Economics Department
Thriving on Placement Handbook 2019/20
Year in Business
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1 Introduction
Welcome to the Year in Business Thriving on Placement handbook. This handbook is designed to help you make the most of your YIB placement. Details regarding the assessment, call-back days, tutor visits, risk assessment and insurance are all outlined in this handbook, which will be issued before you start your placement.

Firstly, here’s a reminder of some of the jargon that will be used in this handbook.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terminology</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Supervisor</td>
<td>AS</td>
<td>Member of academic staff that is responsible for overseeing one or more students whilst they are on placement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careers Service</td>
<td></td>
<td>The central careers service of Royal Holloway.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contract</td>
<td></td>
<td>In the UK - Contract of Employment (or Training Contract). The legal agreement between the Placement Provider and the student. Overseas placements may vary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement</td>
<td></td>
<td>The period of time that the student spends in business – between 9 and 12 months.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement Manager</td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>A member of the Economics Department Placement Team responsible for the day-to day running of the Year in Business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement Provider</td>
<td>PP</td>
<td>An organization that provides the student with a placement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics Department Placement Team</td>
<td></td>
<td>Members of Economics Department staff, both academic and administrative, with specific responsibilities for managing/operating the Year in Business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-place Supervisor/Mentor</td>
<td>WPS</td>
<td>A member (or members) of the Placement Provider’s staff who oversees the student whilst on placement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year in Business</td>
<td>YIB</td>
<td>The specified Royal Holloway programme pathway.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year in Business Academic Director</td>
<td>Academic Director</td>
<td>A member of Economics Department Academic staff responsible for the academic aspects of the YIB.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Let’s start with congratulations and a pause for thought. You’ve worked hard to find and secure your YIB placement and it would be timely to recognize the results of all your efforts. The process you’ve just been thorough is very similar to the search for a graduate job so now is a good time to note down any things you think you did particularly well or things that challenged you. Sometimes it helps to think in terms of what/who has helped the process and what/who has hindered the process. The responsibility for achieving the YIB learning outcomes is ultimately yours, but during the YIB you will be able to draw on support from a wide variety of people. Let’s start by revisiting the aims and learning outcomes and then look at the YIB support model.

1.1 Learning Aims and Outcomes

Students who secure and spend a year in a work placement will be provided with:
- an understanding of the complexity and demands of the graduate job application process
- an understanding of the day-to-day running of a company
- an insight into the managerial skills needed in business
- experience of a range of practical work-based situations (e.g. working in teams, participate in meetings, writing reports/emails, prioritizing own workload)

By the end of this course, students should:
- apply their knowledge and understanding of Economics theory to practical situations
- gain an insight into the managerial skills needed in business
- reflect on how they have dealt with practical work-based situations

To measure these objectives you will be set a number of assessments throughout your placement year, this will be discussed in more detail later...

2 Pre-Placement Preparation

2.1 Placement Checklist

For some of you this may be the first time you have stepped outside full time education and into a work environment. This can be a nerve-racking time as you settle into your new role. To help with this we have compiled a check list below of things to consider before and during the first few weeks of placement.
- Firstly and most importantly check what time, date and location you are expected
- Get a good night’s sleep before your first day, whilst this may be easier said than done due to nerves, try to have a relaxing evening and go to bed early
- Check the appropriate dress code for your company (It’s always better to be too smart, than underdressed)
- If going into an office role brush up on your computer (Excel/Word) skills if necessary before starting. Royal Holloway IT services have a number of online training courses you can sign up for
- Take a pen and notepad on your first day, you will be taking on a lot of new information and will need it
- Make sure you plan your route in advance, and an alternative in case of travel disruption
- Leave plenty of time until you are familiar with the route
- Take contact details with you in case of any unforeseen circumstances (but at all costs avoid being late on your first day, first impressions count)
• Find out who your key colleagues and co-workers are and get familiar with the hierarchy of your department
• Familiarise yourself with the building including emergency exits and assembly points
• Whilst you may already be provided with this information in your contract, find out about holiday and sickness procedures
• Whilst we know you will have a lot on your plate in the first few weeks, you must not forget to get in touch with your programme administrator to let them know you have started your placement

2.1.1 Enrolment
As well as getting everything ready for your new placement role, there are also a few administrative tasks you need to complete for the University.

