



**College of Business and Law**

**Undergraduate**

**Work Placement Programme**

**B Commerce**

**A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS DURING WORK  
PLACEMENT 2015**

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## PLACEMENT CONTACTS

<b>Career Services</b>	
Sheila Byrne Work Placement Manager – B Commerce Career Services University College Cork 2 Brighton Villas Western Road Cork	Tel: 021-4903641 E-mail: <a href="mailto:s.byrne@ucc.ie">s.byrne@ucc.ie</a>
Administration	Tel: 021-4902349 E-mail: <a href="mailto:careers@ucc.ie">careers@ucc.ie</a>
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Dr. Noel Woods B Comm Director	Tel : 021 - 4902578 E-Mail : <a href="mailto:n.woods@ucc.ie">n.woods@ucc.ie</a>

## IMPORTANT DATES AND TASKS

- Work Placement starts on **16<sup>th</sup> March** and ends on **Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August 2015**, unless otherwise agreed with your employer.
- **Submit the Survey Monkey by Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April**, which asks for your Placement contact details. The link to the survey will be sent to your student email.
- Submit your first Learning Log to your Academic Mentor by Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April. Email five Logs to your Academic Mentor over the six month period – **first log by Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April and then one Log by the first Friday of each month May, June, July and August**. Students on 3-month placement submit three Logs - one Log at the end of the second week and then one Log by the first Friday of the following two months.
- **Before sending, get the content of each Log approved by your Workplace Mentor**, to make sure it complies with company confidentiality policy. Ask him/her to read and approve your Log well in advance of the submit deadline. Ask your Mentor to set up this arrangement in advance so that both of you have the meeting fixed in your calendars. Use this opportunity to discuss your progress with your Mentor.
- Your Academic Mentor will expect to receive your Logs at the intervals indicated above. Logs inform your Academic Mentor of your progress on Placement and they are essential for grading your Placement. **Failure to submit all 5 logs will result in a Fail grade**. Save a copy of your Logs as proof of sending and also you will need them to help you write your end of Placement report.
- Your **Academic Mentor normally visits you** and your Workplace Mentor once during the Placement, on a day/time that is convenient for all. This is usually half-way through the six months. Where a visit is not possible e.g overseas location, the Academic Mentor will arrange a conference call with the student and his/her Workplace Mentor.
- Prepare your **Placement Report**, have it approved and signed by your Workplace Mentor and **submit hard copy to your Academic Mentor by Friday 14<sup>th</sup> August**. Advice on how to do this is given in Part Two.
- Your Workplace Mentor will be asked to complete a Report, giving feedback on your work performance during Placement. Include this document as an Appendix to your Placement Report.
- Prepare a one-page **Work Summary**, have it approved by your Workplace Mentor and email it to [careers@ucc.ie](mailto:careers@ucc.ie) **by Friday 12<sup>th</sup> August**. A sample Work Summary is given in Part Three.

## COMMUNICATION WITH UCC

- In week one of Placement, the Career Services will send you a Survey Monkey asking for your Placement contact details and the contact details for your Workplace Mentor. This will be sent to your student email. Submit the Survey by Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April.
- Separately, you must email your Academic Mentor with your Placement contact details and the contact details for your Workplace Mentor. **Your Academic Mentor is the primary point of contact during Placement.**
- The Work Placement Manager will contact both the student and the Workplace Mentor within weeks 4-6 of Placement to ensure that all is progressing well.
- Your Academic Mentor normally visits you and your Workplace Mentor once during the Placement, on a day and time that is convenient for all.
- If you have any serious issues/concerns regarding your Placement, please contact your Academic Mentor and/or the Work Placement Manager immediately. **Early intervention is essential.**

## ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES DURING WORK PLACEMENT

### a) The Student

Work Placement is a three-way relationship between the student, the employer and the University. Each student's conduct during the Work Placement period will reflect not only on him/herself, but also on UCC and the reputation of its programmes. Therefore, each student on Work Placement will effectively act as an ambassador for UCC.

