

Finding a work placement

1 year to 6 months in advance:
Attend an information seminar on work placement. See www.loopbaacentrumletteren.nl

Put together a top-ten list of addresses

Contact the company on top of your list: by phone, by e-mail > report to your work placement coordinator.
By mail > report to your work placement coordinator

Is this your first letter?

yes

Make an appointment with your placement coordinator by phone (071 - 527 22 35)

no

Make sure your letter and CV are flawless, and send them

Did you receive an invitation for a job interview?

no

yes

Did you get the work placement?

no

yes

You are ready to tackle the organisational aspects of your work placement. See the item / *have found a work placement: what's the next step?*

have found a work placement: what's the next step?

Work placement outline

Ask a university lecturer in your own department to be your academic supervisor



Make a first draft of your work placement outline and e-mail it to the work placement coordinator



Once the first draft has been accepted, consult with your academic supervisor



Once your academic supervisor has accepted your draft, consult with your work placement supervisor



Once the work placement coordinator has accepted your work placement outline, sign it yourself and have it signed by your academic supervisor and work placement supervisor



Hand in your work placement outline at the Careers Centre. They will send it to the Board of Examiners for final approval.



Work placement outline approved

Work placement contract

Make inquiries about a work placement contract with the company that provides your work placement



If available, use the company's own standard work placement contract



None available?



Ask the Careers Centre to put together a work placement contract for you. Send an email to loopbaancentrum@let.leidenuniv.nl



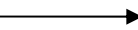
Work placement contract signed



Hand in a copy of your work placement contract at the Career Centre.



Conclude your work placement: turn in work placement report and evaluation form



1. “Finding a work placement”: A Careers Centre Manual.

Click on the boxes below for more information.

2. 1 year to 6 months in advance: Attend an information seminar on work placement (see Careers Centre agenda). Read the regulations for work placement as a tailored subsidiary subject (only in Dutch) and take preparatory courses.

Work placement meetings:

- * (International) work placements during your studies
- * Going abroad during your studies
- * Work placement as part of *Praktijkstudies*, particularly for students of European Union Studies, Journalism & New Media and Management. Please note that it is compulsory for students of these disciplines to attend at least one of these meetings before making an appointment.)
- * “Subsidiary subject market”

During the work placement meetings, the following topics will be discussed:

- * How to find out what you want and what kind of work placement suits you.
- * How to find a suitable work placement and where to find information and work placement vacancies.
- * How to apply.
- * How to proceed once you have found a work placement (work placement outline, work placement contract, supervisors etc.)
- * What is the procedure for getting a work placement outline approved?
- * How to conclude your work placement.
- * Students and companies will share their experiences with you and will be there to answer any of your questions.

How to find out what you want and what your talents are:

- * Study the final attainment levels of your department in the prospectus.
 - * Study the reader *Persoonlijk Profiel* (“Personal Profile”) (not available in English!)
 - * Take a course in “Career Orientation: Where do I stand in the job market?”
- Arbeidsmarktorientatie* (see Careers Centre Timetable).

Where to find information on work placement vacancies:

- * On the Careers Centre website, this website also includes links to (Dutch) work placement vacancies websites
- * In the Careers Centre’s multimedia library
- * On the websites of companies, ministries and other organisations of your choice.
- * Through your own network of lecturers, family and friends.

Please note that you do not have to wait for a suitable vacancy, it is also possible to send out an unsolicited application!

3. Put together a top-ten list of addresses.

Use the results of your research and put together a top-ten list of your favourite companies and organisations. Make sure you use the correct (i.e. up-to-date) e-mail addresses and contacts. Try to find out the names of the senior officials in the companies. Send your application to the senior

official, rather than to the personnel department, since you otherwise run the risk that your application will never reach the person in charge.

4. Contact the company on top of your list: by phone, by e-mail > report to your work placement coordinator. By mail > report to your work placement coordinator.

Formulate a strategic plan for approaching the company of your choice:

* If you're a talkative person and you would like to know in advance if a certain company is worth your time and effort, make a telephone call. Prepare this conversation carefully, make sure you can introduce yourself and make your wishes known without stammering. This is important, because in some cases you will immediately be put through to the person in charge of the work placements.

* You can also request information by sending a short e-mail. Application by e-mail is increasingly common. If you decide to apply in this manner, include your letter and CV as Word-attachments, this makes it easier for the recipient to print them out. If you are applying for an international work placement, you are advised to use e-mail: regular mail is slower and not always reliable.

