

So, you really want a career in Forensics? – Work based learning for Forensic students

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TRANSFORMING
FORENSICS



Forensic Services

CONTENTS

- The (historic) challenges
- The innovative solution
- Student engagement and feedback
- Employer feedback
- Final thoughts



THE (HISTORIC) CHALLENGE

- Industry work experience = practically impossible
- Industry work experience + covid-19 = certainly impossible
- Solution?

~~PROBLEM~~
SOLVED

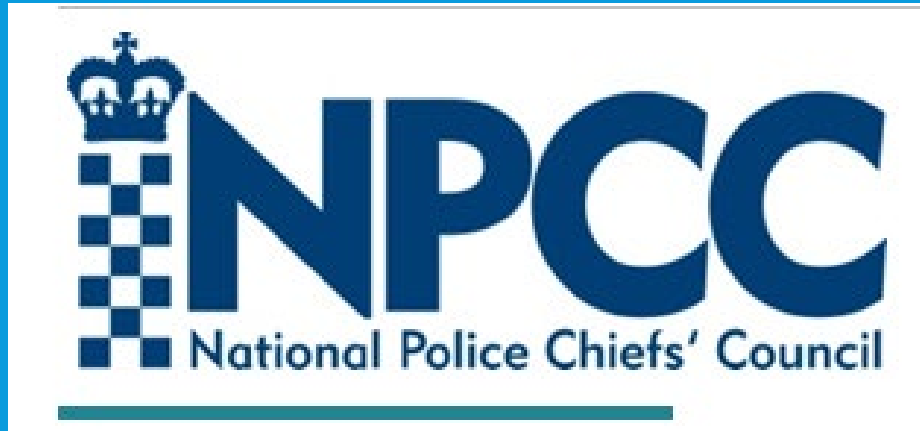


THE INNOVATIVE SOLUTION - LIVE BRIEFS

- A challenge faced by a client/organisation
- “Employed” as a research assistants responsible for delivering a potential solution to current challenges in practice
- Solutions and findings presented to the employer/management team and will be used to inform current practices and policy
- Pre and post project skills audit
- Reflection exercise for a core module
- Certificate of acknowledgement for your role in the organisation



Crime Scene Manager, EMSOU-FS, Derbyshire
Assessor at Chartered Society of Forensic Science



Business Transition Manager (Digital)
NPCC Transforming Forensics Programme



Product Development Officer for CSI Accreditation (Standards and Accreditation)
NPCC Transforming Forensics Programme



Virtual Reality in CSI

Impact of motion-sickness in VR crime scene investigation



GSR recovery methods x2

Validation of kits; scenes and vehicles vs victims and suspects



Firearm recovery methods

Storage and transport of firearms; long barrel and short barrel weapons



Specialist photography

IR and UV in bitemarks and injury



Crime lights x3

Usage in search for semen, GSR and blood



Lighting methods in scenes x2

Search for fingerprints, contact DNA; white light



DNA recovery methods 1

Swabs for substrates



Searching for blood

Lighting, visual examinations, colour blind?



CJS missing cases

Missing cases in the CJS



DNA recovery methods 2

Scrapings for substrates

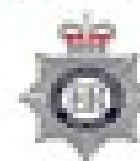
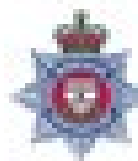


