



Professional Development

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1. Part A

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of Part A within the report is to distribute all research and findings for considered placements and to evaluate why a chosen placement is suitable. The benefits of placement, a placement rationale and the variety of placement opportunities will be included.

1.2 Placement Benefits

According to O'Donovan, D (2018) students that completed placement gained learning experiences, managed to overcome and experienced to learn and distribute new skills that theory work would have not provided. In addition to this Mclean, V (2017). States that compulsory work experience is a great method for students to test out career choices, prepares students for the workplace and can even create a strong work ethic within students.

Trigwell, K (2006) states that work-based learning is now common and offered in most universities and that there are a variety of approaches when completing it. However between the integration of students, employers, colleges and university staff many issues can arise. Therefore each are responsible that work based learning is being completed appropriately.

According to Fanthorne, C (2014). The value of work experience is measured by three factors. Firstly the student learns skills from the experience of the workplace, their personality may developed directly as a result of going on placement and finally that the students career path has been influenced by the placement of attendance. However, Fanthorne does explain that problems may arise when students carryout placement, from unrealistic expectations and workload.

In order to manage any unexpected situations on placement, The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Educational Placements (2018) have stated that opportunities within placement must be authentic and genuine workplace needs are met by the student. Formal agreements should be negotiated between all parties, this is to understand the respective roles and realistic expectations.

Overall, placements are highly praised and highly recommended for university students. The benefits not only ensure that individuals are working within an industry they enjoy but individuals can also gain practical skills not on offer whilst studying. Work placement will also be beneficial for those who have not had much experience, it will enhance Curriculum Vitae and prepare students for workplace situations.

1.3 Placement Rationale

The purpose of the rationale is to ensure a chosen placement is appropriate for specific goals I wish to achieve. This will be done by preparing a variety of guidelines and comparing a chosen placement to see if I will have the opportunity to progress my learning. In addition to this by completing a rationale it will ensure I have realistic expectations before beginning placement. Fanthorne states that students are responsible to manage their expectations and discuss placement with students who have been to their placement of choice.

The chosen placement that I will discuss is PGL.

Firstly, as placement is compulsory for my second academic year I need to ensure that my chosen placement gives me the opportunity to work 200 hours over a minimum of eight weeks to ensure I pass the academic year. In addition to this, as I am studying tourism I believe that for my placement I should be required to push myself out of my comfort zone and interaction with a variety of individuals from different cultures. This will enhance my skills as a tourism student. According to Brunt, P (1997) it is stated that sandwich placements within the tourism industry is an important factor when providing essential skills for students prior to their final year in education. It is stated that students who undergo placement provide an added value once in full time employment.

PGL meets the requirements for my degree as the job roles on offer provide placement for twelve weeks with a contract of 35 hours a week. In addition to this PGL is a placement that works closely with the university. This means I may complete placement with a company with a good representation and that is reliable. Furthermore, PGL offer job roles at a variety of their locations within the UK and France. In order to meet the guidelines that will get me out of my comfort zone and interact with a variety of individuals I need to apply for the job roles that are based out in France.

PGL aids my progression in my degree and within the tourism industry as my communication skills will improve and I will gain good knowledge of the area where I am based. These factors will improve my learning on my degree as I have had the opportunity to develop skills learnt in university whilst in practical situations. Finally, by completing placement within the tourism industry it will enhance my CV which could result in a competitive advantage once applying for a full time career within the industry. Whilst researching for potential placements I came across two companies of interest that praise

placement within the tourism industry and even offer placements to graduates. These companies are TUI and ABTA. As these are well respected companies within the industry I am interested in progressing my career with them and by completing placement I will have more of an opportunity to do so.

Overall by completing the rationale it has encouraged me to complete placement with PGL. This is as most of my objectives set for completing placement has been met by the company. In addition the representation PGL has with the university and customers is an incentive. Finally it has ensured that I will have a realistic expectation before placement begins which increases my chance of enjoying and completing placement.

1.4 Placement Opportunities

During the first academic semester it was compulsory to attend guest lectures from companies that offer potential placements.

The first relevant placement that was considered was Glamorgan County Cricket Club. Amanda spoke to us on behalf of the company and mentioned how there were many opportunities relevant to the tourism and event industry like marketing, hospitality and HR placements. However, compared to other placement opportunities Glamorgan Cricket Club did not look attractive. This could be due to the location in Sophia Gardens in Cardiff.

The next guest speaker to come in was Arianna on behalf of Camp America. In contrast to Glamorgan Cricket Club this placement was portrayed as adventurous and therefore looked more attractive. Camp America was founded in 1964 and now provides several types of camps all over America. The job role suggested to us was a Camp Counsellor. This is relevant in the tourism industry as the incentive is to travel and learn about different cultures. However the only downfall is the expenses to work out in America, especially visas.

