Placement.

Question	Answer and additional Information
1 How long is the placement period?	<p>Traditionally, Newcastle University students would have spent a year on placement in planning practice. We recognise that securing a year's full time employment is a huge expectation in the current economic climate and we would therefore be happy to consider anything from 6 months' fulltime work upwards. Alternatively, the employer may be able to offer a longer period of part time work.</p> <p>The length of time offered should ideally be able to allow the student the chance of taking on a reasonable level of responsibility, to take some tasks through to completion and to have the opportunity to gain a good range of planning skills.</p>
2 When does the Placement period commence?	<p>Some placements start as soon as teaching ends and final assignments are submitted during May of the students' third year. Occasionally students may be invited to continue in their posts until the September of the following year, when they return to University.</p> <p>A very small percentage, who work locally, have sometimes been given the opportunity to continue to work - in a limited part-time capacity - whilst completing final year studies for the Diploma.</p>
3 Where and how does the Placement fit into the student's Town Planning training?	<p>The Royal Town Planning Institute's Accredited undergraduate programme for Town Planning at Newcastle University comprises a 3 year degree, the year out placement and then a final year Diploma. Therefore, when the students commence their Placements, they have already secured their BA degree.</p> <p>The Year Out Placement is designed to give an insight into working practice and may allow students the opportunity to experience specialist areas of town planning that may not have been covered in the formal teaching environment.</p> <p>Many students take the opportunity presented in the final Diploma year to specialise in the areas of planning that they have particularly enjoyed whilst on Placement.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <p>What aspects of planning will the student have studied at University?</p>	<p>Students on the BA degree course gain a good understanding of the Policy Planning process (Local Development Frameworks) as well as learning about the fundamental principles in Development Management. They are given the opportunity to develop GIS skills and given training in urban design. Regeneration is also a strong theme that runs throughout the degree course. In their third year the students follow an Employment Management module, where they consider the professional aspects of working as a Town Planner. A further third year module in Strategy making brings together data collection, analysis and policy formulation skills in chosen topic areas.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">5</p> <p>What sort of work should we give the Placement student?</p>	<p>The Year Out student will benefit greatly from any experience in a wide range of planning related topics. These might include: development management; policy work; conservation; tourism; regeneration; sustainability issues; economic development. As long as the work can be linked to town planning, by way of the skills or knowledge used or through interdisciplinary work with town planners, then the students will enjoy a broader perspective on how town planning works in the real world.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">6</p> <p>What does the University expect from the student/ employer during this Placement?</p>	<p>Newcastle University runs a unique programme of study for the Year Out student. This module is called the Certificate in Planning Practice.</p> <p>The University asks that the employer allows the student to attend a half-year point, 2 day conference in January, without the need for them to take annual leave.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">7</p> <p>What is the Certificate in Planning Practice (CPP)?</p>	<p>The CPP comprises three elements which are completed over the placement period: the Monthly, signed Logbook; the Presentation; and the Practice Issues Report. Regular contact is maintained between the University through the Professional Practice Tutor and the student about the CPP.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">8</p> <p>How much does the Placement student expect to earn?</p>	<p>Placement students in this current year (11/12) earn somewhere between £13,500 and £15,500 for posts outside London and approximately £16,000 - £18,000 for posts within the London area.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">9</p> <p>Who should I contact at the University?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teresa Strachan Teresa.strachan@ncl.ac.uk Professional Practice Tutor for information about the Certificate in Planning Practice • Dr. Susannah Gunn Zan.gunn@ncl.ac.uk Degree Programme Director for the CPP and the Diploma. • Liam Fisher Liam.Fisher@ncl.ac.uk Undergraduate and Placements Secretary, for all matters relating to advertising posts, recruitment and interviews.
<p style="text-align: center;">10</p> <p>How should I progress my enquiry with the University about filling a new Placement post?</p>	<p>Once prospective employers are in a position to employ a Year out student, then it would be helpful if a job description, outlining probable responsibilities and duties, could be sent to Liam Fisher. Liam will advertise the post to the students and will collate CVs and applications from those students who wish to apply and then direct them on to the employer ready for interview short listing.</p>