

Work Experience

How to contact an employer

Contacting an employer

You, and not a family member, should contact the employer for a placement. Contacting an employer yourself will show that you are confident and taking ownership of your placement.

The thought of contacting an employer will seem daunting at first but, if you are prepared, you will feel less daunted about the prospect.

- If phoning an employer, practise what you will say and ask a family member if they would do a practice run with you.
- If you are e-mailing/sending a letter ask a family member to proof read before sending
- Research the employer on their company website.
- Consider the most appropriate way of contacting them.

Contacting an employer by phone

Remember to speak clearly and be polite. Have a pen and paper ready to take notes.

Below is an idea of how to make the call:

- **Always start by introducing yourself and explain why you are calling.**

My name is..... from.....school/academy and I am looking for a work experience placement. Please can I speak to the HR department/manager/relevant person?

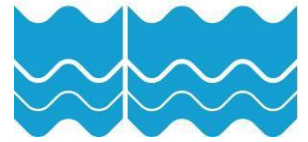
- **When the new person comes on the line, introduce yourself as above and provide further details such as:**

I am a year..... student looking for a work experience placement from..... to..... at your school/business/organisation. At the time of the placement I will be..... years old.

- **Explain why you have chosen to make contact with them for a placement.**

I know that you are a local IT company specialising in web design. I am very keen to pursue a career within this industry. I have some experience of WordPress as I build my own websites at home. I would like to undertake my placement with you to further my knowledge and skills within a working environment.

Normally the manager/relevant person will be able to give you an answer straight away or they will ask you to speak to someone or call back. If they are unable to give you an answer straight away make sure you tell them how to contact you (phone number/e-mail/address).



Contacting an employer by letter/e-mail

Alternatively you can contact an employer by letter/e-mail. Below is an idea of how to structure.

Dear Sir/Madam or Name

- **Always start by introducing yourself and explain why you are writing to them**

I am a year.... student at.....school/academy. I will be completing my work experience from.... to..... and have chosen to find my own placement. I am hoping that you will be able to offer me a placement within your company/organisation.

- **Explain why you have chosen to make contact with them for a placement.**

My grandad was a gardener and I have always helped to him to maintain family gardens. I have helped to plant seeds as well as water and prune plants. I would like to improve my knowledge of plants; learn more about pruning techniques; and how to maintain a lawn. The placement will also help me with my application to college to study horticulture.

- **If you have undertaken any particular research which has led you to contact this employer.**

I have researched your company and learnt that you are a family run business established in 1984 and that the team consists of five members of staff. I am quite a shy and nervous person and feel by working in a small team this will improve my confidence.

- **If there is any additional/extra information you think will be of benefit to your request then add it in. It could be related to subjects you are good at/enjoy or hobbies that relate to the type of work you may do on the placement.**

I have a passion for art and design and am predicted a grade 9 in my GCSE for this subject. My creative design is a skill that could be used during my placement to help with designing of a garden area or flower bed.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully / Yours sincerely (if you know the person's name)

Your name

Contacting an employer in person

You may decide that you want to make contact with the employer in person. If you are, then prepare what you are going to say in advance (use the examples above for phoning and writing). Below are some suggestions to remember:

- Dress smartly (school uniform will be fine).
- Plan a time that the employer will not be as busy i.e. avoid restaurants at lunchtime.
- Ask to speak to whoever is in charge of work experience.
- Take paper and a pen to make notes.
- Consider taking a letter which you can leave if you cannot speak to anyone.