

Work Experience Guide 2025

A handy guide to Work Experience for all year 10 and 12 students at Hele's School during the summer term.

A note for students:

Work Experience is vitally important for lots of different reasons. It provides some of the following-

- Hands-on knowledge of the world of work
- Develops skills that make you attractive in the job market
- Boosts confidence
- Helps with career exploration
- Enhances job prospects
- Builds professional networks
- Can lead to a part-time job or full-time work after school
- Contributes to personal growth & maturity
- Makes you aware of what you are capable of
- Makes you proud of what you can achieve.

Most importantly IT HELPS YOU STAND OUT IN A SATURATED JOB MARKET & CAN PROVIDE THE COMPETITIVE EDGE NEEDED TO BE SUCCESSFUL!

We ask all students to undertake WEX (work experience) during the summer term of year 10 & year 12.

Please be proactive in searching for a placement.

Those who start looking early have more choices and are more likely to have a positive WEX week.

WEX is crucial when writing your CVs in year 11 – it provides a firm foundation to build your strengths and allows you to demonstrate how good you are!

A note for parents and carers:

Finding WEX can be time consuming, but the benefits far outweigh any of the frustrations that may form part of the experience.

Finding a placement, not being accepted, or having to chase emails and make phone calls is all part of real working life and helps build strength and resilience.

Some students may need extra support in finding a placement, and you may know someone who can help:

- Do you work in an organisation that can host a WEX placement?
- Does your child have an interest that you can help them identify as a WEX placement?
- Please encourage your child to start looking early and remind them of why WEX is so important.
- Please help your child talk to friends and family for inspiration and potential leads.
- Remind students that it is their responsibility to find a WEX placement.
- Please ensure they know how to use Unifrog (more to follow about this) and that they fill the form out correctly, as this saves time and energy in the long run.

It is essential for parents and carers to have realistic expectations about the work experience placement, as it may not always be a perfect fit for their child's aspirations, but it can still be a valuable learning experience.

Important to Remember:

- Work Experience is usually the last week of summer term, and we would encourage you to stick with that date as it makes the programme run more efficiently when everyone is out on WEX at the same time.
- Unifrog is our online careers platform, and it is designed to make the WEX processes easier.
- There are templates on Unifrog that can be used when contacting potential placements.
- We suggest the following timetable:

September to October

Research potential placements using the internet, your friends and family network, your interests or by looking at what businesses there are around you.

November to December

Begin emailing organisations and follow up with a phone call or in-person visit.

If you have a CV, you can include that in your email.

Once a business has agreed to host you, please upload the CORRECT details to Unifrog.

January 15th

This is the cut-off date for WEX applications.

You should have your form complete on Unifrog and signed off by the employer, parent/guardian and Miss Miller/Careers Department at school.

February to March

Confirm placement details, dates & times.

Careers Office to mop up any mistakes/placements that have fallen through.

April to June

Attend any pre-WEX meetings at school.

Contact placement to check-in and confirm details.

Ensure the correct contact details are on Unifrog.

July

Do your WEX placement!

What is Unifrog?

Every student has a login for our online careers platform: **Unifrog**.

Unifrog has a series of forms that need to be filled out by all those involved in the WEX placement: student, employer/placement, parent/carer, and school careers office. It is a chain of communication that once each section is complete, rolls on automatically to the next section. Therefore, the Work Experience placement is organised smoothly and easily, all in one place.

1. Access your **Unifrog** account (via the school website/Google search) and sign in (reset password if needed).
2. Go to 'Placements'.
3. Watch the short video on 'Placements' found in the 'Work Experience' section.
4. For extra support and help, read the 'Work Experience – How to Contact Employers' and 'Work Experience – Researching Possible Placements' guides.
5. Add new placement details by clicking on 'New Placement' (this is where you upload the contact details of the employer/place where you want to do your work experience).
6. **Unifrog** will contact the employer/placement for you, then your parent/carer will be contacted to fill out their part, then the school will finish the chain of forms to be filled out.
7. Placement will be confirmed.

Remember!

- It is down to you to contact your preferred placement and arrange your WEX there.
- Please contact potential placements **as soon as possible**. Popular placements will be contacted by other eager students very early, and all the places will soon be used up.
- When contacting your preferred placement, please ensure you have all their correct contact info: name, email, phone number etc.
- Please use **Unifrog's** tools for letter and CV writing – these templates are designed to make things easy for you.
- Don't be afraid to think outside the box – past Year 10 students have done everything from helping at a dance school to working at the Barbican Theatre; from a vet to serving coffee at a café; hair and beauty to a bakery; or an architect's studio to a charity shop. The opportunities are endless!
- Make the most of what's around – The National Trust at Saltram, the National Marine Aquarium on the Barbican, or a local primary school. Think about how easy it will be to get to your placement.
- Placements should be uploaded by 15th January.

Why do we use Unifrog?

Unifrog's Placements tool puts all things work experience in one place, providing an easy tracking process for students, employers, parents/carers, and teachers. The tool is a series of forms that are easy for teachers, students, and employers to complete.

You can also use **Unifrog's** other tools including quizzes on personality and your strengths and weaknesses, how to write a personal statement, or how to explore your options post 16.