• As in previous academic years, you will need to enroll online during the summer
• In your first week you will need to make contact with your programme administrator:
  - To confirm you have begun the placement that had previously been approved
  - To provide contact details of your supervisor
  - To provide confirmation of your placement location and your workplace phone number and email address

2.2 Finance

2.2.1 Fees
Prior to beginning your placement it is essential that you discuss with student finance (01784 276109) your plans to undertake a Year in Business. Whilst you will still have to pay fees during this time, it will be at a reduced rate of 20% of your usual full-time tuition fees. You may also be able to apply for a reduced rate of Maintenance Loan.

2.2.2 Council Tax exemption/Letter of Confirmation
During your Year in Business you will still be considered a full-time student and will therefore be exempt from Council Tax. If there is someone in your house who is not a full-time student you will receive a bill but may be entitled to a discount. You will need a Council Tax exemption form which can download by logging onto Campus Connect and selecting the Enrolment tab where you will be able to download a copy of your certificate.

For further information on Council tax please visit https://www.gov.uk/council-tax/full-time-students

2.2.3 Tax and National Insurance
As a student it is important you are aware of the deductions that may be made from your wages when you start work. Some basic points are detailed below. If you need more detailed advice it is available from the Inland Revenue.

**Income tax** - This is your contribution to Government spending and everyone who receives an income over a certain amount (currently £11,000 2017/18) in the tax year pays some income tax; the more you earn the more you pay. If you work for someone your employer will take that tax from your earnings each payday and pass it onto the Inland Revenue – this is the Pay as You Earn (PAYE) system.

Students are not exempt and have to pay tax in the same way as anyone else working in the UK.
**National Insurance number** – this is your own personal account number. It makes sure that the National Insurance contributions and tax you pay are properly recorded on your account. If you live in the UK you normally receive one automatically at age 16. If you are entitled to a National Insurance number but don’t have one you can apply (contact 0345 6000 643). You MUST apply for one if you are going to take up a job.

3 **International Students**

Royal Holloway’s support and advisory services’ webpage for International students can be found via the link below

http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/international/support/studentsupportservices/home.aspx

3.1 **National Insurance Number**

For those of you who are International students, you will need to apply for a National Insurance number to work in the UK legally. This can take anywhere from a few weeks to a couple of months, so it is imperative that you begin this process on accepting your placement. On some occasions you may be asked to attend an interview and provide important documentation such as:

- Passport/Identity card
- Residence permit
- Birth/Adoption Certificate
- Marriage/Civil Partnership Certificate
- Driving License

To apply for your national insurance number, please visit www.gov.uk/apply-national-insurance-number or call the Jobcentre Plus National Insurance application line on 0345 6000 643 (Monday to Friday (8am to 6pm)).

3.1.1 **Visa Checks**

All students will have contact with the University at several points throughout the year. The requirements for international student visas mean that additional checks via phone/email will need to be carried out to ensure the student is fully attending the placement.

4 **Overseas Placements**

These placements can be more complex than UK placements to arrange and if you have a placement you should have already have thoroughly researched the factors detailed in the Placement Preparation Handbook.

Specific note should be taken of:

- Health and Safety – the position regarding health and safety of a placement student working abroad can be more complicated than in the UK as legislation does vary from country to country. Although EU countries share a similar legislative framework, the actual safety standards maybe somewhat different. Outside the EU, safety standards may vary considerably. The University does, as far as reasonably practical, assess the safety standards of Placement Providers via a risk assessment but we encourage you to seek further information and consider the risks both of the Placement Provider and the environment in which you will live.
- Working conditions – you need to be aware that these can vary significantly from those in the UK and have explored thoroughly all aspects.
• Visas – placements in other countries may require a visa which is not automatically granted to all students, even if they have an offer from a placement organization. You should have allowed sufficient time to secure this.

4.1 Important Documents Checklist

If your placement will take you overseas, in addition to the placement checklist, we have compiled an important documents checklist before you head off on your travels.

