



Guidelines on Student Placements in Taught Programmes

Introduction

The aim of these Guidelines is to ensure that University of Bristol placement students are able to achieve intended learning outcomes appropriate to their level of study, that they are safe and secure (i.e. that placements comply with health and safety legislation and have suitable insurance cover) and that placements comply with the QAA's Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education, Section 9: Work-based and placement learning, as revised in 2007¹.

The Guidelines are written primarily for University-based placement organisers but they also include information suitable for placement providers and for students. The document includes links to sources of information available within the University and to external links that provide additional information.

Definition of terms

Please note that these Guidelines relate to taught programmes only. In these Guidelines, work-based and placement learning refers to learning that is a required or recommended part of a higher education programme, achieved outside the University of Bristol through student involvement in other Higher Education Institutions or workplace environments and that is usually assessed through the demonstration of reflective practice and appropriate learning outcomes. These Guidelines do *not* refer to periods of work or study undertaken within the University of Bristol (by students of the University or other institutions), which are covered by existing guidelines.

Student placements are of various types:

Study placements: study at other institutions as part of a University programme. These include Erasmus study programmes and study placements elsewhere abroad.

Work/industrial placements: to gain work/commercial/industrial experience relevant to the programme of study. These include UK-based Degrees with Year in Industry, Erasmus work placements and work placements elsewhere abroad.

Professional practice placements: to develop the practical skills and competencies associated with a profession, including its ethical practices and procedures, through work shadowing and working alongside qualified professionals in the UK and throughout the world.

In addition to formal placements, the University recognises the value of learning which can be derived from informal immersion in the language and culture of foreign countries or professional situations. For example, the School of Modern Languages recommends that its students experience life abroad, while medical students are encouraged to experience conditions in third world and tropical areas.

¹ Available from <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section9/default.asp>

The University is integrally involved in all assisted and approved placements, regardless of duration, whether they are arranged by the University or by the student.

Departments are required to know where their students are located on placement and to ensure that the prevailing conditions of health, safety and insurance are adequately covered.

These Guidelines are sufficiently generic to cover all types of placement learning undertaken by University of Bristol students and outline the minimum requirements expected. They are intended to supplement rather than to replace departmental placement guidelines, which may be more specific.

Placement learning and learning outcomes

Placement learning comes about through students' engagement with experiences that they find interesting, varied and somewhat challenging; it is facilitated by supportive environments where students feel valued. Students are most likely to engage when they have their own work or project and when there is ample supervision initially, but more autonomy as they become experienced. Under such circumstances, they are able to develop academically, professionally and personally. Learning outcomes can include the acquisition of skills and competences specific to a discipline or profession, more general work-related and employability skills (time management, team working, communications skills etc) and changed personal attitudes and behaviours.

Where the placement learning is a required part of a programme of study, the University requires that intended learning outcomes are clearly identified, that they are coherent with and contribute to the overall aims of that programme and are assessed appropriately. Where the learning is a recommended addition to a programme of study, learning outcomes may be more difficult to identify or assess formally, but nonetheless need to be in place.

Students are often transformed by their placement experiences by acquiring such attributes as maturity, confidence and ethical awareness.

The following three sections provide information for the three groups of stakeholders who are usually involved in placements:

- I. University-based placement organisers and advisors
- II. Placement providers and host institutions
- III. Placement students.

The sections of these Guidelines outlined in boxes throughout the text indicate the University's **minimum requirements** for the operation of student placements.

I. INFORMATION FOR UNIVERSITY-BASED PLACEMENT ORGANISERS AND ADVISORS

Departments which have placements are required to appoint a placement organiser to ensure that the procedures set out in these Guidelines are applied to each placement.

The International Office has the role of the placement organiser for Erasmus students and students whose study placement is organised by the Study Abroad Office.

New placement organisers may learn the role through shadowing or mentoring. Additional help can be provided through the Association for Sandwich Education and Training (ASET) and the National Council for Work Experience (NCWE) websites given below. Another valuable activity is involvement in placement visits where the different perspectives of placement students and their supervisors or line managers can be explored.

