

Information for Students

Internships FAQ's

What is the International Internship in Environment subject?

This is a subject for course credit that has assessments and a minimum number of hours of industry placement. This is a Masters level subject completed outside of Australia and is available during Semesters 1, 2 and the Summer Semester.

How do I look for an internship placement?

Undertake research on organisations where you are interested in completing your internship. See page 2 for the recommended process and suggestions for searching the 'hidden job market'. Email any organisations that you are interested in. You can use the email template on the following page.

How long does it take to find an internship?

It takes much longer than you think, allow at least 3-6 months before you plan to start working.

Can I look for my own internship?

Yes! You are encouraged to find your own internship. Ask your networks too - lecturers, supervisors, professional staff, other students, family, friends etc.

Can I enrol myself in an internship subject?

No, permission to enrol is given to you by the Academic Engagement Team once your internship placement is organised and you have completed the [Internship Placement and Risk Assessment form](#) and other necessary documentation. We will liaise with you about this once your application is submitted.

I don't have an internship placement yet, but I really want to do the subject.

That's ok. Talk to the subject coordinator at least one semester before you plan to do the subject and together you can look for an internship placement. Also use the tools offered by the Melbourne Careers Centre.

Are there any forms I need to complete?

Yes, firstly you must complete the [Internship Placement and Risk Assessment form](#).

What about insurance?

The University of Melbourne covers the placement as long as you are enrolled in an internship subject, the placement is relevant to your study area and all the required forms are completed.

I am already volunteering/working, can I use that as an internship?

Quite often you can use your relevant volunteer work or unpaid work as long you have an appropriate work project and that it has been approved by the internship coordinator and all the paperwork is complete. We cannot approve work placements that you have already completed without prior approval and insurance. Please remember that you cannot use the internship as part of your Research Project.

Step by step process to organising your industry placement:

It is important to organise your placement over the six months leading up to the start of semester before the subject formally commences. If you intend to be overseas throughout the midyear or end of year break, it is important to set up your placement well before you go.

The recommended process is:

Determine what sort of occupation/industry/issue interests you and what sort of organisation would be suitable. The placement must be related to your course and possible career direction. If at any time during the application process you need assistance with your career interests or deciding on what sort of placement you want, contact the [Careers Express Drop In](#) service.

1. Locate possible organisations to approach by searching the internet; social media platforms such as LinkedIn; and talk to people, including teaching staff. Develop a prioritised list of several organisations. You can 'cold call' organisations, but it is easier if you have a contact - so make use of your network (staff, other students, family) to find contacts. This is a type of 'hidden job market' approach (finding employers to approach when opportunities are not advertised). You can refer to search directories or relevant professional associations. Additionally, you could use the "[Company 360](#)" to research employers and industries – accessible via the [Melbourne Careers Centre](#) web site.
2. Prepare a CV/resume of no more than 2 pages and a cover letter – you can go to [Stop 1](#) for a drop in session at any time during the specified hours.
3. **Your cover letter should include details such as:**
 - That you are looking for a placement as part of an internship subject run by the University of Melbourne and you are interested in doing an internship or placement with their organisation over the coming semester;
 - why you are interested in working with their organisation;
 - that this is an unpaid internship, you would be covered by University insurance and that it would amount to approximately 200 hours over the semester;
 - that the placement would usually involve you undertaking a project (you might even have a specific project in mind – although this is open to negotiation between you and the contact person) and may also include involvement in the day-day business of the organisation including 'shadowing' an employee;
 - providing the contact person with the Course Coordinator's contact details so they can follow up for further information about the program.
4. If you do not have a contact before sending an application, phone the organisation to determine to whom you should send your application. Explain that you are looking for a placement as part of the International Internship in Environment subject run by the University of Melbourne, and find out who is the best person to contact, their email address and phone number.
5. Send your CV/resume and cover letter.
6. If you do not hear back within a week, ring the person you emailed to remind them of your request. Ideally, you should contact one or more organisations at a time.
7. Organisations may want to arrange a meeting or interview (via skype or fuze.me for example) with you to discuss the internship. Treat this like a job interview – dress appropriately and prepare by researching their organisation so you understand their core business and how they are organised.

8. At the interview you will need to talk about what it is you will do there. Make sure you tell your workplace supervisor the following to expand on your email to them:
 - Interns usually work on a practical, policy or research project, but the scope of the internship can be a broader portfolio of work if that better fits with the organisation. Even with such a portfolio, however, **there must be a course-relevant component of some kind.**
 - It is up to you and the Host Organisation to agree upon what you will be doing during the internship and the dates. If you have any concerns about what the organisation is asking you to do please talk to the Subject Coordinator.
 - Remind them that it should be around 200 hours of work (approximately 5 weeks). All assessment pieces are the responsibility of the Subject Coordinator's - all the Host Supervisor has to do by way of assessment is to fill out a form which provides feedback on how they think the internship went.
 - The University's insurance covers the student while they are in a workplace for the purposes of the internship. Further details are available at the [University Insurance Office webpage](#).
9. Complete the [Internship Placement and Risk Assessment Form](#). You must upload a letter or email from your host confirming your placement to the application form. This will go to the Subject Coordinator for final placement approval.
10. Apply for free travel insurance through the [University Insurance Office](#).
11. Register your travel with [Melbourne Global Mobility office](#) (outbound).
12. **CHECK:** Are you eligible for additional [funding/scholarships](#)? Do you need to notify Centrelink of your departure?
13. Following approval the organisation will then be emailed University documentation. The supervisor will be provided with a **Professional Placement Letter Agreement** from the Subject Coordinator that sets out respective roles and responsibilities of the University and the Host Organisation.

Subject enquiries

Careers & Industry Consultant: [Fiona Simpson](#)

Subject Coordinator: [Rodney Keenan](#)

Approaching organisations – a sample email to send to Host Organisations:

Dear

I am a student at the University of Melbourne and I plan to enrol in an elective internship subject as part of my degree in (insert the name of your degree, eg Master of Science, Master of Environment etc).

The internship subject requires that I have 5 weeks unpaid placement in an industry relevant to my field of study. The placement is comprehensively covered by the University's insurance policy.

After researching many organisations, I found (insert the name of organisation) very interesting and I would like to ask if you would be interested in hosting me later this year. I am particularly interested in (insert your area of interest).

I have attached a fact sheet that will provide you with more detailed information. The internship coordinator would be happy to answer any questions and can be contacted via email: science-academicprograms@unimelb.edu.au

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely

..... (insert your name & your mobile phone number)