

BIOL 8001

Training in the Workplace
120 credits

Module Manager: Dr. A.R. Pickles



Semester 1 and 2

2017-18

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MODULE SUMMARY

BIOL 8001: TRAINING IN THE WORKPLACE

MODULE MANAGER

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CONTACTING MEMBERS OF STAFF

If you need to communicate with any member of staff at Leeds, please email them (email address format uses initials.surname@leeds.ac.uk).

AIMS OF THE MODULE

The aims of the industrial placement year are to provide students with the opportunity:

- for professional skills development within an industrial/work environment;
- to contribute to the work of the company;
- to extend their knowledge and understanding of their subject and related areas;
- to provide experience in scientific research;
- to enhance their knowledge of career options and help in the making of career choices;
- to improve their portfolio of scientific and transferable skills.

OBJECTIVES OF THE MODULE

By the end of the industrial placement, students should have:

- gained experience in project management, organization and implementation;
- completed an initial literature review related to the work being undertaken during the industrial placement;
- completed a research project and prepared the findings in the form of a written report;

- enhanced their understanding of their subject and related areas and the culture of the industry/environment in which they have worked;
- taken advantage of any learning opportunities offered by employers for personal development and/or to gain experience of up-to-date laboratory, managerial and work practices;
- further developed their scientific and transferable skills including those associated with teamwork, problem-solving and communication;
- gained a better appreciation of the knowledge, skills and attitudes required for a successful career;

The decision to do a work placement year is an important one and needs to be made with due consideration.

1.1 Introduction

The Work Placement Scheme, sometimes referred to as an industrial placement year, allows students who are registered on degrees offered by the Faculty of Biological Sciences to defer their final year of study and to work in industry or other appropriate workplace for a year.

2.1 PRE-REQUISITES FOR THE MODULE

BIOL8001: Training in the Workplace, is an optional module offered to all Faculty of Biological Science students, including Faculty Joint Honours students, between levels 2 & 3 of their University course. It is an assessed 120 credit module which does not contribute to the final degree classification but which you must pass to be accredited with a change in degree title to: “Registered Degree Title ***with Industrial Placement***”. Acceptance onto the course is dependent upon students meeting the academic requirements of the module and acquiring a suitable 9-12 month placement in the UK or abroad.

Academic pre-requisites: Students must normally have gained 100 credits at the end of their second year which would allow for their subsequent progression to level 3.

Placement pre-requisites: A suitable placement is a 9-12 month period of graduate-level employment. It must be offered by an organisation with a Health & Safety and supervisory and resource record acceptable to the University of Leeds. **All placements must be agreed in advance by the work placement tutor, Dr Alasdair Pickles.**

3.1 TIMETABLE

An approximate timetable for the placement year might be as follows:

1. Start placement: July/August/September (by arrangement with employer).
2. Meet industrial supervisor and discuss objectives for employer and objectives of University course (see Work Profile). Oversee completion of employer’s checklist (see Work Profile).
3. Complete induction programme as offered by employer: return copy of checklist (see Work Profile) and contact details (see Work Profile) to the University as soon as possible after starting. Complete personal reflection profile to record personal competencies at the start of placement (see Work Profile).

4. Set initial objectives, in consultation with industrial supervisor (see Work Profile).
5. Co-ordinate visit 1, if required to do so, by academic supervisor, normally held in December or early January to suit. You will have been informed as to whether a visit will occur and who your academic supervisor is.
6. Complete personal reflection profile before visit 1 (even if there is no planned visit!), and oversee completion of all paperwork associated with visit 1 (self assessment of student skills, industrial supervisors assessment of student skills, objectives for 3-9 month period - see Work Profile).
7. Complete the 2000 word literature review to be submitted via the VLE by 12pm on Friday 2nd February, 2018; see guidance on the work placement website for additional information (<http://www.fbs.leeds.ac.uk/students/placements>).
8. December/January: decide whether you will be requiring University accommodation during your final year (see Accommodation section).
9. Final year project lists sent to you, or notification of where to find information (University Easter vacation). Make choice and return according to the instructions provided (see Final Year Projects section).
10. April: Agree plans for production of report (section 5.1.3) with industrial supervisor.
11. Complete objectives for final months of placement and self assessment of student skills. Oversee completion of industrial supervisor's assessment of student skills (see Work Profile).
12. Confirmation of final year project allocations.
13. Completion of written Report. Guidelines on preparing your report are provided on the placements website (<http://www.fbs.leeds.ac.uk/students/placements>) Obtain consent from employer for disclosure of report (**this could take many weeks to complete; allow sufficient time**).
14. Completion of Employment contract. Complete self assessment of student skills, supervisor's assessment of student skills and reflection on placement (see Work Profile). Your supervisor must complete the "Supervisors Comments" section at the end of the Work Profile (make sure you do this before you leave the organization!).
15. Return to University to begin final year (see On Return to University section 7.1.9).
16. September 2018, de-briefing meeting at University.
17. By 12pm on Monday 1st October, 2018 deadline for written report and completed work profile. These should be passed to Phil Lang in the Student Education Service Office, Manton building.

