# **The School of Humanities’ Extended UK-based Work Placements and Overseas Study/Work Placements: Humanities in Action: Staff Handbook**

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## INTRODUCTION

1. The School of Humanities’ (SoH) placement year is designed for students who have successfully completed Level 5 and wish to undertake a year-long placement either on an extended internship in the UK or on an extended placement overseas, or a combination of both. These modules aim to give students insight into a wide variety of applicable fields of work and the opportunity to connect theory with practice in a professional context.

## Extended UK-based Work Placements

1. An extended work placement allows students to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes required in a professional workplace. This will enhance individual students’ employability and give them the best possible preparation for their future careers. Importantly, work placements must be with organisations whose work is relevant to the themes of the individual student’s course.

## Year Abroad Placements: Study or Work

1. Overseas placements enable students to develop cultural and intercultural awareness of the country visited through experiential learning and, for students studying or working in a language other than English during their time abroad, further opportunity to develop linguistic competence. These skills are included in the University’s [Graduate Attributes](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/about-us/our-university/our-teaching/graduate-attributes-at-the-university-of-westminster), are highly prized by employers in today’s market and thus give students a competitive edge in the future job market.

## Options for Placement Year

1. The 6 x modules that govern the SoH placement year are:

5HUMS001W: Humanities UK-based Work Placement (Semester 1)

5HUMS002W: Humanities UK-based Work Placement (Semester 2)

5HUMS003W: Humanities Year Abroad Work Placement (Semester 1)

5HUMS004W: Humanities Year Abroad Work Placement (Semester 2)

5ENGL006W: Humanities Year Abroad Study Placement (Semester 1)

5ENGL007W: Humanities Year Abroad Study Placement (Semester 2)

##

## Overview of Modules

1. The following modules offer the opportunity for an extended period of experience in a UK-based organisation whose work is relevant to the themes of the course:

5HUMS001W: Humanities UK-based Work Placement (Semester 1)

5HUMS002W: Humanities UK-based Work Placement (Semester 2)

Each placement must be for a minimum of 420 hours (up to a maximum of 550 hours) and takes place over 12 weeks (ie 35 hours per week for 12 weeks). The placement can take place over 4 days per week.

1. The following modules offer the opportunity for an extended period of work experience overseas:

5HUMS003W: Humanities Year Abroad Work Placement (Semester 1)

5HUMS004W: Humanities Year Abroad Work Placement (Semester 2)

Each work placement must be approved by the School’s Academic Exchange Coordinator (AEC) and must be undertaken whilst residing overseas. Each work placement must comprise a minimum of 15 weeks’ full-time work/volunteering.

1. The following modules offer the opportunity for an extended period of study experience overseas:

5ENGL006W: Humanities Year Abroad Study Placement (Semester 1)

5ENGL007W: Humanities Year Abroad Study Placement (Semester 2)

Students are required to undertake a study placement at a host organisation abroad and to reside in the country of the placement for 18 weeks per module/term. The placement needs the approval of both the home and host institutions.

## Permitted Module Combinations

1. It is possible for a student wishing to take a year out to take any of the following module combinations:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 5HUMS002W: Sem 2 UK-based WP\* in same organisation | 5HUMS002W: Sem 2 UK-based WP in different organisation | 5HUMS004W: Sem 2 WP abroad in same organisation | 5HUMS004W: Sem 2 WP abroad in different organisation | 5ENGL006W: Sem 2 study placement abroad in same organisation | 5ENGL006W: Sem 2 study placement abroad in different organisation |
| 5HUMS001W: Sem 1 UK-based WP | Option A1 | Option A2 |  | Option A3 |  | Option A4 |
| 5HUMS003W : Sem 1 WP abroad |  | Option B4 | Option B1 | Option B2 |  | Option B3 |
| 5ENGL006W: Sem 1 study placement abroad |  | Option C3 |  | Option C4 | Option C1 | Option C2 |

\*Work Placement

## Important Deadlines

1. **UK work placement(s): If a student is taking a work placement(s) in the UK, this must be confirmed by the last working day in August of the preceding academic year. For any queries, please email** **las-placements@westminster.ac.uk**
2. International Exchange/Study Abroad. Guidance on how to apply for an international exchange/study abroad (including deadlines) for 25/26, will be published on the University website. It is likely that the application window will run from 1 Dec 2025 to 2 Feb 2026.