Departments should draw up standard operating procedures such that new placement organisers have a template to follow. This could involve a database of placements with appropriate information and detailed guidance on health, safety and insurance matters (see below).

The University is responsible for the academic standards of its awards and the quality of provision leading to them, both at University and on placement. Placement organisers are advised to read in full the placements section of the QAA Code of practice².

The following organisations and websites contain information which may also be helpful to placement organisers, particularly those new to the role:

The Association for Sandwich Education and Training (ASET), www.asetonline.org, ASET has Good Practice Advice available at www.asetonline.org/advice.htm

The National Council for Work Experience (NCWE), www.work-experience.org
NCWE has produced a Placement Tutor's Handbook:
www.prospects.ac.uk/downloads/workexperience/guides/Placement_Tutors_Handbook.pdf

In addition to its responsibility for academic standards, the University has a duty of care for its students. Placement organisers and advisors should be aware of, and should ensure that students and placement providers are aware of, the health and safety issues surrounding placements and of the necessity for insurance cover appropriate to the circumstances of particular placements.

1. Health and Safety (H&S)

The Head of Department must appoint one or more placement organisers who are competent and have an understanding of health and safety legislative requirements. Placement organisers need to be able to identify from information provided from the placement provider any possible basic health and safety shortcomings within a placement workplace or institution and make informed decisions, knowing where to access further advice if required.

² QAA Code of Practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education. Section 9: Work-based and placement learning, September 2007. Available from <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section9/default.asp>

The University's Health and Safety Organisation policy³ states that the University has a duty of care towards students and that Department Heads need to provide for the health and safety of students as far as reasonably practicable. Accordingly, all departments must implement the following 3-step approach:

- a) The placement organiser must implement as robust a procedure as possible to assess health and safety procedures in force at the placement as regards the student. This may be done in a variety of ways and the method chosen is a matter for local management but this must be a risk-based decision;
- b) All students are briefed on relevant health and safety issues before the placement commences; and
- c) Placements are monitored and reviewed.

It is the role of the placement organiser to assess the placement and consider whether there are any major risks and also whether suitable controls have been identified to control those risks. The major risks and controls will be linked to the programme subjects, and the controls will have generic themes dictated by the department and the placement provider. Departmental Safety Advisors (DSAs) and the Health and Safety Office are a useful source of help and information regarding the expected health and safety standards that should be met in placement institutions and workplaces. The identification of these major risks and verification of appropriate controls must be done, so far as possible, prior to taking up the placement. Methods of identifying major risks and verifying controls must be developed and owned locally.

The appropriate mechanism will vary between programmes and departments. For some placements it may be appropriate to set out in writing the University requirements relating to the health and safety of the student in advance of the placement. For other departments/ programmes a visit by the placement organiser to the provider prior to the placement that includes a health and safety review may be more appropriate. Alternatively, and particularly relevant to placements overseas, a questionnaire and answer form may be used to establish basic information on health and safety and insurance.

Full advice and templates on how to follow these requirements are contained in the Student Placement Health and Safety Guidance Note available on the Health and Safety Office web site⁴ [<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/safety/guidance/>]. Staff are also advised that to address specific placement issues they should seek guidance from their professional bodies where appropriate [e.g. Veterinary student placements see <http://www.rcvs.org.uk/>]

³ University of Bristol Health and Safety Organisation available at www.bristol.ac.uk/safety/policy/organisation

⁴ University of Bristol Health and Safety Office: www.bristol.ac.uk/safety

Threshold requirements for medical electives:

Examples of good practice include medical electives, where medical students often seek out potentially risky placements in order to broaden and deepen their experience and understanding of specialist areas, such as third world and tropical medicine and medical treatment in warfare situations. The Department deals with the tension between experience in risky situations on the one hand, and the duty of care for its students on the other, in the following way:

- Medical students are not permitted to go on placement to countries on the Foreign Office's banned list.
- In areas where the incidence of HIV is over 1%, medical students are not allowed to undertake work which would expose them to risk of infection. In addition they are required to take with them emergency anti-viral treatment and to have insurance cover for emergency repatriation.
- Medical students who are military cadets are not permitted to go to the front line and, if contemplating placements in theatres of war, must provide guarantees from a senior Commanding Officer that they will not do so.