4.1 SUPPORT FOR YOU WHILST ON PLACEMENT

Simple, effective measures are in place to support you whilst on placement. These include the designation of an academic supervisor for each student, the maintenance of regular e-mail contact with you by module staff (via p.r.lang@leeds.ac.uk), on-site visit (where possible) to your workplace by your academic supervisor, and the timely provision of information required for your further studies (e.g. 3rd year project information). If you encounter any difficulty, or would like to discuss an issue relating to this module, please feel able to contact Phil Lang in the first instance. We will endeavor to respond to your enquiry promptly.

4.2 Staff involved with the module

You will be assigned an academic supervisor who will oversee your placement. They will normally visit you on placement, be available to assist you with matters that arise during your placement, and will examine your report at the end of the module.

4.3 Visits from academic staff

For students placed at organisations in the UK, you will normally be visited by your academic supervisor during the placement year. Such a visit is designed to:

- identify how you are coping with the experience, to support your use of the personal reflection work profile scheme and to assist you with the identification of objectives;
- provide an opportunity to discuss any difficulties you are experiencing. [It is important that you raise any difficulties experienced so that a discussion of potential solutions can be held between your academic supervisor and yourself so that the University can support you effectively during the resolution of these issues];
- discuss the work you are performing;
- discuss the completion of coursework for the module.

We cannot guarantee to visit students in placement outside the U.K., although we will endeavor to do so, if not, another means will be arranged e.g. Skype.

To arrange a visit, you will be contacted by your academic supervisor and will be asked to co-ordinate the visit. This will include the identification of a date convenient to all concerned, the arrangements for the day (itinerary, venue etc.), and the punctual submission of paperwork for the visit.

4.4 Contact with University

At times during your placement you will be contacted by e-mail and asked to update the placement co-ordinator on your progress. As a minimum we are expecting you to state simply whether all is well, or whether there is a problem on the placement. A comparable message will be sent to your industrial supervisor asking for a similar return.

If a problem is identified, we will work closely with you (and the industrial supervisor) to identify steps to resolve the matter. We will also monitor the progress of the agreed solution in an effort to achieve a positive outcome. **You must keep us informed of any changes to your work or personal circumstances that adversely affect you whilst on your placement year.**

5.1 MODULE COURSEWORK & ASSESSMENT

The module is assessed on a pass / fail basis. There are five components to the assessment of this module. In order to pass the module **you must**:

1. Complete your Work Placement profile satisfactorily (as assessed by your academic supervisor);
2. Complete your Work Placement contract satisfactorily (as assessed by your industrial supervisor and academic supervisor);
3. Submit a short literature review of 2000 words (assessed by your academic supervisor).
4. Submit a 6000 word written report of a satisfactory standard (assessed by your academic supervisor) describing an aspect of your work performed on placement by the deadline provided. This report should be hypothesis driven and cover a major project or series of projects you have undertaken whilst on placement. It may also cover your involvement in an ongoing programme of work.
5. Attend a debriefing session organised by the Work Placement Centre upon your return.

A placement deemed to be unsatisfactory would be reviewed on a case by case basis. Termination of a placement within the first month, for whatever reason, would not preclude that student from beginning their final year (Level 3) in September of that year. Termination of the placement beyond this time would require the student to take the rest of that academic year out and enter their final year in the following academic year. Students who are assessed as “fail” on any of their assessed components would fail this module. In these circumstances the student would not be eligible for the degree title “... with Industrial Placement” and would revert back to a 3-year programme.