The final guest speaker considered came on behalf of PGL. According to the PGL website they are “The UK’s leading outdoor education provider”. The company specialises in outdoor education for secondary school groups. In addition to this PGL have venues throughout the UK and a few in France. This company is being considered as the main responsibilities is to host activities for children however the only venues being considered are the ones located in France.

Overall, Glamorgan Cricket Club is a great opportunity however it is not suitable for experience I wish to gain. Therefore the two companies that have been considered is PGL and Camp America. These are more suitable as I wish to go out of my comfort zone and to work abroad, to experience another culture and to work with children.

2. Part B

The purpose of Part B is to evaluate skills already achieved and skills that could be developed and gained whilst on placement. Therefore it will include a qualification audit, training needs analysis and a pre-placement review.

2.1 Qualifications Audit

Whilst searching for potential placements it was important to note any relevant qualifications and certificates in order to find the most appropriate experience. In addition, by doing this it will increase chances of placement by highlighting strengths within the industry. Here are my relevant qualifications.

Subject	Qualification	Grade
Travel and Tourism	BTEC Level 3	Distinction*
World Development	AS	B
Religious Studies	AS	C
French	GCSE	C
Child Development	BTEC Level 2	Distinction
Performing Arts	GCSE	B
Music	GCSE	C

Relevant Certificates for Placement

Certificate	Date Completed
First Aid	September 2018
ABTA Online Learning Course	May 2019

2.2 Training Needs Analysis

Prior to placement, it is important to recognise training needs to ensure that the placement of choice will provide suitable skills that will support my development within the tourism industry.

Firstly, as a tourism student I would like to gain language skills to be able to communicate effectively with those who do not speak English. In addition to this, I believe it is vital to gain an authentic experience of another culture as this would improve product knowledge when I begin a full time career within the tourism industry. One main skill I wish to gain through work experience is working with children. Finally, as I have only had experience with customer service, working with children will be a new experience that will push me out of my comfort zone

2.3 Pre-Placement Review

The first challenge I have faced since searching for placements is timing. As I have commitments the start of September it was hard to find a placement contract that worked around that. Furthermore, another challenge I have faced is hearing back from placements. As I have a deadline, relying on companies to offer placement after interviews and inductions is very time consuming. The final challenge I have faced is finding reliable companies. During the research, I found a variety of placements online with unknown companies that had little or no reputation. Therefore finding a company through university is a priority.

However, whilst completing research I have come across many companies of interest that provide internships and graduate programmes. All in which I may focus on after completing my degree. The variety of guest lectures were also an incentive as it proved that were a variety of opportunities to different career paths that I had never considered before.

Overall, there have been a variety of potential placements that have been considered and all offer different experiences. However my current placement of choice is PGL. The reason I chose PGL is because they offer opportunities that will enhance the appropriate skills within the tourism industry.

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4. Appendix

4.1 Personal Career Action Plan

Personal Analysis

Strength	Weaknesses
I pride myself in having good time management skills and organisational skills. I am also very hard working. With both part time employment and my studies. Therefore I have no doubt that I will be motivated to complete a placement contract.	One of my weaknesses is my confidence. When I am put in a situation to use my initiative I am very doubtful of myself even if it is the right thing to do. During my academic studies and part time work I have found I spend a majority of my time behind a screen or til. I need to find a placement that includes outdoor activities rather than a placement within an office.
Opportunities	Threats
I will show employers my good work ethic and potentially have a future with the company. To gain new relationships and networks within the tourism industry.	Confidence may affect my overall experience resulting in me not making the most out of my chosen placement.

Setting Goals

Objectives	Actions	Implementation	Success Criteria
Confidence	To try and find placement abroad to push myself out of my comfort zone. Take all given opportunities at placement and complete to the best of my ability.	To be confident in my own decisions	By completing my specific contract and appreciate the new experience at placement. Confidence and initiative should increase
Practice a new language	To find work experience preferably abroad, however if placed in Wales I could develop my Welsh language skills.	To converse with locals and support language skills by studying.	To communicating with individuals without any English. Even if it is a basic conversation
Working with children	Research placements with roles specifically for children.	To gain knowledge of programmes or schemes in the area of placement that involve or targeted towards children	Appraisal from the company and children will prove that interacting with them is successful.
Appreciate outdoor activities.	Look for placements that require you to be outdoors	If an outdoor hobby is found on placement try to maintain it during the academic year	By trying new activities even if I end up not liking it.
Working within a team	To complete group activities within the university and to ensure placement provides the opportunity to work with	To volunteer if colleagues need help with anything, especially if I have free time.	Success will be measured by the way I interact with colleagues.

	a variety of people.		
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Personal Objectives

Short Term
My short term objective is to successfully complete placement and to travel as much as possible within the next 12 months. In addition to this I hope to maintain my time management and organisational skills in order to thrive in my degree.
Medium Term
My goals for the next few years is to finish my degree and to start my career within the tourism industry as soon as possible. Additionally, travelling will still be a priority and hopefully will be an incentive of my job role.
Long Term
Firstly, a goal of mine is to not limit myself to one sector of the tourism industry. I want to gain as much experience as possible that will ensure I progress within the industry. A long term goal I would like to achieve is to find a permanent job abroad. However it is in my best interest to promote Wales whilst working abroad and eventually return to Wales.

