



My placement year experience as a Brand Management at Unilever

by Victoria Carro

My name is Victoria Carro, and I'm currently a final-year student studying BSc Management (Marketing). Last year, I completed a Brand Management placement at Unilever, one of the world's largest and most respected FMCG companies.

From early on in my degree, I knew I wanted to take the placement route. I've always been someone who learns best through experience, and I wanted to understand what marketing really looked like beyond the classroom. A placement felt like the perfect way to apply what I'd learned in a real business environment, develop practical skills, and gain clarity about the kind of career I wanted after university. I was especially drawn to Unilever because of its global reputation and its portfolio of iconic brands. I knew I'd be surrounded by experienced marketers and have the opportunity to learn how a large organisation operates behind the scenes.

I found my placement by going directly to the company's website and setting up notification alerts for new applications. Because many opportunities aren't widely advertised, I'd really recommend identifying your top ten dream companies and checking their career pages regularly - this approach helped me find exactly what I was looking for.

Working in such a large organisation meant no two days were ever the same. Mondays and Tuesdays often began with team catch-ups to discuss priorities and updates, and from there, my day would usually start with checking emails and writing out my to-do list. My role involved coordinating all aspects of brand management - from liaising with media agencies and briefing creative campaigns, to supporting the development of TV adverts, influencer partnerships, and social media content. I also managed advertising budgets, ensuring our forecasts and spending were aligned, and collaborated with supply chain and sales teams to deliver smooth product launches.

One of the biggest skills I developed during my placement was communication – both written and verbal. Early on, I spoke with my manager about wanting to strengthen my presentation skills, and together we found opportunities for me to step up, whether that was leading meetings, presenting to external clients, or speaking at larger internal sessions. I'd really encourage anyone doing a placement to identify the skills they want to improve from the outset and then actively seek experiences that challenge and grow those areas.

Beyond professional development, one of my favourite parts of the experience was the people. Working alongside other placement students and colleagues from diverse backgrounds was incredibly rewarding, and I've made friends for life. Being part of such a large cohort meant I never felt alone – there was always a strong sense of community and support, which made settling in so much easier.

Looking back, the placement has had a huge influence on my future plans. It's helped me clarify the areas of marketing I'm most passionate about and given me valuable insight into what I want from my career. As I now apply for graduate roles, I know I want to stay within a large FMCG company and continue in brand management – something I discovered through hands-on experience.

For students who are still considering whether to do a placement year, my biggest piece of advice is to go for it. Even if you're unsure about your exact career path, the experience will give you real-world insight, boost your confidence, and help you stand out to future employers. Treat it as a year of discovery – a chance to explore your interests, make professional connections, and develop skills you can't learn from lectures alone. A placement truly bridges the gap between university and the working world, and it's one of the most valuable decisions you can make during your studies.

A placement year is an optional year in industry available to all undergraduate students enrolled on the BSc Accounting, BSc International Business, Finance and Economics, BSc Management, and BSc Information Technology Management for Business programmes.

It involves full-time, paid employment in a role directly related to your degree, giving you the opportunity to apply academic knowledge in a practical setting, develop your professional network, and potentially secure a graduate job offer. Whether you're a home or international student, the placement year is designed to enhance your career prospects and provide valuable real-world experience before graduation.

Find out more about placement year on the [2025/26 Pre-Placement Handbook](#).

If you have any questions about placement year, please get in touch with the team via email to ambs.placements@manchester.ac.uk.