INDUSTRIAL PLACEMENTS – A GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS

What is a Year in Industry?
Undergraduate students in the School of Engineering and Digital Arts can choose to complete a period of employment between their second and final years of study of up to 12 months. Placements are applied for and secured during the 2nd year of study and typically run from summer to summer, with the earliest starting in June and the latest in September.

Students are paid by their employer and the placement year forms an integral, assessed, part of the degree course. During the employment period, the student keeps a log book which records their daily activities and tasks.

At the end of the placement, the student writes an assessed report on their Year in Industry. The employer also completes an assessment of the student’s performance.

During the placement, the student’s position is the same as that of a full-time staff member, with the same responsibilities on both sides.

Over 50% of the students in the School successfully secure placements each year from the following courses:
- Computer Systems Engineering (MEng/BEng)
- Electronic and Communications Engineering (MEng/BEng)
- Digital Arts (BA)
- Multimedia Technology and Design (BSc)

Many students continue to work for their placement employer, part-time, during their final year of study or complete their final year research or development projects with them. A large number of Kent students receive and accept graduate employment offers from their placement employers.

What makes Kent different?
- Strong history of working with large companies and SMEs both in the UK and overseas
- A dedicated School-based Placement Office assists students in securing a placement giving advice on job applications, and interviews and supporting students during their industrial year
- Support for employers includes advice on advertising job opportunities, targeted marketing of vacancies, assistance arranging on or off campus interviews, campus presentation programmes, handling offers and rejections including passing feedback to candidates
- International opportunities available

How would your company benefit?
- Students have a good range of technical and non-technical skills to offer employers
- Placements can strengthen links between business and academia and can lead to research collaboration
- An effective way to recruit graduates by assessing performance and suitability over a long period prior to graduation
- Students can often bring “new blood” to an organisation and can suggest new ideas and new ways of working
- Your company’s profile is raised amongst the student population

What can our Engineering students do?
Electronic and Communications Engineering (ECE) students have studied Microcomputer Engineering, FPGAs, Computer Interfacing, Instrumentation, Communication Electronics, Electronic Circuit Design, Digital Implementation, Digital Signal Processing, Operating Systems and Computer Architecture. They can program in C and they are familiar with Pads, Modelsim, Labview and MATLAB.

Computer Systems Engineering (CSE) students have studied Object Oriented Programming, Microcomputer Engineering, FPGAs, Computer Interfacing, Electronic Instrumentation, Digital Communications, Digital Implementation, Digital Signal Processing, Operating Systems and Computer Architecture. They can program in Java and C, they are familiar with Pads, Modelsim, Labview and MATLAB, they understand networks and can design digital circuitry. Students from both disciplines have learned how to pick up and learn new technologies and applications quickly.
Whilst on placement, students have worked in a wide variety of fields including Analogue Design, Digital Design, Microcontroller-based design, IC Design, Website design, and Software design in C, C++ and Java.

What can our Digital Media students do?

Digital Arts (DA) and Multimedia, Technology and Design (MTD) students will have a portfolio of usable digital skills for the creation of content across the new media and broader audio-visual industries.

By the end of the second year, when they become available for placements, they know how to build web-sites using HTML, CSS and Dreamweaver, program in C, JavaScript and create Java applets, as well as produce a digital portfolio using Flash and ActionScript. In addition, students can apply the design principles they have learnt on the course to the production of 3D computer modelling in 3DsMax, digital video editing using Premiere Pro and Audition as well as Photoshop skills for image manipulation. But above all, they will have learned how to pick up and apply new technologies and applications quickly and easily.

Employer Commitment

Employers should be able to...

• Offer a real job with real responsibility
• Offer a job that allows students to put into practice what they have learned at university as well as the opportunity to pick up new skills

• Commit to participating in the assessment of their student by completing a student performance evaluation
• Allow the student to meet with the Placement Officer at least once on-site and be present at this meeting
• Nominate a supervisor to work closely with the student

Employers’ Testimonials

BAE Systems, Kent

Electronic Systems Rochester – a division within BAE Systems Inc, a global leader in defence, aerospace and security services – has a long association with the University of Kent School of Engineering and Digital Arts. Our involvement with students includes the provision and supervision of student projects, and the secondment of students on industrial placement. We find the students from the School well-prepared technically and behaviourally for the challenges and pressures of industrial work. They are enthusiastic and keen to learn from their experience in industry. Projects and placements give us and the students an excellent opportunity to get to know one another, and the experience can be extremely rewarding for both parties. Furthermore, when graduate recruitment opportunities arise it makes sense for us to consider students we have already worked with, and who have decided that they enjoy the work and the environment we offer. Indeed, some of our most promising young engineers are EDA graduates.

GForces Web Management, Kent

GForces Web Management deliver the most effective digital strategies for market leading Dealer Groups and Manufacturers. We have taken on five interns over the past two years offering experience in Design, Marketing, Development, Media Services, QA and Project Management. We have rotated our interns through various departments to help them find their niche in which they would like to progress further. This approach has been very rewarding to our interns who have been able to develop skills in a multitude of areas. We have found the students from the University of Kent enthusiastic to our hands on approach and willing to learn. In particular one of our interns showed real initiative working in our product development team and has been kept on as an employee to carry on his project whilst finishing his final year. We have truly benefitted from the contributions of our interns, making our relationship with The University of Kent extremely rewarding for us and the students alike. So much so, we are doubling the internships on offer in September this year.

Further information

Please contact the Placement Officer or visit the School’s website:
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