Life sciences: finding placements or summer internships

This leaflet explores sources of work experience opportunities for life sciences students across a range of sectors in the UK.

Opportunities in the UK

Nottingham Internship Scheme
We work closely with a number of small and medium-sized companies in the East Midlands who offer summer internships to current students and recent graduates. Find out more and apply at: www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/uoninternships

Opportunities by sector
This list is a good place to start looking for your research.
1 Pharmaceutical and healthcare
   Covance
   Covance is a clinical research organisation offering summer placements in toxicology, lab operations, animal operations, bioanalytical services, biotechnology, genetic and molecular toxicology, metabolism operations, environmental sciences, pharmaceutical analysis, clinical operations and data management.
   www.careers.covance.com/university

2 Food and agriculture
   GlaxoSmithKline (GSK)
   GSK offer 140 one-year undergraduate placements in hugely diverse areas of science including respiratory, biological sciences, clinical data sciences, in vivo imaging, biophysics and many more. Most placements are based in the Medicines Research Centre in Stevenage but others are in Ware and Stockley Park. There are also placements in regulatory affairs.
   The summer internship programme lasts for 12 weeks and is aimed at penultimate year students expecting an upper-second-class or higher. Opportunities exist in most of the business functions such as marketing, human resources, procurement and supply chain but no formal scheme exists for science.
   uk.gsk.com/en-gb/careers/undergraduates/undergraduate-summer-internships

3 Environmental
   Lilly
   Based in Windlesham in Surrey, Lilly offers one-year industrial placements in both their in vivo and in vitro laboratories.

4 Consumer goods
   MSD
   MSD offer both one-year industrial placements and summer internships.
   www.msd-uk.com/careers/students

5 Legal sector

6 Wildlife, conservation and working with animals

7 Charitable opportunities

For the latest information, please visit the Life Sciences Careers Moodle page.
Pfizer
One-year industrial placements are available in the pharmaceutical business, diversified business and research and development. The placements are based across their UK sites: Sandwich in Kent, Walton Oaks, Surrey and Granta Park, Cambridge. Research and development placements can be in synthetic chemistry, analytical research and development, in vitro and in vivo biology, pharmaceutical sciences and regenerative medicine.
industrialtrainee.pfizercareersuk.com

3M
3M is looking for outstanding science students to join its technical community. With several technical sites across the UK responsible for the development of products, 3M has business specific laboratories such as pharmaceuticals, abrasives and tapes as well as corporate laboratories, a resource available to the UK organisation to support development, regulatory compliance and troubleshooting.
solutions.3m.co.uk/wps/portal/3M/en_GB/3M-Careers-EMEA/Home/Working/Student

Smith and Nephew
Do not have a formal scheme but are keen for students to write speculatively to them for placement opportunities.
www.smith-nephew.com/uk/about-us/contact-us

Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute
The Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute welcomes students who wish to gain hands-on experience of working in a scientific research environment while studying. Placements are potentially available across the full spectrum of the Institute’s activities and are open to graduates as well as current students.
www.sanger.ac.uk/workstudy/placements

Cancer Research
Each year in January, June and September, Cancer Research UK hosts around 50 interns to volunteer on 12-week projects, which will help them to continue the work they do – funding life-saving research. Open to undergraduates, graduates and career changers looking to develop their skills and gain work experience, the internships are based either in London, supporting the head office teams or regionally, supporting events or volunteer fundraising teams across the country.
Interns are recruited into the following departments: events, marketing, corporate partnerships, HR, fundraising, policy and campaigns, IT, health information and community health engagement and research funding. Internships take place up to four days a week for 12 weeks.
Applications for the spring intake open in October and the placements run from mid-January to the beginning of April.
www.cancerresearchuk.org/support-us/volunteer/internships

2 Food and agriculture

Mondelez
With products in 165 countries and iconic brands such as Cadbury, Oreo and Kenco, Mondelez are one of the world’s biggest snacking companies. Most of their placements are for 12 months, though they do also offer flexible three to six-month placements in research, development and quality.
Collaborating with teams of talented scientists, technologists and engineers, you could work in anything from packaging development, process solutions and food science to sensory science, pharmaceutical and product ingredients.
careers.mondelezinternational.com/europe/students-and-early-careers

Kelloggs
Offer summer internships in their research and development, quality and technology, and nutrition departments.
www.kelloggcareers.com

Mars
This food and pet food manufacturer offers 12-month placements and 12-week summer internships based in four divisions: chocolate (based near London), food, petcare (both based near Leicester and Nottingham), and Wrigley, which is based near London. Roles are available in research and development and in a variety of business functions such as marketing, sales and logistics. Applications open in September for a July start.

