PSYU9A8 PSYCHOLOGY UNDERGRADUATE PLACEMENT

**PLACEMENT STUDENT HANDBOOK**

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INTRODUCTION

**This guide is designed to:**

* Provide background information on the module
* Outline your role as a placement student
* Highlight key dates for your diary
* Give a step-by-step guide to a successful psychology placement experience

We hope this is a positive and beneficial experience for you. We are keen to engage with placement students and welcome feedback. If you have any comments or questions, please contact us using the contact details provided at the end of this document.

This placement module aims to enhance your employability by engagement in work-based learning as part of your training and preparation for the workplace. The placements entail 50 hours at the host or where relevant. Placements can be in person, remote, or a hybrid blend of both.

**Intended Learning Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of the placement, you will be able to:

• Demonstrate understanding of psychology within a work context

• Evaluate skills and knowledge gained during the placement and reflect on your own performance

• Effectively communicate experiences and reflect on your learning

This work placement/work-based project is offered in line with the [**University’s Work Placement & Work-Based Project Policy**](https://www.stir.ac.uk/about/professional-services/student-academic-and-corporate-services/academic-registry/policy-and-procedure/work-placements-and-projects/). All stakeholders i.e. the University, students and placement hosts will have to sign the Work Placement and Risk Assessment Form (WBL 2.1), available at the above link, before the start of the placement stating that they abide by the principles of this Policy.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY and KEY INFORMATION

* While there is no set deadline by which you must have secured a placement, doing so promptly in the Autumn semester will give you plenty of time to complete your hours.
* Please aim to have an initial meeting with your Placement Provider/Mentor no later than the end of November to clarify the details of the placement and complete documents e.g. PVG Applications and the Placement Agreement and Risk Assessment Form (WBL 2.1).
* ***Placement Dates***: The fifty-hour placement should occur between October and April, though the timing and schedule of the placement within these times can be determined by the provider and student.
* Mid-semester breaks occur from Mon 27 Oct – Fri 31 Oct 2025 (inclusive) and Mon 2 Mar – Fri 6 Mar 2026 (inclusive), if you do not attend your placement during those times, please be sure to discuss this with your provider so they are aware and can plan accordingly.
* Before placement starts, i.e. October: The Work Placement and Risk Assessment Form (WBL 2.1) should be completed, signed and submitted. **These forms must be submitted to the University and approved by the Module Co-ordinator before the placement begins.**
* Please note the Autumn Semester finishes on the 5th December and Spring Semester starts on the 19th of January. If you will be away from the University during this time, please discuss this with your provider so they are aware and can plan accordingly.
* Mid-placement-review: You should meet with your mentor/provider and discuss progress approx. mid-way through the placement. Timing will depend on the shape of the placement but would be anticipated to take place by early February. At this, or any point, students and/or mentors can contact the Module Co-ordinator (Sharon.Kessler@stir.ac.uk) if they feel the placement is not progressing according to the placement agreement or if there are any other concerns. Full contact details are also provided at the end of this document.
* The PSYU9A8 Psychology Placement Evaluation form should be completed, signed and submitted by Tuesday the 14th of April. This includes an evaluation and a statement confirming that the student has completed 50 hours on placement.
* Psychology Conference will take place in April 2025. Mentors are very welcome at this event where all students undertaking a placement make a presentation (oral or video/blog/poster) on their placement. The conference is organised by the final year students and you should inform your host about the date, exact time and location (University of Stirling) nearer to the date.

**KEY STEPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PLACEMENT**

1. **Psychology Placement Planning**

Once the placement has been agreed, you should arrange a preliminary phone/video conference/in person briefing with your host to discuss the details of the placement (see below). This should occur before the end of November. This meeting gives you and your host an opportunity to discuss the project and it should form the basis of whether the host and the student wish to progress with the placement (**see step 4 below**).

Some organisations will require the students to go through a PVG check before commencing their placement. This should be highlighted and discussed at an early stage of organising the placement and must be stated in the Work Placement and Risk Assessment Form (WBL 2.1). The University will pay the costs for the PVG check if required and students should submit their applications at their earliest convenience through the Psychology Department, Email: psych-enquiries@stir.ac.uk. Please note that even if the provider provides a PVG, the university requires the student to **also** apply for one through the university.

The host organisation should appoint a member of staff, the “Organisation Mentor”, whose role will be to support you, monitor your progress and liaise with the University through the Module Co-ordinator to oversee the placement both formally and informally.

1. **Mentor support**

Mentors have been advised that they should feel free to discuss, ask questions and resolve any issues with the Module Co-ordinator (see contact details below) before and during the placement(s). The Module Co-ordinator will be happy to arrange video conference meetings if required.

1. **Academic support for the student by the University**

You will have scheduled class sessions with the Module Co-ordinator during the Autumn and Spring semesters to prepare them for your placement, review the placement progress and evaluate / reflect on the placement.

