Internships

EMPLOYER DESIGN GUIDE

Stuckert Career Center
Office of Experiential Education
Thank you for your interest in providing great internship opportunities for our University of Kentucky students! We hope this guide is helpful as you plan your students’ experiences. If you have any questions about how to move forward, please feel free to contact us at expblue@uky.edu or call (859) 257-2746.

An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in the professional fields they are considering for career paths. Internships also give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent. Below are some basic principles to keep in mind:

- An internship experience must be an extension of the classroom – a learning experience that provides for applying knowledge gained through coursework. An internship must not simply advance the operations of the employer or be work that a regular employee would routinely perform.

- The skills or knowledge learned in an internship must be transferrable to other employment settings.

- The experience has a defined beginning and end, and a job description with desired qualifications.

- There are clearly defined learning objectives/goals related to a student’s academic coursework.

- There is supervision by a professional with expertise and an educational and/or professional background in the field of the experience.

- There is routine feedback by an experienced supervisor.

- There are resources, equipment, and facilities provided by the host employer that support learning objectives/goals (including reasonable disability accommodations as required by law).
Experiences That DO NOT Qualify as Internships:

- Commission-based positions.
- Internships located in home-based businesses.
- Positions in which the intern displaces a regular employee.
- Positions that require door-to-door canvassing, cold-calling, or petition gathering.
- “Independent contractor” relationships that require the intern to set up his/her own business for the purpose of selling products, services and/or recruiting other individuals to set-up their own business.
- Positions supervised by a family member.
- Telemarketing positions.
- Positions in which the student is required to pay the employer for any part of the experience (fees for training, etc.).

If the internship is unpaid, the employer needs to adhere to the Test for Unpaid Interns established by the U.S. Department of Labor for “for profit” businesses (USDOL Fact Sheet #71).
What to Consider When Planning for an Intern

- What is the organizational need for an intern? Is there a specific project you have in mind? Are you filling a short-term need? Are you looking to cultivate a student for a future, full-time job? Are you looking to tap into new perspectives and insights?
- Have you completed a detailed internship description? Is the internship substantive and educational? Is there a defined project around which the internship could be based?
- What are some educational outcomes that a student would gain by participating in your internship program? Can the internship be customized based on the student’s interest and goals?
- How many hours are you expecting an intern to work each week? Will all hours be worked on site? Or, will this be a remote or hybrid working arrangement?
- Will this be a paid opportunity or unpaid? Paid opportunities receive more visibility, interest, and applications on Handshake. Payment is expected if the position is looking for a specific skill (i.e., Abode Photoshop). If unpaid, your internship position will need to follow the U.S. Department of Labor guidelines for businesses. (see USDOL Fact Sheet #71).
- What qualifications are you looking for in a student intern? What level of experience? Class year? GPA? Major? You can specify these kinds of criteria within your posting on Handshake.
- How will you support your intern? What training can you provide? What are some educational opportunities that your organization offers? Are intern’s able to shadow other employees? Do you have a mentorship program?
- How will you manage your intern? Your intern may need more oversight and support compared to other full-time or part-time staff.
- What materials and equipment will the intern need? Computer? Phone? Desk?
- Have any risk management, privacy, or personal safety issues been identified and are viable safeguards and procedures in place?
- If traveling is required of the positions, will you be providing a work vehicle or reimbursement of travel expenses?
Earning Academic Credit

Some students may want to complete their internship for academic credit. It is the responsibility of the student to communicate to you any requirements or expectations for an internship with academic credit, including the following:

- Students may require you to sign a learning contract that details the internship position description, contact information of their supervisor, learning objectives, academic assignments, and other information.

- Students will need to complete and document the work hours needed to earn credit. The ratio is generally 48-50 hours for 1 credit. The student intern will need to complete their hours over the course of the semester or summer term.

- The student is responsible for interfacing with you and UK to meet the requirements needed to enroll in an internship course.

- If you would like to learn more about the process the student goes through to obtain academic credit for EXP courses, you can find that here: [http://www.uky.edu/careercenter/credit-internship](http://www.uky.edu/careercenter/credit-internship).

Remote/Hybrid Internships

Virtual Internships involve work that is done remotely over the web, email, and phone. Given the flexible nature of virtual internships where there is potential for the intern and supervisor never to meet face to face, the following considerations should be addressed:

- How will the student be supervised? The type and frequency of contact between the supervisor and intern must be determined in advance. The supervisor should hold a minimum of one meeting per week with the intern (either face-to-face, on the phone, or using web-based technology) for the purpose of direct feedback and supervision regarding projects, assignments, deadlines, etc.

- Will the student need to provide their own equipment (i.e., computer, software, etc.)? Students engaging in virtual internships must have access to the appropriate tools needed to perform their duties. If the student is working remotely or hybrid, will you be reimbursing on utilities and equipment used?

- How will you ensure that this experience is a learning opportunity? Be sure to invite interns to appropriate meetings and trainings, as well as provide opportunities for interns to interact with other professional staff.
Employers may post professional level full-time positions and internships online for free on Handshake, our online job and internship management system for students and alumni.

Handshake uses cutting-edge technology to help students easily connect with employers and source jobs, internships, event information, and on-campus recruiting opportunities. Employers and alumni can use Handshake as a recruitment tool to identify qualified candidates for open positions and manage on-campus recruitment activities.

Be sure to customize your internship posting in Handshake. This will allow Handshake to work for you by posting on student's newsfeed to better promote your position. Potential applicants can see if they meet the posting preferences, but it will not bar a student from applying if they do not meet the preferences.

All employers and their representatives must comply with all EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) standards. The Stuckert Career Center reserves the right to decline postings that require financial investment on the part of our students, involve unreasonable risks, or are not in compliance with the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) "Principles for Employment Professionals."

Other ways to connect:
- Career Fairs
- Employer Information Sessions
- Informational Tabling
- Panel Discussions and Workshops
- On-Campus Interviews
- Job Shadowing
- Informational Interviews
- Networking Socials
Final Internship Checklist

1. Provide description of intern responsibilities with clear expectations and deliverables.
2. Communicate clearly the internship start and end dates with the number of hours the intern will be working per week.
3. Provide the technology and tools that will be required of the intern.
4. Convey your preferred methods of communication: Email, phone, text, Zoom, etc.
5. Schedule regular check-ins and progress reports (i.e., daily, weekly, etc.).
6. Offer opportunities for training and professional development.
7. Give opportunities to attend and participate in staff meetings, present work, and collaborate with other employees.

The University of Kentucky seeks to recognize and honor the achievements of its students participating in internships as well as the investment employers make in our students every year. Awardees will be recognized at our Spring Awards Ceremony.

The UK Intern of the Year Award is presented to a student that has exceeded expectations, grew as a professional, and made a positive impact on the organization.

The nomination process for UK Student Intern of the Year includes:
- Qualtrics nomination form
- Submission of a one-page nomination letter from the employer (on letterhead) citing examples of the student’s outstanding work, creativity, and initiative.

The deadline for nominations is March 31st each year.

UK Intern of the Year 2020-2021
Lauren Hudson

Major: Neuroscience and Biology
Employer: UK Markey Cancer Center, Mentor: Dr. Nathan Vanderford
Title: Intern
Academic term(s): Spring 2019-Present

“This experience has allowed me to understand more about myself, my school, and my state. After working with Dr. Vanderford, I discovered a passion for cancer education and cancer literacy that I intend to incorporate into my future career as a physician.”
For additional assistance, please contact us at expblue@uky.edu or call (859) 257-2746.