5.1.1 Work placement profile

You will be provided with hard copy of the Work Profile. The work placement profile documents your personal development and records the objectives of your industrial placement. It provides an opportunity for reflection upon completion of the placement by yourself, and your supervisors (industrial and academic).

The Work Placement Profile is important. You should keep this profile at work, make it available to your industrial supervisor, and your academic supervisor if they visit. Completion of all sections of your work profile constitutes one aspect of the assessment of this module. In particular:

- using the Definition of Skills table you must complete your “start of placement” assessment of your skills proficiency in week one. Complete the “by Visit 1” column prior to your academic supervisor’s first visit, and likewise get your industrial supervisor to complete their “by Visit 1” column;
- at the visit of your academic supervisor, work objectives for period 3-9 months will need to be set; your academic supervisor will countersign these;
- assessment (by yourself and your industrial supervisor) of your skills proficiency should be made midway and again at the end of your placement;
- at the end of your placement, you will need to complete the final sections of the profile, and your industrial supervisor must complete a further section;
- on return to University, pass your profile to Phil Lang, who will oversee the completion of a final section by your academic supervisor. **Keep a copy of the**

work placement profile for your own records. You should have been provided with a hard copy of the Work Profile. If you mislay it then you can access a copy on the placements website www.fbs.leeds.ac.uk/students/placements.

5.1.2 Literature review

All placement students are required to complete a 2000 word literature review on the subject of your placement to be submitted via the VLE by 12pm on Friday 2nd February, 2018. The aim of this is to help you focus on the project and encourage a good early understanding of the area of work that you are involved with. Most placement providers encourage students to research and engage with the relevant literature so you will normally be doing this anyway and it is of direct benefit as you may utilise this review as part of your larger end of placement written report.

5.1.3 Written report

You are required to produce a report about an aspect of your work on placement, preferably **describing a substantial hypothesis-driven research project conducted by yourself**. Briefly, it should be word processed and should not exceed 6000 words (+/-10%), excluding table/figure legends and references. It is not necessary to describe all the work done on your placement, but the report should include all evidence germane to the research project selected. Your report will be treated as a confidential document and will not be made available to any parties other than your academic supervisor and work placement coordinator. A confidentiality agreement can be signed by the University if necessary.

Your report will need to be cleared by the placement organisation before you leave the placement. You should therefore aim to complete this report while in placement and in good time. Your report must be submitted, along with your Work Profile, upon your return to Leeds, to Phil Lang in the Student Education Service Office. The final report will be examined by your academic supervisor.

For advice on writing your report look under the “Students on Placement” section of the Placement website www.fbs.leeds.ac.uk/students/placements

6.1 DEGREE TITLE *with Industrial Placement*

Achieving a pass mark in all aspects of BIOL8001 is required to pass the module. This does not however contribute to your final degree classification. Instead, your final degree certificate will recognise the achievement through a change in degree title: “Registered Degree Title ***with Industrial Placement***”.

7.1 USEFUL INFORMATION

7.1.1 Module enrolment and registration

You must still complete on-line Registration as normal. The system will open on Tuesday, 9th May 2017. The only module displayed on your module enrolment should be BIOL8001.

7.1.2 Final year project lists will be compiled around Easter time, dependent upon the individual Schools within the Faculty. These will be made available to you by email as soon as they are ready. You should follow the instructions about making

your choices, and phone, email or visit academic staff to discuss the projects. If you intend the latter, remember to save holiday time for the visit to Leeds, and book appointments with all relevant staff.

7.1.3 Accommodation while on placement

By the time you receive this manual, you may well have arranged accommodation at your industrial placement. The company may well be able to help/advise, even if just for a temporary period. Just as likely is that you will have to find your own accommodation, which will involve a visit and some leg work!

7.1.4 Final year accommodation

If you require University accommodation upon your return to Leeds then it is important that you apply in good time. Application forms are available in January and must be returned a.s.a.p. Information from: Accommodation Office, Student Services, Marjorie & Arnold Ziff Building, University of Leeds. Leeds, LS2 9JT. Tel: 0113 343 6071. If arranging your own accommodation, don't forget to save a few days holiday entitlement for "house-hunting".