• Work visa (if required in the country)
• Passport
• Driving License
• EHIC* (for placements within Europe)
• Foreign Currency
• Adequate Insurance for the duration of your stay. You need to check this carefully as travel insurance may not be sufficient.
• Emergency contact details/ensure your next of kin knows the address you will be staying in
• Check your mobile can make international calls

*EHIC- European health card will enable you to access state-provided healthcare in European Economic Area (EEA) countries, at a reduced cost, or sometimes for free. It will cover your treatment until you return to the UK. Please note: this card is not an alternative to insurance: both will need to be obtained. You can find more information about the EHIC and a link to apply for one here: http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcareabroad/EHIC/Pages/about-the-ehic.aspx

4.2 Safety Abroad

The safety of the country and area you wish to take your placement year in will be discussed with the Year in Business Administrator before being approved. However, whilst you are on placement it is advisable to keep up to date with foreign policy and news. You can sign up for alerts letting you know of any unrest or potential natural disasters in your placement country: Foreign and Commonwealth Office alerts: https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

4.3 Mobile Phone and Roaming Charges

As many of you may be aware, mobile phone usage can incur additional costs when abroad. Prior to travelling you should contact your network provider and discuss the rates of International roaming charges in the country you are visiting, and whether there are other cost effective options available.

4.4 Suitable Accommodation

Do speak to your Placement Provider to see if they can help organize an apartment or flat prior to your arrival, perhaps with placement students from other universities. They may often help with temporary accommodation for a couple of days until you find your feet. Remember when dealing with local landlords that customs may be different with respect to housing arrangements. Always be sensitive to any cultural differences and make sure you are clear about your landlord’s expectations in terms of arrival times, guests, etc. If the tenancy agreement is in the local language get it translated by a native speaker so you know exactly what is expected. Ensure you check the legitimacy of landlords or estate agents before you hand over any money for accommodation.
5 Rights and Responsibilities on Placements

Understanding Responsibilities: Before beginning your placement it is important to have an understanding of your responsibilities and also of your employers.

5.1 What is Expected of your Employer

The Placement Provider is expected to:

- provide you with a clear and full induction to its working practices, including health and safety arrangements, fire precautions and emergency evacuation arrangements and how to report accidents/unsafe conditions
- provide the material and support you need for the performance of the placement
- nominate a supervisor who is responsible for your daily supervision and the provision of feedback
- comply with all relevant health and safety legislation and maintain appropriate Employer’s Liability and Public Liability Insurance (UK)

So what does this mean for you?

5.1.1 Health and Safety

In the UK, the Placement Provider has the duty of care and responsibility for the health and safety of students while at work. This is because for the purposes of employment law, including health and safety at work, students on placement in the UK are classed as employees whether or not they are paid for the work they are doing. However, as a placement student you have responsibilities under the Act for cooperating with the Placement Provider on issues related to health and safety. The Health and Safety (Training for Employment) Regulations 1990 give students on work placement the same protection and duties as employees have under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Overseas: Health and Safety standards can vary considerably for foreign placements and while the university does as far as reasonably possible assess the safety standards of the Placement Provider you are encouraged to seek further information and consider the risks associated with the Placement Provider and the environment.

5.1.2 Insurance

In the UK, most Placement Providers will have Employer’s Liability Insurance that provides cover whilst on placement for damage, loss or injury caused to you if the employer is found to be negligent and legally liable. Some employers are exempt from the compulsory insurance (notably government bodies and family operations). You should ensure that Employer’s liability cover is included.

Overseas: While some countries have voluntary or statutory workman’s compensation schemes run by the state and offering fixed compensation to people injured at work, in some countries there is no statutory requirement to provide this and you would have no protection. Be aware that you should consider extra personal insurance (see point 5.2.1 below).
5.1.3 Hours of Work
You should be aware that these should be in line with the working act regulation 1998. Working outside normal working hours carries additional risk for several reasons such as the fact there will be no one to ask for help. You should not, therefore, work outside normal hours without specific authorization from your Placement Supervisor and there must be adequate supervision, for example, an experienced person at least within calling distance.

5.1.4 Workplace Equality
You should be aware that workplace providers have a duty as employers under the 2010 Equality Act towards students on placement to ensure that they are given the same support as other employees in the organization.

Sexual/Racial harassment and discrimination: You may find yourself in a situation where you feel you have faced some form of discrimination. In this instance it is important to contact your Placement Supervisor or programme administrator outlining the incident.

