



An Internship Work Placement is a mandatory part of many Virtu Institute's ("Virtu") Advanced Diploma and Bachelor degree courses and is embedded within single or multiple subjects as outlined in each course or subject outline. In all cases this handbook is to be read in conjunction with individual course and subject documents, specific course supervision and observation guidelines and logbooks if required.

To achieve a successful internship Work Placement the student should take the following steps:

- The student identifies the Host Organisation (HO) and if possible the Site Supervisor
- If the student does not have a prospective HO that is acceptable to the Virtu Lecturer/Trainer then Virtu will assist the student in identifying a suitable HO within Virtu's bank of corporate and commercial stakeholders. Students should be prepared to compete for these places by way of interview with the HO.
- The student provides a quick report containing the HO details, the project/process to be engaged with, the Site Supervisor, and the dates proposed, to their Virtu Lecturer/Trainer for consideration and response
- The student reviews the Virtu Internship Work Placement Agreement, customises it and, after clearance and sign-off from the Virtu Lecturer/Trainer, Administration Manager and Registrar, submits it to the HO for agreement and completion.

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Virtu will inform all enrolling students in the course brochure/ information prior to student enrolment and then during the student induction of this internship Work Placement requirement in the Virtu qualifications. Virtu will then assist the student to locate the Internship Work Placement but it is finally the student's responsibility to secure the appropriate placement. Failure to secure an internship/work placement will result in the student not completing the course.

The function of this Handbook and the appended Agreement is to establish a formal relationship and understanding between the student, Virtu (represented by its Administration Manager and Registrar) and the HO. All three parties are required to complete and sign all sections of the various forms and agreements and the originals will be held by Virtu Institute Student Services.

MANAGEMENT OF THE INTERNSHIP/WORK PLACEMENT:

The internship work placement is designed to take place at a time in the course as prescribed in the course or subject documents and should, as a result, enable students to integrate all of the learning that has taken place in the taught courses. In some cases, the internship work placement will be the context in which a final project will be developed, and it is essential that the experience is effectively supervised by a HO Site Supervisor from a business perspective. The Virtu Lecturer/Trainer will guide and assess the student from an academic perspective.

Students will be required to develop and maintain a reflective journal for the duration of their internship work placement experience. This is an assessed component of most courses and one means by which Virtu can provide ongoing support and guidance to the student on a weekly basis throughout the internship/work placement.

Critically, the internship work placement must be contextualised by the chosen workplace, and this should guide all learning and assessment decisions in terms of the final project work, written reports, logbooks and observations.

A number of critical issues should be addressed from Host Organisation, Virtu and student perspectives:



Relationship with the Host Organisation

In order for the internship work placement to be successful, and to create the possibility, or probability, of future internships work placements for Virtu, there should be some tangible benefits for the Host Organisation. The objectives of the internship work placement should be clearly outlined through a collaborative process between Virtu, the Host Organisation and the student, and the outcomes should be embedded within the agreement for future reference by all parties. It is important that the agreement is ongoing throughout the internship work placement, and that there is a concluding session to identify:

- How well the agreed objectives were met
- What went well
- What could have gone better
- Whether the Host Organisation is prepared to take future student interns/work placements

In all cases, the Host Organisation supervisor(s) must provide a report (Sample provided in this handbook) evaluating both the internship work placement as a whole, and student performance following guidelines agreed prior to the internship work placement period. These guidelines incorporate a set of objectives and observations as well as the skills, knowledge, competencies and learning outcomes required within the Subject Outline and assessment tasks. These objectives should be:

- Written
- Agreed by all parties
- Agreed with a specific timeline
- Challenging but 'achievable' in the time allotted
- Measurable
- Leading the concluding discussions at the end of the internship/work placement period



Supervision of Students:

Students must be allocated individual Site Supervisors, and the supervision timelines should be reinforced. The supervision process can be time consuming, and requires preparation time by both parties. It is essential that the student is not left alone during the internship work placement process, and that ongoing reports are required, documented and followed up. The weekly reporting by students to their Virtu Lecturer/Trainer through entries in their reflective journal will assist in maintaining connection and support.

It is unlikely that a student will be able to deliver well-structured written reports if this workplace learning and activities are not recorded progressively and are left until the conclusion of the internship/work placement period. As such, time for effective supervision should be incorporated in consideration of the overall workload of the Virtu Lecturer/Trainer and the HO Site Supervisor.

The Site Supervisor-to-Student is a key relationship in the management of a successful internship/work placement. Should any issues arise during the internship work placement that could impact adversely upon that relationship then the student should notify the Virtu Lecturer/Trainer immediately. The Virtu Lecturer/Trainer will then initiate an appropriate intervention to guide the relationship towards a more amicable status which is both supportive of student learning and in line with the HO objectives set out in the Agreement.

Nature of Supervision:

There are a number of steps that will facilitate effective supervision from Virtu and Host Organisation supervisor perspective:

- Objectives, timelines and milestone-expectations must be made clear prior to commencement of the internship work placement.
- These expectations must be made clear to all parties, including the Host Organisation. They should be developed in collaboration with Virtu, the Host Organisation, the supervisor and the student.
- A 'Supervision Audit Trail' should be kept for each student

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including correspondence, draft assessments etc. This may be called upon in the event of questioning by Virtu's Lecturer/Trainer on the nature/quality of the supervision provided.

