



# Careers and Employability Service

## How to Write an Application Form for a Work Experience Opportunity

The application form should show your enthusiasm and understanding of the opportunity you are applying for and your ability to meet its requirements. Be confident about writing your application form and create one that really stands out from the crowd by following our step-by-step approach:

### Step one: Do your research

Research the responsibilities, skills and personal qualities needed for the role; the person specification advertised will act as a checklist. Put yourself in the host employer's shoes, as your application needs to reveal to them what skills you can bring to place your application ahead of the competition.

### Step two: Map out your experiences

Brainstorm your experiences, achievements and the lessons you've learned. Don't limit yourself to education, use any work experience, outside interests, sport or voluntary work to show the breadth of your experience, your enthusiasm, energy and skills such as time management. Make sure you exploit all your course content for specific and transferable skills - don't forget projects, presentations or your dissertation - which you have developed during your degree.

### Step three: Make the match

Reflect on all your experiences, matching evidence to the host's needs, emphasising your strongest points, and showing what a well-rounded, employable person you are.

By now you will be feeling more confident about what you need to say, so start planning how to present it on your application form:

1. Download the application form.
2. Read it through carefully.
3. Highlight key words in each question.
4. Decide what evidence best matches each question and provide a different example of your for experience for each response.
5. Use the STAR approach to answer evidence-based questions:
  - S** Situation – Background to the example.
  - T** Task – What did you have to do or resolve?
  - A** Action – What action did you take to achieve the desired result?
  - R** Results (and what you learnt) – What was the outcome? What skills did you build?
6. Review your answers:
  - Have you covered all the job requirements?
  - Have you answered the questions fully?
  - Are you including your unique selling points?
  - Have you remained within the word count (if there is one)?
7. Check and re-check the spelling and grammar. Ensure sentences are punchy and concise. Check that you have provided the correct contact details and degree information.
8. Make sure that you have clearly listed the position and host employer you are applying for.
9. Double-check that the formatting works both when the CV and application are viewed online and when printed.
10. Leave time to reflect and revisit your answers if you can.

## Need more help?

- Attend Career Destinations events on Applications. These are led by both employers and career practitioners. **To look at the events please visit the Events Calendar on MyCareer:** <https://mycareer.soton.ac.uk/home.html>
- Have a look at the prospects website [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk) and check out the 'Job Applications advice' section.
- Have a look at our website for hints and tips, including a video on completing online applications: <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/careers/students/application-support/application-forms.page>