

UTM Undergraduate Students

Tips on Finding and Securing Your Own Placement

Getting Started

After enrolling in your Academic Internship or Community Engaged Learning course, it is critical that you consult with your professor and/or the placement staff for your program. You should inquire about whether or not there are any specifications for the project work that you will undertake during your placement, and if there are any other guidelines to consider. You should also discuss your interests, as well as your academic and career goals, as you may be directed to particular types of organizations or industries based on this material. Once you have clarified these points, you will want to begin locating and conducting research on placement sites. Some questions to ask yourself when considering possible organizations are:

- Is the organization reputable?
- How many employees does the organization have?
- Where is it located? Is it accessible to me?
- Do the goals of the organization align with my own?
- Does the time commitment adhere to the rules of my course?
- Have they hosted undergraduate students in the past?
- What are the potential projects available?

Reaching Out

Once you have found a placement site of interest based on the answers to the questions above, consult again with your professor and/or the placement staff in your program. If the placement site receives their pre-approval, you may proceed to make contact. For tips on professional communication, please read the “Workplace Correspondence” section of the [Tips for Students](#) resource on the Experiential Education Unit’s (EEU) website.

As you will likely be submitting a resume and/or cover letter to the organization, students are recommended to have their application documents critiqued at the [UTM Career Centre](#).

Interviewing

If selected for an interview, it is recommended that you conduct additional research on the organization. You are advised to review their website, read their Mission Statement, and speak to students who have completed past placements with the organization whenever possible. You will also need to prepare for the interview. Locate sample interview questions online and practice as much as possible leading up to the date of the interview.

On the date of the interview, arrive punctually, in business casual attire, and with a hardcopy of your application documents on hand, in case you are asked to provide them again. Remember to ask the interviewer(s) questions as well, as this is your opportunity to better clarify whether the environment and project fits with your interests, goals, and values. After the interview, be sure to follow-up with a thank-you email within 48 hours.

For additional support with interview preparation, please visit the [UTM Career Centre](#) to book a mock interview or review sample questions in their library on campus.

Next Steps

If you receive an offer from the placement site, you must report back to your professor and/or the placement staff in your program. It is at this point that you will be provided with documentation to finalize the details for your placement. Specifically, you will need to review and sign a [Student Declaration of Understanding](#) form, as well as a [Protection of Confidential Information Agreement](#) form indicating your commitment to uphold privacy in accordance with the University's policies. Your supervisor must also sign the required paperwork outlining all policies and procedures relating to unpaid placements. Once all documents have been signed, you may begin scheduling your hours for the term while ensuring that they coincide with the expectations of your course.

If you have not been offered a position and are struggling to find alternatives, the placement staff for your program may have suggestions and be able to advise you further.

Throughout Your Experience

During your placement, it is important that you conduct yourself professionally at all times, as you are an ambassador of the UTM community. For tips on conduct, please consult [this resource](#).

Should any challenges or concerns arise during your placement, please keep your professor and/or placement staff well informed. You are also welcome to connect with the staff in the Experiential Education Unit. Each of these contacts will be available to advise you and support your success in your placement.