

FOR OUR FUTURE

A quick guide to help you discover volunteering and work experience opportunities



#MAKEYOURSUMMERCOUNT

HOW THIS PACK CAN HELP YOU



After signing off from school or college for the summer holidays, the weeks ahead could be the perfect time to get a taste of work experience or volunteering. We know how hard it can be to find opportunities for young people to get access to volunteering and work experience, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, and so we have created this booklet to help get you started with some ideas and inspiration around how you can make those opportunities happen. Along with practical tips and suggestions, the booklet looks at how to manage work experience safely as we ease our way out of lockdown and how you can make the most of your experiences when applying for a job or further education opportunity. We hope you find it useful, and would love to hear what you think of it or how we can improve or add to it. Over the summer we will continue to advertise opportunities we hear about using the #MakeYourSummerCount, so follow us on social media (see page 15). We hope this pack gives you some useful pointers on how to get started, but we would love to hear what you think of it, email us at lifelab@soton.ac.uk with your thoughts.

The LifeLab team



#MAKEYOURSUMMERCOUNT

CONTENTS

- 3 Volunteering: why do it?
- 4- 5 Ideas for volunteering
- 6 Get your views out there
- 7 Work Experience: why do it?
- 8 Virtual work experience
- 9 Put yourself out there
- 10 Sample covering letter
- 11 Thinking about college?
- 12- 13 Thinking about your career?
- 14 Need more inspo?
- 15 Stay in touch



Where you see these symbols click on them to find out more

CLICK HERE



In a recent YouGov poll 77% of people said volunteering had improved their mental health, with 53% saying it had improved their physical health

DID YOU KNOW?

DID YOU KNOW?

Film director Steven Spielberg began his career by doing work experience at Universal studios

#MAKEYOURSUMMERCOUNT

VOLUNTEERING: WHY DO IT?



Volunteering is a great opportunity to build your self-esteem, explore and discover new interests, widen your social circle, gain work experience and make a difference to your community.

Helps boost your skills and career prospects

Makes you feel like you're giving back to your community

Gives you a chance to experience different career opportunities

Gives your CV something extra, showing different experiences and interests outside of school

Helps your personal development, raises aspirations and promotes personal resilience

WHY I DID IT



Volunteering pushed me out of my comfort zone and gave me the confidence to do something for myself that was rewarding. I felt like I was being treated like a person in my own right.



MAKE PLANS FOR THE SUMMER

Have you heard about the National Citizen Service?



The national volunteering scheme is an affordable way to get involved in volunteering and social enterprise. Register for NCS and you could be meeting new mates, learning life lessons, skills and getting your voice out there while pushing yourself to new limits.

[CLICK HERE](#)



#MAKEYOURSUMMERCOUNT

IDEAS FOR VOLUNTEERING



Here are just some of the volunteering opportunities available....

Southampton Hub

Southampton Hub is a local charity that connects university students with the local community through volunteering opportunities.

This summer they are running a couple of 'one off' activities that you could help with

- **Food Bank Collection Campaign:** encouraging Southampton residents to donate to local food banks and collecting/delivering donations.

- **Litter Picks:** spend a couple of hours clearing local parks and spaces.

You can register your interest for these activities [here](#).



The Mix

Helping to shape the future of support for young people is just one of the opportunities on offer at The Mix. As one of the UK's leading support service for young people, they are there to help deal with challenges - from mental health to money.

Click on the link below to find out how you can give your time in lots of different ways.

CLICK HERE



If you have an idea for a one off event that you would like them to support, you can send details using the same [form](#) or email Sophie directly on sophie.ford@southamptonhub.org.

Heads Together

Becoming a panel member, working in a charity shop and supporting young people's projects are all opportunities you can find out about on the Heads Together website. It is an organisation set up by the Royal Foundation aimed at tackling the stigma of mental health and providing a variety of different programmes to help.



