

## **Work Experience**

For my placement I secured an internship at Leeds2023, a company based in Leeds designated to creating a year of culture in the city. Their main function was putting on a series of creative projects throughout 2023 to bring the community together.

I applied for more than one role within the company but informed them that my preferred job role would be the Social Media Content Curator, which was what they accepted me for.

Following my acceptance, I had an online call with the Head of Placements and Student Opportunities, Niamh Byrne. We agreed that to complete my required 15 days, I would work two days a week for the next seven and a half weeks. Wednesdays and Fridays worked best for me since I did not have university and so the following Wednesday I headed to the office in Leeds city centre.

On my first day I had a meeting with Niamh where she briefly explained how everything would work and how Chloe, the head of social media at Leeds2023, would oversee my endeavors during my time with the company. They set me up with my own personal Leeds2023 email address and added me to their Microsoft Teams chat where I would be kept up to date with all of the company's progress and future plans. This helped me to feel as if I was part of the team.

When working in the office, I was set tasks by Chloe to complete by the end of the day. These were usually to write Instagram and Facebook captions for the scheduled social media posts on the day, with the occasional meeting they allowed me to oversee, where we met with the other departments and discussed future plans for the company. She gave me pointers on their 'tone of voice' and told me that all of their social media pages must follow the same structure. Therefore, I spent time researching all of their social media accounts such as their Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn in order to gather an understanding of what was expected from me.

The first couple of days my captions were not used which was slightly disheartening. Chloe gave me feedback which explained that my work was good but suggested that I should use certain words and phrases to match with the tone the company currently used. I decided to reflect on my work and take on board this advice to improve the quality of my captions. I began to use more witty phrases to give a more informal, friendly feel to the post in reflection of what I saw on their social media. This was received well, and I began to see my work posted on their Instagram feed.

After a few weeks in the office, I began to feel that I was not being given enough work to fill my 9-5 day. After completing my tasks by around 12pm most days, Chloe would not give me anything else to do for hours after, despite me requesting it. I appreciate that Chloe was very busy with her own duty, and she often did not have time to give me an explanation of what I should do after I had written the captions for the day. After a couple more weeks of this I began to feel that I was an inconvenience for Chloe and even when I was sent tasks to complete, they were often never responded to and disregarded without feedback or acknowledgement. Plenty of the work I was asked to do was of no relevance and was made purely to give me something to do during my time there, which I felt was an inefficient use of my time. I acknowledged that although my work was rarely benefitting the company, it was all a good experience for me and therefore I completed it with enthusiasm.

To tackle this problem, I sought advice from other employees in the company to see if they had any more work they could set me. Nathan worked in the social media sector beside me and so I asked him if there was anything I could do to assist him. He allowed me to write the captions for their LinkedIn account, which he oversaw, and always gave me helpful feedback on my work.

Near the end of my time at Leeds2023 they had a large event which was one of the company's biggest accomplishments. I asked if I would be able to attend the event to assist with anything that needed to be done. I did so with the intention of getting more involved and to show my dedication to the job. It was an enjoyable day, and I felt fortunate to have been a part of such a successful event. I was grateful to be given a more hands-on task where I could work alongside the team.

Overall, the experience taught me that I would like to go into a practical job that did not require being in an office every day. Although I am extremely grateful for the experience, it made me realise that it is not what I aspire to go into in the future. Instead, I would enjoy experiencing another side of journalism such as reporting as this would give me the opportunity to go out and connect with people. After spending hours in front of a computer during my time at Leeds2023, I learnt that working with others and getting to go to different places would be a much more rewarding job for me.

Although there were some aspects of the placement that I did not enjoy, I learnt a lot from the experience, and I believe that I developed numerous transferable skills that I will take with me to future roles in the industry. Firstly, I developed an understanding of content strategy and audience engagement techniques. Since I created content for multiple different platforms, I learnt how to tailor my writing to specific audiences, to maximise public engagement. Additionally, by collaborating with the other teams within the office

during the meetings, it enhanced my ability to work effectively in a team setting, fostering communication and teamwork skills.