

Unpaid Internships Checklist

Unpaid Internships

What are unpaid internships?

Unpaid internships are opportunities to participate in a discipline related role for an agreed period of time and payment is not received.

To get involved or not?

The Fair Work Act 2009 requires that students are paid at least the minimum wage for work experience undertaken within organisations unless, the work is undertaken as a requirement of a course of study or is classified as voluntary work.

In some industries unpaid internships are common, and students make the decision to participate based on the benefits derived in relation to gaining relevant work experience, creating a professional network and/or clarifying career goals. The tasks to be performed by the student should primarily be observational, or, if the student undertakes productive activities, the benefit of the work activities should largely flow to the student, rather than assist the host of the unpaid work placement with its revenue activities.

You should ensure that the placement supports the learning outcomes of your course.

Unpaid Internships checklist

Questions to think about	Yes	No
Is the organisation not-for-profit?		
Have you completed background research on the company and their activities?		
Is your role clear and specific?		
Are the activities and placement you'll be undertaking helpful and related to the learning		
Have you established clear timeframes around how long you are prepared to participate ie hours per week and total duration?		
Can you get academic credit for the experience or is it a requirement of your course?		
Are you gaining useful skills or knowledge by undertaking this internship?		
Could the experience help you make up your mind about your career options or support		
Are you free from paying any fees?		
Will you be covered by insurance?		
Is your role a learning position and one which could not be undertaken by a paid work-		
Have you asked if there will be any training and orientation available?		
Will your work hours fit around your study and exam commitments?		

Based on your answers and personal values formulate a decision as to whether you will proceed.

Resources

[Fair Work Ombudsman](#)

[UTS documentation](#) (Must be completed for unpaid internships that are not a course requirement)