* However, certain companies prefer applications to be sent in by regular mail. When sending out your CV and covering letter, do not forget to sign the letter. Make sure it looks presentable, neatly folded and unstained, and remember to put enough stamps on the envelope.

Letter and CV:

Once you have decided to contact the company on top of your list, formulate your letter and make your CV. On the Careers Centre website you can find examples that will help you write your letter and CV. When applying for a work placement, your letter should indicate the field of work or research you are interested in. Knowing what you want is good, but it is also important to be open to the suggestions the company might make.

Once you are convinced that your letter and CV are flawless, send them to the work placement coordinator: loopbaancentrum@let.leidenuniv.nl.

If needed, he or she will make corrections or give you some additional advice. When sending out a letter for the first time, you might want to make an appointment with the coordinator, to let him or her review your letter and CV. This is also a good opportunity to ask any remaining questions.

5. Is this your first letter?

6. Make sure your letter and CV are flawless, and send them.

Nowadays, it is common to send letters and CVs by e-mail. Include your letter and CV as separate Word-attachments; this makes it easier for the recipient to print them out. When applying for an international work placement, you are advised to use e-mail: regular mail is slower and not always reliable.

Certain companies prefer applications to be sent in by regular mail. When sending your CV and covering letter, do not forget to sign the letter. Make sure it looks presentable, neatly folded and unstained, and remember to put enough stamps on the envelope.

7. Did you receive an invitation for a job interview?

Once you receive an invitation for an interview, you should prepare the interview carefully. Study the company's website, ask for an annual report, and prepare answers to any standard questions that you might expect. Make sure you remember all the questions you want to ask about the company or the work placement, and find out about the company's dress code, if there is one. Needless to say, you should look presentable.

If the thought of going to the interview makes you nervous, you can make an appointment with the Careers Centre to practise certain aspects of the interview with one of the staff members. A number of useful tools are also provided in the 'Effective Job Applications' course, which is taught several times a year (see Careers Centre programme for more details on course schedule). In this course, you are given the opportunity to practise job interviews with recruiters from the business community.

If you still did not receive any response two weeks after sending your application, you can make a phone call to inquire about the procedure. Some companies use this as a means of selection: only the people who are really interested would call the company to ask for information about their application. They are more likely to be invited for an interview!

8. Did you get the work placement?

Congratulations!

You are ready to tackle the organisational aspects of your work placement. See the item *I have found a work placement: what's the next step?*

Once you have been informed that you have been accepted (usually within a few days after the interview), the moment has come to decide whether you still want this work placement or not. Perhaps you are in doubt, because it has turned out that the company providing the work placement cannot fulfil your wishes, or the work placement does not meet the demands defined by Leiden University. If this is the case, do not feel obliged to accept the work placement, but make sure you reject it politely, using the right arguments.

Rejected?

Finding a work placement can be a strenuous job, and you may have to send out several letters of application before you succeed in finding a position. If you have been rejected, always try and find out what the reason was. In this way, you'll become aware of your weak spots, and be able to work on them in time for your next interview. Just pick the next company on your top-ten list, and never give up.

9. I have found a work placement: What's the next step? A practical guide. Click on the boxes below for more information.

10. Work placement outline.

Before you start your work placement, your work placement outline should be approved by the Board of Examiners of your own department.

11. Ask a university lecturer in your own department to be your academic supervisor.

In most university departments you can choose a university lecturer yourself, and ask him or her to be your academic supervisor. Choose the lecturer who, in your opinion, has the most expertise in the discipline of your work placement.

In some disciplines, for instance *Praktijkstudies*, you will be assigned an academic supervisor. You are therefore not free to choose your own supervisor. For more information, see your department's prospectus.

12. Make a first draft of your work placement outline and e-mail it to the work placement coordinator.

On the Careers Centre website you will find a model of a work placement outline. All the blanks should be filled in your own work placement outline. Mind the following points:

* Fill in the exact starting date and end date.

- * **Placement project:** describe the thesis of your research. Describe the product your research will result in (for example: a recommendation.)
- * **Placement project planning:** formulate a general plan of the work to carry out during your work placement in order to complete your work placement assignment.
- * **Preparatory courses:** the courses taken as preparation for your work placement. Do not forget to mention where you took these courses, and the date of completion. They count for 4 or 8 ECTS.
- * **Proposed number of credits:** the credits you receive for completing the work placement. The number of credits can be either 12 or 16 ECTS in the Bachelor's programme, depending among other things on the number of credits you received for your preparatory courses. A subsidiary work placement subject is worth 20 ECTS.