#### **During Work Placement the student will:**

- Act within the Terms and Conditions of Employment laid down by the employer;
- Take reasonable care of the health and safety of him/herself and those with whom s/he comes into contact;
- Approach work diligently, take responsibility and be willing to act on his/her own initiative where appropriate;
- Be punctual and observe rules governing time practices;
- **Use employer facilities such as email, internet and phone in accordance with the employer's code of practice. Work phone should not be used for personal purposes. Personal phone should not be used during work time;**
- Satisfy the academic requirements of the module as outlined in the Academic Assessment Guidelines;
- Adhere to dress code;
- Send his/her Placement contact details to the Academic Mentor and Career Services;
- Liaise with your Academic Mentor and Workplace Mentor to arrange the Academic Mentor visit or conference call;
- Complete a Work Summary and have it approved by your Workplace Mentor for use on the Work Placement website.

Students are employees of the company for the duration of the Work Placement. When on Work Placement students must abide by the rules and regulations set out by the employer for its own employees and will be subject to the same disciplinary procedures as would apply to any employee.

## **b) The Employer and Workplace Mentor**

Employers who participate in the Work Placement programme are required to treat students in the same way as they treat their other employees. A contract of employment exists between the employer and the student for the duration of the Work Placement.

### **The Employer is asked to:**

- Ensure that the host organisation is fully compliant with current workplace Health and Safety legislation and all other legal requirements;
- Complete a Health and Safety Questionnaire before the start of Work Placement;
- Give the student an induction course on company codes, practices and health and safety requirements in the work place;
- Provide the student with a suitable working environment;
- Assign a Workplace Mentor, who is a member of staff, to oversee the work of the student and act as a supervisor to the student.

### **The Workplace Mentor is asked to:**

- Outline the duties, activities and training that the student can expect to undertake;
- Advise and support the student during Work Placement;
- Read and approve the content of the student's Learning Logs in order to ensure they are accurate and comply with the company's confidentiality policy;
- Read and approve the content of the student's Work Placement Report in order to ensure it is accurate and complies with the company's confidentiality policy;
- Meet with or agree a conference call with the Academic Mentor and student, at a time convenient to all parties. This meeting/conference call will be arranged by the Academic Mentor and student;
- Report to the Academic Mentor and to the Work Placement Manager any aspects of the student's performance that are unsatisfactory or any concerns you may have in relation to the student;
- Complete and submit the Workplace Mentor report, in consultation with the student, at the end of the Work Placement. This Report will inform the academic assessment of the student in the Work Placement module. Details in Part Two of this document.

### c) The Academic Mentor

The role of the Academic Mentor is to provide support and advice to the student during Work Placement. S/he evaluates the student's performance on Placement and awards a grade for the Module.

#### The Academic Mentor is asked to:

- Be the primary point of contact for the student during Work Placement;
- Liaise with the student during Work Placement to make sure all is going well;
- Receive the student's Learning Log by email at the agreed intervals, which will inform the Mentor of the student's progress on Placement. The student is required to email five Logs to their Academic Mentor over the six month period – **first log by Friday 3rd April and then one Log by the first Friday of each month May, June, July and August**. Students on 3-month placement submit three Logs - one Log at the end of the second week and then one Log by the first Friday of the following two months
- Visit the student and Workplace Mentor once during the Placement, on a day and time convenient for all. The Academic Mentor will email the student and the Workplace Mentor to set up the visit. Where a visit is not possible e.g overseas location, the Academic Mentor is asked to arrange a conference call with the student and the Workplace Mentor.

#### *Objectives of the Academic Mentor visit:*

- *Review the tasks/projects being undertaken by the student*
- *Ascertain if there are any difficulties associated with the Placement from the student's and the Workplace Mentor's viewpoints*
- *Make an initial evaluation of the student's performance on Placement*
- *Gain a greater insight into the host organisation and its activities*
- Liaise with the Placement Manager on any issues of concern that arise.
- Evaluate the performance of the student at the end of Placement and award a judgement. See Part Two of this document.

### d) The Work Placement Manager

#### During Work Placement the Work Placement Manager will:

- Contact the student and the Workplace Mentor between weeks 4 - 6 of Work Placement to ensure that the Placement is progressing to the satisfaction of all parties;
- Liaise with the Academic Mentor and Workplace Mentor on any issues of concern that arise during Placement.
- Be available to advise and support with any concerns students may have regarding Work Placement in the event students are unable to contact the Academic Mentor.

