

Work Experience Handbook

Surrey County Council
“Making Surrey a better place to live, work and visit”

Your step by step guide to joining us



SURREY

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Introduction

Welcome

We are delighted that you are thinking of joining us for your work experience placement.

Our exciting opportunities can range from one day up to one/two weeks and help you to gain an insight into the workplace, while supporting your learning and development.

We trust that the time you spend with us will be rewarding and enjoyable and we also encourage you to use this opportunity to learn about the Council and the wide range of services we provide which in turn supports our vision to make Surrey County Council a better place to live, work and visit'.

This handbook has been developed to let you know about the important information that you will need to gain the most from your placement.

We look forward to receiving your application for your work experience.

A bit about us

Our Directorates are made up of the following services

Health, Wellbeing & Adult Social Care
Children, Families, Lifelong learning & culture.
Community protection, Transport & Environment
Corporate resources
Transformation, partnerships & Prosperity

For more information about us and the services we provide, you can visit our website at: <http://www.surreycc.gov.uk>

Work experience plays a key role in the council's vision to make Surrey a better place to live, work and visit. Surrey County Council encourages work experience, work shadowing and student placements and acknowledges the benefits these arrangements bring to our organisation, such as a new insight into the workplace and improved ties with the local community.

Our Values

The values below will be crucial in delivering our corporate strategy, and are what we draw on to make a difference for Surrey residents.

- **Listen** - We actively listen to others and expect to be listened to.
- **Responsibility** - We take responsibility in all that we do at work.
- **Trust** - We work to inspire trust and we trust in others.
- **Respect** - We are supportive and inclusive and committed to learning from others.

What does work experience at SCC mean for you?

Your work experience placement will give you a real experience with real people and we are committed to providing you with the best opportunities. The rewards and benefits of work experience are many. By choosing to do a placement with us, we can help you:

- Gain practical experience in the job you are interested in.
- Raise your awareness of current developments in the work area.
- Improve your job opportunities. Having experience of work will make you a more interesting prospect to employers and give you something to talk about on job applications and your CV.
- Build on your skills and knowledge and gain confidence in your chosen area of work.
- Build your networks.
- Explore career options and make a positive career choice.
- Gain excellent knowledge and insight into a large public sector organisation

Locations

As our teams are based in different locations across Surrey, you will need to bear this in mind when making your placement choice so that you can be sure you can travel to and from your placement.

Please note our primary offices are located at:

- County Hall, Penrhyn Road, Kingston - Upon -Thames.
- Quadrant Court, Guildford Road, Woking
- Consort House, Redhill
- Fairmount House, Leatherhead

N.B – we do have various other locations across the whole county.

Our primary offices offer good transport and road links. But please take the time to consider your travel in advance.

How to apply for a work experience placement?

Apply at: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/jobs/early-careers/work-experience>

You will be asked to provide your personal details, along with attaching your Curriculum Vitae (CV).

If you do not have a CV to hand, please look on our website for guidance and a CV template that you can use to create your CV. <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/jobs/tips-and-guidance/cv-writing-guidance>

What happens next?

We will contact you if a placement is available in your chosen service area.

We may ask to meet with you prior to any arrangements being confirmed to ask you more about your expectations and the goals you wish to achieve during the placement so that we can match you to the most appropriate placement opportunity.

Please note that it may not always be possible to provide you with an exact match for your placement and in some circumstances, it may not be possible to provide you with a placement at all. This will depend on your requirements and our available resources. We may discuss alternative placements with you if your choices are not available or, in the event that we cannot provide you with a placement, we will let you know.

We will confirm the full details of the arrangements of your placement by email.

Are there any other requirements?

Some roles may involve activities with vulnerable groups of people, i.e. working with Children/Adults, or being privy to sensitive and confidential information about the Council or the people, families and carers that use our services. This may result in the need to contact you to obtain further information prior to your placement commencing. We will let you know if this is the case.



