

Employer Internship Guide

What is an internship?

According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), 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 professional fields they are considering for career paths; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent.

How do internships differ from other jobs?

Internships MUST include specific learning objectives for the student. In the classroom, students build knowledge from lectures, assigned reading, exams, and class projects. Through internships, student interns learn through practical application of what was gained in the classroom.

To be truly defined as an internship, the experience must be:

- 1.) Related to the intern's intended career field or coursework.
- 2.) Facilitated by an internship supervisor who provides regular constructive guidance, evaluation, and feedback.
- 3.) Targeted toward a learning objective, which the intern engages in and reflects upon throughout the course of the internship.

How does the internship process work at UT?

You can post your internship position(s) on our Handshake system. Please follow the instructions below to create your account and post your internship opportunities.

- To register your company and contact information in Handshake, go to: <https://app.joinhandshake.com/register> and click Employer. Once you have created an account in the system and you're vetted/approved by us, you will be able to post your role.
**When creating your account, be sure to choose University of Tampa as a school to link to!*
- Questions about how to create your account and post positions? Visit <https://support.joinhandshake.com/hc/en-us/categories/202707307-Employer>.

Once your internship is posted, it will be reviewed for approval by a staff member in the Office of Career Services. Pending approval, the internship will be available for students to view and apply. Students are not placed in internships; they must search Handshake to find opportunities. It is the student's responsibility to contact faculty if they are completing the internship for credit.

Can I post my own internship on Handshake?

Yes! When you post your internship on Handshake, it will remain in a “pending” status until reviewed by the Office of Career Services for approval (typically takes one-three weeks due to the high volume of internships submitted on Handshake). Feel free to call the Office of Career Services to expedite the approval of your internship posting. Once approved, students will be able to review internship postings and apply.

What requirements are needed to host an intern?

Employers interested in hosting interns must provide the following:

- **Physical office space** (office space cannot be located inside the home)
- **General liability insurance coverage** (consult with your insurance provider or legal team for verification)
- **Direct in-person supervision**
- **Compliance with [Fair Labor Standards Act](#)**

How can I develop a strong internship position description?

Though similar to a part-time or full-time job description, internship position descriptions should also disclose learning outcomes. When interns recognize value in the internship and understand the professional growth opportunities available, your target applicant pool will grow. Be as detailed as possible in your position description to convey an accurate picture of how the student can increase their knowledge/skill set, and be an asset to your organization.

Do I have to pay my intern?

The answer to whether you must pay an intern can be found in the [Fair Labor Standards Act](#) (FLSA). This is based on whether the intern/student is an employee under FLSA and who the primary beneficiary is between intern and host site.

The Department of Labor has developed seven criteria for identifying the primary beneficiary. All seven factors must be met to post an unpaid internship:

1. The extent to which the intern and the employer clearly understand that there is no expectation of compensation. Any promise of compensation, express or implied, suggests that the intern is an employee—and vice versa.
2. The extent to which the internship provides training that would be similar to that which would be given in an educational environment, including the clinical and other hands-on training provided by educational institutions.
3. The extent to which the internship is tied to the intern’s formal education program by integrated coursework or the receipt of academic credit.
4. The extent to which the internship accommodates the intern’s academic commitments by corresponding to the academic calendar.
5. The extent to which the internship’s duration is limited to the period in which the internship provides the intern with beneficial learning.
6. The extent to which the intern’s work complements, rather than displaces, the work of paid employees while providing significant educational benefits to the intern.
7. The extent to which the intern and the employer understand that the internship is conducted without entitlement to a paid job at the conclusion of the internship.

Compliance with FLSA is a requirement to participate in The University of Tampa Internship Program. It is the sole responsibility of the employer/ host site to determine if this criterion is met. Please consult legal counsel or the Department of Labor if more information or clarification is needed.

*** The majority of internships are paid and students are presented with an abundance of internship opportunities. To remain competitive, we strongly encourage paid internships.*

What level of compensation is typical for an internship?

Compensation varies from industry to industry. Academic credit is not a form of compensation. (Students that choose to enroll their internship for academic credit have to pay for the course.) Interns that are paid must at least meet the state's minimum wage criteria. However, to attract the most desirable candidates, competitive compensation is recommended. To ensure that your internship is in compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act, review [Internship Programs under the Fair Labor Standards Act](#).

Am I guaranteed an intern?

The Office of Career Services does not place students into internships and therefore cannot guarantee that a student will apply to your internship. However every effort is made to market your internship and inform students about internship opportunities. Paid internships typically receive a larger, more competitive candidate pool.

What can I do to build awareness of the opportunity, in addition to posting on Handshake?

Internship host sites that spend time on campus building their brand typically have the most applicants. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways. Please visit [Employer Services Page](#) to learn more about how to increase your engagement with the UT community.

As an internship host site, what do I need to do so that a student can obtain credit?

The student should assume most of the responsibility when completing an internship for academic credit. However, you may be asked to complete an Internship Request Form, which includes intern supervisor, student responsibilities, projects, learning objectives, verification of liability insurance, compliance with FLSA, etc. Each academic department manages for-credit internships a bit differently, but you will likely be asked to complete an evaluation of the student's performance, verify hours worked, or provide additional documentation. Please be sure to understand the deadlines for such materials, and to provide them in a timely fashion. Your student intern can provide more detail on what their academic department requires.

Each department also has specific pre-requisites that are required for students to be eligible to earn academic credit for an internship. Requirements can be viewed at www.ut.edu/internships/academiccredit.

Is sponsorship required to hire an international student as my intern?

No. An international student can be hired as an intern the same way you would hire a domestic student. The international student will be required to earn academic credit for their internship, but they can still get hired the same as any other candidate. There will be paperwork on the student's end, but no additional paperwork on your end is required to hire an international student for your internship opportunity.

When do internships typically begin? How long do they last?

Internships typically start within the first three weeks of the academic semester and last the duration of the semester (14 weeks during fall/spring semesters, 12 weeks during summer).

Can an intern be considered an independent contractor?

No. The independent contractor designation is not appropriate for interns. Independent Contractors are hired because of their expertise in a given area and are expected to produce certain results. That arrangement is a direct contradiction to the main purpose of an internship, which should be to learn.

Should I offer orientation for newly hired interns?

It is recommended that you coordinate some type of onboarding orientation for your intern(s) similar to how you would treat a new part-time or full-time staff member. Items for inclusion could be a history of your organization, explanation or organizational structure, rules, policies, expectations, and a review of the student's learning objectives and goals. You will also be responsible for providing the necessary equipment/materials for the intern to successfully complete their internship (computer, office space, applicable software, etc.)

What if there is a problem with my UT student intern?

Employers are urged to report any incident as soon as possible to The University of Tampa's Office of Career Services to permit both the university and the host site the opportunity to promptly intervene. All complaints should be filed as quickly as possible. All interactions during the intervention will be documented and kept on file in the Office of Career Services.

**The National Association of Colleges and Employers 2019 Internship and Co-op Survey Report:
The one-year retention rate for intern hires with internal experience is 71.4%.**

Questions?

Contact Kelly Allgeier, Associate Director of Career Services (kallgeier@ut.edu)

The information provided in this document is not legal advice, and should be viewed as general information.
Please consult your legal counsel for specific information.