# IMPORTANT TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

## Health and Safety in the Workplace

The establishment and maintenance of a healthy and safe working environment for employees is a necessary part of human resource management in organisations. The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 is the most recent piece of legislation in Ireland covering this area. This Act applies to all places of work regardless of the nature of the work performed. It imposes duties on employers, employees and third parties, i.e. contractors. The 2005 Act is enforced by an independent agency, the Health and Safety Authority (HSA). One of its main functions is to inform organisations about the standards which must be established and maintained and to carry out inspections to ensure compliance. Health and Safety Authority website <http://www.hsa.ie/>

## Safety in the Workplace

- Students on Work Placement are employees and are owed a duty of care like all other employees;
- On commencement of employment, your induction programme will cover health and safety practices in your workplace;
- Ask to see a copy of the company Safety Statement and familiarise yourself with its contents;
- Familiarise yourself with the company's safety rules, especially:
  - The layout of the building
  - The emergency evacuation plan for the building
  - What to do in the event of a fire
  - The location of fire-fighting equipment and how it works
  - First Aid arrangements in the workplace
  - The location of the relevant numbers to be contacted in an emergency
- Make sure you have a complete set of Personal Protective Equipment (if relevant) for the work you are doing and know how to use it;
- If you identify a safety hazard in your workplace, bring it to the attention of your Workplace Mentor;
- Avoid behaviour or activities that may harm you or others;
- If you experience incidents of bullying or harassment in your workplace, report this to your Workplace Mentor, alternatively contact your Academic Mentor or Work Placement Manager.
- Finally:
  - ✓ Work safely
  - ✓ Never take risks
  - ✓ If not sure, ask your Workplace Mentor
  - ✓ If still not comfortable with the situation, contact your Academic Mentor



- Always remember that the provision of a safe, healthy workplace is a legal requirement under the 2005 Act and companies or individuals (both manager and employees) may be prosecuted for non-compliance.

### **Students on Work Placement Abroad**

- As part of your Employer's Induction please ensure that you are informed of the country's Health and Safety Legislation, as it differs from country to country.

***Every organisation must have a Safety Statement, which describes the programme of action in place to ensure the safety, health and welfare of employees. This document must be kept up to date at all times and must be available for examination by employees and the HSA.***

### **Annual Leave and Study Leave**

During Work Placement, you will work up a holiday leave entitlement. Your work contract will give you details of the annual leave due to you and the employer's policy about booking holidays.

With regard to timing of holidays, ask your Workplace Mentor and/or the Human Resources Department regarding the most suitable time to take holidays. If it is normal practice for a company to have a holiday close-down during the Summer, then you may have no option but to take holidays at that time, along with all other employees.

## **Procedures for students to follow if repeating exams during Placement**

- If you are required to repeat exams, you should contact your Academic Mentor immediately to discuss how much time will be needed to prepare for repeat exams;
- A meeting should then be organised immediately with the Workplace Mentor to request and negotiate time off to prepare for and sit repeat exams, as well as to determine the date on which the student will return to the workplace;
- Time taken to prepare for and sit exams should be taken from annual leave entitlement and any additional time taken will be unpaid and at the discretion of the employer;

## **Unfair Treatment**

If during the course of your Work Placement you feel that you are being unfairly treated, contact your Academic Mentor and Work Placement Manager immediately. Please note that all organisations will have a grievance and appeals policy in place, which will be set out in your contract of employment should you wish to appeal any decisions made by your employer.

## **Termination of employment**

Companies have the right to terminate a student's employment at any time for economic and/or performance reasons, as laid down in the company's code of practice. In the event of this becoming an issue contact your Academic Mentor and Work Placement Manager immediately.

The student's academic mark may be affected by an early termination of his/her Work Placement, except for cases where the circumstances of the termination are outside the control of the student.

## Part 2: Academic Assessment of Work Placement

Complete and pass the ECDL. A student who does not obtain an ECDL License cannot undertake the Work Placement Module.

Each Student on Work Placement is assigned both an Academic Mentor and a Workplace Mentor. The Academic Mentor is a member of staff from the Department representing the student's major subject choice. The Workplace Mentor is an on-site supervisor or manager who oversees the work of the Placement student on a day to day basis.

Students must **submit 5 Learning Logs**, one by Friday 3rd April and then one by the first Friday of each month May, June, July and August. **Failure to submit all 5 logs will result in a fail grade.**

The Work Placement has a credit weighting of 10 credits, in Year III of the BComm Degree. The Academic Mentor evaluates the Student's Work Placement performance based on the Learning Logs and the Placement Report. Students must include their presentation slides (4 slides as per structure guidelines outlined below) as an appendix to the Student Placement Report. There will be no formal presentation of the Report, unless the Academic Mentor requires one to assist him/her in the grading of the Report.

