

Finding placements and work experience opportunities for Linguists

More and more graduate employers expect students to have previous work experience on their CV's. Undertaking a work placement or work experience can provide you with this. This guide provides advice and links to a selection of websites that might be able to point you towards work placements (sometimes called work experience or internships) and other work experience opportunities for language students; opportunities in which you can use your language skills directly, and others in which using your languages is not essential. This list is by no means exhaustive, but will help you start your search.

Why do a placement/work experience?

There are many benefits to undertaking work experience:

- **Gain insight** into a particular industry or role.
- **Decide** if this is the right career path for you.
- **Apply** the theoretical knowledge that you have gained during your degree.
- **Develop** transferable skills and enhance your CV.
- **Network** and gain valuable references and contacts for the future.
- **Use your language skills** in a work setting.

In addition, many students find they are offered a graduate position, or further work experience, as a result of a work experience placement; 1 in 3 graduate positions are filled by students who have taken work experience (High flyers survey 2015).

Placement Types:

Summer Placement

- Usually structured over 8 - 12 weeks (although some are shorter in length)
- Most are aimed at students in Year 2, but there are still many opportunities for Year 1 students.
- A summer placement can be undertaken during the vacation period prior to study abroad in year 3
- Summer placements should offer graduate level work experience

Placement Year

- Work rather than study abroad - you could consider a work placement abroad for all or part of your third year.
- Erasmus funding is available for study and work abroad

Term-time placements

Undertaking work experience during term time, is an excellent way to gain employment experience around your studies, and can often be a good idea when undertaking placements in schools, local organisations or with community groups. You might also want to consider applying for one of the University's On CampUS placements. These are 100 hour, paid, project based placements in a professional or academic department within the university that fit around your studies. To find out more about On CampUS placements visit:

<http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/placements/students/oncampus>



Other work experience

Volunteering

As an undergraduate student, getting involved as a volunteer translator is a great way to build up experience which will enhance your CV and provide you with some useful contacts. You should consider making speculative approaches to local charities/not-for-profit organisations to offer your services as a volunteer translator/interpreter. In addition, *Babels* is an international network of translators and interpreters <http://www.babels.org> and provides good networking opportunities, as does *Translators without Borders* <http://translatorswithoutborders.org/>. *La via Campesina*, <http://viacampesina.org/en/> which runs conferences and forums, is also worth exploring.

Freelance Work

Once they have developed some translation experience many language students also endeavour to get work on a freelance basis through professional networks such as *Proz* (Freelance Translators and Translation Companies) <http://www.pro2.com> and the *Translators Café* <http://www.translatorscafe.com/cafe/default.asp>. Memberships of professional associations such as the *Chartered Institute of Linguists*, www.iol.org.uk and the *Institute of Translating and Interpreting*, www.iti.org.uk can also promote networking opportunities.

Whatever work experience choice you make, you will be increasing your employability, making contacts for the future and enhancing your CV.

How to find work experience and placements

There are lots of places where placement opportunities are advertised; most of these are online but there are also events on campus where you can meet employers and talk to them directly about the placement opportunities they offer.

UoS Resources

Career Connect: This is the Careers Service's online database, where all the placement opportunities that employers send to us here at the University of Sheffield are advertised www.shef.ac.uk/careers/students/jobs. Many companies that advertise are looking for Linguists, so do explore them thoroughly, and don't forget to check back regularly as new vacancies are posted on a daily basis.

Use **Career Connect** to search the Careers Service's 'what's on' schedule, and book to attend some of our recruitment and networking events; you might just meet your future employer <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/careers/students/events>.

