

Work Experience Handbook

Central Bedfordshire Council

“A great place to live and work”

Your step by step guide to joining us



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Introduction

Welcome

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

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

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

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

We look forward to receiving your application for work experience.

A bit about us

Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) is a unitary council with 59 elected councillors, who are elected every four years. As a unitary council, we are responsible for delivering and commissioning a wide range of services. Our purpose is to represent and serve the communities of Central Bedfordshire and we have a statutory responsibility for schools within Central Bedfordshire.

Our Directorates are made up of the following services

Children's Services	Community Services
Resources	Chief Executive's Team
Public Health	Regeneration & Business Support
Social Care, Health & Housing	

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

Work Experience supports our plan for 'community resilience', which includes enabling everyone to have greater exposure into the world of work so they can make more informed decisions regarding their future careers and, where relevant provides additional resources for Schools/Colleges and Academies to utilise across the curriculum.

Our Values

Our values describe the organisation we are and how we achieve our priorities. These values set out the way we will work and interact with everyone and they are as follows:

- Respect and empowerment – treat people as individuals who matter to us
- Stewardship and efficiency – make the best use of resources available to us
- Results focused – focused on delivering the outcomes that make a tangible difference to people's lives
- Collaboration – work closely with our colleagues, partners and customers to deliver on these outcomes

What does work experience mean for you at CBC?

Your work experience placement will give you a real experience with real people and we are committed to providing you with the best opportunities.

Our aim for your placement with us is:

- to gain an insight into the world of work
- to gain an insight into the public sector and services we provide
- to gain additional skills and learn more about the qualifications you may need to help you make decisions about choosing a career path in the future

Locations

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

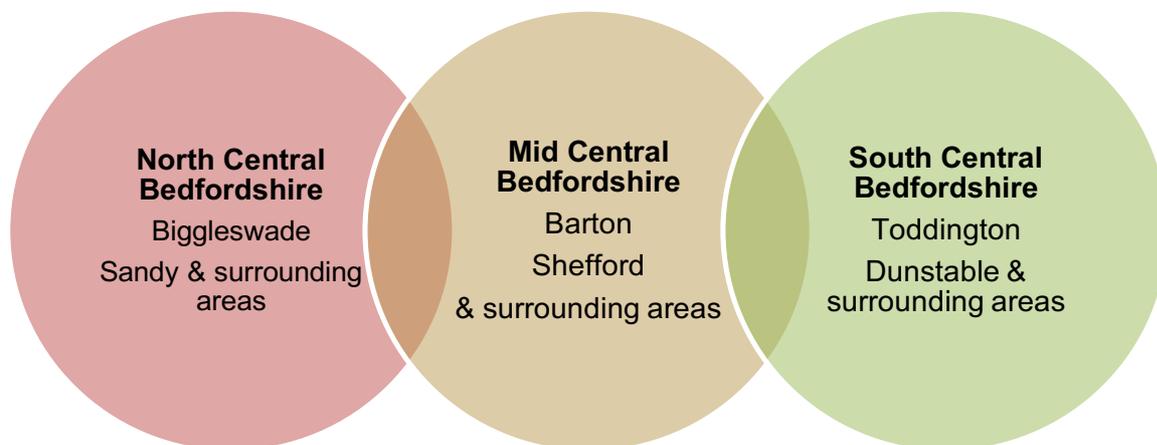
Please note our primary offices are located at:

- Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford, Beds
- Watling House, High Street North, Dunstable, Beds

Information on local bus services can be found here:

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/transport/public/bus-timetables-routes.aspx>, so please take the time to consider your travel in advance.

Here are some of the other locations that we are based at:



How to apply for a work experience placement?

Apply at: <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/jobs/other/work-experience.aspx>

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

If you do not have a CV to hand, please look on our website for a CV template that you can use to create your CV. <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/jobs/work-here/application.aspx>

You will be asked to choose, from a range of services that interest you, from a drop-down menu and submit your application.

What happens next?

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

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

Please note that it may not always be possible to provide you with an exact match for your placement and in some circumstances, it may not be possible to provide you with a placement at all. This will depend on your requirements and our available

resources. We may discuss alternative placements with you if your choices are not available or, in the event that we cannot provide you with a placement, we will let you know.

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

Are there any other requirements?

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

What happens next?

We will discuss the most relevant information with you on your first day, however the information below maybe helpful:



Preparation is key

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

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

Your contact / mentor

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

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

Helping you to settle in.....

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



Health & Safety

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

Your training may be in the form of a demonstration, briefing, reading material, explanation, e-learning, or as part of an assessment.

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



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

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

What activities will I be involved in?

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

We will aim to provide you with a Work Activities plan relative to the service area you are placed in and your mentor will go through this with you.

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

How am I doing?

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

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

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

End of First week:

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

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

On completion of your placement:

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

On your last day we will ask you to:

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

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

We will issue you with a certificate of attendance as confirmation of your undertaking and completing a work experience placement with us.

Have your say

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

Ending your work experience placement early

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

Further information

You can find out more information about work experience at CBC here <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/jobs/other/work-experience.aspx>

Obligation to offer and accept

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

Working for us in the future

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

Jobs and Apprenticeships with Central Bedfordshire Council

Check out jobs in our area at <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/jobs>

Find an Apprenticeship:

Search the find an apprenticeship service for apprenticeships in England.

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>

Jobs in the public sector:

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

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



A great place to live and work

Contact us...

by telephone: 0300 300 8000

by email: Recruitment@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

on the web: www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Write to Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House,
Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, Bedfordshire SG17 5TQ