

# GSDP Preferred Placement Applications

## Introduction

As part of my professional career development, I was assigned the task of applying to at least two of the companies who have placement partnerships with the university for a sandwich year placement.

After learning about all the companies, I chose to apply to Next and WANDisco.

## Application Preparation

Before applying, I did have a CV but it was not up to a standard I was happy with, so I worked on refining the content as it is important to keep the details to a concise yet descriptive level, this included:

- Removing specific GCSE grades and replacing them with a two-line overview which still demonstrates my good performance and does specify Computing and Maths to outline my long-term interest and affinity for the subjects.
- Shortening the description of my college course from including modules to just stating achieved grades.
- Re-writing my experiences to achieve greater clarity and ease of reading.

The next step in my preparation was to create a Cover Letter, as I did not have one.

Getting started here was quite difficult as I had never written one before and did not know where to start. I turned to the internet and visited numerous sites that claim to be able to write Cover Letters for you; not to simply fabricate a pre-made one in minutes but for inspiration about the structure and general tone commonly used in these documents.

This turned out to be a great idea and I quickly commenced writing my fully original cover letter, with the plan to write one for Next first and later adapt it to the WANDisco application.

Crucially, before applying, I contacted my character and professional references to make sure they were still willing to provide references; none minded.

## Evidence of Applications

Included in this submission are files containing a copy of the applications I submitted to Next and WANDisco, along with proof of the applications and my invitation to the next stages of the selection processes.

## Reflection and Action Plan

### Reflection

As evidenced by my invitation to the next stages of both recruitment processes, I believe the CV and Cover Letter(s) I submitted were of a good standard and worked well to present the qualities I could provide to a company.

Particularly, I think the bold yet minimal presentation of my CV helps to draw the eye, and the information I have chosen to list does a good job of summarising the important details, without being too heavy or slow to read through.

I think the Cover Letter I wrote (and adapted to fit both roles) is well worded and emanates a positive and enthusiastic tone, whilst remaining professional and outlining some impressive experience for someone my age.

### Action Plan

While I am pleased with how my applications went, I can obviously always keep improving my CV and ability to write Cover Letters, based on past experiences such as this one.

Now speaking critically, the area of my CV I think could use the most improvement is the experience section – I think the amount of text could be reduced noticeably while still retaining the same level of meaning within the paragraphs.

I would also like to re-write my personal profile / personal statement before sending out my CV to any more applications as it seems outdated by focusing on my GCSEs; I believe the best course of action would simply be to start again as it is not a large piece of work.

Thinking about the Next application, I could have tried to include more details about skill and experience in my Cover Letter as, being a large and very well-known organisation, they are likely to get far more applicants and thus it would help if I laid down as much information as possible to differentiate myself from the pack, so to speak.

Ultimately, in the future, when applying for even more highly contested roles, I need to focus on making absolutely sure that both my CV and Cover Letter are as concise as possible, whilst still putting forth all the relevant and required information – this is important because as there are more and more applicants for a role, the recruitment team will naturally want to spend less time on each application, and condensing my skills and experience into the neatest and easiest to process package possible will give me a great head start in creating exciting opportunities for my career.