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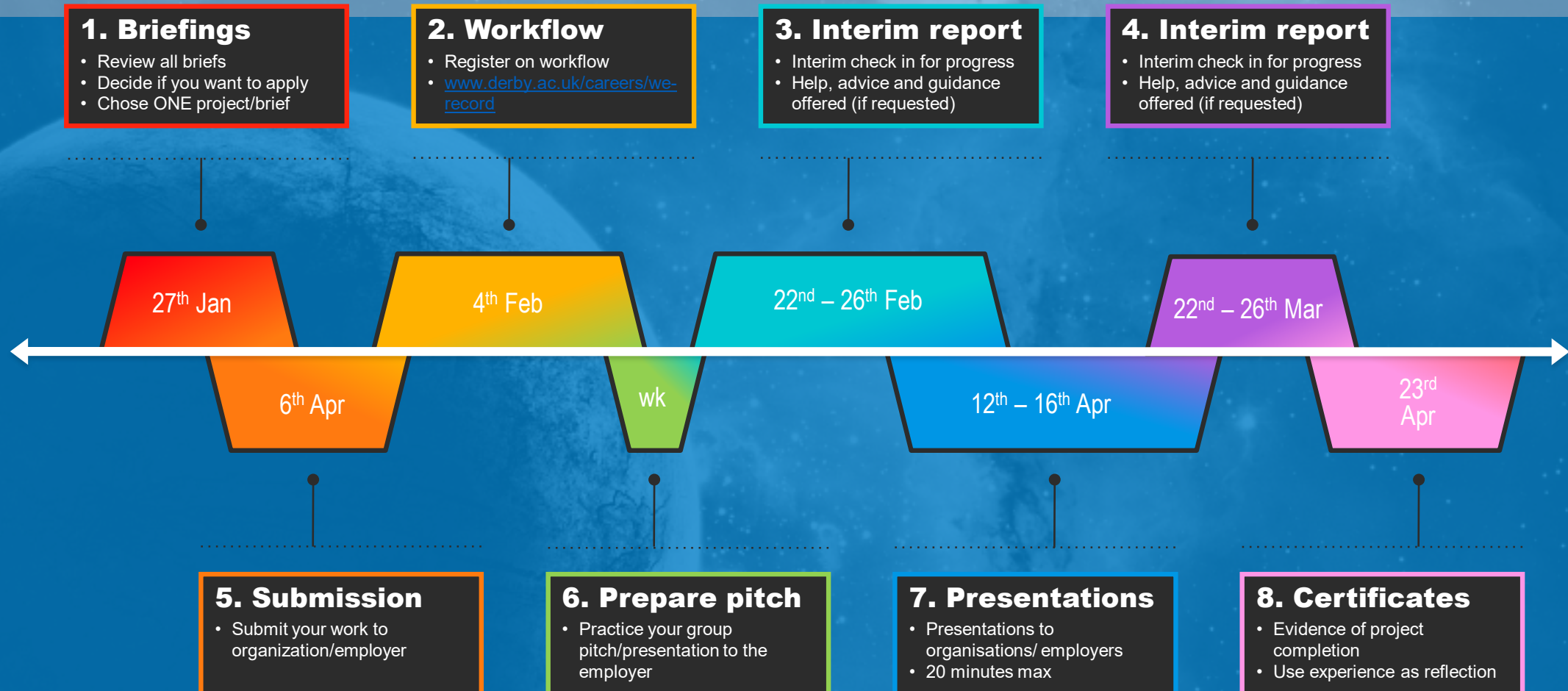
East Midlands Special Operations Unit



Forensic Services

Milestones

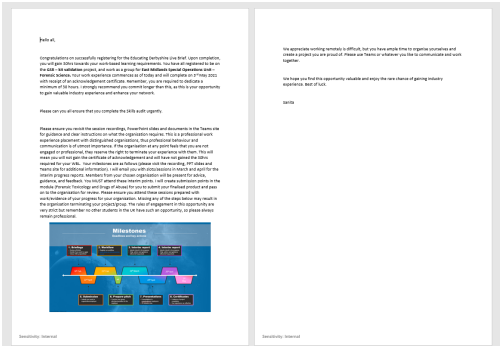
Student directions



STUDENT ENGAGEMENT



- Confirmation email on signing up (start of 'employment')
- Fully briefed by 'employer' and sample validation documents provided
- 101/118 at L5 signed up
- Opened to L6 (5 groups signed up)
- Interim report deadlines in calendars
- 1 team 'fired'
- 1 'team' warning for lack of engagement



STUDENT FEEDBACK

What did you enjoy the most about the live brief?

- This great opportunity to work and get to know the organisations.
- Working in a group / Working as a team / Getting to know the people in my group / getting to work with an interesting group of people
- Learning more about a area I've got interest in.
- Being able to research a topic that I would not have originally had an opportunity to research and gaining more knowledge about other work possibilities in the forensic field.
- Ability to research for a real life scenario / Researching and building on that research
- Collaborating with other group members to work on a project that we had genuine interest in and gaining experience working for a profession forensic organisation where they acknowledge our work for future use
- Being given free range to research whatever we like as long as it falls under a specific topic, we don't usually get freedom in our assignments so it was a nice change of pace and made things a lot more enjoyable!

