

The Undergraduate Placement Charter

Introduction

The aims and commitments set out in this Charter are applicable to optional 9-12 month work placements, taken as an intercalating year as a part of your academic programme.

Newcastle University recognises that extending your degree to undertake an intercalating work placement has many benefits, including:

- Improving career prospects on graduation.
- Reinforcing academic learning and improving overall academic performance.
- Development of graduate attributes sought by recruiters.
- Enhancing the University's reputation and links with external organisations.

For these reasons and more, we are committed to supporting you in having a valuable placement experience.

Aims

We aim to:

- Encourage all undergraduate students to recognise the value of a placement year.
- Support you as far as possible in helping make the most of your placement experience.
- Help you secure a suitable placement in which you will utilise your undergraduate, attributes, and help you to reflect on these through your placement module.
- Check your placement with you to ensure it meets the University's health and safety and insurance requirements.
- Help you re-integrate into your academic studies upon returning to the University.
- Encourage employers to pay a fair salary to placement students.

Where your placement cannot be supported via the University for any reason we will provide you with clear information on why this is the case and, if appropriate, help in finding an alternative. While the Careers Service will only advertise paid placements, we will offer advice and support if you wish to take an unpaid placement.

Key commitments

Prior to going on placement, Newcastle University offers a variety of support:

- Access to careers advice, guidance and information relating to placements, including:
 - online information and drop-in services
 - a wide range of placement vacancies advertised throughout the year
 - placement-focused sessions delivered within Schools and by the Careers Service.
- Clear information on the process for undertaking a placement year, including what types of placements are available and appropriate.

- A clear process, undertaken by University staff, to check health and safety, insurance and wellbeing provisions for placement students within host organisations.
- Communication with students and placement providers on risk levels, and actions required to ensure the safety of placement students at all times.
- Preparation sessions to support your initial transition from University to placement.
- An induction into the placement year module for your course, including workload requirements, deadlines, learning objectives and assessment methods.

While on placement, students can expect the following from the University:

- You will be offered a **minimum of two verbal meetings with University staff**, either virtual or in person, covering academic and pastoral support.
- Regular **email contact with you and with your workplace supervisor**.
- **Access to support** to help you tackle difficult issues that arise while on placement.
- Access to **distance learning resources** relating to your placement module.
- Ongoing **access to the University's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)** and other online resources, such as those provided by the University library.

Upon returning to Newcastle University, staff will support your re-integration to University life in a number of ways:

- **Welcome back events** to bring together returning placement students to share your experiences.
- **Access to ASK** (Academic Skills Kit) to support your transition back into academic study.
- Opportunities to provide **feedback on your placement experiences** and to influence the development of placement year provision across the University.
- **Opportunities to act as a mentor** for future placement students.
- **Support to reintegrate with your programme cohort**.

Student responsibilities

While this document sets out the University's commitments, you are ultimately responsible for finding, applying to and successfully gaining a placement. As a student, you should:

- Be proactive in taking up offers of placement support from the University, to help gain a suitable work placement.
- Provide timely information to the University when you have secured a placement, including letting us know about any specific needs or personal factors that may impact on your ability to undertake a placement.
- Act as an ambassador for the University and your employer while on placement, conducting yourself professionally at all times.
- Be committed to the work set by your employer, and to following their policies and procedures.
- Maintain contact with University staff while on placement, for academic and wellbeing support.
- Be committed to the work required for your academic module(s), ensuring placement hosts are aware of this commitment.
- Meet your assessment deadlines so that your placement year can be included in your degree title.

Ongoing support

Registering as a student for a 9-12 month placement year allows you to retain access to University and NUSU resources, even if you're working away from Newcastle. This includes: Library resources, Student Health and Wellbeing Service, Sports facilities and clubs, IT account and services, Careers Service, Personal Tutor support, NUSU Advice Centre, Chaplaincy.