

Guide to finding an internship



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

Faculty of Arts Work Integrated Learning

Preparing your application materials

1. Before you start

You should spend some time thinking about your application before you begin writing. Consider your goals and objectives for the application. Some resources to help at this stage:

- Watch this seminar for valuable advice on how to prepare your CV: <http://youtu.be/al9EUE9WZqI>
- Use the University's Employ Me tool to analyse your personal strengths and qualities: <http://go.unimelb.edu.au/smb6>
- Do your research and make sure you understand the organisation you want to apply for – browse their website, read annual reports, know their partners, find out about current projects.
- Students who may need English language support should explore the resources the University has available here <http://go.unimelb.edu.au/2mb6>, or here <http://go.unimelb.edu.au/xht6>

2. Identify possible hosts

- 2.1 Determine what sort of work interests you, keeping in mind that the placement must be related to your course and possible career direction. You might want attend a Stop 1 careers session, to discuss with a careers consultant: <http://go.unimelb.edu.au/rsp6>
- 2.2 Identify specific organisations to approach by asking around in your network, and searching online. Develop a prioritised list of organisations. Go beyond the most obvious organisations in your interest area as often the demand for placements will be greater in well-known organisations.
- 2.3 Note that the organisation doesn't have to have an established internship program – an organisation may not have thought of taking on interns but is happy to consider the idea when approached. Sometimes organisations with

established programs may be more difficult to access.

- 2.4 You can 'cold call' organisations, but it is easier if you have a contact within the organisation to approach directly - so make use of your network (staff, other students, family) to identify contacts.

3. Prepare your CV

Prospective hosts will want to see your CV, so it's essential to spend some time updating it. This can be time-consuming, but it's an excellent investment in your career. Some key steps to follow are:

- 3.1. Save the document with a clear file name, eg 'FirstName FamilyName - CV.doc'.
- 3.2. If you don't have one already, chose a CV template to work with. You can use the one at the end of this document, or one of the templates provided by the University: <http://go.unimelb.edu.au/kgm6>
- 3.3. Make your CV specific to the organisation(s) you target for your internship.
- 3.4. Use an executive summary to present your 'best bits', i.e. your selected achievements and attributes.
- 3.5. Don't exaggerate your skills – present yourself with integrity and include volunteering and other extracurricular activities so people can get a sense of who you are/what you care about.
- 3.6. Do not use any Melbourne University logos, you are not authorised to do so.

4. Write your Cover Letter

You won't need a Cover Letter for every application, but it can also provide a base for an introductory email. Some key steps are:

- 4.1 Save the document with a clear file name.
- 4.2 Choose or review possible templates. You can use the one at the end of this document, or one of the templates provided by the University: <http://go.unimelb.edu.au/8mb6>

- 4.3 If it is a letter, ensure that it follows necessary conventions. If you are unsure, review a template or check the list provided by the University's careers page.
- 4.4 Introduce yourself, explain what you're applying for, what attracted you to the role, and why you'd be a great fit for it. Remember that the message is why you are good for them and **not only** why they are good for you
- 4.5 If this is a follow up letter to an earlier contact state with whom you had contact initially.
- 4.6 Explain the purpose of your letter is to secure an internship as part of an accredited university internship subject. Remember to refer to your discipline(s) and state the number of hours you must complete.
- 4.7 Explain that the contact hours are negotiable. Mention relevant skills and knowledge (could be your qualifications, studies, employment, volunteer experiences), do not forget interpersonal and other skills BUT always give evidence for your assertions.

Once you secure a placement and begin your work, it is worth keeping some key points in mind. The University's careers service has some useful advice with you should review in the first week or so of your placement: <http://go.unimelb.edu.au/mmb6>

Ask for help!

Above all, don't be afraid to ask for help if you are having trouble. You can contact your academic coordinator, or the Arts Work Integrated Learning team for help at any point: <https://arts.unimelb.edu.au/students/wil#contact>

5. Before you submit

Proofread! It is vital that you proofread your application before you send it to potential hosts. Review your documents to make sure formatting is neat and consistent, and make sure there are no typos, grammatical, spelling or other mistakes. There are a number of resources available to you at this stage:

- Ask a friend to read over your documents, they might pick up any errors you've missed.
- Make an appointment with an advisor at Stop 1 to review your documents in person: <http://go.unimelb.edu.au/rsp6>
- Your academic supervisor will be happy to help you with checking your CV and cover letter.

6. After you have submitted

Once you have sent an application or inquiry to your target company there are a number of things to consider:

- Follow up after a reasonable length of time. Employers can often take a long time to process job applications, however, if you do not hear anything back after a few weeks, you may want to send a polite email to double-check that your application was received.
- Don't be disheartened if you don't get a "yes" immediately! Sometimes you may have to apply to a dozen or more organisations.
- Many hosts will want to meet you for an informal interview before taking you one. Review the University's advice for job interviews before you go: <http://go.unimelb.edu.au/4mb6>

Finding possible hosts

1. Identify possible organisations

You should start by thinking about organisations you would like to work with. Consider the sorts of experience you want to gain, and the career path you want to follow after University. Once you have a broad idea, you can begin looking for specific hosts:

- Look on the LMS Community for your degree or school. Most communities maintain a list of organisations which have taken interns in the past, and may be open to hosting again.
- The University provides a list of possible careers options for Arts graduates, which might also provide some inspiration: <http://go.unimelb.edu.au/vmb6>
- Look for peak bodies or associations for the industries you are interested in. These often maintain a list of member organisations you could look into.

2. Look for advertised positions

Many organisations in Australia and abroad post openings for internships. Search for these online and through personal and professional networks. Some key resources include:

- LMS postings – the Faculty of Arts receives exclusive internship offers from many organisations. We will make these available to students via the LMS for your subject or school.
- Some opportunities may be listed on Careers Online, the University's secure job board: <http://go.unimelb.edu.au/umb6>
- You can also look through some general job-search strategies here: <http://go.unimelb.edu.au/omb6>

3. "Create your own" internship

You don't need to be restricted to organisations which are currently advertising. Many interns find a placement by cold-contacting a potential host and asking if they are willing to take on a student.

You should identify one or more possible hosts, and then email them to ask if they have internships available. This email should include elements of a cover letter, but does not need to be as formal in its layout. It should also be shorter than a standard cover letter. Internship proposals should include the following:

a. Goals and objectives

This is your opportunity to explain what you want to do during the internship. Describe what you want to learn and achieve. You can write this in paragraph form or use bullet points to highlight the specific things you want to accomplish. Be as specific as possible and demonstrate clearly that 1) you have done your research on the organisation and 2) you have good reasons for wanting to do your internship with this particular host.

b. Professional profile

Describe your skills and strengths. Make clear to your host what you will bring to the organisation. Take into account the length of the internship you aim to apply for. Longer internships will require more detailed descriptions of the value addition you hope to bring to the organization.

c. Key elements of internship program

Be clear in your email that you wish to take the internship as part of a University subject. Include the hours you are required to complete during your internship and your availability in relation to the organisation / project. If undertaking a 25 point internship, indicate that your internship will include a major research report developed in consultation with the interests of the host organisation.