7.1.5 Council Tax

You are exempt from paying council tax. If your term-time address is outside of the Leeds-Wakefield area, you will need a Student Registration Certificate, which you can apply for on-line at:

http://students.leeds.ac.uk/info/10200/finance/598/council_tax_exemption or in person at the Student Service Counter in the Ziff Building.

7.1.6 NUS Cards

As a full-time student you are of course entitled to your NUS card, and the privileges that go with it. It will need renewing upon your return!

7.1.7 Registering with a GP

You are strongly advised to register with a local GP during your placement year.

7.1.8 Tuition fees and LEA maintenance grants

- **Tuition Fees:** The University has decided that Tuition fees for work placement students will be £1350 for UK students.
- **Your LEA and Student Loans** The Student Office should automatically have informed your LEA of your change to a 4-year programme. In case of difficulties, contact the Student Office on 0113 343 2007.

7.1.9 On your return to university

A meeting of all placement students will be held in Intro week of your final year (September). It will be an opportunity to identify what you have gained from the placement experience, to update your CV and to begin to reorientate you back into academic life. You will also need to submit your two pieces of module coursework, the Work Placement Profile and the 6000-word report, by the Monday, 1st October 2018. The original copies of these documents will be retained by the Faculty; you are advised to make a photocopy of each document for your records.

7.1.10 Last but not least!

You are to be congratulated on gaining a work placement - now make the most of it! Spread your interests beyond the lab or office in which you work. Consider yourself on an information-gathering exercise. Find out about other areas of the company,

how they interact, how the company is structured. Make friends and contacts, they could prove very useful to you in the future. Explore the type of jobs available, how does the company recruit?

Your Work Profile will help you track and identify certain transferable skills which you can develop; keep a note of any particular instances where such skills were important. Such examples can be added to your CV or raised in interview. These aspects of your placement are likely to be of particular interest to future potential employers.

Trouble at Work

Hopefully your work placement will go just as you had planned it, you will enjoy it from the start, feel you are being given an opportunity to develop skills and be involved in many different projects. However, sometimes things don't always go as we had planned or hoped. If this is the case, there are many things that you can do to improve your placement. Initially you should look to resolve problems yourself by speaking to your line manager / supervisor or HR, but if you feel that you need advice or these discussions aren't working you should contact your Placement Tutor.

Some situations you may encounter include:

I'm not doing the job that was stated on my job description/that I discussed prior to starting my placement

- Make sure you've given yourself enough time to settle in to a role, you aren't going to walk straight into a job and be given all the best and most exciting tasks. The company will expect you to prove yourself before you start dealing with clients or making decisions that will impact upon their business.
- Speak to your supervisor or manager; it may be that they're not aware of what you're expecting or what was discussed previously.

I don't get on with my supervisor

- You can't expect to get on with everyone at work, everybody's different and personality clashes are to be expected. Try to keep things professional – your supervisor may well make all your colleagues feel exactly the same, talk to people about how you're feeling – this may make you feel happier about everything.
- Is there a mentor you can talk to?
- If it is serious talk to HR about what steps you can take and what processes are in place to deal with the situation.

I don't enjoy the work I'm doing

- Is it the role in general? Were your ideas about what was involved realistic? Talk to colleagues about how closely the role you're doing reflects the full time equivalent of the role.
- Speak to your supervisor / line manager and explain how you're feeling. Do you have any realistic ideas on what you and your employer could do to improve your job satisfaction?
- Don't quit your job on impulse. Most employers do care about how you feel during your time as an employee and there should be room for negotiation.

My contract has been terminated

- This is an extremely rare occurrence and you should contact your Placement Tutor immediately. Contract termination may be a result of ongoing disciplinary issues or because of poor company performance.
- If your placement ended because of your own actions, you may not be able to complete your placement year or you may need to find another placement – this should be discussed with your Placement Tutor.
- If you are made redundant from your placement your placement tutor will be able to advise you on what you need to do next to ensure that you still

successfully complete your placement year – this is likely to involve finding another placement.

- If you do not complete the required number of hours and decide to defer University until the following September you must alert your LEA as you may not be entitled to your full loan.

For an overview of your rights as an employee in the workplace go to the employment section of the Citizens Advice Bureau web site. The site contains a range of information including the National Minimum Wage (NMW), Basic rights at work, Employment status and contracts of employment
<http://www.adviceguide.org.uk>