The Workplace Mentor Report will help inform the academic judgement (see criteria below). The Workplace Mentor is asked to rate the student's performance on a scale of 1 to 5, as per box below. The Workplace Mentor Report is to be included as an Appendix to the Student Placement Report.

### **Section D:** (To be completed by the Workplace Mentor)

#### **Student Performance**

Please rate the student's overall Placement performance, under the following headings, according to the rating scale below:

**1            2            3            4            5**

1. Did not meet job requirements. Significant performance improvements urgently needed.
2. **Met minimum job requirements. Work improvement plan was needed to bring performance to a satisfactory level**
3. **Met normal job requirements with few exceptions. Improvements in performance needed in one or more major job elements.**
4. Fully met job requirements. Performance was what was expected of a person in this position.
5. Exceeded job requirements. Student performance impressed exceeded what is normally expected in this position.

The Academic Mentor makes a recommendation regarding a Fail or Pass or Honours judgement on the Student's Work Placement Report, as per criteria below, and this is forwarded to the BComm Board of Studies.

**Criteria:**

**A Fail judgement (i.e. between 0 and 39%) may be recommended by the Academic Mentor where:**

- A student fails to address the learning outcomes of the Placement. There is no use of analytical skills and any originality or insight. Such work will have a degree of irrelevance and is presented with expression and style that is poor.
- The student has not maintained and not submitted their 5 Student Learning Logs and has not completed and presented the Student Placement Report satisfactorily.
- The student is deemed not to have performed in a satisfactory manner with regard to the role and responsibilities of the student (see Section 1).
- The student has been given a '1' rating by their Workplace Mentor.

**NOTE: If you receive a Fail grade in your Work Placement Report you are not eligible for honours in Year 4 of your Degree.**

**A Pass judgement (i.e. between 40 and 59%) may be recommended by the Academic Mentor where as a minimum:**

- A student shows some awareness and understanding of the critical issues involved in the Work Placement, presents material that is professional but may have some technical mistakes. There is some use of analytical skills and some originality or insight but the execution is not very competent.
- The student has maintained and submitted their Student Learning Logs and has completed and presented the Student Placement Report satisfactorily.
- The student is deemed to have performed in a satisfactory manner with regard to the role and responsibilities of the student (see Section 1).
- The student has been given a '2' or '3' rating by their Workplace Mentor.

**An Honours judgement (i.e. above 60%) may be recommended by the Academic Mentor where:**

- A student shows a good level of awareness and understanding of the critical issues involved in the Work Placement. There is good use of analytical skills and a degree of originality or insight with a competent execution.
- The student has maintained and submitted their Student Learning Logs and has completed and presented the Student Placement Report in a professional manner.
- The student is deemed to have performed in a satisfactory manner with regard to the role and responsibilities of the student (see Section 1).
- The student has been given a '4' or a '5' rating by their Workplace Mentor.



## **Awarding of Honours**

The award of Honours can be made to those students who perform very well in all aspects of their Work Placement. This should be reflected in the Academic Mentor Report, the Workplace Mentor Report, the student Learning Logs, the Student Placement Report. These will show that the student has had the ability to achieve the following:

- Plan and organise their Placement;
- Attend punctually and conduct oneself appropriately during their Placement;
- Follow a set of procedures in accordance with employer specific instructions;
- Demonstrate evidence of networking and communication skills;
- Show the ability to work in a professional environment and function effectively in a team environment;
- Communicate effectively with other workers in a particular Placement;
- Present written Learning Logs during their Placement;
- Write a Work Placement Report that fulfils the criteria 1 to 8 below.

**The Student Placement Report should be of maximum 4,000 words and fulfil the following criteria:**

1. Outline the responsibilities held and duties carried out;
2. Summarise key aspects and produce a reflective account of the Placement, i.e. a brief summary of the Learning Logs;
3. Provide a critical understanding of the business environment, the work culture and the structure of the organisation in the Placement;
4. Discuss your Placement in terms of the challenges and level of satisfaction it presented;
5. Discuss the link between the BComm course modules and their practical applications in the Placement setting;
6. Discuss your personal and professional development developed throughout the Placement;
7. Reflect on and evaluate the Placement in light of career aspirations and prospects;
8. Provide a sample of work that you have completed while on Placement. This should have regard to the requirements of confidentiality of the organisation.

