

Case Study: Internship

Yash Chawla, Second Year Chemistry Student

Which company did you undertake work experience with?

I did a 12 week Summer Placement in Finance at Unilever (Leatherhead Office, UK).

How did you go about finding the internship?

I attended a careers fair (I believe it was a RCSU one) where I met someone from Unilever and found out more about their opportunities in different areas of business: finance, marketing, sales etc. I then went online and read more about the opportunities on their website. The Summer Placement is in fact an advertised role, and so I made a direct application.

What was the application and interview process like? What was the timescale for your application?

The application process consisted of an online application form, online aptitude tests, a telephone interview (competency-based interview) and then a final Selection Day event. I submitted my online application form in early November, completed my online test in mid-November, had my telephone interview in end-November and was invited for a Selection Day in mid-December. The application process was quite time consuming, but was a great opportunity for self-reflection!

How big was your team and where did it sit in the organisation?

I worked within Accounts Payable/ Purchase 2 Pay department (Controller's Office) in Finance. The Accounts Payable/ P2P division had actually been recently been outsourced to IBM India, and there was a small team of only 3 sitting in Unilever Leatherhead which was responsible for overseeing the process and dealing with escalations (when things went wrong or special projects were required) and simplification.

What was your role and what did it involve?

I was given a clear 3 objective work-plan when I arrived. These consisted of helping the P2P Team with certain projects and simplification, and looking into the monthly reporting deck for Accounts Payable. At the end of the internship, I presented my ideas for P2P Simplification to management, I designed and prepared a new monthly reporting deck, and I presented my analysis on the Accounts Payable situation of the Ireland Accounts.



“I was able to experience what it was like working in a huge multinational organisation”

- Yash Chawla



What was the most valuable thing about your work experience?

The most valuable things about the work experience was getting a direct insight into working life. I was able to experience what it was like working in a huge multinational organisation and what it was like working in a finance job. Furthermore, the work experience allowed me to learn a huge deal on organisational finance as well, especially how Accounts Payable works.

Do you have any tips for future Imperial students looking to make the most of their summer?

To get the most out of your summer, apply to a firm and job that you are definitely interested in and try to learn as much as possible during your few weeks there!