

# The Never Not Creative Internship

## Why?

Getting the best possible start in your career is something that we all wish for. Having a safe workplace to cut your teeth and experienced people to show you the ropes can give you that invaluable insight and information that helps to make you valuable – and employable.

While many workplaces in the creative industry offer excellent opportunities, some may need a bit more help in setting up a program that's of mutual benefit for the intern and the business alike.

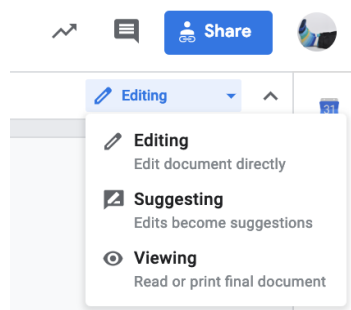
## What?

This document isn't expected to be the be all and end all – it's not the law – to be honest the law is mostly clear on what constitutes an internship and whether it is a paid role or not (hint, it is). It's intended to be a guide for running and participating in a successful internship.

To begin with, this document is a place for you to write your ideas and contribute to what may become a standardised internship program. Depending on the contributions and ideas it may be a range of programs with different structures / durations. We'll work this out as we go.

As we build this document, please make as many suggestions as you like. All that we ask is that you be respectful with your ideas and language. Please add any links to references that you used at the end of the document.

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU'RE IN **SUGGESTING** MODE. CLICK THE OPTION IN THE TOP RIGHT OF YOUR SCREEN.



What happens next? Good question. This document will stay open for suggestions until the end of March 2019. Then the ideas and feedback will be collated to produce a more formal document. This may be a guide for the employer and intern to use together, or even for an intern to present to an employer to use for their upcoming internship. Other ideas for format are welcome!

# Contents

The document is split into 9 sections.

1. **What is and isn't a paid internship?** - add your thoughts and definitions.
2. **Goal** - what is the objective of the internship for both the employer and the intern?
3. **Duration** - how long a program should last.
4. **Commitment** - what the intern and employer agree to uphold for themselves and each other.
5. **Reward** - what the employer and intern should expect to see in return for their commitment to each other.
6. **Structure** - what form the program should take and components that it should include.
7. **Delivery** - tips for the employer and the intern to ensure a successful experience.
8. **Evaluation** - how to end and review a successful internship experience
9. **References** - links to further information

## What is and isn't a PAID internship?

Add your definitions below. Feel free to add rows to the table.

For reference here is the Fair Work Ombudsman's guide (to be honest, it's a little grey and non-committal) - <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/pay/unpaid-work/work-experience-and-internships>

PAID	MAYBE?	UNPAID
Any position that can be done by paying a normal employee	Any position that is part of a university course requirement and results in accreditation for the intern? <b>Not exactly keen on this - students pay for subjects so they're essentially paying for an unpaid internship</b>	Any arrangement less than 5 days
Any position that results in the company generating revenue from the work done	Any position that works on purely pro bono projects? - would argue no, see 1st point in the paid column.	Any arrangement that is purely observational
Any arrangement longer than a month		Does this exclude people who aren't design students? What about people already in the workforce considering a change in career?
Any arrangement that benefits the operation of the company.		
Any position that assists minimise the workload for employees - i.e. replacing a freelance junior		

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## **GOAL** - *What is the objective of the internship for both the employer and the intern?*

### **Intern**

Get experience, build confidence, and build understanding of how the creative business works.

Opportunity to collaborate with other disciplines

Work out if this is the career for them

Learn on the job and be exposed to new problems

Learn soft skills, e.g. studio / team etiquette

To become “work-ready”

To give the intern an accelerated introduction to working life in the creative industry. To help them understand the pace, urgency and reality of working in a commercial practice.

To network and become part of the industry

### **Employers**

For the employer to support new entrants into the creative industry, evaluate potential fit for permanent recruitment, and aid the development of management skills within their team.

Invest in the next generation of the creative industry.

Find long-term employees

Find new perspectives to improve studio / team / business

Showcase why people should want to work here - good impression - word of mouth

Train internal staff on how to manage

Understand cultural fit

## **DURATION** - *how long a program should last.*

Internships should last for a minimum of 20 working days and a maximum of 60 working days.

They may be for 2-5 days a week / kept flexible as agreed between the employer and the intern.

What's worked for us and our interns: 3 weeks full time or over a period of time 1-3 days per week.

Interns should attend for a full work day and preferably at least two consecutive days to experience the workflow and pace of a studio and their projects.

If not at university, and a paid position, should this be 3 days minimum?

3-6 months

Minimum 2 days per week

2 weeks unpaid, then 3 months evaluation at a minimum / intern / living wage

Could they be milestone based rather than time-based?

## **COMMITMENT** - *what the intern and employer agree to uphold for themselves and each other.*

The intern agrees to respect all of the rules and policies in place at the business for regular team members. This includes everything from good time-keeping, confidentiality, respecting the reputation of the business and the team within it.

The intern agrees to follow the guidelines, structure and commitments set out in the Never Not Creative internship program or an adaptation of that has been agreed with the employer.

The employer agrees to respect and treat the intern in the same way that they would any other member of their team.

