

**SCHOOL OF GEOGRAPHY**  
FACULTY OF ENVIRONMENT



**UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS**

# A Year in Industry



# The benefits of a year in industry ...

Leeds geography students have an opportunity to extend a three-year degree to a four-year programme by working for a year in industry between Levels 2 and 3 of their degree. Whether they are a single honours or joint honours student, this opportunity will be presented to them once they begin their degree programme with us. This is a fantastic opportunity for students to gain new skills, increase their employment potential, earn some much needed money to support their studies and help them to decide upon their future career path.

## Benefits for you as a student ...

Working for a year in industry brings many benefits academically, personally and financially:

- Relevant work experience which increases your future employability.
- The opportunity to earn a salary for a year.
- Increased confidence for applying for graduate jobs in the future.
- An opportunity to develop a wide range of transferable skills including IT skills, people skills, analytical, numerical and leadership skills.
- Increased maturity for your final year of study, often leading to a better final year academic performance.
- An opportunity to be awarded a degree with the prestigious 'Industrial' suffix.
- Up to 70% of placement students are offered future employment by their employer – doing a placement gives you a head-start in a very competitive graduate job market.

## Benefits for you as an employer ...

There are considerable advantages for employers. Leeds geography students stand out from the crowd due to their:

- Ability to think flexibly and independently.
- Motivation and high achievements.
- Ability to analyse information and propose creative solutions.
- Ability to work as a team and value difference.
- Critical understanding of the commercial sector and the needs of businesses.
- Research, report writing and presentation skills.
- Project and time management skills.
- Enthusiasm, commitment and talent.

Many of our students have gone on to work for their industrial year companies following graduation, bringing with them the skills and expertise they have gained throughout their geography degree at Leeds.



“  
*A geography degree at Leeds coupled with a 'Year in Industry' makes a student stand out from the crowd. On completion of the 'Year in Industry', I was offered a permanent job following graduation!*

”

Paul Matthews  
BA Geography Industrial 2009



“  
*I just wanted to thank the School for yet another recruit. I hope CACI will continue to be a source of employment for Leeds Geography/GIS graduates over the next few years. We continue to be delighted with the quality of your graduates, their knowledge of retail location planning and their ability to work effectively from day one.*

”

Ian Thurman  
Vice President, Location Planning, CACI

# What our students think ...

## **Matt Boardman: BA Geography & Management Industrial 2011**

### **Javelin Group Plc**

#### **Role: Locations Analyst**

“In the highly competitive environment of graduate employment, I decided that by taking a year in industry I could apply what I had learnt in the first two years of my degree course, whilst gaining invaluable practical experience in a professional environment.

I undertook my year in industry in London with the Javelin Group, one of the leading European consultancies in the retail and eCommerce industry. My time was spent as an Analyst within the company’s Retail Locations team, who specialise in working with retailers, developers and owners in order to optimise their store portfolio and shopping centre investments. I worked on projects for large companies including BAA, M&S, Meyer Bergman and TriGranit in cities across the UK and Europe. This included completing a number of projects in Poland. The improvement of my subject specific, industry specific and technological skills was extensive.

Equally, if not more important however was the maturity of transferable life skills that will provide the keystone to my future studies and career progression, and I feel I have developed an excellent grounding within an industry where I am seriously considering pursuing a career.

Essentially the year gave me an outstanding insight into the rigorous demands of working in a professional environment and my experiences at Javelin have placed me in a highly advantageous position, both in terms of future career progression and the completion of my final year of my degree. “



## **Elaine Paterson: BSc Geography Industrial 2011**

### **Co-op Group**

#### **Role: Support Manager, Energy & Environment**



“My placement year was invaluable in terms of improving my confidence and knowledge of the workplace and mastering key competencies needed to become successful in the ‘world of work’. Whilst working for the Co-op group I assisted in a green travel project to try to encourage employees to commute to work in the most sustainable manner possible and project managed a scheme to reduce the amount of water consumed by

the business. Alongside these major projects I also edited a monthly newsletter about energy and environment related projects from across the business and conducted research into the CRC Energy Efficiency Scheme. I was also given the opportunity to work with other teams across the business such as Group Marketing, Business Change and Transformation, Facilities and the development team for the new Head Office. I made some valuable contacts during the year and as a result I am currently working for Yorkshire Water on a three month placement alongside my degree and have the offer of a graduate job at the end of my degree! I would strongly advise a Year in Industry to any prospective undergraduate. “

## **Suzanne Buck: BA Geography Industrial 2011**

### **Mars Chocolate UK Ltd**

#### **Role: Assistant Buyer**

“Working for Mars was an invaluable experience. I worked in the Procurement department, as a member of the team that purchases all of the services and goods for the UK marketing and sales teams across the Mars sector.

Throughout this year I was treated as a true Mars associate and was given considerable responsibility in a real job. Although I was supported throughout by my team and line manager, I was accountable for my assigned portfolio of commodities and suppliers. My role also meant that I had the opportunity to travel across the UK and Western Europe to visit different Mars sites and attend departmental and team

meetings. Although during my year I learnt a great deal about business, and how a global, private multinational works, the main thing that I take away from my year is what I learnt about myself. I discovered so much about my strengths and my preferred style of working, both of which will have a significant impact on my future career and the environments in which I hope to work. “



## FAQs

### How long is the placement for and how much does it cost?

A minimum of nine and a maximum of 15 months. Students pay a greatly reduced tuition fee during their industrial year: this fee is set by the University on an annual basis. Salaries are set by individual employers.

### Where can I work?

You can work at a wide range of external companies and organisations, either in the Leeds area or further afield. The placement does not necessarily need to have a geographical focus, but should give you the opportunity to develop your transferable skills and must be approved in advance by the School. Organisations which have hosted previous placements for geography students include:

- Local city councils.
- Regional development agencies.
- Environmental consultancies.
- International financial, IT and petroleum companies.
- Utilities companies.
- Major retailers.
- Property and planning companies.
- Charities.

# 70%

*of year in industry students are offered a permanent job with their placement company following graduation.*

### Can I work overseas?

Under the Erasmus Work programme, students may find placements within the EU and benefit from a full fee waiver, as well as a non-repayable Erasmus grant.

### What contact do I have with the School during the year in industry?

Either the module manager or a member of the Student Support Team will visit you whilst you are on your placement. We meet with both you and your work placement supervisor to ensure that the year is progressing well. This visit also provides you with an opportunity to ask us any questions relating to your academic work.

### How is the year in industry assessed?

On a pass / fail basis - it does not officially contribute towards your final degree classification. However, when considering borderline cases at classification an excellent portfolio can tip the balance in your favour! Students complete a skills portfolio and reflective summary whilst on placement, which is the academic requirement for the module.

### Who should I contact about the Year in Industry scheme?

Please contact our External Relations Manager Tessa Grant on [t.j.grant@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:t.j.grant@leeds.ac.uk), Tel: 0113 3436754 for more information about opting into the Year in Industry either as a student or an employer.

**Many employers will only consider applicants who have already done some form of placement or internship with them - getting that experience before graduation is invaluable.**

