Organising a Placement for the Science and Technology Internship Subject

Subject Coordinator: Professor Janet Hergt  head@earthsci.unimelb.edu.au
Careers Consultant: Yovanna Adamis  yadamis@unimelb.edu.au

Before this subject formally commences, over a period of about a month or two leading up to the start of semester, it is extremely important to organise your placement. If you intend to be overseas throughout the midyear break, it is important to set up your placement before you go. The recommended process is:

1. 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 you are having difficulty being clear about your career interests or deciding on what sort of placement you want, make a Careers Consultation appointment with Yovanna Adamis. Bookings are through Careers Online: www.careersonline.unimelb.edu.au (go to 'View Appointments') – if you have difficulty finding an appointment to suit, email Yovanna: yadamis@unimelb.edu.au.

2. Locate possible organisations to approach by searching the internet, perhaps using online directories such as:
   - www.dir.yahoo.com.au,
   - social media platforms such as LinkedIn,
   - relevant professional associations - list of “Professional Associations by Degree” can be downloaded from the Careers and Employment (C&E) website: http://careers.unimelb.edu.au/student/online_career_tools/exploring_your_options

   and

   - talking 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).

For more information on this approach:
http://careers.unimelb.edu.au/student/online_career_tools/exploring_your_options and download PDF ‘Approaching employers”
3. Prepare a resume (2 pages, perhaps 3 if necessary) and an application letter. Please use the “Cover letter format” and “Resume Format – STEM” templates, downloadable from the C&E website:

http://careers.unimelb.edu.au/_Resume_format_STEM.pdf

4. Your application / cover letter should include:
   • You are looking for a placement as part of the Science & Technology Internship run by The University of Melbourne and you're interested in doing an internship with their organisation over the coming semester.
   • Why you're interested in working with their organisation.
   • This is an unpaid internship, you would be covered by University insurance and that it would amount to about 80 hours over the semester.
   • The placement would usually involve the student undertaking a project or a portfolio of research and management work (you might even have a specific project or area of research in mind – although this is open to negotiation between you and the contact person) and may also include involvement in the day-to-day business of the organisation.
   • Provide the contact person with the Subject Coordinator’s contact details so they can follow up for further information about the program.

5. Have your drafts reviewed by making a Careers Consultation appointment with Yovanna Adamis. Alternatively, you can attend a Careers Drop-In session on any Tuesday afternoon between 12 and 2pm (no bookings; first-in, first-served). Both, careers appointments and careers drop-in sessions are held at Eastern Precinct, a shared space with the Science Student Centre. If you are having trouble making arrangements for a review of your documents, email Yovanna: yadamis@unimelb.edu.au.

6. If you don’t have a contact, before sending an application, phone the organisation to determine to whom you should send your application. Explain that you’re looking for a placement as part of the Science and Technology Internship subject run by The University of Melbourne, and find out who is the best person to contact, their email address and phone number.

7. Send your application – resume, application / cover letter and Host Information flyer (this document will be available before the placement information session).

8. If you don’t hear back within a week, ring the person you emailed to remind them of your request. Ideally, you should only contact one organisation at a time. If you're not getting much response you can start contacting several at once.

9. Organisations will want to arrange a meeting or interview 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.

10. At the interview, you will then need to talk about what it is you’ll do there. Make sure you tell your workplace supervisor the following to expand on your email to them:
   • Interns usually work on a practical, research or policy 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 organisation to agree upon what you will be doing during the internship. If you have any concerns about what the agency is asking you to do then talk to the Subject Coordinator.
   • Remind them that it should be about 80 hours worth of work (usually one day a week over the semester). Assessment, of the intern’s written work for the purposes of the internship subject, is the Subject Coordinator’s responsibility - all the agency supervisor has to do by way of assessment is fill out the form which will be provided
in the Subject Guide 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: www.fpg.unimelb.edu.au/io/unimelb/student.html

11. If you would like to talk about an upcoming interview – particularly the issue of what you might do in your placement - contact Professor Janet Hergt.

12. When your placement is finalised, advise the Subject Coordinator what organisation you'll be doing your internship with, what the placement involves and the name and contact details of your supervisor.

13. Fill out a University of Melbourne Risk Assessment Form and sign a Student Declaration form and submit to the Subject Coordinator for final placement approval.

14. Following approval, the organisation will then be emailed University documentation. The supervisor will be provided with a Letter Agreement from the Subject Coordinator that sets out respective roles and responsibilities of The University and the placement agency.