#MAKEYOURSUMMERCOUNT

IDEAS FOR VOLUNTEERING



Solent Mind

Solent Mind is a local independent charity which is part of a network of over 100 local Minds across the country. They offer services and advice to make sure people get the help they need. They offer a number of volunteering opportunities

“ It is a really good opportunity for me to gain a range of skills, such as confidence and communication which are things which I will be using in all aspects of my life in the future. ”



No Limits

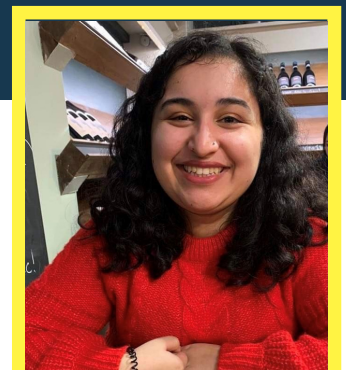
Are you passionate about helping to improve opportunities for young people? Then why not consider becoming a youth ambassador for No Limits? The charity supports, advises and educates young people, helping them to gain the skills and knowledge needed to manage their lives, grow in confidence and build brighter futures.

[CLICK HERE](#)



They are looking for youth ambassadors to shape their service and raise awareness of No Limits in the community. To find out more email enquiries@nolimitshelp.org.uk

“ Any form of volunteering that highlights your skills, such as communication, is valuable! ”



**Anusha, 23,
Medical Student**

#MAKEYOURSUMMERCOUNT

GET YOUR VIEWS OUT THERE



British Youth Council

Volunteering doesn't necessarily mean working in a shop, for a charity or in an office. You can volunteer your thoughts and views too.

Organisations understand the importance of hearing from young people so why not use your voice to shape decisions that could impact your life. British Youth Council empower young people aged 25 and under to get involved in their communities and democracy locally, nationally and internationally, making a difference as volunteers, campaigners, decision-makers and leaders



[CLICK HERE](#)



Knowing that your contribution is making a difference and maybe even improving things for other young people in the future gives me a pretty good feeling. I really enjoy the projects we get involved in which can be really creative and gives me the opportunity to learn new skills that can only help in my future career choices.



Southampton Children's Hospital Youth Ambassadors Group

If an interest in health is more your thing, then how about helping to shape hospital services for young people by joining the Youth Ambassador Group (YAG) at Southampton Children's Hospital. The YAG is an active youth advisory group, set up to ensure the voice and ideas of young people are heard across the Children's Hospital and the wider University Hospital Southampton. The YAG meets regularly to discuss projects taking place across the hospital and this is also an opportunity to meet other young people with shared interests.



[#MAKEYOURSUMMERCOUNT](#)

WORK EXPERIENCE: WHY DO IT?



Work experience is a great way to build your skills and your CV and find out what you could enjoy doing in the world of work. Sometimes schools arrange work experience opportunities, but you can do work experience in your own time during holidays or at weekends at any time whilst you're at school, college, university and beyond.

Confirming an interest in a career or (equally useful) deciding it's not for you

Building confidence by meeting and working with new people

Gives you valuable content for a university or job application

Bringing a job you have read about to life

Gives you a foot in the door - if you impress the employer you may be asked back on a more regular basis, or encouraged to apply when vacancies come up

Develops transferable skills, such as communication and teamworking

WHY I DID IT

“ Work experience allowed me to see medicine outside the glamorised picture I had in my head. It gave me the opportunity to hear and learn from those working within the NHS. Overall, work experience gave me enough time to reflect and truly decide that medicine was the career for me! ”



**Chenai, 21,
medical student**

VIRTUAL WORK EXPERIENCE



During the pandemic, organisations have had to rethink how they can make opportunities available to young people. This means, that whilst, in-person work experience may still be tricky to find, there are more and more experiences available online.

Speakers for Schools

Speakers for Schools put young people in touch with business and organisation leaders to create a network of thousands of school talks and work experience placements – all for free. They have recently launched a free Virtual Work Experience programme linking young people up with employers from a variety of industries.

[CLICK HERE](#)



Medic Mentors

Medic Mentors is a free virtual work experience programme for students in Years 10 to 12. Aimed at those who are interested in studying medicine, each month students access live and pre-recorded content.



LifeLab

LifeLab is supporting the University Hospital Southampton to develop a programme of virtual work experience, where young people can virtually 'shadow' consultants during their ward rounds and 'meet' current medical students at the University of Southampton. Eligibility criteria applies and the programme is aimed at Year 10, 11, 12 students. Email CareerExperience@uhs.nhs.uk or lifelab@soton.ac.uk



Try to keep a diary while you're on work experience so you can reflect on it for interviews.