## Degree Titles

**11.** Here is a list of degree title permutations:

Degrees for students who spend one or two semesters on a work placement will be “with Professional Experience”. (A1, A2,)

Degrees for students who spend one or two semesters studying or working overseas will be “with International Experience”. (A3, A4, B1, B2, B3, B4, C1, C2, C3 and C4)

Degrees for students who combine a UK-based work placement and overseas experience will be “with Professional and International Experience”. (A3, A4, B4 and C3)

## Student Expressions of Interest – Finding out More

**12.** You can book a 20-minute consultation with the [LAS Placement Team](https://engage-employability.westminster.ac.uk/leap/appointments.html?advisers=23947&types=88) or [Student Mobility Team](https://engage-employability.westminster.ac.uk/leap/appointments.html?advisers=23947) via [Career Zone](https://careerzone.westminster.ac.uk/unauth). Appointments take place either at the Cavendish campus or [virtually](https://engage-employability.westminster.ac.uk/leap/appointments.html?types=7) via Microsoft Teams.

## PLACEMENT APPROVAL PROCESS

**13.** UK Work Placements:

Any student applying for a work placement in the UK is required to complete the [LAS Year Long Placement Pathway](https://engage-employability.westminster.ac.uk/leap/pathways/preview-pathway.html?pathway=137) via Career Zone.

Once the student has completed the required stages in the pathway, the LAS Placement Team will contact the Line Manager at the Placement Organisation to complete the required due diligence checks.

All work placements – whether they are planned for semester 1 or semester 2, must be confirmed with the LAS Placement Team by the last working day in August of the preceding academic year. So, a student intending to take a placement year from September 2026 must have confirmed all placements by 29 August 2026.

**14. Overseas Study Approval Process.**

Students wishing to study abroad must select up to three institutional choices during the application window (Dec – Feb). The allocation of places occurs in February following the closure of the application window. This is the responsibility of the Student Mobility Team (SMT) / Academic Exchange Coordinator (AEC).

For more information, please look at the following link:

<https://www.westminster.ac.uk/zone29/students/find-jobs-and-experiences/working-and-studying-abroad/study-exchanges/how-to-apply-for-a-study-exchange>

**15. Overseas Work Placement Approval Process.**

Finding an overseas work placement is challenging, and therefore, there is a requirement to allow scope for flexibility. If a student wishes to combine an overseas study placement with an overseas work placement, they are advised to undertake the study placement in Semester 1 and the work placement in Semester 2. This means that a student who is unable to find an overseas work placement may be able to apply to extend the study placement.

If a student wishes to undertake a year-long overseas work placement but is unsuccessful, they may be able to apply for an overseas study placement or continue to Level 6.

**Note: All overseas work placements will require additional due diligence checks, supported by the Student Mobility Team and, where appropriate, Procurement.**

**16. Combination Approval Process for Work and Study Placement.**

Students wishing to combine a UK-based or overseas work placement with one semester studying overseas (Options D or E2) must initially contact the Student Mobility Team for their semester abroad study. If they are also taking a placement in the UK, the student must follow the approval process for UK placements outlined above.

## SUPPORT FOR PLACEMENTS

### Workshops

**17. The UK-based and overseas work placement modules (5HUMS001W, 5HUMS002W, 5HUMS003W and 5HUMS004W) all comprise the following teaching hours:**

2 x 1.5-hour pre-deployment tutorials to be delivered online.

3 x hours of online workshops each semester to be delivered as detailed below:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Tutorial Number** | **1** | **2** | **3** |
| **Timing** | End of Learning Week One | Mid-semester | Learning Week 10 |
| **Responsibility:**  | Academic | Academic | Academic |
| **Aim** | Introduction to Assessment, the Workplace Reflection (to include the 5R framework). | Mid-placement Review to address any issues identified by students and assessment guidance | Individual Personal Development Review Meeting |
| **Delivery method** | Online | Online | Online |

**18. The Year Abroad Study Placement modules will comprise the following teaching hours:**

2 x 1.5-hour pre-deployment tutorials to be delivered online.

