We use cookies to ensure that we deliver the best user experience of our website. If you would like to, you can change your cookie settings at any time. Continue

Work experience while doing your degree

Our overriding goal is to enable our graduates to embark on successful professional careers in the life sciences and beyond.

The **'with Professional Placement'** option is available with our **Biological Sciences (/undergraduate/courses/biosciences/biological-sciences-placement.aspx)**, **Human Biology (/undergraduate/courses/biosciences/human-biology-placement.aspx)** and **Biochemistry (/undergraduate/courses/biosciences/biochemistry-placement.aspx)** programmes and is an obvious choice to significantly enhance employability.

- Get a head start in today's competitive jobs market
- See how your subject is applied in the world of work
- Clarify your own career objectives
- A wide range of placements in industry, medical research and conservation

What is it like on placement?

(/undergraduate/courses/biosciences/biological-sciences-placement.aspx)
Hazel Thornton, a final year student on the **BSc Biological Sciences with Professional Placement degree (/undergraduate/courses/biosciences/biological-sciences-placement.aspx)**, describes her experiences on the course and during her year in industry, where she worked in Greece with a marine conservation organisation.

(/undergraduate/courses/biosciences/biochemistry-placement.aspx)
Ben Golland, a final year student on the **BSc Biochemistry with Professional Placement degree (/undergraduate/courses/biosciences/biochemis placement.aspx)**, describes his experiences on the course and during his year in industry, where he worked for GlaxoSmithKline (GSK).

Where can I work in my placement year?

The School of Biosciences has extensive links with companies and organisations in diverse fields from the pharmaceutical industry and medical research to conservation organisations; this means that we can find placements for students with a wide range of interests.

Over the past few years our students have worked for the following organisations and companies:

- Sanger Institute
- Astra Zeneca
- GlaxoSmithKline
- Pfizer
- Centre for Population Biology
- Cambridge Antibody Technology
- Forsite Technology
- The Binding Site
- Basilea (Switzerland)
- Celltech
- Florida State University
- Kew Gardens
- University of Melbourne

Will I be paid during my placement year?

The work you do in your placement year will probably be paid, especially if you work in industry or medical research. If you are more interested in an area such as conservation you may be working for a charity and in this case you may not be paid during your placement

Structure of the Programme

If you choose to join one of our 'professional placement' degree programmes, you will follow the same modular course structure as students on the mainstream programmes for the first two years. Your third year will be spent working in your chosen placement. On your return you will join the final year of the degree programme.

Does the placement year count towards my degree?

Yes, early in your placement year you will be expected to write a plan describing the purpose of your placement, and at the end of the year, to produce a report showing what you have achieved. You will also give a short talk about your placement. These pieces of work will be assessed and will count towards your final mark. When you graduate you will be awarded a degree with the words 'professional placement' after the title.

Can I combine a "with Professional Placement" with specialist degree titles?

Although you cannot combine the 'with Professional placement' description with other detailed titles such as Biological Science (Genetics), or Medical Biochemistry you can take the same optional courses as students with these degree titles. This will be reflected in the transcript of your degree, which can be presented to potential employers, to show which areas you have specialised in.

Entry Requirements

These are higher than for most of our three year degree programmes, see individual degree programmes for details. However they have a built in insurance offer. Candidates firmly accepting as their first choice an offer for one of our Professional Placement programmes are guaranteed a place on the corresponding three year programme course if they meet the standard offer for the course.

© University of Birmingham 2014