The Placement Report should be read by the Workplace Mentor and approved for submission with regard to matters of company confidentiality. The Report is then submitted, in hard copy, to the Academic Mentor, by the advised deadline.

The Placement Report must contain an **Executive Summary** at the beginning of the report, maximum length of one page. From this Summary, the reader should be able to ascertain:

1. What the document is about;
2. Whether the information is new to the reader
3. What conclusions are being made
4. Reasons to read the document

### **Sample Contents of Executive Summary:**

1. Where did you work?
2. What did you do (your job description)?
3. What did you learn (what skills and experiences did you acquire)?
4. How did the Placement link to your academic studies (where do you see the links between academic subjects and work practice)?

### **The requirements of the Student Learning Log are as follows:**

The purpose of the Learning Log is to promote learning from experience. By recording observations and experiences **as well as relevant reflections**, a continuous learning process is facilitated during Placement. The Learning Log is a tool for identifying and reflecting on what is being learned. By providing a transcript of the evolution of the learning, it enhances awareness of the learning and personal development available from the Placement experience. The Log also provides the Academic Mentor with a means of ensuring that the Placement opportunity is aligned with the student's studies and provides a framework for academic evaluation, feedback and guidance.

Each log should contain 2 paragraphs;

- (i) The first paragraph **should describe** what duties you have undertaken at work since your previous log (or since you started work in the case of your first log);
- (ii) The second paragraph **should include a reflection** on and record of what you have learnt about your job, about yourself and how you work with others in a team environment. This paragraph of your log should describe observations and experiences as a contribution to learning and should evaluate these in terms of your initial goals in these areas.

### **Presentation of Placement Report**

Students must include their presentation slides (4 slides as per structure guidelines outlined below) as an appendix to the Student Placement Report. There will be no formal presentations of this Report, unless your Academic Mentor requires one to assist him/her in the grading of the Report. Your Academic Mentor will inform you if they require you to give a presentation.

Your presentation appendix should consist of 4 slides covering the following:

1. Outline what skills, experience and knowledge you feel you have gained in the Work Placement programme
2. Outline where you believe the BComm programme helped you in your Work Placement
3. Outline where you believe the BComm programme could learn from your experiences in the Work Placement
4. Looking back now, what is your assessment of the Work Placement programme in terms of its place in the BComm programme and your future career plans

## **WORK PLACEMENT AWARD**

The Work Placement award was introduced to recognise exceptional student performance during Placement.

One award will be available each year and the award will be presented to the successful student(s) at the College of Business & Law Placement Awards Ceremony in final year. If no students are nominated, no award will be given. The winner(s) will receive a monetary prize and this prestigious award is also an excellent addition to the student's CV.

The award will be open to all 3<sup>rd</sup> Commerce students undertaking the Work Placement option within the Transferable Skills module.

Nominations for the award will be accepted from the student's employer. To nominate a student, a form must be completed by the student's employer and returned to the Placement Office, accompanied by a supporting statement.

Nominations must be submitted to the Placement Office, by email, fax or post, two weeks before the finish date of Placement. Nominations will be invited from employers one month before the finish date of Placement and the Award Nomination form will be emailed to all involved.

The B Comm Placement/Project Awards Committee will review nominations and select the winner(s). The Committee is made up of representatives from the B Comm Board of Studies.

For a student to be eligible, they must be completing their Placement in the current academic year, be returning to University following Placement and must have handed in their Placement assessment documentation by deadline.

The winner and all students nominated will be notified following the Committee's selection. In advance of selection, at the discretion of the Committee, nominated students may be asked to deliver a short presentation on their Placement experience.



## PART 3: APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Academic Mentor Visit Report

#### Academic Mentor Visit Report

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Visit \_\_\_\_\_

Employer Name \_\_\_\_\_

Employer Representatives met

Work Role/ Position

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Based on your meeting with the student and the Workplace Mentor, please assess or rate the following:

#### Section A: Work Experience

Is the work challenging?

Is the work of relevance to the Student's course of study?

Are there well-defined targets to be achieved/projects to be completed?

Is there adequate support/supervision?

Are health and safety matters being addressed adequately in the work place?

