



Internship Guide

Internship Fact Sheet

A fact sheet that provides a definition and learning objectives for the activity.

WBL Connector Checklist

A checklist of steps to guide WBL Connectors in creating and supporting successful internships for all parties.

Student/Learner Checklist

A checklist for students or learners participating in the internship that facilitates deeper learning from the work-based learning experience.

Teacher/Faculty Tip Sheet

Tips for teachers and faculty that encourages ways to connect the internship to the broader curriculum.

Employer Tip Sheet

Tips for employee volunteers participating as an internship host to support their engagement.

Employer Fact Sheet

Facts about internships to help employers decide whether their company or organization can participate.

Implementation Tools

Unpaid Internships Fact Sheet

A fact sheet for employers to help understand when interns need to be paid.

USDOL Fact Sheet #71: Internship Programs Under the Fair Labor Standards Act

The regulations governing internships from the federal government.

What Every Worksite Supervisor Should Know

Suggestions and tips for internship supervisors.

Work-Based Learning Plan and Evaluation

A guide and evaluation tool that helps guide and assess the internship experience.



Internship Fact Sheet

Internship

An Internship is a highly structured, time-limited, Career Preparation activity in which students/learners are placed at a worksite to participate in and observe work firsthand.

Internships provide students/learners the opportunity to learn by doing real work and being productively engaged in the workplace. They may provide the opportunity to work in teams, work on a project, or rotate through a number of departments and job functions.

Internships are one activity in the continuum of authentic work-based experiences provided through Earn & Learn.

Internships are designed to:

- Promote hands-on experience in a field of interest.
- Provide productive value for the employer.
- Provide exposure to a wide range of careers and jobs within the industry.
- Offer opportunities to develop, practice and demonstrate employability skills.
- Build occupational knowledge.
- Create awareness of the education needed to be successful in the industry.

Internships are structured to:

- Enhance workplace knowledge and career awareness.
- Help build the skills required for specific occupations.
- Expose students/learners to a wide spectrum of workplace activities.
- Support key academic concepts, as well as technical and occupational skills development.

Internships are supported by:

- Student/learner preparation in the classroom.
- Internship design with the employer partner.
- Employer host orientation and ongoing troubleshooting.
- Multiple opportunities for reflection on the experience, both verbally and in writing.
- Employer assessment of skills acquisition.

Internships are connected to:

- Classroom learning.
- Individual career development/training plans.
- A sequence of educational, training and workplace activities.
- The student's/learner's next steps.

Internships take place for a minimum of 60 hours with more hours being optimal. They may be paid or unpaid, depending on whether the student is performing productive work for the employer and other factors.¹

¹ See USDOL Internship Factsheet #71 <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fact-sheets/71-flsa-internships> or the Unpaid Internships Fact Sheet

Internship Support Materials

Checklists, Tip Sheets and Fact Sheets

- WBL Connector Internship Checklist
- Student/Learner Internship Checklist
- Teacher/Faculty Internship Tip Sheet
- Employer Internship Tip Sheet
- Employer Internship Fact Sheet

Documents, Forms and Implementation Tools

- Unpaid Internships Fact Sheet
- USDOL Fact Sheet #71:
Internship Programs Under the Fair Labor Standards Act
- What Every Worksite Supervisor Should Know

Tips for Success **Work-Based Learning Essential Elements**

Quality Internships include structured activity before, during and after the experience. Pay attention to these tips to ensure meaningful experiences that result in enriched learning.

- ✓ Conduct Effective Planning
- ✓ Prepare for Success
- ✓ Identify Learning Objectives
- ✓ Create Authentic and Engaging Experiences
- ✓ Connect to Careers
- ✓ Support Student/Learner Growth
- ✓ Ensure Activities are Safe and Legal
- ✓ Provide Ongoing Support
- ✓ Provide for Reflection, Presentation and Feedback.
- ✓ Connect to the Student/Learner Next Step
- ✓ Assess and Document the Experience

Sustaining and growing Internships and all other work-based learning activities depend on maintaining positive relationships with the employers who are providing opportunities. These employers should be treated as valued customers and partners with frequent check-ins to address participation needs as they arise.

Work-Based Learning Connector Internship Checklist

Quick tips for Work-Based Learning Connectors¹ to ensure successful internships.

Before the Internship

- Review the Fact Sheet and any required forms.
- Meet with teachers/faculty and discuss how they can help with student/learner selection, internship design, reflection activities and support the classroom connection. Share the Teacher/Faculty Tip Sheet.
- Maintain regular communications with teachers/faculty.
- Design and develop the internship with the employer.
- Arrange for student/learner interviews.
- Debrief following the interviews.
- Have the employer sign the worksite agreement.
- Identify interested students/learners and review resumes.
- Select and refer qualified students/learners matched to employer specifications.
- Confirm placement details by providing both the employer and student an offer letter.
- Conduct a site visit to address key legal or safety issues.
- Prepare hosts by providing an orientation and determining the preferred frequency and method of contact.
- Prepare interns by sharing the student/learner checklist.
- Develop specific learning objectives for their WBL plan.