3 x hours of online workshops each semester to be delivered as detailed below:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Tutorial Number** | **1** | **2** | **3** |
| **Timing** | Beginning of semester  | Mid-semester | Learning Week 12 |
| **Responsibility:**  | Academic (Module Leader) | Academic (Module Leader) | Academic tutor |
| **Aim** | Introduction to Assessment: Study Abroad Reflection.  | Mid-placement review to assess overall progress on placement to date and address any issues/problems relating to the placement | Individual Personal Development Review Meeting |
| **Delivery method** | Online- group session | Online – one-to-one sessions | Online – one-to-one sessions |

### Contact with the University

**19**. Students will have the following contact with the University throughout the placement year:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Semester-long Activity (Sem 1 or Sem 2)** | **University Support** |
| UK-based work placement | Academic visits student (Onsite where possible, if not, online). LAS Placement Team receives the Student Induction Checklist and completes monthly well-being checks. Attendance is monitored via monthly timesheets submitted via Career Zone.  |
| Overseas-based work placement | Students are required to complete monthly timesheets. The SMT completes monthly well-being checks by email. There is a mid-placement review (via a feedback form) and an online “visit” by an academic.  |
| Overseas study placement | The Academic Exchange Coordinator and Student Mobility team have regular online check-ins with students |

**20**. Students can also access the following support during their placement year:

* 1. Students can arrange 1-1 sessions with the AEC, the LAS Placement team and/or the Student Mobility team throughout the term.
	2. If required, support from Personal Tutor and relevant Professional Services (Registry, Counselling and Mental Health Service, etc.).
	3. Support from the partner university before, during and after their mobility as appropriate.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

**21.** The table below allocates academic and professional responsibilities.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Module Code** | **Delivery of Tutorials and Assessment** | **Due Diligence of Work Placement** | **Support throughout Placement** | **Quality Assurance of Placement** |
| 5HUMS001W and 5HUMS002W | Module leader and academics | LAS Work Placement Team | Module leader and LAS Work Placement Team | LAS Work Placement Team |
| 5HUMS003W and 5HUMS004W | Module leader and academic tutors | Student Mobility Team | Module Leader, Student Mobility Team | Student Mobility Team |
| 5ENGL006 and 5ENGL007 | Module leader and academic tutors | Student Mobility Team | Module Leader and Student Mobility Team | Module Leader |

### Resources for Students

**22.** **Generic Resources for Students.** During the placement year, students will be encouraged to engage with:

1. Virtual Skills Academy: A series of seminars and workshops designed by industry professionals, employers and specialist speakers. All workshops will be posted on <https://engage-employability.westminster.ac.uk/>Career Zone at the start of Sem 1.
2. Digital Humanities: <https://westminster.potential.ly/playlists/xzelirebvumetqxs>
3. Work-based learning: [WBPL Student Page](http://engage-employability.westminster.ac.uk/leap/svc/cms.html?fragment=content/article/4a2e352d-1ef4-4098-95da-f872eef191de)**,** [An Introduction to Work-Based and Placement Learning](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DtSKd7o_h5M) (Video)

## ASSESSMENT

**23.** The assessment for all Humanities in Action work placement modules comprises:

​A 1000-word reflective placement report (50%)​

​&​

​A 15-minute personal development review (50%)

​

The assessments will be marked pass/fail.

**24.** The assessment of a study or work placement abroad comprises:

1 x 1000-word reflective report (50%)

&

1 x 15-minute personal development review (50%)

Students studying abroad are required to participate in classes at the partner institution/s in accordance with their Learning Agreements and to sit all assessments related to the modules on which they are registered, passing at least 50% of the credits on their Learning Agreement (15 ECTs or equivalent). In circumstances where students do not pass the required credits at the partner university, they will need to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes of the module in their reflective placement report.

## VISA IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

25. Students studying at Westminster on a Student visa who are considering undertaking a placement year should contact [Student Advice](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/support-and-services/student-advice) as soon as possible.

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

26. Students who have a disability or condition are encouraged to register with the [Disability Learning Support Team](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/support-and-services/disability-learning-support) and explore further resources via the Careers Discovery Feed on [Career Zone.](http://engage-employability.westminster.ac.uk/leap/svc/cms.html?fragment=content/article/68c193e6-947a-4dc2-b5b8-92720b72b56c) The following rules and regulations apply to students with disabilities who wish to undertake a placement:

1. UK-based Work Placements. UK placement providers must make reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act (2010), but only if students disclose their disability and specify their needs. Disclosure can happen at any stage, though early disclosure is best.
2. Overseas Placements. Unfortunately, overseas providers aren’t bound by UK law, so written confirmation of adjustments is essential. Students should initially contact the LAS Placement Team (UK placements) or Student Mobility team (overseas placements) to discuss any support or adjustments required.