4.2 Curriculum Vitae

Rachel Thomas

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Swansea, SA4 8PH
07393832841
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EXPERIENCE

Shell Service Station, Pontarddulais —Sales Assistant

January 2018- Present

Responsibilities include managing the store and forecourt over weekends, completing store deliveries and completing forecourt deliveries with extra precaution. The majority of shifts are required to work independently.

Krispy Kreme, Swansea— Graduate Sales Assistant

August 2017 - September 2018

Responsibilities included selling products and maintaining the cleanliness of the store additional responsibilities included meeting targets, upselling, providing good product knowledge.

Garden Room Restaurant, Pontarddulais — Waitress

May 2016 - July 2017

Responsibilities included ensuring all customers were satisfied with their purchase, maintaining the cleanliness of the store and working alongside a team.

Certificates

**The ABOUT ABTA online
training programme**

Level 1 First Aid

EDUCATION

St. John Lloyd Catholic Comprehensive, Llanelli — 10 GCSE's (A-C)

September 2010 - June 2015

Coleg Sir Gar, Llanelli — BTEC Qualification

September 2016 - June 2018

Travel and Tourism Level 3, **Double Distinction***

University of Wales Trinity St David, Swansea — BA Degree

September 2018 - Present

International Tourism Management

SKILLS

- *IT Skills*
- *Written and Verbal Communication*
- *Organizational Skills*
- *Multi-tasking*
- *Time Management*
- *Ability to work under pressure*
- *Adaptability*
- *Leadership*
- *Working within a team*
- *Customer service skills*

VOLUNTEERING

El Nino Surf Store and Club Nautic Arenal (2017)

In June 2017, I had the opportunity to work with these companies for 2 weeks with Erasmus+. My main responsibility to teach paddle boarding to Spanish children and to carry equipment to and from the beach. I truly enjoyed my experience there and I am now challenging myself to a longer experience abroad to work with children.

Coleg Sir Gar/ Carmarthenshire Council (2018)

I volunteered with my college in 2018 to work with the council to provide tennis activities to primary schools around the Carmarthenshire area. I had to ensure that the children were getting involved with tennis games and to make it fun. In addition to this the day ended up to be very warm so I had to ensure the children were wearing suncream and were hydrated.

Pontarddulais Workingmens Club. (2019)

I volunteer with my local club around 4 times a year to hold events to entertain the children in my local town. Each event is different however my main responsibilities is to decorate the club to the appropriate theme, hold competitions like pass the parcel and to entertain them with dances.

4.3 Cover Letter

Rachel Thomas

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07393832841
rachelthomas1802460@gmail.com

December 3rd 2019

Hiring Manager,
Alton Court,
Penyard Ln,
Ross-on-Wye
HR9 5GL

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am writing to express an interest in a vacancy of a Group Leader that was posted on the PGL website. I am keen to challenge myself in a new environment and I will now discuss why I am suitable for the job.

Firstly, my most recent job role is with Shell Service Station, Pontarddulais and where I am required to work independently. Since working in this job role I have developed my initiative skills. This proves that I am suitable for the job role as I can use my initiative whilst responsible for the allocated group of pupils.

Additionally, whilst working with Krispy Kreme I was taught the appropriate skills to meet, greet and serve customers to specifically satisfy their needs. I took the responsibility of the job role seriously and this is reflected by the fact that I was Krispy Kreme Swansea's first ever employee of the month. This goes to show that I am passionate about interaction with customers and that I will ensure that all customers are comfortable.

Furthermore, in June 2017, I had the opportunity to travel to Majorca with ERASMUS+ for 2 weeks of work experience. During this time I worked at El Nino Surf Store and Club

Nautic Arenal Yacht Club. Both of these work placements improved my communication skills as I had to interact with Spanish colleagues and children. This proves that I am suitable for the job role as I had experience working with children abroad before.

Finally, as you can see from my Curriculum Vitae, I have volunteered with a variety of businesses and organisations whilst studying. All which have required me to meet and greet customers of all ages, answer any of their questions and to use my initiative to solve any problems. All whilst providing fun activities for children. Therefore this shows that I would be suitable as a Group Leader as I have completed the same responsibilities in my spare time.

In conclusion, I believe that I am most suitable for this job role as I can transition my skills into the workplace that would improve customer satisfaction of those at PGL. I hope I am considered for this vacancy and I hope to hear from you soon.

Best regards,

Rachel Thomas