It is entirely appropriate for medical students to complete risk assessments for their electives and they are required to do so; comprehensive information on health and safety risk assessment is provided in their handbook.

2. Insurance

Placement organisers should read the detailed guidance on insurance for student placements on the Office of the University Secretary's website⁵.

This comprises insurance guidance as regards legal liability (including professional indemnity/malpractice), travel and health insurance risks.

Departments should address any additional questions regarding insurance to the University Insurance Officer.

3. Other non-academic requirements

Each field of work or study, and each country, has its own culture, customs, norms and expectations. These may be unfamiliar to students and should be made explicit.

In certain circumstances, placements may involve other specific requirements. For example, work in hospitals or some laboratories may require Hepatitis B vaccination, work with children may require clearance from the Criminal Records Bureau and work that is commercially sensitive may require the signing of confidentiality agreements. Also, many professional bodies, chartered institutes etc. have specific requirements for students working towards professional recognition/affiliation/membership.

4. Criteria for the approval of placement opportunities

The University expects that departments establish and maintain relationships with organisations or departments whose missions and national or international standing are comparable with its own. Departments should determine that the placement provider is able to:

⁵ Office of the University Secretary Liability Insurance questions. Available from www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/insurance/questions.html

- provide learning opportunities which enable the intended learning outcomes to be achieved;
- support students during their placement;
- fulfil their responsibilities under health and safety legislation, having regard to the level of skills and experience of placement students.

In addition, departments should:

- take reasonable steps to ensure that students are placed in an environment where they are treated equally, regardless of nationality, race, disability etc, i.e. that placements comply with legislation such as the Disability Discrimination Act, and
- as far as possible to assess the facilities available for students (e.g. library and computing provision, teaching facilities, laboratory facilities, working environment etc) and those facilities available for students who have particular support requirements due to a disability;
- ensure that placements fulfil the requirements of relevant professional, statutory and regulatory bodies.

In some instances, the University has formal partnership arrangements with relevant placement providers. Such arrangements are dealt with elsewhere (e.g. Erasmus by the International office – see section below - and education partnerships by the Education Support Unit). A memorandum of understanding can be useful in assuring that the placement provider understands, agrees to and is able to demonstrate its ability to fulfil its responsibilities under relevant legislation.

An example of good practice in the development and maintenance of constructive relationships with placement providers (and in employer engagement more widely) exists in the case of MEng in Engineering Design with Industrial Placement Year. This degree programme was developed in close association with 15 prestigious companies whose ongoing contribution is integrated into every stage of the programme, including placements, facilitated by an Industrial Liaison Officer working for the University

5. International placements

International placements can provide particularly valuable learning opportunities. The University recognises that both its degree programmes and individual students are enriched by the experiences and opportunities offered by international placements.

However, overseas placements and foreign travel can carry additional risks. Staff and students need to be aware of, and as far as reasonably practicable to avoid, potential risks. Placement organisers and students are recommended to consult the following University of Bristol links:

Study placements:

www.bris.ac.uk/international/yearabroad/study/applyouteu.html

Pre-departure advice for study placements:

www.bris.ac.uk/international/yearabroad/study/whatnext/before.html

Work placements:

www.bris.ac.uk/international/yearabroad/work/apply.html

Links for work placements:

www.bris.ac.uk/international/yearabroad/work/links.html

In addition the following external websites, and links contained within them, provide both awareness of potential risks and advice on sensible precautions:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO): www.fco.gov.uk,
www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/about-kbyq-campaign/
and www.fco.gov.uk/resources/en/pdf/2855621/travel-safe
Placements are not usually permitted in countries on the FCO banned list.