During the Internship

- If possible, meet with the intern and worksite supervisor at the workplace and observe workplace activities. Finalize training plan and make appointments for any future visits.
- Assist the worksite supervisor in completing the Employer Evaluation of student/learner performance at the mid-point and completion of the internship.
- Facilitate learning by coordinating opportunities for interns to reflect on their internships in the classroom and regularly assess progress using evaluations.
- If applicable, monitor intern timesheets and payroll. Resolve any issues that may arise.

After the Internship

- Conduct follow-up activities by reviewing the completed evaluations with the intern.
- Help interns update their career plan and think about any next steps they would like to take to further their career goals.
- Provide avenues for feedback on the effectiveness of the internship and make recommendations for adjustments in the future.
- Coordinate opportunities for student/learner reflection with teachers/faculty to help make the connection between this internship, classroom learning and next steps.
- Document the experience in ELENA and provide reports to all parties.

Sample Internship Timeline

Five months in advance:

- Develop and design the internship.
- Confirm student/learner availability and schedule with appropriate stakeholders.
- Get signed worksite agreement.

Three months in advance:

- Review resumes.
- Schedule interviews.
- Process results.
- Confirm placement details.
- Conduct a site visit.

Two months in advance:

- Prepare internship hosts.
- Prepare interns.
- Prepare teachers.

Two weeks in advance:

- Confirm details with all parties.

On the start date:

- Check in with the intern and employer.

¹ This includes Earn & Learn work-based learning connectors and others who facilitate, arrange and support work-based learning activities for students or other learners.

Student/Learner Internship Checklist

Internships can give you valuable experience in the workplace. It is a really exciting time because you get a preview of what your life could be like working at a job in an area of interest to you.

You'll meet many new people and learn a lot, so pay close attention and think about the possibility of this being a job for you one day.

Have you done all that you can to prepare for your internship?

- Think about the kind of internship you might like to have. Once you've asked around about what's available, decide on the one that fits best for you and apply for it.
- Turn in all required forms and complete any assignments.
- Create a resume' and prepare for your interview.
- Practice your "elevator pitch" introduction (who you are, why you're interested in the internship, what you are studying and what your career goals are).
- Do some research. Find out what you can about the company and the position.
- Have questions ready for the employer.
- Map out the location and leave early enough to ensure you arrive 10 minutes before the interview. Plan out what you are going to wear for this important first meeting.
- Once you have a placement confirmed, CONGRATULATIONS! learn all you can about the company, the internship and what will be expected of you.

Getting Ready for Your First Day

- Map out employer location and plan to get there 10 minutes early.
- Dress professionally.
- Bring your ID and any other forms that you need.
- Know the name of your supervisor and who to ask for when you get there.
- Relax and smile!

Have you thought about what you can do to make your internship a big success?

- Talk to a teacher or faculty member about what your learning goals are. Think about what you want to learn, the skills you'd like to develop, and work with your worksite supervisor to improve them. Include these in your WBL Training Plan.
- Go to the orientation and any trainings that your worksite supervisor asks you to.
- Make sure you understand your duties and complete all assigned tasks.
- Ask questions if something is unclear!
- Regularly talk with your connector, teachers/faculty and parents/guardians about how it's going at your internship.
- Track your hours and submit your timesheet (on time) to be paid!
- Consider keeping a daily journal about what you are learning and experiencing.

When your internship is over, how will you keep moving your career forward?

- Participate in ongoing self-reflection activities and classroom assignments. What were you able to accomplish and what did you learn through this experience?
- Send a thank-you letter to your worksite supervisor and ask if you can use him/her as a reference on your resume' or connect on LinkedIn.
- Update your resume' based on new skills and experiences gained and record the experience in your career development plan.
- Think about what you would like to do next to move your career plans forward.

Teacher/Faculty Internship Tip Sheet

Note: If you're coordinating an Internship, review the Connector Internship Checklist.

Internships are designed to:

- Promote hands-on experience in a field of interest.
- Provide productive value for the employer.
- Provide exposure to a wide range of careers and jobs within the industry.
- Offer opportunities to develop, practice and demonstrate employability skills.
- Build occupational knowledge.
- Create awareness of the education needed to be successful in the industry.

Did You Know?

Internships can support classroom curriculum and allow for students/learners to see and apply practical applications of key academic concepts.

Students/Learners who participate in internships while in High School or College pay more attention in class, enjoy higher graduation rates and better employment outcomes later in life.

Before the Internship

- Give the work-based learning connector information about students/learners who are ready for an internship. Talk about how you can support interns in reflection activities.
- Review the Connector Internship Checklist with the work-based learning connector and decide who will facilitate each activity.
- Help match students/learners to specific internship opportunities based on their skills and interests and the employer's needs.
- Help students/learners prepare for the interview, including their "elevator pitch" and how to dress.
- Have students research the employer and identify career options/pathways of interest.
- Work with the intern to define their learning objectives for their WBL Training Plan.
- Let interns know how they will be evaluated on their internship performance.
- Explore what concepts in the classroom might be demonstrated in the workplace.
- Distribute and collect all required forms.