## FAQs

**19. What are the visa requirements for a student wanting to spend one or two semesters overseas?**

Non-EU students studying or working in Europe need a visa which has a 3-month lead-in. Students are advised to apply for visas as soon as the placement is confirmed. Any international work placements must be agreed for the whole year by February 2025. EU students studying or working in Europe do not need a visa.

**20. What is the process for a student wanting to teach abroad with the British Council?**

Students apply directly via the British Council. For further details, please see the following link: [Teach abroad as an English Language Assistant | British Council](https://www.britishcouncil.org/study-work-abroad/outside-uk/english-language-assistants). The Student Mobility Team provides detailed advice via the Global Opportunities Bb site.

**21. What happens if a student returns early to the UK from a year-long overseas placement?**

If a student returns unexpectedly from a semester abroad and wants a placement in the UK, the University will respond on an ad hoc basis. This is not to be made public to students because there are no guarantees that a placement can be found with short notice.

**22. What happens if the student does not complete the full internship/overseas placement?**

They will not be granted “with professional/international experience” on their degree. To have any form of award title, students must complete 120 credits at the UoW. If the student fulfils both a work placement in the UK and a study/work placement overseas, they will be awarded “with professional and international experience”.

If students fail after the referral point, they will not be awarded with the extended work placement and can only refer to it on their CV.

**23. Who meets additional costs of a student working or living overseas?**

SMT funds students via the Turing scheme in line with funding rounds for Sem1/FY and Sem2 students going overseas. Students will receive information before applying for the Turing scheme and will then receive more detailed information once accepted and confirmed with exchange/placement.

**24. What happens if the student cannot find a suitable UK-based or overseas placement?**

The Module Leader and the University’s Careers and Enterprise Service will work closely with the student to identify opportunities for a placement. However, in the unlikely event that it is not possible to find a suitable placement, the student will continue to the final year of studies. The deadline for this is 29 Aug 2025.

**25. Can a student defer the placement to later than stated in the Learning Agreement?**

The student can only defer the placement if there are serious circumstances beyond their control which may have adversely affected their ability to undertake work experience. This will require the student to submit a successful claim for Mitigating Circumstances. However, it may be possible to modify the terms of the work experience if this is in the mutual interests of both the host organisation and the student. In the event of a student failing to complete the target hours due to serious or exceptional circumstances, the student would apply for an adjustment to assessment.

**26. Can the student change their placement after submitting the Learning Agreement or after the placement has started?**

The Learning Agreement is a commitment between the student and the host organisation, so a placement can only be changed in exceptional circumstances, for example, if the host organisation has to withdraw from the agreement. This will require an agreement in writing by all parties to terminate the relationship.

**27. Can the student start the placement earlier than the nominated semester?**

It is possible for the student to commence the placement prior to September if the host organisation would like the student to start earlier, for example, if they have a project starting at a specific date and they want the student’s involvement. International students must ensure that any change in dates does not have a negative impact on their visa requirements.

Semester-based placements should start within the academic year, whereas year-long placements can start as per all other placement years for visa students, i.e. after exams and results are published (End June / Early July).

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that start and finish dates do not overlap if they are undertaking two opportunities.

**28. What happens if the student fails one or both modules?**

If the student fails one or both modules, Academic Regulations will apply and the student may be referred in coursework. In that case, the student will be required to resubmit one or more of the assessed coursework elements by the RD Coursework deadline.

**29. What happens if the student cannot finish the placement because of illness or other unforeseen circumstances?**

If there are serious circumstances beyond the student’s control which may have adversely affected their ability to undertake work experience, the student will be able to submit a claim for Mitigating Circumstances. This enables the student to complete their placement at a later date. Alternatively, the student may return to the University for their final year.

**30. Will students get paid on their work internship?**

**UK-based Internships**

This depends very much on a number of factors relating to the nature of the placement (e.g. sector, role and location) Some private sector organisations may provide a salary at national minimum wage or above).