The World Health Organisation: www.who.int/en/

The Department of Health website on healthcare abroad includes a country by country guide: www.nhs.uk/Healthcareabroad/Pages/Healthcareabroad.aspx

The University recognises that health and safety regulations vary throughout the world and that standards in some countries may be different from those in the UK. Placements in more remote areas may be difficult to monitor (in terms of both health and safety and quality assurance). Students studying abroad may also experience somewhat lower levels of academic support than they are accustomed to at Bristol and this should be pointed out to them in advance.

6. Academic elements of placements

As mentioned in section 4 above, the University/department has responsibility to ensure that the academic elements of placements are satisfactory. The following summarises the threshold requirements in this area.

6.1 Placement content

Departments must establish with the placement provider in advance that the placement content will fulfil the student's learning needs and that it is in alignment with the requirements of any professional, statutory or regulatory body (PSRB) accrediting the student's programme. Intended learning outcomes should also be agreed in advance between the University department and the placement provider.

6.2 Assessment

Appropriate assessment of placement learning and informing students and placement providers of their role in assessment processes. Where placement providers are involved in assessment, the University may provide guidelines or training on this. Assessment can be by (but is not limited to) learning log, work journal, portfolio, poster or PowerPoint presentation, project report, research paper/dissertation, interview/viva, supervisor's report, or by providing other evidence of learning and development. Departments will ensure that any assessment of students carried out by the placement provider adheres to the approved assessment methods for the programme/unit and that the external assessors have early access to University, faculty and departmental assessment guidelines. Departments should assure themselves of the capability and expertise of the placement provider in conducting any assessment.

6.3 Academic credit

Departments should ensure that any marks awarded for placement learning are transferable and correlate to the overall marking structure of the student's programme. Where a department is not certain about the equivalence/comparability of marks awarded it should consider alternative ways of taking account of placement study. For example, it may choose to:

- award credit points on the basis of a pass but not count the actual mark towards the student's final result; or

- set a separate assessment task, the marks from which then contribute to the student's final mark.

Marking schemes in overseas universities may differ from those in the UK and academic credits earned in foreign institutions may not be directly transferable to Bristol marking schemes. There are a number of ways of resolving this problem and the International Office offers assistance to each Department in identifying a suitable model for their specific subject area. They also offer extensive information and briefings for students. Specific advice for academics is hosted on the following website:

www.bris.ac.uk/academicregistry/raa/int-office/yearabroad/

This website, for University staff only, includes a list of placement coordinators and a copy of the handbook that the International Office gives to students at their briefings.

7. Students with disabilities

Placement organisers should give consideration to students who have particular support requirements due to a disability. Please also consult the Equality and Diversity website for additional assistance: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/equalityanddiversity/>

By law, students cannot be required to disclose their disability. However, it is reasonable to encourage students to do so and to make them aware of the possible consequences of non-disclosure, i.e. that no support will be provided. Students should have an identified route for disclosing, for example via their personal tutor to the placement organiser, or to the placement organiser direct. Placement organisers should then discuss placement issues with the student and potential placement providers. Practical assistance regarding equipment etc. may be sought from the University's Access Unit⁶.

Toolkits for placement organisers, students and placement providers on managing off-campus learning for students with disabilities provide another source of information. These can be found at: www.disabilitytoolkits.ac.uk

8. Managing placements

Good practice in the management of placements includes the following.

- Briefing prospective placement students, including the provision of up-to-date information on host institutions and feedback from previous placement students. Where appropriate, central services such as the Health and Safety Office, the International Office and Careers Service can provide pre-placement briefings.
- Providing students with help in writing CVs, applications, covering letters, mock interviews; the University Careers Service can help with these.
- Building and maintaining constructive relationships with placement providers.
- Defining, as far as possible, intended learning outcomes and making these clear to placement providers and students; helping students to consider their placements as valuable learning opportunities.
- Provision of a departmental handbook of information for placement providers and students, which might include intended learning outcomes and assessment criteria, the rights and responsibilities of all stakeholders, a placement timetable, checklist, contact information, what to do in case of emergencies or problems etc.

