

Effective Student Placements

Facilitators: Steve Slack - CEO SAYiT

Joanne Thompson - Senior University Teacher, University of Sheffield

Workshop Participants: Approximately 15

Summary

Participants were asked three questions to answer in pairs. These were:

- How to create a mutually beneficial ethos?
- What do students positively offer an organisation?
- How to prepare for a placement to be successful? (emphasis on sharing best practice)

Representatives from different organisations shared aspects of their placements that worked well and in some cases needs further development.

Question	Workshop 1	Workshop 2	Flipchart
How to create a mutually beneficial ethos?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find out what student interests are and match it. • Encourage innovation and creativity – eg Football match to engage with clients • Legacy – think about what you will do with the work produced. • Tangible outcomes – ‘why’ are you doing what you are doing. • Humility • Be adaptable • Recognise there are power imbalances and see the strengths of different organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even with best plans things can go wrong and it is important to be responsive to challenges. • Creating an environment for communication and acknowledging the power of each partner (Organisation, Student and Uni) • Clear understanding of expectations/behaviour. • Allowing them to step up and fly high • Having time for students • Investment in the future for us. Influencing training of future doctors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find out students interests, be creative! • Legacy – adds to balanced benefits, talk about why and benefits • Tangible outcome for student • Being prepared and adaptable • Recognise power imbalance – establish mutual respect • Support and supervision triangulation • Balance between curriculum and practice that’s useful • Recognising strengths of each and power imbalance • Open communication throughout placement – ongoing, open environment • Establishing relationships • Placement fits with learning outcomes • Clear understandings • Honesty – with uni and students, students with host • Making time for supervision • Start with what students are comfortable with – match interests • Allow students to step up to bigger challenges • Build confidence • Be empowering • Support to break barriers • Flexible, open-minded • Develop schemes opportunities

<p>What do students positively offer an organisation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate, computer literate, good communication, personable. • Scrutiny – thinking about ‘why’ we do things the way we do. • What they can do for organisations – value the clients – take them seriously. • Deeper knowledge of the sector. • Impact assessment – evaluation. • Make staff feel good • Reenergise an organisation • Objective reflection and critique • Age of students is close to our client group – create aspirations for them. Similarly if they are more mature they have different skills to offer. • Curiosity, questioning minds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh perspective, digital skills (setting up databases) research skills, action planning • Have an objective view, links with academic staff. • Youth – brings fresh perspective but mature students bring experience. • Energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good talkers • Passionate • IT literate • Constant scrutiny – why we do things • Give a sense of importance • Deeper/current sector knowledge • Evaluation/impact and outcomes • Students help staff to feel good – “doing a good job” • Aspirations – developing • Generating conversations • Curiosity • Thread/connection that runs through from University to VSO • New insights from students curiosity • Flexibility • End goal contained tasks • Digital knowledge • Understanding the norms of the sector you’re volunteering in, UoS prospects, qualifications and experience needed • Aspiration for others • Think creatively – find out students interests and matching • Makes staff feel as good as students develop • Yearly calendar for organisations for all student placements • Planned visit prior to placement • Create resources, help at events, constructive critical eye on current practice, research • Where possible projects with a very clear and tangible outcome • Some humility on both sides and understanding of what each can contribute • A really good induction programme/pack which sets out timeframes and expectation for both sides • Clear set of objectives and arrangement for assessing and monitoring progress towards them • Fresh perspective • Digital skills – social media • Research skills • Links to teaching staff to support • Youth
<p>How to prepare for a placement to be successful?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned visit by students prior to placement starting • Have a yearly calendar across MDH with details of where students are going at different times of the year. • Importance of supervision on placement – having a named contact person/key person to report to/ask for help. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre interview meeting. • Induction, mentor/buddy. • Clearly defined project and planning ahead. • Timeliness of meetings – prior to starting. Formal induction to meet members of team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly define project from all sides – job description, discuss with tutors • Plan ahead, understand university point of view • Having time for all things prior to starting placement • Treat students as member of team

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student knowing what is going to happen on placement • Balance benefit • Young people need some help/support to understand different work cultures (usual working practices in other sectors) • Clear objective induction and practical outcomes • Shared expectations and values – don't assume they are the same. • Uni tutor support important. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Management and training to upskill students (SOAR – referring to PGR students) • Shared expectations/values. • Align skills and knowledge to organisations. • Mutual exchange of ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work shadowing • Training sessions – formal • Shared expectations • Full induction • Pre-interview, mentor/buddy • Details of organisation and student needs • Establishing values • Planned visit prior to placement – students, breaks barriers/less intense first day • Yearly calendar – to help with large number of placement requests from variety of student disciplines – maximise flexibility • Having time to think about what the student is going to do establish contacts – supervisor role – key person • 'Balanced Benefits' • Understanding of young age and level of experience in a student – How to dress, address customers etc. – professional standards • Practical things – phone no's • Clear objectives • Induction • Manage expectations and presumptions of ability and skill
--	---	--	--