During the Internship

- Work with the work-based learning connector to document learning objectives.
- Design and coordinate concurrent learning activities in the classroom.
- Provide opportunities for interns to reflect on their experience - in the classroom, both verbally and in writing.

After the Internship

- Review completed evaluations with interns. Discuss and record next steps.
- Work with the work-based learning connector to finalize documentation of student learning. Together, assess the effectiveness of the internship and make recommendations for adjustments.
- Provide opportunities for students/learners to reflect on their internships or showcase their work through presentations or demonstrations.
- Help interns update their career development plan.

Go Deeper

- Guide students/learners through a comparison of the culture and style of the workplace with others they have observed, including behavioral and communication expectations.

Employer Internship Tip Sheet

Through an Earn & Learn internship, students and other learners are placed at a worksite for a defined period of time to participate in and observe work firsthand.

Internships provide a direct benefit to the employer and give students/learners the opportunity to learn by doing real work and being productively engaged in the workplace. Interns may work individually, in teams, work on a project, or rotate through a number of departments and job functions.

When hosting an intern or launching an Internship program at your company, keep the following success factors in mind.

Did You Know?

Interns are learning about your industry and are considering how they might prepare for and begin their career.

Students who participate in internships while in High School or College enjoy higher graduation rates and better employment outcomes later in life. Many return and become valuable regular employees with the companies where they interned.

Before the Internship

- Contact your Earn & Learn connector to discuss hosting an intern. If/when you decide to move forward, interview and select the intern.
- Work with the work-based learning connector to develop and design the internship.
- Determine who supervises and guides the intern.
- Review the informational packet provided by the intern's school or college.
- Meet with the connector and the intern to finalize learning plans and agree on an ongoing communication strategy.
- Inform other staff members and employees that an intern will be at the workplace.

During the Internship

- Provide a workplace orientation for the intern.
- Consider ways the intern can develop work readiness skills (ask the connector for a copy of a list of the skills) and be exposed to a range of careers in your industry.
- Identify opportunities that will support the intern's academic, occupational and work-readiness skill development and assist the intern in working toward learning objectives.
- Think about ways you can serve as both a coach and supervisor.
- Communicate successes and opportunities to the connector that can be used to enhance the value of classroom connections.
- Use the WBL Training Plan and Evaluation to assess the intern's performance at a mid-point and completion of the internship. Discuss it with the intern and the connector.

After the Internship

- Hold a debriefing session internally at the company. Review the effectiveness of the Internship program and make suggestions for improvement.
- Complete the WBL activity evaluation.

Resources

- Visit earnlearn.us to learn more about how to get the most out of your partnership with Earn & Learn.

Employer Internship Fact Sheet

Through an Earn & Learn internship, students and other learners are placed at a worksite for a defined period of time to participate in and observe work firsthand.

Internships provide a direct benefit to the employer and give students/learners the opportunity to learn by doing real work and being productively engaged in the workplace. Interns may work individually, in teams, work on a project, or rotate through a number of departments and job functions.

Why is an Internship important for students/learners?

- Everybody needs a first job, and for many, an internship provides that opportunity.
- An internship provides exposure to a wide range of careers and jobs within the industry and a chance to explore a field of interest.
- Those that participate in an internship experience higher graduation and completion rates and better employment outcomes later in life.
- Helps develop occupational knowledge and the ability to perform successfully in the workplace.
- Offers an opportunity to develop, practice and demonstrate new skills and to learn what education and skills are needed to be successful in the industry.
- Gives young people a chance to develop adult and team relationships.

What are the benefits to my company?

- Introduces potential future workers to job opportunities with your company.
- Exposes students/learners to the skill needs, educational requirements and career opportunities in your industry.
- Brings new energy and a fresh perspective to your workplace.
- Shows your employees that you are committed to supporting education and helps them understand how to communicate with the next generation of workers.
- Provides opportunities for existing workers to develop supervisory skills.
- Allows for you to observe potential future workers in a long-term interview process.
- Promotes an understanding of the role and contributions of your business in the community.
- Offers a public relations benefit.

What do I need to do next?

- Contact your Earn & Learn work-based learning connector and work with him/her to design the internship.
- Arrange for a presentation to your employees.
- Consider any impacts on company policy.

Resources

- Distribute the Employer Internship Tip Sheet to interested employee volunteers.
- Visit earnlearn.us to learn more about how to get the most out of your partnership with Earn & Learn.

Program Level: 11th grade or higher
Employer/Intern Ratio: 1:1 (maximum 1:5)
Duration: 6-8 weeks, 60 or more hours
Location: Workplace
Costs: Wages (sometimes subsidized)
Special Considerations: Internships may be paid or unpaid, depending on whether the student is performing productive work for the employer and other factors.

See USDOL Internship Factsheet #71
<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fact-sheets/71-flsa-internships>