



University of
Reading

SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE, POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT

PLACEMENT YEAR

BSc Agriculture

BSc Agricultural Business Management

'My placement with Waitrose gave me good insight into both retail and food markets, whilst furthering my knowledge of the British dairy sector. I thoroughly enjoyed my placement year and would encourage all undergraduates to see it as a chance to develop important professional skills, independence and an opportunity to pursue a particular area of interest.'

Joe Pitt, BSc Agricultural Business Management with Placement Year

HOW DOES A PLACEMENT FIT WITH MY DEGREE?

A placement year is a fantastic opportunity to gain 12 months work experience in an area that is directly related to your degree programme or potential career path, giving you the freedom to find a placement that suits you and your career aspirations.

The placement will be undertaken during the third year of your programme. Your first two years will be based at University where you will develop a thorough knowledge of your chosen subject, which can then be applied in an industry-specific setting in your placement year, before returning to University for your fourth and final year.

Why a placement makes you more employable

There are many reasons why students decide to take a 12 month placement

- Most companies demand applicants have relevant work experience and those that do have an added advantage over applicants that have not undertaken work experience.
- Many employers use their placement scheme to identify potential candidates for their graduate recruitment scheme.
- If you have no idea what graduate level career path you'd like to explore, or what company you'd like to work for, a placement year allows you to investigate a career or company with a view to helping you make a more informed career choice.
- Not only are you encouraged to apply and develop the skills that you are learning at university, you'll also have opportunities to learn new ones depending on the nature of your placement. These could include planning, specialist software and databases, customer facing skills and public relations.



WHAT ARE MY PLACEMENT OPTIONS?

The companies you can apply and work for will depend on your degree programme and the career you are interested in pursuing.

Many of our students apply for placements with large, established organisations such as: John Deere, Haygrove and Frontier. Other students have spent a rewarding year working for smaller-scale business to gain a broad experience of the whole operation.

Students have also spent a rewarding year working for smaller-scale non-governmental organisations or charities, both abroad and here in the UK. Placement students gain broad based experience, for example in project management, day-to-day operations and communication, depending on the goals of the organisation. Typically students will have responsibility for a specialist task. This may mean working with end-users, liaising with clients, delivering presentations or writing reports; learning many new employability skills as part of their role.



Preparation and training

The School's dedicated Placement Team will guide you through the career planning process, and covers everything you need to know about your placement year, including how to:

- Fill out an application form
- Create a winning CV
- Write a covering letter

We also work closely with the Careers Centre and Placement Team who provide support and advice on all aspects of the application process, and give you the opportunity to participate in telephone and mock interviews and Psychometric Assessments (ability tests) to ensure that you are thoroughly prepared for the application process.

Support during the placement

Once you are on your placement you will continue to have access to support and guidance from your Academic Tutor and our Placement Team, and we will arrange a placement review meeting during the course of the placement.

Recent placements

Agriculture and Agricultural Business Management

DairyCo

DroneAg

Hall Hunter Partnership

John Deere

Kingston Hill Farm Ltd

McDonalds Young Farmer Programme

ASK ADAS Ltd

Savills

Strutt & Parker

Velcourt

Waitrose & Partners

FINDING A PLACEMENT

There are lots of ways to find a placement. Employers look for students who are proactive and self-driven so be prepared to use a number of different methods to find your ideal placement.



Resources available to help you search for a placement

We have lots of resources to help in your search for a placement, including:

- An employer database with details of companies who offer relevant placements, or who have taken on our students previously
- Our annual Careers and Placements Fair, attended by a range of companies who have vacancies for placement students
- Support from dedicated Placement Team, Careers Consultants and access to My Jobs Online, where employers advertise placements and you can sign up to receive daily or weekly email alerts.

Networking and direct contact

Don't feel you have to wait for your ideal placement to be advertised. If you know what company you would like to work for you can approach them directly. Our students have gained placements via a direct approach, such as:

- Phoning the company and discussing potential opportunities
- Giving their CV directly to a manager, either at Trade Fairs or Career Fairs

Using existing contacts - friends, family, colleagues - can also help you secure a placement.

'I would strongly recommend doing a placement. I now know what I'm looking for in a graduate job and more importantly I know what I don't want to do. There are some skills that just can't be taught at University – like public interaction, a skill I really enjoyed and found rewarding but also challenging. My commercial awareness has also increased and I now understand the pressures that agricultural businesses face and the decisions that need to be made when running a successful enterprise.'

Hannah Jones,
BSc Agriculture with
Placement Year



'Undertaking a professional placement year opened up a whole breadth of opportunities to me, experiencing a range of practices operated by the business and developing an understanding of the company and the wider industry. I met a host of influential leaders in both the business and in agriculture, and took the opportunity to discover where my future career is best focused. The benefits of a placement can be advertised no better than by the offer of a full time job upon completion of my degree.'

Luke Cox, BSc Agriculture with Placement Year

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I didn't register for the 4-year degree course – can I still do a placement?

Yes, when you've accepted your placement we can arrange a transfer to the relevant 4-year degree course.

When will my placement start?

This is often dependant on your employer – some schemes run from July, others from September. If you are unclear about this or any aspect of the placement then you just need to contact the Placement Team.

Will I be assessed?

Yes, the placement year comprises of 120 credits and is a formal part of your degree: you will be required to submit assignments to demonstrate your learning.

Will I get paid?

The majority of placements are paid, with a typical salary in the region of £16,000 – £20,000.

Will I be offered a graduate job position?

Companies may use their placement scheme as way of recruiting for their graduate roles – so you could return to University for your final year with a graduate job already secured.

PLACEMENT YEAR

i For more information, please contact the Placement Team:

School of Agriculture, Policy and Development
University of Reading
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Reading, RG6 6EU

sappdplacements@reading.ac.uk
www.reading.ac.uk/apd

Agrespect Partner



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Important Information

This brochure was issued in 2023 and is aimed at prospective undergraduate students wishing to apply for a place at the University of Reading (the University) and start a course in autumn 2024. The University makes every effort to ensure that the information provided in the brochure is accurate and up-to-date at the time of going to press (May 2023). However, it may be necessary for the University to make some changes to the information presented in the brochure following publication – for example, where it is necessary to reflect changes in practice or theory in an academic subject as a result of emerging research; or if an accrediting body requires certain course content to be added or removed. To make an informed and up-to-date decision, we recommend that you check reading.ac.uk/study

The University undertakes to take all reasonable steps to provide the services (including the courses) described in this brochure. It does not, however, guarantee the provision of such services. Should industrial action or circumstances beyond the control of the University interfere with its ability to provide the services, the University undertakes to use all reasonable steps to minimise any disruption to the services.

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Placement fees

During this year you will only pay a partial fee which is currently set at 15% of the normal tuition fee. Check the website for the latest information: reading.ac.uk/fees-and-funding

Placements

Programmes with a Professional Placement Year (also known as 'Year in Industry' or 'Placement Year') are fully dependent on students securing their own placement opportunity, normally through a competitive recruitment process. The University provides dedicated career and application support for placement year students. Students who do not secure a placement or who are unable to complete the placement year due to extenuating circumstances, have the option to transfer to a three year variant of their programme with agreement from their School/Department.



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