5.2 What is Expected of You?
You will have signed Royal Holloway’s Work Placement letter (the tri-partite agreement with the College, Placement Provider and yourself) in which various responsibilities were outlined. These set out an expectation that you will:

- Comply with all rules regarding health and safety requirements and the policies and procedures of the Placement organization, including sickness and holiday arrangements
- Accept instruction from the Placement Supervisor/Mentor and perform to standards set by the Placement Provider (code of conduct). Failure to act in a responsible manner may invalidate any insurance cover. Make sure you understand how you will be given feedback about your work and ask to have information confirmed if you are not sure.
- Take responsibility for your work, maintain confidentiality (including on social media) and not doing anything which would bring Royal Holloway or the Placement provider into disrepute
- Inform the Placement Provider of any access or special needs that may require adjustments
- Keep the Royal Holloway programme administrator updated of any issues/changes with the placement
- Complete all reports/assessments as required by Royal Holloway and attend the relevant visit days/call-back days

5.2.1 Student Insurance during Placement

UK Personal Insurance – you should ensure your personal insurance is adequate to cover your possessions, personal liability, etc. If you use your personal car for travel to and from placements or for business activity at your placement then you need to check that cover is either offered by your personal motor insurance or by the Placement Provider.

Overseas Personal Insurance – You should ensure this provides for all your requirements. If the employer cannot provide confirmation that there is an equivalent policy/scheme to protect you as in the UK then you should check that your personal insurance policy provides some fixed benefit in the event of an injury.
6 Support from the University

During your time on placement you are still a student of Royal Holloway University and will still receive the same support as you did when studying. You will find a list of useful contacts at the end of this handbook and it is essential that you keep a note of these during your placement. Someone from the Economics department placement team will keep in touch during the year. There will also be opportunities for you to meet with members of staff throughout the year.

6.1 Call-back Days

You will have to attend one or two call-back days, in the autumn term and/or in the spring term. These will enable you to discuss your placement experiences with your fellow YIB placement students and also to receive advice and help for your personal development portfolio and case study. You will be informed of the dates of these as early as possible. During your call-back days at Royal Holloway you will be expected to attend workshops/meetings to discuss:

- how the placement is progressing- tasks/projects carried out; work based situations encountered
- consideration of personal development record
- preparation for case study report

6.2 Workplace Visit

For most UK-based placements, a member of the YIB staff can visit you during your placement to carry out a workplace visit. The main purpose of the visit is to ensure that the placement is proceeding as agreed and that the job tasks being undertaken by you are of sufficient educational value. If you are working outside the UK you will still have contact but it may not be face to face.

6.3 Health/Disability/Learning Difficulty Support

The Equality Act of 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and this includes placement positions. Those students with a health condition or disability are encouraged to seek additional support through Royal Holloway Student Support via welfare@royalholloway.ac.uk/Alex Stanton (Disability and Dyslexia). Student support can offer students guidance about when to disclose their condition to the Placement Provider and can be contacted with any concerns before or during the placement.

6.4 Financial Support

Hardship funds: If you find yourself in financial difficulty during your YIB, you may be entitled to help from the Access to Learning Fund. This is only available to UK students and you may apply if on a placement year though only if you have already applied for the full amount of maintenance loan available form student finance. You can find out more information and how to apply for a hardship fund on E-Campus or by emailing FinancialAdvice@royalholloway.ac.uk.
6.5 Contact Details at the University

During office hours you can contact the School of Law and Social Science via the following methods:

- Placement administrator: LSS-school@rhul.ac.uk / Tel: +44 (0) 1784 427 6654
- Year in business email address: Economics-YIB@rhul.ac.uk
- Economics reception desk Monday – Friday (9am – 5pm) Tel: +44 (0) 1784 414005

24-hour emergency contact is available via Security at Royal Holloway, Tel: +44 (0) 1784 443063

6.6 Complaints Procedure

If you have any dissatisfaction arising from the support in finding a placement, staff involved in the Year in Business or the placement itself then please raise these informally as soon as possible with the parties concerned and hopefully the issues can be resolved.

If you wish to make a formal complaint about any part of the placement process or the placement itself, this must be done in writing as follows:

- Email the Year in Business Programme Administrator
- If you are not satisfied with the response received, email the Year in Business Academic Director

Upon receipt of your written complaint, we will acknowledge receipt and confirm the timescale for a full response which may depend on the complexity of the issue and/or availability of relevant staff. Those dealing with your complaint may respond by email or suggest a meeting to discuss your concerns.

7 Assessment for EC3511

There are 3 elements to be completed as part of your assessment. The work should be submitted by the end of October following the placement year. The assessment accounts for 20% of your final-year grade. More details can be found on the Year in Business page on Moodle.