Home students who undertake what is considered as a Type B (unpaid) placement by Student Finance England could be eligible for full funding, i.e. the same amount received in a standard study year; this may be subject to means testing. Type B placements are defined by Student Finance England as:

* unpaid service with a state primary or secondary school (or college) in the UK
* unpaid service with a local authority in the UK
* unpaid service in the prison or probation service in the UK
* unpaid research in a UK or overseas institution
* unpaid service in a hospital (NHS) or a clinical commissioning group in the UK
* unpaid service in the UK Parliament

For more information, please contact Student Finance England.

If a student is considering accepting an unpaid placement, they may also wish to consult the University’s [Student Advice Team](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/support-and-services/student-advice) who can provide support and help in organising the student’s finances. They offer one-to-one appointments and email advice, and a Duty Adviser is usually available.

Whilst it is considered good practice for the Placement Provider to reimburse students’ travel and lunch expenses, this is not always the case. The LAS Placement Team can liaise on students’ behalf to enquire if this is possible.

**Overseas Work Placements:** Students will get Turing funding if the SMT’s annual bid is successful. The placement needs to be longer than 28 days and cannot be remote.

**31. Are students able to undertake paid work alongside a placement?**

Yes, although there are restrictions on the number of hours an international student can undertake. An international student’s working allowance will be stated on their Biometric Residence Permit (normally a maximum of 20 hours per week during term time). As their work placement will be an integral and assessed part of their course, they may be able to work above the usual limit, but they must first ensure that the work placement meets the required criteria. Essentially, this means that international students doing a full-time placement could work up to a maximum of 20 hours per week in other paid or unpaid employment in addition to the placement.

**32. How do students obtain evidence of attendance for their visas?**

**Students taking a placement in the UK:**

The Monthly Timesheet that students submit to Career Zone will be checked by the LAS Placement Team and will be used to monitor their attendance. This will be verified electronically by the host organisation each month. The timesheet is not marked but it is important that this is submitted via the Career Zone pathway on time every month.

**Students taking a placement overseas**

The Visa Compliance Team will highlight students who have work placements overseas when we send them a list of students going away for the coming academic year. The SMT will then monitor the students that the visa compliance team highlight with a number of check in points to ensure compliance.

**33. What are the visa implications for UK residents studying or working overseas?**

Students must apply for a visa with support from their host organisation as soon as their placement is confirmed. This is part of the exchange pre-departure support.

**34. What are the visa implications for international students undertaking a work placement in the UK?**

The period over which international students are Career Zoned in their internship(s) must be at least as long as the academic semester. If a student finishes their internship before the last day of the University’s second semester, they will have to return to their home country before the start of their final year’s study and will have to reapply for a UK visa. ​

**35. How do international students ​find more information?**

The University advises that all international students considering a placement must contact an International Student Adviser based at the University’s Student Advice Team via the [Student Centre](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/support-and-services).​

**36. Do students pay tuition fees?**

Please check your tuition fee charge with your Faculty Registry Office and the Finance Office. If you are eligible to receive Student Finance England funding and must pay a tuition fee for your placement year, you can apply for a Student Finance Tuition Fee Loan to cover this. Normally, 15% of your annual tuition fee will be charged for the 2024/25 academic year.

More information on this and how to apply for Student Finance for your placement year is available via the Student Advice team, and this webpage: <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/study/fees-and-funding/funding/undergraduate-student-funding/full-time-undergraduate-placement-years>.

**37. What are the funding arrangements for students spending a year overseas?**

Students going abroad pay 15% of fees to UoW – nothing to the overseas partner. Students on study abroad programmes pay no fees at the UoW and full fees abroad.

**LEARNING AGREEMENT TEMPLATE**

**Name**:

**Academic Supervisor**:

**Location of Placement**:

**Placement Contact**:

**Start and End Dates**:

**Work Pattern**:

e.g. one day 9am-5pm per week for 36 weeks

**Description of Placement**

* A brief description of the organisation –where it is, what it does
* A job description or project brief for your role

**Your Self-assessment and Aims**

* What skills, knowledge and experience do you bring?
* What are your strengths?
* What do you hope to learn on your placement? (Please consider: professional skills, subject-based and organisational knowledge plus aptitudes.)
* How do you expect to document your learning process?
* What are your personal targets and milestones?

Signed

Student:

Supervisor:

Host organisation officer: