



PSC | Public Sector
Commission

Public sector internship program

Guide for universities and students

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About the 'Public sector internship program'

The 'Public sector internship program' is an initiative to provide high-calibre university students with practical on-the-job training opportunities within the public sector. The program allows students to complete a work-based project within a public sector agency, applying the knowledge and skills developed through their studies in a professional capacity.

Overview of an internship placement

- Public sector agencies identify a project that is suitable for a university student to undertake and writes a brief overview of the project.
- Agency commits to host a student as part of the program.
- Internship projects are advertised online via the Public Sector Commission's Internships Board.
- Eligible students from universities in Western Australia apply for projects that relate to their course of study, provided they have the endorsement of their unit coordinator.
- Interns are selected by agencies and assigned a workplace supervisor. All resources necessary to complete the project are provided.
- Work undertaken by interns is unpaid, typically one day per week, across a three or four month period.
- Successful completion of the project earns the student academic credit toward their degree.

Benefits

The program can benefit students by providing an opportunity to:

- experience working within the public sector
- develop networks within the public sector
- increase the prospect of securing employment within the public sector
- apply the knowledge and skills developed in the classroom in a workplace setting
- earn academic credit through the completion of a work-based project.

Roles and responsibilities

Before deciding to participate in the program, it is important that universities and students have read and be able to meet the required responsibilities and commitments of an internship placement.

University, student and agency role and responsibilities	
Universities will be required to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cover insurance of interns and provide copies of the relevant policies to the host agency ensure responsibility for all academic matters.
The unit coordinator will need to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> support students to apply for suitable projects that relate to their course of study and level of skill and knowledge endorse student applications advise host agencies of any academic requirements of the unit including evaluation and assessments provide host agencies any applicable documentation monitor the intern's performance, including contact hours respond to agency queries regarding academic matters or issues with the intern.
Interested students will need to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> be enrolled in a participating unit (i.e. will earn academic credit through completion of a work-based project) apply to internship projects online monitor their contact hours in the workplace ensure any academic requirements are completed complete the internship project.
The host agency will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> nominate a workplace supervisor to support the intern provide the intern with all necessary resources complete any evaluation and assessment requirements.

Public Sector Commission

The Commission's key role is to promote the program and the Internships Board to all universities in Western Australia, to encourage students to apply.

Important note: Agencies have sole responsibility for the selection of interns, therefore the Commission cannot guarantee all students will be successful in securing an internship placement. If a student has been overlooked on multiple occasions the Commission can work with unit coordinators to assist with securing that student an internship placement.

Getting started – steps for students

The following steps will need to be completed by students to participate in the program:

Consult with unit coordinator and seek endorsement	Unit coordinators will assist students to apply to the right project and explain the academic requirements of the unit.
Search the Internships Board for opportunities	The Internships Board can be accessed from the Commission's website .
Apply to projects	Students apply online to suitably matched projects. Unit coordinators will be contacted automatically to confirm their endorsement.
Undertake the internship placement	Agencies will provide interns with a workplace supervisor, and all resources necessary to complete the project.
Complete a work-based project	Interns will need to achieve the project deliverables within the agreed timeframes.

Choosing an internship project

Students will be able to choose from a list of interesting and challenging projects related to their studies and interests.

Students should carefully consider the project details, and their own ability to undertake and complete the project. Students who choose projects suitably matched to their course of study, interests and level of knowledge and skills will gain the greatest benefits from the program.

Internships Board

The Commission has established the Internships Board to create a centralised location for the advertising of internship projects available within the public sector.

All available projects will be advertised on the Commission's Internships Board, which can be accessed from the Commission's [website](#).

Agencies that have chosen to participate in the program will advertise internship opportunities within their workplace via this the Internships Board, and students will be able to apply for any project via the Internships Board.

Projects can be advertised at any time of the year. Students interested in undertaking an internship placement should check regularly for new opportunities.

Searching internship projects

Students can view all projects that are available, or can use one of the search boxes or the keyword search function to filter results to locate suitable projects more easily.

Projects can be filtered by agency, location, preferred qualification, key project terms and required skills and knowledge.