The employer agrees to follow the guidelines, structure and commitments set out in the Never Not Creative internship program or an adaptation that they have agreed to with the intern.

*Perhaps include something along the lines:*

The intern commits to be open-minded, actively listen and accept the responsibility of the experience. The intern will act proactively throughout the internship, looking for ways to add to the experience.

The employer commits to include the intern in as many activities and as much of the studio life as possible. The employer will nominate a studio buddy(s) for the intern. Someone the intern can go to for advice, or to resolve issues.

The employer commits to give the intern designated 'time' with the team. Space for them to ask questions directly in an open, informal manner.

The intern role shouldn't be covering that of another full time employee - i.e. cover for someone on holiday etc.

**REWARD** - *what the employer and intern should expect to see in return for their commitment to each other.*

The internship is a paid position. To fully understand and immerse themselves into a business they need to be treated like an entry level employee. They need to experience supporting or doing paid work for paying clients or clients that the agency has a commercial arrangement with (including pro bono) – and therefore should be paid.

If the employer isn't in a position to pay the intern, but still wants to support new entrants to the industry, then the opportunity to offer mentor sessions, portfolio reviews, or observation days is another great way to help.

The standard internship wage is a base rate of \$150/day plus superannuation if applicable. (please suggest / comment - this is just a starting point) Of course, employers may choose to pay more. I would suggest \$200 a day plus super, as per any other role a student would take. Super is absolutely necessary

The wage is just that. A salary for work performed for the company. It can not be replaced with transport tickets, lunch etc. Any additional incentives or perks are above and beyond the standard internship wage. Agreed!

At least minimum wage. No alternatives. Free lunch etc.



## **STRUCTURE** - *what form the program should take.*

The program is split into 6 sections. Each section is referred to as a percentage of time. If the program is 20 days then, 25% equals the first 5 days, if 60 days, then the first 15 days etc.

Please share your thoughts here. What should be included in each section? What's missing?

1. Introduction (10%)
  - roles and responsibilities, business model, key clients, history of the business, plans for the future, explanation of an organisation chart (so the intern understands everyone's role), personal introduction to the team.
2. Flow (20%)
  - daily / weekly routine, expectations around ways of working, tools and processes used in the business. Attendance at a regular WIP meeting.
3. Working with a team (20%)
  - giving / receiving feedback, check-ins, transparency, building on ideas, introduction to every team member and a clear description or explanation of each colleague's role and remit.
4. Working with a client (20%) Suggest making this 30%
  - preparation, meeting skills / etiquette, presentation skills, how to have a difficult conversation. Understanding how to take a brief/active listening skills/learning how to take notes.
5. Business success (20%)
  - project management, quoting / proposal writing, chasing the money. Access to studio management software/time keeping process.
6. Evaluation (10%)
  - how to evaluate the success of the internship, honest feedback for intern and employer, next steps / action plan whether with the company or not. Reference?

## **DELIVERY - *tips for the employer and the intern to ensure a successful experience.***

Please add your tips for successful internships here. They could be behavioural, process driven, mindset driven...

A weekly one-on-one catchup with the intern with supervisor or manager to discuss their workload, experience, expectations and queries. Can be as quick as 10 to 15 minutes in the office or over coffee.

**Establish a way to let your interns know what their day/workload will look like either through one-on-one catch ups like suggested above. Or a way that they can check and manage for themselves like a spreadsheet, trello board etc. There's nothing worse than having to twiddle your thumbs or feeling annoying because you're constantly asking for more work**

**A huge part of internships is about studio etiquette, client servicing/interaction so I think it's good to loop interns in on as much as is appropriate (meetings, phone calls, studio catch-ups) so they can observe behaviours and learn by absorbing what they've seen.**

**Organisations should ensure that emails and other systems interns need access to are up and running appropriately and reliably. Secondly, extra intern hours should be recorded and confirmed via email or in writing, not by word of mouth. This is to ensure that interns are not being overworked.**

Suggest that we offer:

- Draft template for a contract agreement between the intern and employer

- Draft 'formula' of what a day/week/ month of an internship might look like (because many studio's are unsure what to do with an intern)

**Suggest having a designated project the intern is taking care of, so they are following through a project from brief to debrief (as closely as possible) and not jumping around between briefing sessions only to work on them for a day or two**

Meaningful work - work that can be clearly linked to a progression in understanding and / or skill.

Have an experienced supervisor - what training does the person in charge of the intern have?

Ensure key learning outcomes

Proper time for feedback - weekly / frequent updates

Clarity on if a role is / isn't available as an outcome of the internship

In-house work or work to promote the agency is still work, and therefore should still be paid.

## **EVALUATION** - *how to end and review a successful internship experience*

Could end up being a feedback form / scorecard / discussion guide for a meeting between the intern and the employer.

A letter of recommendation would be hugely beneficial for the intern searching for their next career opportunity.

Perhaps the relationship doesn't end abruptly at the end of the internship. Perhaps there's a scheduled meeting after one month, and again after six months. It would be a good start to an intern understanding the value of a network / mentor.

An exit interview would be highly beneficial with a letter of recommendation

## **REFERENCES**

<https://www.fairwork.gov.au/pay/unpaid-work/work-experience-and-internships>  
<http://internsaustralia.org.au/for-interns/#the-law>