If you need any help please contact Miss Miller, Careers Support Manager, at millerr@heles.plymouth.sch.uk

Please note:

A WEX placement is not confirmed until the school has received a fully digital copy of the WEX forms on Unifrog.

Unifrog check Health & Safety, additional safety guidelines, risk assessments, and insurance GDPR.

Some Ideas for WEX Placements

Every year we have students unsure of who to approach regarding their WEX placement.

If you do not know where to begin then please have a think about your hobbies and interests, and what sort of job you would like to do when you leave school.

We hold regular WEX drop-in sessions in the Careers Library at school to help with suggestions.

Here are some ideas:

- Primary & Secondary schools.
- Plymouth University, Marjon or the Arts University (in one of their subject departments or the events/catering teams).
- Garages & Car Dealerships.
- The National Trust at Saltram, Antony, Buckland Abbey etc.

- Theatre Royal, Barbican Theatre, Soapbox Theatre.
- Friary Mill, Yield Bakery, Warrens.
- Cafes & restaurants.
- Nurseries & Pre-schools.
- Hair & Beauty Salons.
- Nail Bars.
- Garden Centres & DIY shops.
- Vets, Pet Shops & Animal Shelters.
- Architects, builders & construction.
- Fashion retailers, wedding shops, dress shops, dress makers/tailors.
- Plumbing & electrical engineering firms.
- Babcock, Princess Yachts, Kawasaki.
- Aerospace companies.
- RAF, Army, Navy camps – please talk to your CCF leader.
- Plymouth City Council – for The Box, Libraries etc.
- Charity shops – Red Cross, Oxfam, RSPCA, St Lukes etc.
- Citizens Advice Bureau.
- Florists, plant shops, gardeners/landscaping companies.
- NHS – dentists, Derriford Hospital, doctors' surgeries etc.
- Pennywell Farm.
- National Marine Aquarium.
- EE
- Equestrian centres & horse-riding schools.
- Argyle, water sports, gyms etc.
- Hotels and pubs.
- Golf clubs, tennis clubs, rugby etc.
- Travel agents, caravan parks, campsites.
- Residential & care homes.

- The Land Registry.
- Retail shops.
- Accountants & banks.

Please note:

Some large organisations have a set application process for WEX, and the cut of dates are early in the year, so you need to be organised and start researching these in September.

These include:

- Plymouth City Council (responsible for libraries & museums)
- Babcock
- National Trust
- NHS
- Plymouth University (academic subject areas)
- Theatre Royal
- Lloyds Bank.
- Livewell.

On Placement

Please remember the following when on placement:

1. Rules are there to be followed.
2. Health and Safety is important to keep you safe.
3. Please listen to instructions.
4. Be mature and polite.
5. Don't spend time on your phone or share things about WEX to social media.
6. We will check in on you (in person or by phone).

7. You need to keep your WEX journal safe and complete it (it will help with CVs and job/college applications).
8. Please utilise Unifrog – explore all the different tools, videos, presentations etc.
9. Use Unifrog's online WEX journal to record your experience.

Please ensure you are aware of the following before your placement starts:

- A bit of research on the organisation will help you prepare in advance.
- How you will get to the placement - don't pick somewhere too far away.
- What uniform or clothing is suitable?
- Can you buy food and drink for lunch on site, or do you need to take your own?
- What time do you start and finish?
- Who is your point of contact and where do you meet them on the first day?
- Have you got realistic expectations?
- Who do you contact if you are late or absent?

If you are ill, please contact school as normal to report your absence AND contact the placement.

If you have any questions or concerns, then please email Miss Miller: millerr@heles.plymouth.sch.uk or call 337193.

Other help available:

Monthly Drop-in Sessions in the Careers Library (computer suite of main Library) with year 11, 12 & 13 students who have already done WEX.

Ask them anything you like about WEX: sourcing placements, things they loved/hated, mistakes they made

Check ClassCharts for times & dates.

After School Parents & Carers WEX Presentation – sessions in the library after school for help, advice and Q&A

Check ClassCharts & emails for times & dates.

Year 10 WEX Assembly – October every year.

Hele's School Website – Check out the careers pages on the school website for lots of interesting help & ideas.

School Careers Library – (computer suite of main Library) Have a look at a range of leaflets, books, posters and other info regarding WEX & careers. Watch some of our careers videos on the digital display or use the computer to do online searches.

Please read:

- You are not allowed to go on any placement that involves using dangerous machinery / chemicals/ equipment.
- Working at height – There are clear guidelines which prevent any of you working above 3ft/1.2 metres.
- No student is permitted to serve alcohol.
- You are not advised to attend your previous primary schools. It is important that you experience the 'real world of work' rather than a 'trip down memory lane'. If teaching or childcare is a route you would like to investigate further, you are welcome to contact other primary schools.
- Please do not arrange a placement with an immediate family member, relative or friend. Note that the placement must have a structured programme to ensure the best experience for you.
- The placement will not necessarily reflect the eventual career choice of the student but should allow a broad experience of the workplace and an opportunity to develop skills for the future.
- Work experience is part of the school curriculum and therefore students are not paid.
- Health & Safety is paramount – please look at the WEX PowerPoint Miss Miller sends out via email in the weeks running up to your placement.
- Please stick to the cut-off dates for placement applications.