To view specific information about a project, students will need to click on the project title in the search result to view the project advertisement. It will provide an overview of the project and outline the project brief including the deliverables, preferred intern profile and application instructions.

Students can also create a login account on the Internships Board and opt to receive a email notification when a new project is advertised that may be of interest.

Applying for an internship placement

Students apply for an internship placement online via the Internships Board. Students will need to create a login account on the the Internships Board to apply, and submit a separate application for each project that is of interest.

As the Commission cannot guarantee all students will be successful in securing an internship placement, students are strongly encouraged to apply for multiple projects to increase their chance of securing an internship placement.

Application process for students

Students apply by answering a set of standard questions, which includes their personal and university details, as well as set application questions.

Unless otherwise stated in the advertisement for the project, students are instructed to submit a brief covering letter in no more than one page that addresses:

- why they would like to undertake the project
- how the project aligns to their course of study
- how their skills, knowledge and previous experience will assist them to complete the project.

Students also have the option to submit a Curriculum Vitae (CV).

Agencies can choose to amend this application process to better suit their needs, so students will need to check for any amended application instructions within the project advertisement, which they will then need to follow.

Important note: The student's unit coordinator will be contacted automatically via email when an application is submitted to confirm their endorsement of the application. This endorsement is required before the application is considered by the agency.

Notification of an outcome

The agency will notify the successful intern and unsuccessful applicants at the conclusion of the selection process.

Important note: When applying for a project, students can specify a date if they require notification of an outcome prior to the closing date of the project. Agencies are not required to make, or notify the student of a decision by this time.

Information about the internship placement

Internship placements will generally commence within the first two weeks of the start of the university study period, unless other arrangements have been agreed on with the intern.

Workplace supervisor

Each placement will have identified a workplace supervisor that has a clear understanding of the internship project, and who is responsible for:

- meeting with the intern to agree on the details of the placement (i.e. starts and end dates, days in the office, due dates for the project)
- supporting the intern throughout the project to meet the desired outcomes
- ensuring that the intern has understood the scope and deliverables of the project
- establishing a work plan with the intern to outline key tasks and deadlines
- having capacity to meet with the intern and respond to queries on a regular basis
- monitoring the progress of the intern and provide support and regular feedback.

Important note: If a work plan is necessary to meet the intern's academic requirements, it is the responsibility of the intern to ensure that a work plan is completed and in accordance with the university requirements and deadlines.

Tips to ensuring a successful internship placement

Students should aim to:

- ensure they have understood and have the same understanding as the agency of the project scope, deliverables and deadlines
- gain an understanding of the host agency (i.e. functions, purpose, strategic aims)
- seek regular and constructive feedback from the workplace supervisor – schedule weekly meetings at the commencement of the placement
- introduce themselves to other agency staff and ask to be included in work meetings where practical
- develop a work plan with their supervisor to guide the project.

Completion of the internship placement

Universities are required to advise agencies of the intern's academic evaluation and assessment requirements and provide any documentation to the workplace supervisor. At the successful completion of the internship placement, students will gain academic credit toward their degree.

Frequently asked questions

1. Can more than one intern complete a project?

Agencies are not limited in the number of interns that they can accept to complete a particular project, however, in most instances agencies will propose a project that is only suitable for one intern.

Agencies will specify in the project advertisement if it can accommodate more than one intern. Students should conduct a keyword search on the Internships Board for any group opportunities, but such opportunities are likely to be rare. Only projects that have specified that they are suitable for more than one intern should be applied as a group.

2. What happens if there is an issue within the workplace?

The unit coordinator should be the first point of contact for interns if any questions or issues with the work placement arises which cannot be resolved with the agency.

If the unit coordinator is not able to resolve the issue, they can contact the Commission for further advice.

3. What career opportunities are available in the public sector following the internship placement?

Students interested in a career in the public sector should visit existing job vacancies via the Jobs board at www.jobs.wa.gov.au

The Jobs board operates similarly to the Internships Board so interns will be familiar with the process for applying for jobs in the public sector.

Alternatively, graduate programs offer a structured learning and development induction into the public sector and agency. Interested students should refer to the agency of interest for particular details.