More medical inspo

[Get a feel for what life's like as a GP](#)

[Virtual experience for people thinking of applying to medical school](#)

[Aspiring medics work experience programme](#)

[Virtual medical school](#)

#MAKEYOURSUMMERCOUNT

PUT YOURSELF OUT THERE - IT'S WORTH IT



Giving up your free time to do work experience and volunteering has benefits beyond giving something back and making you feel good inside - it gives you a head start in your career. Here are just some things that employers have said about the value of applicants who have gone that extra mile.

It shows that you are passionate about what you want to do

Shows that you spend your free time proactively

Gives you more than just work-related skills

Shows that you spend your free time proactively

I skip straight to the volunteering section because I think it says a lot about the person I want to work with



**Jo
Southampton GP**

“As an employer I think a candidate who has actively sought relevant work experience stands above the rest as they have shown interest and commitment to the career pathway they want to proceed down.”

#MAKEYOURSUMMERCOUNT

PUT YOURSELF OUT THERE - SAMPLE LETTER



Selling yourself to a prospective employer on paper can be tricky, so here is a sample letter that you could use to send in with your CV with some hints and tips about what to include, it's a good idea to keep your letter to a single page - any longer and it may not be read!.

Your Name
Full Address
Postcode

Date

The employer's name
Full Address

Dear Mr/Mrs/Dr/Professor XYZ (**HINT -try to avoid Sir/Madam and use a name where possible**)

I would like to enquire about the possibility of a work experience placement with your company/organisation during the week (dates).

I am (age) and a student at (your school/college name) and currently studying (GCSEs/A Levels (**HINT: list relevant subject as appropriate eg media/computing/business studies**)).

I would like to work at (company name) because..... (**HINT: what is it about this company that makes you want to work there and what you would bring to it, use an example or evidence to back up your suitability e.g. had a paper round for a year, babysit for friends/family, worked on school or college committees or campaigns**)

I am (list some of your personal skills and qualities e.g. friendly, reliable, hard working, enjoy meeting people etc). My personal interests are (write any down that may help with your application, they will want to know a bit about who you are)
(**HINT: Summarise what appeals to you in particular about this opportunity and employer. Research the employer to back up your reasons.**)

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely (**NB - if you have used Sir/Madam, then this should be Yours faithfully**)

(Sign your letter)

Print your name

#MAKEYOURSUMMERCOUNT

THINKING ABOUT COLLEGE?



Although the pandemic is still affecting our ability to do things in person, colleges are still opening their doors virtually to prospective students. It is not too late to get a feel for what further education looks like, from the comfort of your own home. Here are a selection of virtual tours that have been produced by colleges and sixth forms in Hampshire.

Virtual college tours



- [Richard Taunton Sixth Form College](#)
- [The Sixth Form College Farnborough](#)
- [Queen Mary's College](#)
- [Brockenhurst College](#)
- [Eastleigh College](#)
- [Fareham College](#)
- [Havant and South Downs College](#)
- [Sparsholt College Hampshire](#)
- [The Isle of Wight College](#)
- [Arnewood Sixth Form](#)
- [Ringwood School Sixth Form](#)
- [Burgate Sixth Form](#)
- [Oakland Catholic School and Sixth Form](#)
- [Bay House Sixth Form](#)
- [Bohunt Sixth Form](#)

- [St Vincent College](#)
- [Basingstoke College of Technology](#)
- [Farnborough College of Technology](#)
- [Totton College](#)
- [Barton Peveril College](#)
- [Peter Symonds College](#)
- [Southampton City College](#)
- [Itchen College](#)
- [Highbury College](#)
- [Portsmouth College](#)
- [Bitterne Park Sixth Form](#)
- [UTC Portsmouth](#)
- [Christ the King VI Form](#)
- [Island Sixth Form](#)
- [Yateley School Sixth Form](#)
- [St Anne's Catholic School for Girls Sixth Form](#)



THINKING ABOUT YOUR CAREER?