Has the Student submitted the required Learning Logs to date?

Yes	No

#### Section B: Workplace Mentor's Evaluation of the Student's performance

	Poor				Excellent
Student's level of technical knowledge for this Placement	1	2	3	4	5
Overall quality of work carried out by Student	1	2	3	4	5
Ability of Student to work with others	1	2	3	4	5
Timekeeping of Student	1	2	3	4	5
Ability of Student to manage their time effectively and to meet deadlines	1	2	3	4	5
Ability of Student to manage change, if appropriate	1	2	3	4	5
Demonstrate a willingness to acquire new skills and to learn?	1	2	3	4	5

**Section C: Assessment of the Student's strengths and weaknesses based on Placement**

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**Section D: Overall rating of the Placement**

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**Section E: Further comments/suggestions**

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**Appendix 2: Workplace Mentor Report**

# Workplace Mentor Report

The student is asked to include this Report as an Appendix to their Placement Report which is submitted to their Academic Mentor.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Workplace Mentor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Mentor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Section A: (To be completed by the student)

Summary of Accomplishments:

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## Section B: (To be completed by the student)

Student's Comments:

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## Section C: (To be completed by the Workplace Mentor)

Comments (Were overall goals met? Student strengths? Student areas for improvements?):

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## Section D: (To be completed by the Workplace Mentor)

### Student Performance

Please rate the student's overall Placement performance, under the following headings, according to the rating scale below:

1 2 3 4 5

1. Did not meet job requirements. Significant performance improvements needed.
2. Met minimum job requirements. Work improvement plan was needed to bring performance to a satisfactory level
3. Met normal job requirements with few exceptions. Improvements in performance needed in one or more major job elements.
4. Fully met job requirements. Performance was what was expected of a person in this position.
5. Exceeded job requirements. Student performance impressed, exceeded what is normally expected in this position.

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always
<b>Did the Student .....</b>					
Complete tasks effectively and efficiently?	1	2	3	4	5
Complete tasks on schedule?	1	2	3	4	5
Produce an acceptable volume of work?	1	2	3	4	5
Produce work of good consistent quality?	1	2	3	4	5
Demonstrate skills and knowledge in his/her technical area?	1	2	3	4	5
Seek help and additional information when required?	1	2	3	4	5
Demonstrate a willingness to acquire new skills and to learn?	1	2	3	4	5
Learn from their mistakes?	1	2	3	4	5
Exhibit good planning and organizational skills?	1	2	3	4	5
Exhibit initiative where appropriate?	1	2	3	4	5
Express him/herself clearly verbally?	1	2	3	4	5
Express him/herself clearly in writing?	1	2	3	4	5
Communicate effectively with others?	1	2	3	4	5
Work well with others?	1	2	3	4	5
Add value to the group, where appropriate?	1	2	3	4	5
Conduct him/herself professionally to those inside and outside the group, including clients/customers?	1	2	3	4	5

Maintain a good attendance record?	1	2	3	4	5
Attend punctually?	1	2	3	4	5

**If the Workplace Mentor wishes to submit this Report on a confidential basis to UCC, instead of returning it to the student, they may do so, and should contact the Academic Mentor to make arrangements.**

## Appendix 3: Sample Learning Log

The first Learning Log should outline the student’s goals regarding the skills, knowledge, understanding and attributes expected to be achieved during the Placement and the reasons these are important in the context of education, career plans and personal development. During Placement, the Learning Log should describe observations and experiences as a contribution to learning and should evaluate these in terms of the initial goals.

Record the work carried out, tasks or projects in progress and training received. Also, record observations and experiences and reflect on how these are contributing to learning (each of the five Logs should be typically one page in length).

Get the content of your Log approved by your Business Mentor, to make sure it complies with company confidentiality policy.

Once approved, email your 5 Logs at the agreed regular intervals, to your Academic Mentor.

### Sample Learning Log

Weeks 1 and 2	
<p><b>Goals for Work placement</b> (for 1<sup>st</sup> Log only). Note what skills, knowledge, understanding and attributes you expect to gain during Placement. Note why these are important to you in terms of your education, career plans and personal development.</p>	
<p><b>Describe duties/tasks you have undertaken</b> since your last Log. ( or in the case of 1<sup>st</sup> Log, what you have done since you started work)</p>	
<p><b>Reflection on what you have learned</b> about your job, yourself and how you work with others. Describe observations and experiences in terms of how they are contributing to learning and evaluate your progress in terms of your initial goals set.</p>	

## Appendix 4: Definition of Workplace Skills

### Definition of Workplace Skills

Many of the skills required for success in work are the same as those needed for success in life more generally. The ability to relate to people from differing backgrounds, to cope with a variety of situations, to communicate, to learn from experiences and apply that learning are important in all aspects of life and work.