1. **Student/Mentor Briefing**

Once you have secured a placement, you should make contact and organise a preliminary briefing meeting (ideally before the end of November) to discuss the placement in detail. At this meeting and if required, subsequent meetings, students and hosts/mentors should aim to follow the University of Stirling’s WBL Policy (see Introduction). Key points are:

* + Plan the timing of the placement i.e. how the 50 hours will be scheduled.
	+ Be very clear what the aims and tasks of the project are.
	+ Specify any placement outcomes and confirm the placement meets the intended learning outcomes.
	+ Make clear the lines of communication and how the placement will be monitored via remote means (email/video conferencing/phone, etc.) or through in person meetings.
	+ Discuss the organisation’s structure, employees and volunteers, contacts for their project and relevant resources.
	+ Discuss any additional needs e.g. PVG
	+ Discuss: Placement start dates/times; Student induction (see below); The WBL Policy.
	+ The Work Placement and Risk Assessment Form (WBL 2.1) **must be completed and approved by the Module Co-ordinator prior to the start of the placement.** The Module Co-ordinator will co-sign and approve the submitted document on the Canvas online learning environment. This approval will be visible to you.
	+ If host organisations wish for a report or output at the end of the placement, they should discuss this when determining the placements tasks and include it in the Work Placement and Risk Assessment Form (WBL 2.1). You should be made aware of the length, style/format etc. required for such outputs. Providers should ensure that all tasks can be completed within the 50h placement period.

Placement hosts have been advised that students should be introduced to the organisation at the start of the placement. This should include:

* Fire regulations
* Dress code
* Absence requirements (if applicable)
* Contact numbers
* Breaks/lunch times (if applicable)
* Hours of opening
* Procedures for processing expense claims
* Who they will be working with / who their mentor is
1. **Placement Review**

You and your host should review your placement progress regularly and you have the opportunity to contact the Module Co-ordinator if there are problems.

At the end of the placement, we ask mentors to complete the PSYU9A8 Psychology Placement Evaluation form. The form is required to confirm that the student has completed the required hours of the psychology placement and whether the mentor felt that this was done at a satisfactory level.

1. **Student Assignments**

You will complete 2 assignments:

1. **Reflective essay on their psychology placement** (100% of module grade, marked by university staff)
2. **Presentation on their psychology placement** at the Psychology conference to which hosts are invited (contributes to a different module grade, marked by university staff)
3. **What if a student needs additional support**

We know that students can experience personal and study-related challenges at any time, and these may occur when they are off-campus on work placement or working externally on a project. Be assured that we will continue to provide all our students with full support during these times.

You will continue to have full access to all [Student Support Services](https://www.stir.ac.uk/student-life/support-wellbeing/student-support-services/) available including [mental health and wellbeing support](https://www.stir.ac.uk/student-life/support-wellbeing/student-support-services/your-mental-health-and-wellbeing/) whilst on work placement or work-based projects.

Providers have been advised on how to support students when they become aware that a student is experiencing challenges such as poor mental health or there is a critical issue. The process for this is:

1. The organisation will advise the student that they will be informing the university point of contact within the programme/module of the situation. This ensures that the student is aware that the organisation is linking the university back to the student to provide support.
2. The organisation will contact the named point of contact at the university to advise of the situation. This ensures it can be discussed and addressed with the student as quickly as possible.
3. The organisation will direct the student to the University’s Student Support Services so they can immediately access support required from the university service.

**Keeping yourself safe**

When you are on an employer site, you should adhere to all health and safety requirements. During work placements and work-based projects, you are to be treated as an employee of the organisation so should be kept safe. Please remember that you should only communicate with organisations using your student email.

It is advised that students [Safezone App](https://www.stir.ac.uk/about/professional-services/estates-and-campus-services/safety-environment-security-and-continuity/safezone/) while on placement or conducting any work on an external site.

1. **Other Information**

Placement providers can nominate their placement students for a STAR Award (Student Talent Awards Recognition) that aim to recognise the outstanding contributions our students make to organisations through work experience placements, internships, and volunteering. This celebrates students who have developed their skills and experience whilst making a valuable contribution to the wider community. Nomination forms will be sent to hosts in the Spring. Students will also be invited to nominate placement mentors. Placement providers who nominate and/or are nominated will be invited to the STAR Awards Ceremony in May (date and time to be confirmed). This is typically a smart, red carpet event held in Stirling Court Hotel, with a reception. Any enquiries to star@stir.ac.uk.

**Contact Details**

Although there are scheduled classes, please feel free to contact us at any point.

**Any enquiries can be made to:**

Module Co-ordinator: Dr Sharon Kessler

E-mail: Sharon.Kessler@stir.ac.uk

Administrator: Hazel O’Donnel

 Email: hazel.odonnell@stir.ac.uk