

Placement Year

George Barham

Economics and Finance with a Placement Year

Category Executive at Crown Commercial Service



Finding my Placement

The placement I secured with Crown Commercial Service (CCS) was advertised on the CareerCentral website. With the ongoing pandemic my interview was online, but this worked very well.

CCS do public procurement, which involves finding demand for goods/services in central government and the Wider Public Sector (WPS), and satisfying those demands by drawing together the customers to get better deals on the goods they are looking for.

I initially found it hard to network within the organisation, so I joined as many groups and activities as CCS ran, and I introduced myself to new people each week to expand my network.

My responsibilities

At the start of the placement I lead a 3 month project looking at concluded agreements and evaluating their success. This involved lots of data analysis and interviewing individuals from a range of different teams.

Getting relevant experience

I worked as part of the Project Delivery Team for the first 3 months. This involved effectively managing the ongoing agreements being brought to market. We had weekly meetings for progress updates and ensured actions were followed up. Sometimes there would be impacts on timescales and we'd escalate to management or seek help from across the organisation.

I then worked in the Category Team for 9 months; this team progresses agreements to bring them to market. My responsibilities were around working towards their business case.

My advice

- Make a list of placements you might want to go on, starting with selecting industries of interest
- Introduce yourself to CareerCentral so you're ready to use them when you need support
- Make sure your CV is up to date and have it reviewed
- Start applying early—don't wait too long or other deadlines will start to hit
- Before interview, research company culture through sites like LinkedIn

Most importantly, always be yourself—employers can sense if you are trying to be someone you aren't!