Preparing for your work experience placement

Preparation is key ...



Here are some tips which may help you when you join us:

- ✓ Make sure you know what time you need to arrive for your placement and where and who to report to
- ✓ Plan the journey and your travel time
- ✓ Introduce yourself to others
- ✓ Take notes at the Introduction meeting and during your placement
- ✓ Agree what skills you want to learn, and commit to achieving them
- ✓ Get involved and participate, show enthusiasm and interest in what you are doing
- ✓ Ask questions if you are unsure about anything

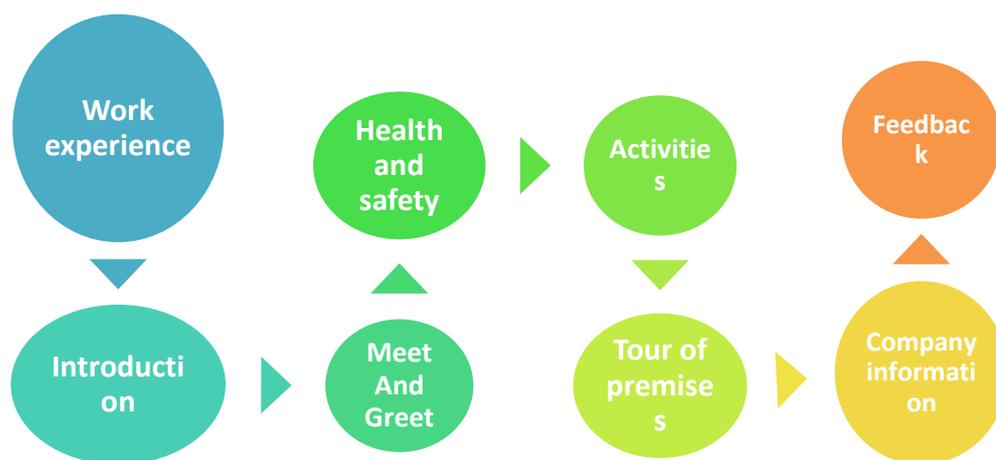
Your contact

You will be given guidance and support by a member of the team. They will be your first point of contact and they will keep you up to date with any changes or news that you need to be aware of.

If there is anything you're not sure of, or if you have any questions you should speak with them. You will be provided with their contact details on confirmation of your placement.

Helping you to settle in

When you begin your work experience placement with us, a member of staff will greet you on your arrival and over the course of your placement we will cover the following:



Health & Safety

We want to be sure that you remain safe whilst on our premises. Your mentor is responsible for making sure that you receive any relevant training linked to the activities and any equipment you will use in your role.

In any event we are required to provide you with an overview of the following:



SCC will ensure that Risk Assessments and Safe Working Practices will be carried out and completed for all common activities specific to the individual or location. You are expected to follow all health and safety protocols in the same way as paid staff.

It is important to discuss with your mentor any special requirements you may have to protect your health, safety and wellbeing, which may include disclosing any disability or medical condition.

Confidentiality:

How we handle data and keep it safe is key to the way we work here in the Council. Data or information such as hardcopy papers, emails or even verbal information are all required to be handled in a safe and secure manner. Therefore it is important to let you know what this means for you while you are on your work experience placement with SCC.

The Council operates in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 (GDPR April 2018) and

Why is this important?

There are laws that govern the way we handle data – particularly data that is about people. The major piece of legislation we have to work under is the Data Protection Act 2018 which lays out rules on how we handle and look after personal data.

Discussing your work with others

Discussing what you did and the work that you undertook can be shared but you must not discuss or disclose confidential information that relates in any way to the Council with anyone. If confidential information is disclosed this is likely to be a breach of the Data Protection Act which may have serious consequences to you and the Council.

What things do I need to be aware of?

You might be given access to Surrey's IT systems and information. You will need to ensure that you are responsible in how you access the data by not sharing passwords and not disclosing to your friends/others if you have found out information about people during the course of your work placement with us or other types of confidential information such as the cost of services.