⁶ University of Bristol Access Unit for D/deaf and disabled students : www.bristol.ac.uk/accessunit

- Ensuring that contact details of students and their placement supervisors/line managers are maintained and up-to-date. If students are lax at returning forms or responding to emails, placement organisers should be proactive in seeking this important information.
- Maintaining contact with placement students through email, post, websites and/or placement visits, as appropriate. Encouraging reflection and self-awareness of learning and development. As far as possible, keeping abreast of students' achievements and any problems.
- Dealing appropriately with any emergencies or problems which may arise from time to time.
- Monitoring and evaluating, as far as possible, health and safety, student progress and the quality of learning opportunity provided by the placement environment. Information and feedback should be sought, in this regard, from University staff, students, and from placement providers. In addition to administrative organisation of placements, there should be academic oversight of placement standards and quality. This should be an anticipated aspect of a quality assurance audit.
- Implementing any improvements to the placements scheme, as necessary.

One example of good practice in encouraging reflection and self-awareness, in students learning informally by living abroad, is demonstrated by of the School of Modern Languages. Students complete online forms four times during their year abroad and include such questions as:

What libraries, theatres, art galleries or other places of cultural interest have you visited?

How would you assess your progress in language since you have been abroad? Consider the following areas:

- Speaking
- Listening
- Reading
- Writing

Do you feel there are still aspects where you need to improve? What are your strategies for doing so?

Other questions ask students to compare the foreign press, theatre and television with those in the UK. Students are required to write essays on aspects of their year abroad.

9. Terminating a placement

Most placements run smoothly. When minor issues do arise, they can usually be sorted out to mutual satisfaction through diplomatic dialogue between all parties. However, there are a few situations that may result in the termination of a placement. For example, personal circumstances may mean a student is unable to continue with their placement or commercial circumstances may arise that mean a placement provider is no longer able to host a student.

More importantly, there may be concerns about the quality of a particular placement in terms of the learning opportunities it offers or the adequacy of its health and safety provision.

Departments should monitor placement learning as part of the Annual Programme Review (APR) process and raise any problems with the placement provider immediately they arise.

Learning opportunities/learning potential

Placements differ in the learning opportunities they offer. Placements that involve students in challenging, interesting and varied experiences, in situations where they and their learning are well-supported, have high potential for learning. Placements that offer only mundane, routine or repetitive experiences, or where students do not feel adequately supported, have low learning potential. It may be necessary to terminate a placement if its learning potential is too low and cannot be improved. This is a matter of academic standards and quality assurance; placements offering only poor learning opportunities should be avoided in future.

Health and safety provision

It may also be necessary to terminate a placement in the rare event that a student is exposed to significant health and safety risks without effective adequate controls in place. The placement organiser or a visiting tutor must discuss any concerns identified with the placement provider to seek immediate improvements. It may be necessary to withdraw the student if there are any unresolved health and safety concerns. The Departmental Safety Advisor and members of the Health and Safety Office will be able to provide advice to placement organisers in reaching the major decision to withdraw a student. Once a student has been removed from a placement the placement organiser should arrange a debriefing session with appropriate members of staff and the student. Consideration must be given to not sending another student to that particular placement in the future.

Terminating a placement could have serious implications affecting the student's programme of study and this therefore emphasises how important it is to ensure initially that placement providers have high standards of health and safety.

* * * * *

The following sections provide information suitable for placement providers and host institutions and for students respectively.

In the vast majority of placements there is a placement provider and/or a host institution. It is the responsibility of the placement organiser to inform them of what the University requires and expects of its placement providers and host institutions. The type of information that should be given to placement providers is outlined below:

II. INFORMATION FOR PLACEMENT PROVIDERS AND HOST INSTITUTIONS

The University of Bristol values the learning opportunities provided by the wide range of institutions (universities, commercial companies, hospitals, charities, farms, professional practices and so on) that host its students for periods of study or work experience and aims to have constructive relationships with them.

In order to recommend placements to our students placement providers must obtain assurances that host institutions:

- provide learning opportunities that enable students to achieve their intended learning outcomes;
- provide appropriate support and supervision for students during their placements;
- fulfil their responsibilities under health and safety legislation, having regard to the level of skills and experience of placement students.