External resources

Website	Website Address
Prospects	www.prospects.ac.uk
Target Jobs	www.targetjobs.ac.uk
Milk Round	www.milkround.com
Student Ladder	www.studentladder.co.uk
Rate my Placement	www.ratemyplacement.co.uk

Specialist Recruitment Agencies

Agency	Website
Appointments Bi-Language	www.appointmentsbilanguage.co.uk
Capita	www.capitatrtranslationinterpreting.com
Capita Linguist Portal	www.capitatrtranslationinterpreting.com/cti-linguist/?_orig=
Euro London Appointments	www.eurolondon.com
Multilingual Vacancies.Com	www.multilingualvacancies.com
Top Language Jobs	www.toplanguagejobs.co.uk
Linguists Direct	www.linguistsdirect.com
Pearl Linguistics	www.pearllinguistics.com/
iAgora	www.iagora.com
Appointments Bi-language	www.appointmentsbilanguage.co.uk
Bilingual People	www.bilingualpeople.com
Corinium Language Associates	www.coriniumlanguage.co.uk
Euro London Appointments	www.eurolondon.com
French Recruitment	www.frenchrecruitment.co.uk
The Language Business	www.languagebusiness.co.uk
The Language Export Centre	www.lxcentre.co.uk
Lingua-jobs	www.lingua-jobs.com
Euro London Appointments	www.eurolondon.com
Europe Language Jobs	www.europelanguagejobs.com
French Selection	www.french-selection.co.uk/vacancies.php

Social Media

More and more opportunities are now advertised on Twitter and Facebook. Following the organisations you are interested in means you will see placement opportunities as soon as they arise.

Why not also follow the University of Sheffield Placement Team on Twitter? We continually post work placement vacancies and share advice that you might find helpful. @UoSplacements

You may also like to join LinkedIn, and connect with those working in the fields you are interested in, or join relevant groups such as the Sheffield University Languages Alumni Group.

https://www.linkedin.com/groups?home=&gid=5089126&trk=anet_ug_hm

Remember that prospective employers will look you up on social media too, so make sure you have built a strong and professional online presence. The Careers Service has a useful guide to using social media to further your career: <http://www.shef.ac.uk/careers/students/gettingajob/media>

Create your own opportunities: speculative applications

Not all organisations advertise placements, but you can make speculative applications by sending your CV and covering letter directly to an organisation or individual you would like to work for. This approach often works well when applying to small local companies, schools, or community organisations. Academics within your department may also have contacts that might be useful to you when considering sending speculative applications.

Overseas Placements

Placement years, summer placements and work experience opportunities are not restricted to the UK; there are many opportunities available across the globe that will allow you to use and enhance your language skills.

Where to look?

A good starting point for overseas placements is to explore My International Career and Going Global. Both sites can be accessed through the University Careers Service at www.careers.dept.shef.ac.uk/infotree/EmploymentOverseas.php. Going Global, in addition to providing country guides and other useful information, lists placement opportunities available across the world. The British Council also offer excellent placement opportunities overseas www.britishcouncil.org/

Overseas placements may require more planning and can be financially more expensive than a UK-based placement. For help and advice with these issues visit the placements website at <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/placements/students/overseas>.

Teaching-related work experience

If you are interested in a career in teaching, get as much experience as possible before applying for a PGCE, School Direct, TeachFirst or other teacher training. Investigate US in Schools (www.shef.ac.uk/schools/outreach-programmes/us-in-schools/applying) and approach schools speculatively for work shadowing and more hands-on work experience as well as getting involved in after-school clubs, youth groups, summer camps, etc. Local authority websites usually list contact details for schools. For general information about teacher training: getintoteaching.education.gov.uk. For FE: www.feadvice.org.uk and HE: www.prospects.ac.uk/higher_education_lecturer_entry_requirements.htm

Funding

There is often funding available to help you undertake a work placement. The Placement Team post funding opportunities on their website as and when they become available, so keep checking for opportunities: www.sheffield.ac.uk/placements/students/funding

Where can I get help?

The Placement Team can help you at all stages of the placement process. The Placement Officer for Arts and Humanities is, Dr Louise McInnes. She is available to help you source and apply for placements, and to assist you with updating or writing your CV. She is available for weekly appointments in Jessop West; appointments that can be booked via the calendar link: <http://bit.ly/17zn68c>. She can also be contacted via email: l.e.mcinnnes@sheffield.ac.uk

If you are not sure what area of work you are interested in, or what occupations you can consider with your degree, you may want to make an appointment with a Careers Adviser first. You can do this by calling 0114 2220910.