Rothamsted Institute
Rothamsted is the largest agricultural research centre in the United Kingdom and almost certainly the oldest agricultural research station in the world.
Vacation bursaries are designed to give promising undergraduates an opportunity to experience first-hand work in a research laboratory during the summer vacation, usually at the end of the second year of a three-year course. The bursaries are advertised in February.
www.rothamsted.ac.uk/careers

East Malling Research
A major organisation in the UK for research on horticultural crops and plants and their interactions with the environment. Their research on perennial fruit crops is internationally renowned. Opportunities range from three to six weeks unpaid voluntary work to three-month paid science projects assisting research. Sandwich student placement also available for six to 12 months.
www.emr.ac.uk/vacancies/opportunities-students-visiting-workers
3 Environmental sector

BP
Paid internships last for 12 months or 11 weeks over the summer months. They are targeted primarily at penultimate-year undergraduates and postgraduates. Opportunities exist in environmental science and chemistry.
www.bp.com/careers/students

Environment Agency
A one-year geomatics placement, based in Bath, is available for penultimate year students. The degree must include content on remote sensing and/or geographic information systems. It is for students committed to a career in geomatics or the environmental sector. They must gain approval from the university before applying for this placement.

To register, email: geomaticsinternships@environment-agency.gov.uk

4 Consumer goods

Unilever
Industrial one-year placements and 12-week summer placements are available in research and development and business functions. They are available to penultimate year students in various locations in the UK and Ireland.
www.unilever.co.uk/careers-jobs/graduates

P&G
P&G offer one year and 12-week summer placements in their research and development function and various business functions. Opportunities exist in the UK as well as in Germany, Belgium and Italy.
uki.experiencepg.com/home/how_we_recruit.html

5 Legal sector

Bird and Bird
International scientific law firm offering three-week summer placements to 30 students. Online applications open in October.
londongraduates.twobirds.com/opportunities

6 Wildlife, conservation and working with animals

The Fisheries Society of the British Isles (FSBI)
The FSBI has established an annual competition to fund summer undergraduate internships for student members of the FSBI. The aim of the programme is to enable undergraduates to conduct supervised research in the UK or the Republic of Ireland lasting up to eight weeks during the summer vacation while registered as a student, or during the summer immediately after completing their final year of studies. The FSBI will provide a grant of £200 per week up to a maximum of £1,600 (ie for eight weeks) towards subsistence and travel expenses. The FSBI expect that between eight and 10 awards will be made each year.

Applicants should be studying for an honours degree in a subject relevant to fish biology, normally biological sciences, but other degree programmes will be considered if the proposed project is within the field of fish biology or fish management.
www.fsbi.org.uk/grants/internships

The British Society for Plant Pathology (BSPP)
The undergraduate vacation bursary is open to all BSPP members and will provide modest support for work on specified research projects during the summer vacation. The objective of the bursaries is to provide undergraduates considering a research career with some practical experience in a plant pathology laboratory and to assist supervisors to meet specific research objectives.

Applications are invited from supervisors on behalf of an identified student. Students should be in the middle year(s) of their degree course and each BSPP member will be restricted to making a single application annually. Bursaries will be awarded on a competitive basis. Insurance cover for BSPP-supported bursaries is the responsibility of the institution hosting the student. Such cover indemnifies any insurance claims on the BSPP during the tenure of the awards.

Students will receive a sum of £200 per week to cover their living expenses and £500 will also be provided for consumables. Bursaries will be for a maximum of 10 weeks and a minimum of eight weeks.
www.bspp.org.uk/funds/vacation.php
7 Charitable opportunities

For volunteering opportunities and some paid placements, take a look at:

Wildlife Extra
www.wildlifeextra.com/go/jobs/default/#cr

Conservation Jobs
www.conservation-jobs.co.uk/jobs

Environmental Jobs
www.environmentjob.co.uk

Conservation Careers
www.conservation-careers.com

Wildlife Trust
www.wildlifetrust.org

Opportunities overseas

Our website has information about job hunting overseas including access to two exclusive online resources. Passport Career is a resource that includes jobs, internships, industry overviews, CV advice and company profiles. Venture provides country-specific guides to living and working abroad, taking a year out and volunteering.

www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/workingabroad

Details of additional opportunities can be found on Moodle Module Title: Life Science Careers (Medicine and Health Sciences) (UK)
- Work placements, summer studentships and internships.

You may also find additional vacancies posted on the Careers and Employability Service Vacancies site
www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/vacancies

Other vacancy sources

The work experience and volunteering section of our website
www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers/workexperienceandvolunteering

Biochemical Society
www.biochemistry.org/Education/HigherEducation/Internshipsandplacements.aspx

Student Ladder
www.studentladder.co.uk

The Infectious Disease Research Network (IDRN)
The student research placement programme is intended to act as a catalyst, or ‘match-making’ facility, linking talented and committed students and research institutions in the United Kingdom.
www.idrn.org/placements

RateMyPlacement
www.ratemyplacement.co.uk

Cogent
Dedicated life science placement service
www.cogentskills.com

Reed
Some science internships advertised on this site
www.reed.co.uk/jobs/scientific/life-science

We're here to help, get in touch:

Careers and Employability Service
The University of Nottingham
Portland Building, Level D West
University Park
Nottingham NG7 2RD
United Kingdom

t: 0115 951 3680
e: careers-team@nottingham.ac.uk
www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers

CareersUoN
@UoNCareers
blogs.nottingham.ac.uk/careers

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t: +44 (0)115 951 5559
e: alternativeformats@nottingham.ac.uk

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