All electronic data belonging to the Council, including copies made, must be returned to the Council at the end of the placement in any event. If however there is something that you may have created for us or devised please seek our consent to use or share this with others and we will consider your request.

Data and information needs as much respect as people do and therefore we do have to be careful in how it is handled by all our employees in SCC. This placement will be terminated without prior notice in the event of any misuse of or failure to properly protect the Council's confidential information.

Your mentor will discuss our Confidential Reporting Policy with you to help you understand how you should raise any particular concerns you may have.

In any event you will be required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement prior to commencing your placement with us.

Safeguarding:

Surrey is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff, volunteers and those on work shadowing, work experience or educational placements to share this commitment. It is vital for employed staff to take full responsibility for this. The manager must ensure that those on placements are properly supervised at all times and that they are not left unsupervised with vulnerable service users. This is in the interests of protection of all individuals. Managers must conduct a risk assessment to identify the controls needed to protect the individuals on placement, the staff and others with whom they come into contact during the placement.

Insurance:

All individuals on work shadowing, work experience or educational placements will be insured under the council's public or employer's liability insurance whilst undertaking work approved and authorised by the council. The council will not be responsible or liable for loss or damage to the personal belongings of those on placement.

What activities will I be involved in?

We will aim to provide you with activities that match, as closely as possible, the work you wish to undertake with us, taking into consideration the responses noted on your application form.

If there is an activity that you would like to undertake please let your mentor know so that we can try to accommodate it within your activity plan.

How am I doing?

We want to make sure that you are getting the best experience from your time with us and we will ensure that during your placement we will discuss with you:

- how your day went
- what you have learned
- whether your activities met your expectations
- what activities are planned for the next day

You can record your activities on the Diary Activity form we can provide you with to help you record your achievements if you want to.

End of First week:

At the end of the first week we will meet with you informally to:

- ask you to complete an Evaluation form to record your achievements
- give you the opportunity to discuss how you are getting on
- identify any further training or other support that you may need
- prepare for the next week's activities

On completion of your placement:

We hope that you will have enjoyed your time with us and it has given you some ideas as to potential future career opportunities within SCC.

On your last day we will ask you to:

- complete your own Evaluation form before we meet with you
- meet with us to discuss:
 - how you feel your placement with us has gone
 - What went well?
 - What skills you have learnt?
 - What was the best part of your time with us?
 - What did you enjoy the most?
 - What did you least enjoy and why?
 - In what ways could we have improved your time with us?

We will also complete our own Evaluation Form and give you some feedback on how we think things have gone.

Certificate of attendance:

On successful completion of your placement, the council will provide you with a certificate of attendance

Ending your work experience placement early

If you decide that you no longer wish to undertake your work placement with us, you must let your mentor know as soon as possible.

Further information

You can find out more information about work experience at SCC here:
<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/jobs/early-careers/work-experience>

Obligation to offer and accept

No obligation exists from either party and your work placement does not constitute an offer of employment.

Working for us in the future

We really hope that we have given you a real insight of what it is like to work for us. If you would like to know more about pursuing a career in local government, have a look at some of these sites for more information about the opportunities on offer:

Jobs and Apprenticeships with Surrey County Council

Check out jobs in our area at: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/jobs>

Find an Apprenticeship:

Search the find an apprenticeship service for apprenticeships in England.
<https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>

Jobs in the public sector:

A job site for vacancies in the public, not for profit and charity sectors. It also has a careers advice section.

<http://www.jobsinpublicsector.co.uk/>

Have your say ...

We value feedback as it lets us know what we are doing well or could improve. With this in mind, we encourage you to give us feedback on your work experience placement and share your ideas and suggestions with your mentor so that we can continually improve what we do.

