WHAT IS AN INTERNSHIP?

An internship is a short-term work experience in which you receive training and gain experience in a specific field or career area. Some organizations offer internships to current students or new grads, and you can also research organizations and approach them yourself to request an internship. The important element that distinguishes an internship from a short-term job or community service is the intentional "learning agenda" that the intern brings to the experience. Consider doing an internship to gain career-related experience during your studies or upon graduation!

WHY DO AN INTERNSHIP?

- Develop skills that employers seek (e.g. teamwork, communication, technical skills)
- Gain first-hand experience in your discipline and get your foot in the door
- Network and make contacts within the company and in the industry
- Work closely with a mentor in the organization
- Learn of work opportunities within the company…internships can turn into job offers
- Clarify your career goals
- Earn credit or financial compensation

**TIP:** Research internship opportunities to find the one that is right for you. Do you want to gain experience in Canada or abroad? Are you looking for opportunities within a large or small organization? Which skills would you like to develop? Paid Internships can be found on the Career Learning Network (CLN) under “Off Campus Jobs” and unpaid internships can be found under “Volunteer Postings”. The UTM Career Centre has many resources for gaining experience abroad.

WHAT IS THE LAW?

Internships can be paid or unpaid, and it's important to know your rights as an intern. In Canada, each province has its own employment standards legislation, regulations and/or guidelines that may apply to interns. The Ontario Employment Standards Act states “Generally, if you perform work for another person or a company or other organization and you are not in business for yourself, you would be considered to be an employee, and therefore entitled to ESA rights such as the minimum wage. There are some exceptions, but they are very limited, and the fact that you are called an intern is not relevant.” Familiarize yourself with the rules regarding unpaid work if you are considering an unpaid internship. Click here for more information: [http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/es/pubs/internships.php](http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/es/pubs/internships.php)

LOCATING AND RESEARCHING ORGANIZATIONS

Students can search both paid and unpaid internships on U of T's Career Learning Network (CLN):

- Search for paid internships on the Off-Campus Job board (the “Search Job Postings” feature allows you to specify paid internships)
- Search for unpaid internships on the Volunteer Job Board

Other sources for finding existing internship postings or programs include:

- The Directory of Careers in the Resources Section of CLN
- Resources in the UTM Career Centre Resource Library

In addition, The UTM Career Centre Resource Library has a collection of current and past internship postings.
OTHER INTERNSHIP RESOURCES AND LINKS

**Career Edge**  [https://www.careeredge.ca/en/home](https://www.careeredge.ca/en/home) - Provides paid internships for recent graduates and internationally qualified professionals

**Ability Edge**  [https://www.careeredge.ca/en/job-seekers/find-your-edge](https://www.careeredge.ca/en/job-seekers/find-your-edge) - A division of Career Edge, Ability Edge is an internship program designed for graduates with disabilities.

**Ontario Government**  [Paid internships with government | Ontario.ca](https://www.careeredge.ca/en/job-seekers/find-your-edge) -

**Campus Access**  [http://www.campusaccess.com/](http://www.campusaccess.com/) - This directory contains a list of Canadian and international internship programs that offer students and graduates an opportunity to gain practical experience, explore potential careers and enrich their lives.

**Talent Egg**  [http://talentegg.ca/incubator/?s=internships](http://talentegg.ca/incubator/?s=internships) - A popular online job board and career resource for students and recent graduates.

**TIP:** Be proactive! Start early. Be aware of deadline dates so you are not disappointed.

SELF-DESIGNED INTERNSHIPS

An organization may be receptive to a student who proposes a self-designed internship. Explain your interest in the company, your background and ask if they would be interested in providing an internship. Many students have found internships by taking this initiative! If you would like to book an appointment with a Career Counsellor or Employment Advisor to discuss this, visit the Career Centre (room DV 3094) or call us at 905 828 5451.

INTERNSHIP COURSES AT UTM

For more information about internship courses and experiential learning at UTM, visit the UTM Experiential Education Office website at:  [https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/experience/experiential-learning-utm](https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/experience/experiential-learning-utm)

FINDING THE RIGHT FIT

Finding the right fit is important so that you can maximize your learning experience and manage your expectations regarding the organization. Consider the following when applying to an internship:

1. What kinds of tasks and projects have interns completed in the past?
2. What projects do you have in mind for this internship?
3. What are the learning outcomes for this opportunity?
4. What specific skills or characteristics are needed to be effective in this internship and in this organization?
5. Who are my co-workers? How would we work together?
6. How could I get in touch with a previous intern?
7. What type of training is offered to the intern?
8. Will this be a paid or unpaid internship?

This tip sheet is intended as a counselling document and the information is subject to change.  (Updated Aug. 2016)