- Report from Placement supervisor – confirmation that performance has been as a minimum satisfactory (Pass/Fail)
- Case Study linking work experience to relevant theory studied in the previous two years. This is a 5,000 word report

8 Troubleshooting and Problems on Placement

There are many issues that can arise during your Year in Business and the following sections attempt to provide advice relating to the most usual ones. Some of you with plenty of experience of the workplace may find these obvious but for those of you with limited experience or experience of a different type of organization you may encounter problems such as:

- Difficulties with managers and co workers
- Issues relating to tasks and amount of work
- Issues with money
- Accidents and Emergencies
- Issues with your tutor
• Facing potential re-organization/redundancy
• Addressing the problem yourself

In the first instance, if you feel you are able to, it is important you attempt to address the problem yourself. This is not because we do not wish to help or support you, but instead we hope it will be a better learning experience, and a more reflective experience of the work place.

It is important to note here that if you feel you have faced any form of discrimination, feel your safety is compromised or that you cannot tackle the issue alone you should get into contact with the University via the contacts below:

Year in Business Administrator
LSS-school@rhul.ac.uk
Dr Pierre-Olivier Fortin – Year in Business Academic Director pierre-olivier.fortin@rhul.ac.uk

9 If a Placement Fails

In very rare circumstances the placement may go wrong. If for whatever reason, the placement is forced to end due to actions by the organization, or by yourself, please inform us as soon as possible. If the placement fails there are a number of implications:

9.1 Visa Implications

If you currently hold a visa and your placement is terminated and you are required to go home your visa will be curtailed. You will be notified in writing by the UKVI and will be given 60 days from the date of notification in the letter to leave the UK. When you return home, you will have to apply for a fresh tier 4 visa to resume your final year.

9.2 Academic Implications

If you do not complete your Year in Business placement you will be transferred to a 3-year Economics course and resume your studies in the following September. Emma Baker will be available for one-to-one career consultations to discuss your options in the meantime.

10 After your Placement Ends

10.1 Returning to University

This is the chance to catch up with your friends and reflect on how you have dealt with practical work based situations.

10.2 Updating CV/Applying for Graduate Positions

As discussed in the outset of this of this handbook, the process you’ve just been thorough is very similar to the search for a graduate job, and as you return for your third year, this process will begin again for those of you wanting to get onto a graduate scheme. The Careers service within the University will be there to support you through this process.
10.3  ASET Award for Best Essay on Placement

ASET is the professional body for placement and employability staff, each year they run a competition for those students who have taken part in a Year in Business programme. It aims to give students the opportunity to reflect on their experience through a written essay. The competition opens each September, with entries being submitted no later than January. More information is available from http://www.asetonline.org/comps.htm

11  In Conclusion...

Whilst starting a placement can be a nerve-racking time, it is important to remember that this will also be a fun and unique experience you will make useful contacts and get valuable experience which will ultimately help you in your final year back at Royal Holloway and when you apply for a graduate position. The skills and contacts you can make during such a placement can be invaluable. It is not possible to include every eventuality in this handbook and so if you are having difficulties that are not covered here or would like to talk to someone then contact a member of the Placement Team.

Finally, we wish you every success in your Placement year.
12 Contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Their role in the placement process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year in Business Administrator</td>
<td>School of Law and Social science</td>
<td>Your first port of call relating to information about the YIB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careers Service</td>
<td>Ed McLean</td>
<td>A member of the Royal Holloway Careers Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year in Business Academic Director</td>
<td>Dr Pierre-Olivier Fortin</td>
<td>Responsible for the academic elements of the YIB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Supervisor</td>
<td>A member of academic staff will be assigned to you</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-place Supervisor/Mentor</td>
<td>A member (or members) of the Placement Provider’s staff will be assigned when you start your placement</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

School of Law and Social Science
– *Year in Business Administrator*

Ed McLean
– *Economics Careers Consultant*

Dr Pierre-Olivier Fortin
– *Year in Business Academic Director*

Economics Department Reception desk Monday – Friday (9am – 5pm)
+44 (0) 1784 41 4005

Royal Holloway Careers Service
– *Support*
+44 (0) 1784 276473

– *International Student Support*
+44 (0) 1784 443663

– *Student Financial Advice*
+44 (0) 1784 276109

– *Students’ Union*
+44 (0) 1784 276700

– *College Switchboard*
+44 (0) 1784 434455

Security
(24 hour Emergency contact) +44 (0) 1784 443063

General Advice:

Citizen’s Advice Bureau : www.adviceguide.org.uk

Foreign and Commonwealth Office: www.fco.gov.uk

HM Revenue and Customs : 0845 367825 www.hmrc.gov.uk

National Insurance Office: 0845 6000643 www.gov.uk/apply-national-insurance-number