In addition, departments ensure that:

- students are placed in an environment where they are treated equally, regardless of nationality, race, disability etc., and
- facilities available for students (e.g. library and computing provision, teaching facilities, laboratory facilities, working environment etc), and those facilities specifically available for students who have particular support requirements due to a disability, are of an appropriate standard.

Educational institutions providing study placements should be able to satisfy these criteria at a standard which is broadly similar to that at the University of Bristol.

Where professional work involves patient or client confidentiality, the University understands the need to respect this. Where placements involve work of a commercially sensitive nature, the University is aware of the need to enter into confidentiality agreements.

Good practice in work experience placements is promoted in the UK by the National Council for Work Experience (NCWE, www.work-experience.org). NCWE recently established a Quality Mark standard. Companies like Barclays Capital, GlaxoSmithKline, Marks & Spencers, Heinz, Citi and the Intel Corporation UK, have already been accredited for the quality of their placements schemes. Placement providers are assessed in the following areas:

Commitment; employers are able to demonstrate their commitment to developing students and employable graduates.

Recruitment; employers comply with fair practices in recruitment and selection and comply with equal opportunities legislation.

Induction; they have clear and defined induction processes, which are formalised and compulsory, covering key areas including health and safety.

Learning and development; employers provide optimum learning opportunities to enable students to achieve their intended learning outcomes.

Assessment; they have suitable means of assessing student progress and providing constructive feedback.

Resources and support; employers understand their role in supporting students and their learning.

Relationships; where applicable, employers build and maintain relationships with the University.

Placement evaluation and monitoring; employers have in place mechanisms for effective monitoring of placements or placement programmes and aim for continuous improvement.

Toolkits for placement organisers, students and placement providers on managing off-campus learning for students with disabilities provide another source of information. These can be found at: www.disabilitytoolkits.ac.uk

Placement organisers must inform students of their rights and responsibilities while on placement. In particular, it is important that students are aware of the responsibility they have for their own health and safety, and that of others, and for their own security. Below is the type of information suitable for students.

III. INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

Going on placement can be a big step, especially when the placement is a long one and/or in an alien environment. You may also have less support available, both academically and personally, than you are used to in the UK. It is worth considering whether you are physically and emotionally equipped to cope. A placement can also be the most rewarding experience of your entire degree programme; you are likely to learn a great deal about your subject/profession/another language/the world of work and about yourself, as well as having a lot of fun. In addition, you are likely to develop valuable skills and abilities that will help you in final year back at university and beyond graduation.

It is essential that you inform your University placement organisers and/or your personal tutor of your contact details while on placement and those of your supervisor or line manager. Also, keep the University informed of your progress and any particular successes or problems you may have.

Your safety and security, and those of others, are of primary consideration. If the University is instrumental in securing a placement, you will be informed about all aspects of the experience, including health and safety and insurance, but it is your responsibility to make yourself aware of these matters.

Placement organisers are expected give consideration to students who have particular support requirements due to a disability. Students who require support for a disability are strongly encouraged to declare their disability to their department, in good time, so that both an appropriate placement and appropriate support can be put in place, wherever practicably possible. If you do not disclose, you run the risk of support being difficult or impossible to provide. Your department will have set out a method of you disclosing and you should follow this. Placement organisers will then discuss placement issues with you and potential placement providers. Practical assistance regarding equipment etc. may be sought from the University's Access Unit⁷.

The following external website may be useful: www.disabilitytoolkits.ac.uk/students

⁷ University of Bristol Access Unit for D/deaf and disabled students : www.bristol.ac.uk/accessunit

Where placements involve work of a commercially sensitive nature, you and your Department may be asked to sign confidentiality agreements. You must respect both commercial confidentiality and patient or client confidentiality, as appropriate, at all times.

When students perform well on placement, they not only enhance their own future prospects, they also enhance the reputation of the University and encourage placement providers to host Bristol students in future. Unfortunately, the opposite is also true. On the rare occasion that a student behaves badly on placement, the University's reputation may be damaged and future placement opportunities are jeopardised. For this reason, if you were to behave badly on placement, disciplinary action would be taken.

