

### Work Experience Information Pack One week placements for students in Year 10-13

#### About

Work experience placements are an important part of career progression. The South Downs National Park is keen to provide opportunities for students to find out more about our work and also contribute their ideas to our projects.

The work is varied and so are the skills and expertise of both outdoor and office-based staff. Posts relating to our two purposes and duty include roles such as: rangers, ecologists, archaeologists, education and volunteering, planning and sustainable development, interpretation, access and transport, tourism and recreation, forestry and estate management. There are also staff covering corporate services such as finance, facilities management, administration, press and publicity, human resources and IT.

#### Previous students have reported:

*"I was nervous about the interview when I arrived but looking back it was a really useful part of the experience. I learnt a lot about what to expect and the types of information to research and be ready to talk about"*

*"I really enjoyed being at the education event in Ardingly which involved helping children with activities like making the giant jigsaw puzzle which detailed the major habitats in the South Downs"*

*"I enjoyed cutting bracken with Dan and the volunteers, it was a tough day of work but very rewarding. It also gave me the chance to speak to everyone about what they enjoyed doing and why they were out there every week working hard to conserve the environment"*

#### Roles and activities

You can apply for a placement in any of the areas below (**in bold**) and your placement will include a range of the activities listed. If you wish to split your placement across two office locations, you could experience a wider range of activities.

South Downs Centre only:

- **Front of house, facilities and support services** – meet and greet members of the public at our visitor centre, answer telephone queries, process post, receive and process the weekly stationery order, building tours, weekly fire alarm test

- **Media, communications, website, publications, events and engagement** – put together a press release, design a social media campaign, draft items for Instagram, Twitter and Facebook, create content for the newsletter, analyse, design and modify website, design a new publication, create and upload media for the photo library, create leaflets using our branding, help plan event activities and ideas, scout venues, prepare and load equipment for public events
- **Planning** – site visits, inspect and report on planning applications, draft maps and plans, look at architecture and building design, work with developers, calculate development levies, allocate funding to community projects, attend access and transport forums

#### Ranger offices

- **Conservation, events, education and engagement** – practical conservation tasks, survey and site visits, tool maintenance, build equipment e.g. barn owl boxes, work with volunteers, help plan event activities and ideas, scout venues, prepare and load equipment and attend public events, design activities and games for school visits and support class visits
- **\* Front of house (at Seven Sisters only)** – meet and greet members of the public at our visitor centre and car park welcome point, support the visitor services team on the refreshments van.

#### Office locations

##### Head office:

South Downs Centre, North Street, Midhurst, West Sussex, GU29 9DH

##### Ranger Offices:

Eastern Ranger Team - Stanmer Park, Brighton

Central Ranger Team - Singleton, West Sussex

Western Ranger Team - Near Droxford, Hampshire

Seven Sisters Country Park, - Near Seaford, East Sussex

#### How to apply:

1. Read carefully through the available roles and activities in the previous section and consider which offices you will be able to travel to. Typical working hours are 09:15 to 16:00.
2. Check the [Work Experience section](#) of the website. We will update our listing if we are not recruiting for some roles or at some offices.
3. Read carefully through the person specification on the next page and think about examples of when you have demonstrated the skills/abilities and personal qualities.

4. Work through the application form, making sure to complete all sections fully. Get help from friends, family and teachers, or search the internet for advice on completing job applications. Submit your completed form to [learning@southdowns.gov.uk](mailto:learning@southdowns.gov.uk)
5. You can expect to hear back from us within 2 weeks of submitting your form:
  - a. If your application meets the criteria, we will contact you to arrange an interview.
  - b. If your application needs a little more work, we may invite you to re-submit your application, giving you some advice and guidance.

### **Next steps:**

#### Interview:

If your application meets the criteria, we will invite you to an interview with a member of our learning team and those that you may be working with during the week. The interview will take place at one of our offices and is a chance for you to see the offices and facilities where you will be based for the placement. We want to give you as much experience as possible so will ask you some standard interview questions and we may ask you to complete a knowledge based quiz.

To prepare, you could do some research about the National Park and the National Park Authority using our website [www.southdowns.gov.uk](http://www.southdowns.gov.uk). You could also learn about some of the species and landscapes we protect and enhance in the South Downs National Park. Finally, we would advise looking at the person specification again and think about examples you will give to demonstrate the skills/abilities and personal qualities not assessed from your application form. There will also be a chance for you to ask us questions so think about what you might like to know about the South Downs National Park or your potential upcoming placement.

After the interview you can expect to hear from us within 1-2 days:

- c. If you are successful, we will contact you to confirm your placement. Please make sure to notify your school/college of your placement at this point.
- d. If you are unsuccessful, we will contact you to let you know that we won't be offering you a placement.

#### Before your placement starts

Approximately two weeks before your placement starts, we will send you a work experience programme. The programme will let you know what you will be doing each day, what time you need to arrive, who you need to meet, where you need to be (if you are working at more than one office) and what you need to bring. Your programme will, as much as possible, include the roles and activities you were interested in.

If you have any paperwork for us to complete for your school or college before you start the placement, please send it over to [learning@southdowns.gov.uk](mailto:learning@southdowns.gov.uk) during this time.

### During your placement

Towards the end of your week of work experience we will ask you to write a short report, including any photos you have taken, about your week. This report will be shared in our weekly internal newsletter. We will also complete any paperwork for your school or college on the final day of your placement.

### **Person Specification**

<b>Requirements and criteria</b>	<b>Criteria marked with an “x” will be assessed from your application form. Please see below for further details.</b>	<b>Criteria marked with an “x” will be assessed at interview. Please see below for further details.</b>
<b>Skills/Abilities</b>		
Ability to follow instructions	x	
Good communication skills	x	
Ability to work well as part of a team		x
IT skills - ability to use standard Microsoft Office applications, including Word, Excel and Outlook		x
Ability to organise workload effectively	x	
Good levels of accuracy and attention to detail	x	
<b>Personal qualities</b>		
Reliable and punctual	x	
Enthusiasm and willingness to participate and deliver		x
Demonstrates an interest in the South Downs National Park	x	

**Completing your application form** – The criteria marked above as being assessed from your application form will determine whether or not you are invited to interview. You are advised to ensure that you demonstrate on your application form how you meet each of these criteria, giving details of qualifications, certificates or recognition and examples of specific experience.