Self-sourcing Professional Internships: The basics

The basics

- Professional Internships are part-time, typically unpaid opportunities.
- They are completed over a semester, during which students dedicate 120 to 140 hours to a project.
- These hours cannot all be completed remotely, but hybrid arrangements are possible.
- Internships take up an elective, meaning they can be completed alongside other units.
- Obtaining an internship is a competitive process that requires formal applications.
- To find out more, please visit our website.

All self-sourced internships are subject to a screening process. Your opportunity must pass due diligence checks and receive academic approval. Therefore, the validation of a self-sourced internship is not guaranteed.

Eligibility criteria

- You must be admitted in an eligible undergraduate degree.
- You must have completed 12 units (150 credit points).
- You must have maintained a unit average of at least 60%.

Checking your eligibility

Before trying to self-source, please make sure you have been deemed eligible for our internship program, even if you do not plan to apply for opportunities on InPlace (our online application platform).

You can register for a check via this link. Then, our team will assess your case and inform you of the outcome.

If you are eligible, you will be given access to InPlace. If an intake is active, this platform will allow you to view and apply for relevant internships should you wish.



Your internship options

There are three ways through which you can engage with our internship program:

- Apply for the internship opportunities advertised on InPlace.
- Self-source your internship by securing an opportunity outside of InPlace. Relevant search sites could include <u>SwinEmploy</u>, <u>GradConnection</u>, <u>Prosple</u> and Seek.
- Self-source your internship by networking or cold contacting organisations.

Key dates

Please make yourself aware of the cut-off dates for the intake you wish to complete your internship in. You can do so by following this link to our website.

Contact

You can visit us at the Careers Launchpad (ground floor of the SPS building), explore our website or reach out to us at profplacements@swin.edu.au.

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SWINBURNE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Self-sourcing Professional Internships: Tips and tricks

Self-sourcing by networking or cold contacting

1. Define your value proposition

You need to convince an organisation that you would add value to their project.

- Highlight your relevant knowledge and technical skills.
- Highlight your personal strengths. You can take inspiration from this <u>strength assessment</u> or this list of employability skills on <u>myfuture</u>.
- You can also check out our <u>Skills &</u>
 <u>Preferences Learning Path</u> as a resource.

2. Access support

There are a variety of support resources available to you.

- Explore these websites to <u>find an internship</u> or <u>find an ethical internship</u>.
- Other resources include <u>GradConnection's e-</u> <u>Learning Hub</u> and the <u>Australian Business to</u> <u>Business Directory</u>.

3. Networking

Learn how to network professionally and effectively.

- Use this resource on <u>informational interviews</u> to build your networking approach.
- Identify people in your current network who may be able to help you reach industry professionals.
- Use LinkedIn to approach people of interest.
 Swinburne Alumni are often great contacts for networking or internship opportunities.
- Join a relevant professional association as a student member to get access to events and industry professionals.
- Remember that your networking efforts might not have an immediate impact but may pay dividends in future.

4. Direct approach (cold calling)

First, identify which organisations you would like to intern with, then gather a list of relevant names and contact details.

- Order this list of organisations from most preferred to least preferred. Then, research the organisations in this order.
- During your research, try to identify if an organisation has a department or team that may suit your discipline, knowledge and skills.
- Also try to identify the names and position titles of industry professionals who would be appropriate contacts.

5. Develop a pitch (verbal or written)

After this research, outline the following for each organisation.

- Why would I like to intern at this organisation and in what capacity?
- What could I offer as an intern?
- You can use your value proposition and our <u>Elevator Pitch Builder</u> for help here.
- Inform them of the start and finish dates for the relevant intake.
- Provide our <u>handout for organisations</u> that outlines the necessary guidelines and processes.
- Before making contact, practice your approach on friends and family.

You will also need to make sure that a satisfactory number of hours can be completed within the duration of the relevant semester. Please also make sure that you allow enough time to complete the entire self-sourcing process. Being realistic and flexible in your approach to self-sourcing is key.

Receiving an offer

As soon as you receive an offer, you will need to do the following.

- Download the <u>Project Description template</u> and send it to your potential host organisation for completion.
- Once it is complete, send the template and the contact details of your potential industry supervisor to profplacements@swin.edu.au.

Internship unit enrolment

You will be enrolled in the relevant internship unit by our team once your opportunity is confirmed. You can consider this as an official acknowledgement that your internship has been approved.

Please note that it is illegal to do an unpaid internship with a forprofit organisation.* There are severe penalties for companies who appoint someone in an unpaid position that is not sanctioned by an approved tertiary program.

The risks for you are also considerable if you choose to undertake an opportunity without approval from Swinburne. For example, if we are unaware of your internship, we may not be able to assist or support you as required should issues arise.

*An unpaid internship with a not-for-profit organisation may be possible. In this case, make sure you are registered as a volunteer with the organisation to ensure you are covered by their insurance.