Placements abroad

If you are travelling abroad on your own, it is particularly important that you inform family, friends and/or colleagues of your itinerary and expected date and time of return.

It is also important to consult your GP or the Student Health Service for up to date advice on health risks abroad and relevant inoculations. This is particularly important if you are working in areas of the world where there may be a risk of disease, e.g. malaria, cholera, hepatitis or HIV.

You need to check out the following websites and to do so well ahead of your placement as some preparations (such as vaccinations, passports and visas) need to be organised many months in advance.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office, www.fco.gov.uk,
www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/about-kbyg-campaign/
and www.fco.gov.uk/resources/en/pdf/2855621/travel-safe

Do take note of the 'know before you go' and 'travel safe' advice and, if in doubt, discuss your plans with your placement organiser.

The World Health Organisation, www.who.int/en/
Avoid countries, regions or districts known to be dangerous.

The Department of Health website on health abroad includes a country by country guide, www.nhs.uk/Healthcareabroad/Pages/Healthcareabroad.aspx

If you are interested in an Erasmus study placement, but also useful if you are considering another form of placement inside or outside Europe, the following International Office websites tell you what to do before you go (with a useful checklist available too) and what you should do while you are abroad on placement:

www.bristol.ac.uk/international/yearabroad/study/whatnext/after.html
www.bristol.ac.uk/international/yearabroad/study/whatnext/before.html
www.bristol.ac.uk/international/yearabroad/study/whatnext/whileaway.html

Insurance is an important consideration and you should identify insurance **appropriate for your particular placement**. Remember that the consequences of having an accident abroad can be far more serious than if it occurs at home and that it is therefore especially important to avoid exposing yourself to unnecessary danger.

It is important to recognise that each field of work or study, and each country, has its own culture, norms, customs and expectations. You should make every effort to find out what

these are (from the University before you go on placement or from your host institution when you arrive) and behave accordingly.

In the unlikely event of any problems, you should first contact your placement supervisor, line manager or local Erasmus organiser. If this does not yield a solution, you should contact your University-based placement organiser(s) or personal tutor.

Other help available through the University:

The University Careers Service has a Placements Officer who can help in the preparation of CVs, covering letters, applications, mock interviews etc, which could help you to secure a placement.

The International Office can help with study or work abroad, especially options available under the Erasmus schemes:

Study placements,

www.bris.ac.uk/international/yearabroad/study/applyouteu.html

Pre-departure advice for study placements,

www.bris.ac.uk/international/yearabroad/study/whatsnext/before.html

Work placements,

www.bris.ac.uk/international/yearabroad/work/apply.html

Links for work placements,

www.bris.ac.uk/international/yearabroad/work/links.html

Your department may have dedicated placement organisers and your personal tutor may also be able to provide help and advice.

You will remain as a registered student during your placement, giving you access to the University website, your existing @bristol.ac.uk email address, etc. You are also entitled to make use of the student support services, as appropriate.

One external website with useful advice on placements, including a checklist and Code of Conduct for placement students, is: www.bathstudent.com/aware/guides/placement

Finally, you'll find that you get the most out of your placement if you work hard, play hard and enjoy the wide range of experiences open to you.

Appendix: Short-term working group on student placements membership

- Ms Claire Axel-Berg, International Office
- Mr Richard Edwards, Education Support Unit (Secretary)
- Ms Liz Greaves, Health and Safety Office
- Dr John Grinsted, Faculty of Medical and Veterinary Sciences (until 31/07/08)
- Professor Jeremy Harvey, Faculty of Science
- Mrs Jo Hutchings, Careers Service
- Ms Ruth Jackson, Students' Union
- Professor David Mumford, Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry
- Dr Debbie Pinfold, Faculty of Arts
- Dr Fabrizio Scarpa, Faculty of Engineering
- Dr Frank Taylor, Clinical Veterinary Science (Chair)
- Dr Poppy Turner, External Consultant
- Ms Jackie West, Faculty of Social Sciences and Law