Along with looking for volunteering and work experience opportunities, the school and college holidays are a chance to consider different types of jobs and careers and what your next steps could be.

A-levels got you worried?

If your next step is your A-levels or starting college, it can feel like you have already set yourself on your career path based on your subject choices. However, leading academics, researchers and scientists have been recording what their choices were to demonstrate how things are not set in stone. Take a look at where their choices took them.

[CLICK HERE](#)



Credit to [Professor Christina Pagel](#) at University College London.



Try to keep a diary while you're on work experience so you can reflect on it for interviews.

Meet the Scientist

As part of the LifeLab 'Meet the Scientist' programme, the team has created a range of video interviews and career profiles from doctors, scientists and researchers which you can [access for free here](#).



Solent Education Business Partnership (EBP)

Solent EBP have created free videos for students and their parents giving advice and support to help them consider their next steps. There are also talks from a variety of businesses. Check out their [YouTube channel](#).



#MAKEYOURSUMMERCOUNT

THINKING ABOUT YOUR CAREER?



What about all you entrepreneurs out there?

If working for someone else isn't where you see yourself, then how about being your own boss?

The 'Speed You Up' project offers an introductory, monthly session to self-employment. The sessions take place every last Tuesday of the month on Zoom. Learners who are interested in self-employment will be able to join additional sessions which will cover topics such as skills, business ideas and business planning.

All sessions are free of charge and are open to young people aged between 16 and 25, not in employment and living in either Hampshire or Surrey .

[CLICK HERE](#)



Career moves

Along with career advice you might be getting at school or college, there are lots of organisations that help support young people take their first steps outside of education. Youth Employment UK has loads of online courses and resources for young people aged from 14 to 24.



Have you heard of the National Careers Service? They have information specifically for school leavers on what options are out there.

[CLICK HERE](#)



Go local

Local authority websites are a great place to discover what support and opportunities are available for young people in your community. Southampton City Council has information on loads of difference careers along with helpful advice on how to prepare for the world of work

[CLICK HERE](#)



#MAKEYOURSUMMERCOUNT

NEED MORE INSPO



Follow some of your favourite employers on social media so you can demonstrate your interest in them.

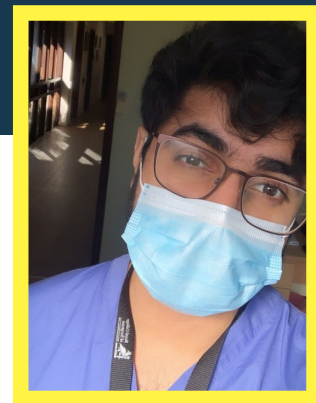


**Duncan Bartlett
CEO Recruitment
Agency**

“ Work Experience is really important, as finding out what you don't like to do is just as important as finding out what you do. I would always recommend it. Getting out of your comfort zone and trying new things can really define your future. ”



Be willing to give things a go and try new experiences. You may surprise yourself and find new things that you enjoy



**Shahzaib, 21,
Medical student**

“ You'll definitely get the fruits for your hard work if you are persistent and resilient. ”

**Aimee, 19,
Nursing student**



“ Work experience was an invaluable opportunity. It helped send me on my future career path and mature in my attitude towards it. ”


FOR OUR FUTURE



It would be great to know if this pack has helped or inspired you. If you manage to get some work experience or do any volunteering over the summer holidays, tag us in on your social media posts and use the hashtag #MakeYourSummerCount. You can find us on all the usual platforms

 [@LifelabSoton](https://twitter.com/LifelabSoton)

 [@lifelab_soton](https://www.instagram.com/lifelab_soton)

 [@lifelabsouthampton](https://www.facebook.com/lifelabsouthampton)

 lifelab@soton.ac.uk

**Stay
in
touch**

We hope you have found this pack useful, but if you think we might be missing something or you have any feedback on what we have included, get in touch with us at lifelab@soton.ac.uk.

All information correct at time of publication

Produced and designed by LifeLab

LifeLab is a University of Southampton education project based at University Hospital Southampton. We produce resources and education programmes that allow young people to discover the knowledge they need to lead healthier lives. You can find out more at lifelabonline.org.

#MAKEYOURSUMMERCOUNT