

Ref: VC

September 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

Y10 Work Experience
Monday 9th June – Friday 13th June 2025

As part of our careers education programme, all students complete up to a week of work experience towards the end of Year 10. This helps them to develop a clearer understanding of the workplace, try out a potential career choice and to build on their employability skills such as independence, using their initiative, communication and teamwork. We also find it boosts their motivation in school after experiencing what the world of work is like beyond their education. Work experience is classified as volunteering, therefore students should not receive payment, and their placements should not be the same as their part-time jobs.

We expect students to source their own placements to develop their skills and confidence, vital when they are searching and applying for their first jobs, apprenticeships, college or university places. This also gives them ownership over the decision of where to go. We have moved our work experience dates to earlier in the year, at the request of local employers, and to avoid clashing with other local schools, however, as a result this will reduce the amount of time students have to arrange their placements. We would therefore recommend approaching potential companies as early as possible.

Please note the length of placement will vary depending on which GCSE courses your child is taking, due to trips taking place the same week.

- If your child takes GCSE History, there is a trip on Monday 9th June. This means their work experience will be 4 days – Tuesday 10th – Friday 13th June.
- If your child takes GCSE Geography, there is a trip on Friday 13th June. This means their work experience will be 4 days – Monday 9th – Thursday 12th June.
- If your child takes both GCSE History and GCSE Geography, they will be on both trips so their work experience will be 3 days – Tuesday 10th – Thursday 13th June.
- If your child does not take GCSE History or GCSE Geography, their work experience will be 5 days – Monday 9th – Friday 13th June.

We hope many students will find a placement reflecting their career interests, however, where this is not possible it is useful to remember the main purpose is to experience the world of work, and this can happen in almost any working environment. They will develop transferable skills that they can apply to any future job role by gaining experience in any industry, even if it is not an industry they would consider in the future.

Please could you discuss this with your child and, where possible, support them to approach businesses to see if they would be willing to accommodate a placement within the week stated above. Once your child has found a placement, they will need to log it on our careers platform, Unifrog. Guidance for this will be given during tutorial sessions and we will send home a how-to guide in due course.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

With many thanks in advance for your help,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V Cannam'.

Miss V Cannam, Careers Lead: vcannam@thomaskeble.gloucs.sch.uk

Student FAQs

How should I apply for a work experience placement?

If you have thought of a company you would like to be placed with, a preliminary call is a good idea to ask if they accept work experience students, or you could go there and ask in person. If they do, you should follow up with a letter or email using the template below. If you are not comfortable with calling, you could send the email as your initial contact. If you do not hear back within 2 weeks, you could either politely contact them to ask if they have received your request, or contact other places to see if you can find a placement elsewhere.

Where can I go for work experience?

Any company that will accept you! Most students opt for a local placement in Gloucestershire, and previous placements have included Stroud District Council, primary schools/nurseries, vets, gyms, solicitors, charities (e.g. National Trust, Meningitis Trust), estate agents, golf clubs, cafés, Pangolin Foundry, Stroud Arts Space, engineers, with tradespeople such as electricians/landscapers or mechanics, Superdry, Westonbirt Arboretum, WWT Slimbridge, Calcot Manor & Spa, hairdressers, beauticians, museums, Longfield Hospice, Gloucester Rugby, Forest Green Rovers, Ecotricity, The Door, Snow Business, Cotswold Airport, libraries, travel agents, St James's Place and Eastcombe Post Office. You may go further afield (we have had students go to Bristol and London for example), however, be aware we may not be able to visit you for support during your placement. International placements are possible if you are able to organise travel and accommodation, please be sure to contact Miss Cannam to discuss before arranging. This is not advised if you are doing a 3-day placement.

What if I don't know what I want to do as a career?

Work experience is a really valuable opportunity to see what the world of work is like and to develop transferable employability skills like communication and organisation. You should try to choose something you are interested in. If you like talking to people, perhaps choose a customer-facing placement like a café or shop (and these might also be able to offer you a part-time job during Year 11 or beyond if they're impressed with you!). If you like sports or animals, try to find a placement reflecting that interest. Consider if you'd like to work outdoors or if you'd prefer an office environment, and if you like working with the public or in a quieter setting. You could ask family members or family friends if they think their jobs might interest you, and perhaps go to their place of work, even if it's in a different department. By choosing something based on your interests and personality, you might find something you enjoy that you could then consider after school, but equally you may discover it's something you'd never want to do, and this is just as important to find out!

What if I can't do work experience in my preferred industry, e.g. NHS or emergency services?

We would recommend you think about the skills you'd require in your chosen job and other roles where similar skills would be required. For example, working with the elderly to develop empathy and communication is often regarded as excellent work experience for someone wanting to work in nursing, or working in a playgroup could be good if you are interested in midwifery. We have had students interested in drama working with care homes to provide the entertainment programme for the residents, and in gyms if they're interested in physiotherapy. There are lots of ways around this issue, and you are then likely to be able to apply for more relevant work experience in Year 12 or during college, when you're over 16.

What if there's an accident while I'm on placement?

Students are insured by the school, however employers must have valid Employer's Liability Insurance for us to approve for your placement to go ahead. If you wish to see a copy of our insurance schedule, then please contact the Finance Office.

Is there anything else important that I should be aware of?

If you are interested in an engineering placement (e.g. Renishaw) or the Armed Forces, please speak to Miss Cannam as they have specific application processes and deadlines. You will need to do this as early as possible next term, by the end of October at the latest.

What is the process for confirming my placement?

Once you have found a placement, you will fill in the details on Unifrog. Please ensure you tell the employer they will get emails from Unifrog, as it may go into their junk folder. Once you have filled in your section, it will then email the employer, who will complete your placement information and their insurance details. Once the employer has completed their part, it is sent to your parent/carer for their permission, before coming back to Miss Cannam for the school's authorisation.

Ideally you should have completed your student section by October half term. This gives time for the employer and parents/carers to complete their sections too. If all sections of Unifrog are not completed by February half term, we may not have time to complete any necessary health and safety checks and risk assessments. In this case, you would remain in school during work experience week.

If you're on a local placement, we aim for a member of TK staff to visit you during your work experience week to check you're OK, and that neither you nor the employer has any concerns.

At the end of your placement, you will complete a short reflection on Unifrog and the employer will also provide feedback on how you did. You will have a mock interview with a local businessperson at the beginning of Year 11, and they may review your reflection and employer feedback as part of this interview process.

Email Template

Subject: Work Experience Enquiry

Dear (title and name if you know it, or company name),

I am a Year 10 student at Thomas Keble School in the first year of my GCSE courses. I have a great interest in (subject/career) and am considering it as my chosen career path.

I would very much appreciate it if you would consider whether your company would be able to offer me a work experience placement between (insert relevant dates).

I hope to gain experience to tell me if (the job/career/subject area) is the path I really want to follow after leaving school, and to develop my employability skills and find out more about the world of work. I would be expected to work standard shifts of up to 8 hours per day to suit your business, with a 30-minute break for every 4.5 hours worked. The school will provide full guidance on the levels of support I will require including safeguarding/welfare issues and will ensure health and safety checks are carried out. In terms of insurance, all the school requires is a copy of your employer liability certificate, submitted electronically using our school's careers platform, Unifrog.

(You should then add a paragraph explaining any previous work experience / responsibilities e.g. school leadership positions, or achievements inside or outside of school as appropriate).

If you have any queries please contact me via e-mail: (put your email address here) or telephone: (provide both your home telephone number and mobile number if you can).

Thank you for your consideration.

(Your first and last names)