Once you have finished your draft, mail it to the placement coordinator at:

loopbaancentrum@let.leidenuniv.nl

When sending out a letter for the first time, you might want to make an appointment to have the coordinator review your work placement outline and talk about the next step. You do not have to make an appointment to discuss any follow-up versions of your draft. Any follow-up versions will be reviewed through e-mail. Your work placement will be entered in the faculty's database as a basic concept.

13. Once the first draft has been accepted, consult with your academic supervisor.

As soon as you have formulated the final version of your work placement outline draft with the help of your work placement coordinator, show it to your academic supervisor. He or she may have some additional suggestions or remarks.

14. Once your academic supervisor has accepted your draft, consult with your work placement supervisor.

As soon as you have completed the final version of your work placement outline draft with the help of your academic supervisor, show it to your work placement supervisor. He or she may have suggestions, in particular where the practical aspect is concerned.

15. Make an appointment (by telephone) with the work placement coordinator.

See letter and CV.

When sending out a letter and CV for the first time, you can make an appointment to have the coordinator review your letter and CV. This is also a good opportunity to ask any remaining questions.

16. Work placement contract.

Before you begin your work placement, a work placement contract must be established and signed between yourself (the work placement student) and the company providing the work placement. In some cases, the company will want a representative of Leiden University to sign the contract as well. If required, the work placement coordinator (and not the academic supervisor) will sign the agreement.

17. Make inquiries about a work placement contract with the company that provides your work placement.

18. If available, use the company's own standard work placement contract. Have it signed and copied, and hand it in at the Careers Centre.

Work placement contract (issued by the company offering the work placement).

If the company offering the work placement has its own standard work placement contract, you should use this. Have the work placement coordinator read this contract before you begin, to ensure that there are no errors.

In some cases, the company will want a representative of Leiden University to sign the contract as well. If required, the work placement coordinator (and not the academic supervisor) will sign the agreement. Make a copy of the signed agreement and hand it in at the Careers Centre.

19. Ask the Careers Centre to put together a work placement contract for you. Mail any additional personal details to the Careers Centre: loopbaancentrum@let.leidenuniv.nl

If the company does not have its own standard work placement contract, the Careers Centre can provide you with one. Most of the information required will be taken from your work placement outline, which should be ready and handed in by then. You should also mail the following additional information, as agreed between the company and student:

- * The number of days of leave per month;
- * Work placement compensation (gross/net per month);
- * Any other expenses or travelling allowance;
- * Further agreements regarding the work placement (for example: leave of absence if you need to take exams, or for a holiday you have already booked).

20. Work placement contract signed.

Once a) the work placement contract has been signed by all parties involved, b) the contract has been handed in at the Careers Centre and c) your work placement outline has been approved by the Board of Examiners, you can begin your work placement.

21. Once the work placement coordinator has accepted your work placement outline, sign it yourself and have it signed by your academic supervisor and work placement supervisor.

22. Hand in your work placement outline at the Careers Centre.

They will forward it to the Board of Examiners of your department for approval.

The Careers Centre secretary will forward your work placement outline to the Board of Examiners, and enter any additional data in the database. Once the Board of Examiners has assessed (and approved) your planning, you will receive your original document by regular mail. The secretary will send a copy of the approved plan to your work placement supervisor and academic supervisor.

23. Work placement outline approved.

Once your work placement outline has been approved by the Board of Examiners, the work placement contract has been signed by all parties involved and has been handed in at the Careers Centre, you can begin your work placement.

Start your work placement!

24. Conclude your work placement: work placement report and evaluation form.

Once you have finished your work placement, write a report and ask your work placement supervisor to read and check it. Once he or she has accepted your report, hand it in to your academic supervisor. He or she will make an assessment of your work placement, based on your report and based on the work placement supervisor's remarks.

Tip: during your work placement, make a weekly report of your activities. You can use these mini-reports to inform your academic supervisor about your progress (by e-mail), and you can also use them as a basis for your final report. Doing this will help you remember the details of your work, and ensure that you do not omit any important details in your final report.

Once your academic supervisor has assessed your work placement and accepted your report, send a copy of your report to the work placement coordinator at the Careers Centre. Your report will then be placed in the Careers Centre's multimedia library. During your work placement, you will have received by e-mail a form called "work placement evaluation form (student)". Hand in this form at the Careers Centre.