The following core areas must be covered during the supervision process (this list is not exhaustive and additional issues may arise relating to specific projects):

- The nature of the project or process to be undertaken and a clearly established link with the student discipline where appropriate
 - Structure of the submitted reports
 - Skills, knowledge, competencies and learning outcomes required
 - Methods of assessment
- Possible learning/project topics
- References
- Site Supervisor advice on establishing of business and professional networks
- Research philosophy, methodology, methods of data collection
- Effective presentation and interpretation of data
- Writing complex documents

It is common, and appropriate, for the Host Organisation Site Supervisor to comment on drafts of the student's projects, on student engagement in the workplace and the workplace process, but it is important to distinguish clearly between offering supporting advice and doing too much actual work for the student. Critically supervisors should:

- Make useful comments and provide guidance
- NOT mark the draft reports or submissions
- NOT write for the student

NOTE the project, process and assessment submissions are to be the student's work, and will be marked as such.

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Insurances:

It is the responsibility of the Host Organisation to have appropriate and current work place and Public Liability insurance policies that cover the student intern during their normal work and learning activities in and around all premises of the Host Organisation where the student is located. Virtu will provide appropriate insurance cover for the Intern as an enrolled student of Virtu while attending at the Host Organisation's premises.

Students

Although the internship/work placement and its assessment tasks are critical parts of the overall course, and must be progressed to completion and attainment of the required skills, knowledge and competencies, it is important that the student is encouraged to maximise the potential benefits. In this regard the following issues should be addressed with each student as a group in the early stages, and then followed up during the internship/work placement itself. Students should:

- Establish some personal goals in addition to the ones required by the Host Organisation and Virtu. The internship/work placement and assessment tasks must be related to the discipline area, and the student should develop some goals in terms of skills, knowledge and competency development as well as career expectations. Meeting these goals will encourage a sense of accomplishment, and they should be included in the ongoing discussions and final evaluations
- Take responsibility for meeting expectations established by both the Host Organisation, the Site Supervisor and Virtu's lecturing and assessment staff: don't wait until the internship/work placement concludes before thinking about the assessment tasks and the learning outcomes. Students should make sure that they meet, or communicate with the Site Supervisors on a regular basis, and certainly at the assigned times.
- There will be a range of expectations, and these will not always include the most interesting and exciting aspects of the workplace or internship. Students should be encouraged to display positive attitudes and to demonstrate positive work ethics. A negative attitude will generate negative feedback, may compromise the opportunity to learn, limit access good

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data or even negate the possibility of being offered a job at the end of the internship work placement period. Students should not, under any circumstances, show negative attitudes towards any workmates, and should comply with any reasonable expectations of the HO.

- Students should try to learn as much as they can about the HO and seek additional opportunities in the organisation when possible. There may be additional learning opportunities within the HO's activities, and students should participate as much as possible, ask questions and take initiatives within the overall context of the internship/work placement if this is permitted.
- Students should seek input from their Site Supervisor, and, if possible, seek additional mentoring or coaching from within the HO. This must be done carefully since possible mentors all have work responsibilities, but this type of input is valuable when it can be accessed. In addition to maximising learning during the internship work placement, additional mentors can also have valuable input in terms of future career opportunities and for references.
- Students should ensure they keep up to date with entries into their reflective journal to document learning experiences, and to re-evaluate ongoing objectives as the internship/work placement develops.

Finally, students should be encouraged to enjoy the internship work placement experience. All stakeholders want the students to do well at the outset, and a collaborative relationship between these stakeholders is most likely to maximise the overall outcomes and benefits for all parties.

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Host Organisation Feedback:

Please attach your
**Host Organisation Site Supervisor
Business Card**

Virtu Institute is appreciative of the support of the professions and commerce in providing their students with internship work placement positions and hope that Host Organisations will provide feedback on the internship work placement that they have just experienced.

Please fill out this questionnaire about the student intern and the internship experience. Once completed we would appreciate your returning this questionnaire to our Administration Manager and Registrar.

The questions below relate to conduct of the student / intern in the work place. Please circle the appropriate number ranging from (5) excellent to (1) very poor.

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ABOUT THE STUDENT

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. The student was motivated during the internship/work placement	5	4	3	2	1
2. The student displayed enthusiasm and interest in doing a good job	5	4	3	2	1
3. The student demonstrated a positive attitude towards the workplace	5	4	3	2	1
4. The student displayed a strong sense of professionalism	5	4	3	2	1
5. The student showed appropriate levels of the technical ability	5	4	3	2	1
6. The student used software and computers appropriately and efficiently	5	4	3	2	1
7. The student displayed cooperation and an ability to work with others	5	4	3	2	1
8. The student worked with minimal supervision when required	5	4	3	2	1
9. The student offered creative input or suggestions	5	4	3	2	1
10. The student was able to handle and accept direction and criticism	5	4	3	2	1

ABOUT THE ASSESSMENT TASKS

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
11. The assessment tasks identified by Virtu were clear and relevant	5	4	3	2	1
12. The student's reports accurately described the organisation's requirements, functions and activities	5	4	3	2	1
13. Any recommendations made by the student to the HO were clear and relevant.	5	4	3	2	1
14. The conclusions drawn by the student were accurate and fair	5	4	3	2	1
15. The report by the student on the workplace was considered accurate and relevant	5	4	3	2	1

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Host Organisation Name:

Host Organisation Site Supervisor's Name

Host Organisation Site Supervisor's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Host Organisation Site Supervisor's Title: _____

Comments and Suggestions for Improvement:

Would your company be interested in accepting interns/work placements from Virtu Institute in the Future?

Yes: _____ No: _____

Please scan the last three pages of this Handbook, return a completed pdf evaluation form to the Administration Manager and Registrar, Virtu Institute at registrar@virtuinstitute.edu.au and also feel free to contact the Administration Manager & Registrar for further information regarding this internship/work placement program.

The HO Site Supervisor should also ensure that the Virtu Assessment requirements for the subject and course are completed alongside this feedback form to provide Virtu with the HO Site Supervisor's assessment of the student's skills, knowledge and competencies in the formal assessment forms provided.