WORK EXPERIENCE – THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

1. Pay

You will not be paid a salary for the work experience you do and you will not enter into a contract of employment with us for the role. If you or your parents/guardians receive income support you must let us know before you join us so we can make lunch arrangements for you when you attend work.

2. Working hours and breaks

Your hours will usually be no more than 6-8 hours a day, Monday to Friday, 9am -5pm, usually with a one hour lunch break.

Your actual hours will be agreed in advance if you are successfully selected for a work experience placement.

You will not be expected to work more than 36 hours per week, or between the hours of 10pm and 6am.

Work Placements can last for one day or for 1 or 2 weeks, usually over consecutive 5 day periods of 36 hours per week, however we may be able to arrange alternative working times to help support you if the team you will work in can accommodate this.

3. Accidents and Incidents:

In order to help us prevent accidents and to meet our statutory requirements, you must ensure you report **all** accidents or other incidents which occur during the course of your work experience placement. A member of staff will cover SCC's arrangements for the reporting of accidents and incidents (including violence and aggression) during your introduction.

4. Behaviour and conduct:

It is important that no one is discriminated against, victimised, bullied or harassed because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. We expect everyone to treat everyone else fairly and with respect and be mindful that poor behaviour could present a negative image of SCC. If you believe this type of behaviour is happening, you should report it to your contact immediately.

Should you behave in an unacceptable way it may result in us withdrawing you from the work placement.

We will provide you with further information on the SCC Equality Policy on your first day, however the key standards of behaviour expected of you are:

- If you have access to our intranet/internet/telephone: there must be no inappropriate messaging, inappropriate images, photographs, emails, documents sent, received or

- downloaded – all workplace tools are monitored for inappropriate usage
- No alcohol or drugs are permitted on the premises
 - You must adhere to the relevant policies and procedures of the Council – further details of these requirements will be provided at your Introduction meeting
 - Attend work on times agreed for your placement.
 - Endeavour to complete work given to you on time and to a good standard
 - Ask for help if you are unsure about something
 - Not using personal mobiles during working time, except on breaks, or if a home emergency arises during working time.
 - No verbal abusive language or conduct towards work colleagues or customers.

You will be asked to sign a work placement agreement form prior to commencing your placement.

5. Social Media:

You should be aware that social media networking websites such as Facebook, twitter YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram etc. are in the public domain and therefore can be seen by most people. When/if you are using social networking sites you should **not** make any negative comments or references to SCC, or provide details of its service providers and service users.

Any communication with the media should not be made without prior discussion and agreement with your mentor.

We will go through this in more detail during your placement with us.

6. Dress Code:

Whilst you are on SCC premises you should adhere to the applicable dress code for the team you will be working with. In most cases, smart casual clothing should be worn and we will confirm whether any restrictions are in place prior to you commencing your placement with us.

Should you be required to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) during some/all of your time with us, for example if you are out on a site visit, any mandatory PPE will be provided and, if supplied, must be worn as directed. PPE could include safety glasses, helmets, safety shoes and workwear/overalls. You are required to return any equipment or clothing/footwear allocated to you should you leave your placement early or at the end of your placement.

7. If you are ill/unable to attend your work placement

If you are unable to attend your planned work placement activity for any reason, you should let your mentor/contact know as soon as possible.

Please ensure you call in by 9.00 a.m. on your first day of absence and let us know when you think you may be well enough to return.

8. If you are ill/unable to attend your work placement

If you are unable to attend your planned work placement activity for any reason, you should let your mentor/contact know as soon as possible.

Please ensure you call in by 9.00 a.m. on your first day of absence and let us know when you think you may be well enough to return.

9. If you have any issues/problems during your work placement

We hope your work placement experience with us is an enjoyable one, but we recognise that there may be times when a problem arises.

If you have a problem relating to your work experience, you should raise it directly with your mentor who will aim to resolve it with you.

If you feel the matter is not satisfactorily resolved, or you feel the need to escalate your concern, you should raise this with our HR Department or if relevant speak to your School/College/Academy contact.