While many students recognise the value of the learning they undertake as part of the curriculum, they often do not appreciate the learning that arises from Placement.

The Learning Log should reflect on and evaluate the development of skills in the workplace, some of which are described below:

#### Goal Setting

Ability to define targets that need to be reached in order to achieve a successful outcome and to review progress towards achievement of these goals.

#### Oral and Written Communication

Ability to articulate well, negotiate and successfully transmit information at an interpersonal and group level, using verbal, written and technological means in formal and informal environments.

#### Team-work

Ability to contribute willingly and constructively within groups of any size and not afraid to seek or offer support from/to other team members in order to meet common goals.

#### Problem Solving

Ability to collate information relating to a problem, present and evaluate alternative solutions and recommend the optimum solution for action.

#### Time Management

Ability to utilise time productively through prioritising of work tasks.

#### Meeting Deadlines

Ability to organise the workload to ensure that tasks are completed by the required time.

#### Listening skills

Ability to listen without interruption to somebody and interpret the message being given and the action that may be necessary.

#### Initiative

Ability to initiate actions or tasks without being prompted by others.

## Appendix 5: Sample Work Summary

Employer Name, location - Department/Division Name/Team

### Work Summary

Student Name

#### Job Description

- Member of lending team that manages a portfolio of customers primarily in the *department/division* sector.
- Assist team in preparation of credit applications.
- Manage credit risk of the portfolio.
- Deal with daily queries from customers relating to all aspects of their banking requirements.
- Liaise with relevant departments and branches regarding various customer queries.
- Assist team in maintaining good relationships with customers.
- General office duties including completion of various reports and ensuring compliance.

Sector teams within Corporate Banking are generally the Principle Relationship Managers for a number of different customers. We are the first point of contact for customers and provide a range of different banking facilities. The main purpose of this relationship involves lending money to the company and offering various debt facilities. This is achieved by preparing a credit application known as a mark-up seeking sanction for various debt facilities. The primary purpose of a mark-up is to help the reader make an informed credit decision as key risks and issues are identified. There are a number of steps involved in preparing a mark-up but the final result is a summary of the company's financial performance, trading performance, report on key risk issues, borrower grade, industry analysis and competitive position of Borrower. This is then presented before a credit committee where the chairperson makes a decision on whether to sanction facilities.

#### Skills and Experience Acquired

- *Numerical and Analytical Skills*

A significant amount of the work entails analysis of the financial statements of a company, extracting this information in a format commonly used by the Bank and summarising the trading performance of the company through the use of various ratios. Valuation techniques are often put into practice when determining whether a new acquisition will add value to the existing company and whether the projected increase in debt is justified by the estimated increase in earnings.



- *Understanding of Market Fluctuations and Economies*

An integral part of the job is observing analyst reports on share price fluctuations for publicly quoted customers. I now have a greater general understanding of the driving forces behind fluctuations in exchange rates and interest rates and have a better knowledge of what is going on in both Irish and world-wide economies.

- *Teamwork and Communication Skills*

Due to the daily contact with customers, branches and various departments within the Bank, my communication skills have greatly benefited from the Placement. Since I worked with a small sector team where flow of communication regarding discussion of various scenarios and provision of solutions is hugely important, I now fully appreciate the importance of teamwork and the need to co-operate and work efficiently and effectively with one another.

#### **Placement Link into Academic Studies**

- Financial Reporting – Since the majority of information regarding the company's financial performance and trading analysis is extracted from the financial statements, a clear understanding of financial accounting is definitely beneficial. General accounting skills are also put into practice when examining and monitoring customer accounts and credit utilisation to ensure the customer is not operation in excess of their facilities.
- Business Finance – Certain valuation techniques are utilised during the course of the job. However, more widely used and commonly accepted methods that are used to measure variations across markets are learned.
- Economics – Exposure to various market reports and daily comments certainly contributes to a greater understanding of Irish and world-wide economies, markets and companies.