STUDENT FEEDBACK

What did you enjoy the least about the live brief?

- Presenting
- The initial phase in which I was unsure of what I had to do exactly.
- The fact that it had to all be done online (NOT at the fault of any staff!!!!!!!!!!) because of the current situation :(
- Would have preferred to present in person but this was out of anyone's control
- Having to find our groups was difficult but in the end I found a really good group.
- Trying to allot time to the project while also working on other deadlines, planning IS projects and working at the same time. But it gave me more experience/skill balancing my deadlines.
- the lack of information at the start
- I wish there was more direction. Having autonomy with the work made things a lot more enjoyable although having a frame to work from would have made researching easier.

STUDENT FEEDBACK

What did you learn about yourself when conducting the pre and post project skills audit?

- I am able to work in a team with people I do not know
- I would not say I learned something new but I definitely recognised what I need to improve on myself.
- I realised that I had definitely gotten more comfortable about working in a team.

- I gained confidence and communication skills
- That I am organized
- That I try to look at as much research as I can, I tend to lead the group a little when building a presentation.
- How much my confidence has improved when communicating and present my work

STUDENT FEEDBACK

If you were to do this project again, what would you change and why?

- I would dedicate more time to researching
- I would probably suggest working with different organisations that time to get to know more fields.
- If I was to do this project again, I would focus more on a specific reason of motion sickness and do very heavy research into just one area to get as much accurate information I could possibly gather.
- Nothing, i enjoyed it as it is
- I would work in a larger group as I feel the live briefs are huge topics and with more people more research and opinions can be explored
- Either do it single or just do not do it, it was so much added stress for everyone
- I would have started it earlier. There was plenty of time to finish the project although upon reflection I would've worked harder in the beginning stages of the project.

STUDENT FEEDBACK

In your personal opinion, what is the value and worth of completing a live brief?

- I personally found this opportunity very exciting because it will help building the CV and I can proudly say I have offered some of my work to these people.
- Acquisition of more knowledge on whatever area we chose and significant value for employability in the future.
- Being able to research a topic that you are interested in without the stress that its going to be heavily scrutinised and marked makes it more engaging and a fun research project to do.
- Learn skills and networking
- Its quite valuable but not essential in my opinion, its not much different from a normal assignment.
- It gives good experience to students that want work experience. For our year trying to get a placement was difficult due to covid-19 especially in areas I wanted to work in, having this helped to get that experience.
- The skills and improvement gained from this live brief are invaluable. I have grown over the last few months and become more confident in my abilities and I feel these opportunities can greatly enhance my employability
- Not a lot just felt like a lot of research but I did get better at it
- To build teamwork and organisational skills.
- It gives you extra experience and shows you've experienced real life issues

STUDENT FEEDBACK

Would you recommend future students to take up a live brief project, and why?

- Yes, good experience and helps enhance research skills and team work
- I would absolutely recommend it because you gain so much through this experience.
- YES!!!!!! It helps you with learning about something that you may not have had an opportunity to learn about before and may even result in you wanting to research it in the future!
- yes - learn alot of new skills
- Sure, it was a fun way of doing research.
- Yes I would because if you struggle to find placement or are unsure what doing a work experience is about then this is a good example.
- Yes, because there is a lot of opportunity to improve your skills and developed new skills especially public speaking and presentation skills. The live brief can make you feel more confident in your abilities
- yes its an easy alternative to a physical placement
- Yes, it's a nice change of pace to regular assessments and if the topic is right, can be interesting and fun.
- yes definitely it enhances your knowledge

EMPLOYER FEEDBACK

- Students brought ideas forward that the organisation/team hadn't even thought about
- Changes to current planned scheme of work to be adapted
- Saved time on contextual research – especially for the validation documents
- Several more projects to be offered on top on the existing ones



THOUGHTS?

FINAL THOUGHTS

- (majority) of student incredibly professional
- Adhered to rules/timelines
- Clear personal growth occurred
- Engagement in following assignments improved(ish)
- Offered again in Spring 2022
- Research project to assess role of experiential learning/ live briefs
- Build on live briefs to include practical tests (validations)
- Incredibly intense but worth it!

QUESTIONS?

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