10. If we identify there is a problem

If there are issues raised about your contribution, ability or conduct during your work placement, your mentor will discuss it with you straight away so that you can be made aware of their concerns and have the opportunity to address them.

If there are concerns that even with the necessary training, mentoring or support you will not be able to fulfill your work placement goals with us there may be no alternative but to withdraw you from your placement.

If you are a student, we will discuss any concerns with the appropriate School/College/Academy beforehand before any final decision is made.

We would always hope to be able to resolve any issues without taking this decision and we will always meet with you to discuss how we can resolve any concerns in the first instance.

11. Insurance

You will be covered by our Employer Liability Insurance and Public Liability Insurance while you are undertaking your work experience placement with us. This means that you are covered against accidents, diseases or injuries that may occur due to negligence on our behalf.

12. Gifts and Hospitality

There may be times when it is acceptable for you to receive items or gifts of small value given to you in appreciation of your work experience placement activity. For example, a box of chocolates, flowers.

However, in cases of hospitality or gifts with a value in excess of £25 you should politely decline them and let your mentor know about the offer made to you as soon as possible.

13. Related forms

- a. Attendee Evaluation form
- b. Diary Activity form
- c. Confidentiality Agreement
- d. Workplace Agreement
- e. Parent/Guardian consent form (required if aged 18 or under)

14. Abbreviations/Jargon buster

At Surrey County Council, we use many abbreviations. This makes it quicker and easier to refer to something with a long title. This may be confusing and unfamiliar. Below is a short list of some of the most used abbreviations and terms you might hear us use during your placement.

Don't be afraid to ask what it means if you come across an abbreviation that you are unsure of.

SCC	Surrey County Council
LGA	Local Government Association
SME	Small, Medium Enterprise (Subject, Matter, Expert)
DSE	Display Screen Equipment
HR	Human Resources
OD	Organisational Development
L&D	Learning and Development
T&Cs	Terms and conditions
NJC	National Joint Council
CLT	Corporate Leadership Team
CEX	Chief Executive
AD	Assistant Director
NUT	National Union of Teachers
SMT	Senior Management Team
ICT	Information Technology



SURREY

***“Making Surrey a better place to live, work
and visit”***

Contact us...

By telephone: 0208 541 9000

By email: my.helpdesk@surreycc.gov.uk

On the web: www.surreycc.gov.uk



SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL WORK EXPERIENCE APPLICATION FORM

Name: _____

Email: _____

Contact number: _____

Are you in school, sixth form or college? (Please state the name). If the answer is no, please specify your current status.

From the following list, please tick which area of the council you are interested in. (you may select more than one).

- Health, Wellbeing & Adult Social Care
- Finance
- Children, Families, Learning & Communities
- Highways, Transport & Environment
- Commercial
- Customers, Digital and Transformation

Please briefly explain what interests you about the area(s) you have selected.

Are you currently undertaking any subjects/qualifications that relate to the area(s) you are interested in? If yes, please specify:

From the below, please indicate which type of work you would be interested in.

- Office based
- Outdoor/practical work
- working with residents
- Other (please specify) _____

Surrey County Council has offices across the county. Our main offices are listed below. Please select which locations you are able to commute to. (NB: The more locations you are able to travel to, the greater your chance of securing a placement)

- County Hall – Kingston –Upon- Thames
- Quadrant Court – Woking
- Fairmount House – Leatherhead
- Consort House – Redhill

Please specify when you would like to do the work experience placement. (You can advise specific dates if this applicable)

How long are you looking to conduct the work experience placement for? (We offer up to 2 weeks)

- On occasion, we may ask you if we can take photographs of you and ask you for comments on how your work experience placement is going. These may be used in SCC internal/external publications to promote the Work Experience Scheme. If you wish to **opt out** of this, please tick the box.

Please send a copy of your completed application form to:
myhelpdesk@surreycc.gov.uk

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