

Employer Internship Toolkit

Professionalism Starts Here



1. Internship Definition, Characteristics, & Benefits

Definition

San Diego State University recognizes the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) Internship Definition:

An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent.

Characteristics

It is recommended employers refer to the Internship Characteristics Matrix (on page 5) for information on SDSU's best practices on the three categories of internships:

- paid
- paid for academic credit
- unpaid for academic credit

* Please note students must enroll in a course for academic credit when completing an unpaid internship.

Benefits of an Intern

- Recruit and create a future pipeline of potential employees
- Interns offer new ideas and are highly motivated pre-professionals
- Internships create an opportunity to connect with SDSU and increase visibility of your organization on campus
- Interns can be a great asset to employers by assisting with short-term projects, research and more
- Connect to SDSU and support future Aztecs

2. Posting Internships

Compensation

- SDSU encourages all internship providers to compensate their interns. Please note that some majors require students complete only internships
- Compensation is commonly \$10.50 - \$14 per hour for undergraduate students and \$18 - \$25 per hour for graduate students based on experience and industry/field
- For unpaid internships, students must earn academic credit and must be enrolled in an internship course. Employers will be required to complete a Service Learning Agreement (SLA) prior to posting an internship position

Aztec Career Connection

- Aztec Career Connection is SDSU's online job board, for both internships and jobs; and accessible to all students
- Internships for qualified organizations can be posted on the Career Services Aztec Career Connection site: employer.sdsu.edu
- To set up an account, click "Register for a new account" and follow the instructions
- Processing takes approximately 24 business hours for review and background check. Upon approval, employers will receive an email verification with further information
- Please note Career Services reserves the right to refuse an organization's request to enroll

Service Learning Agreement (SLA) Process

- A Service Learning Agreement (SLA) is required for all unpaid internships.
- Each SLA is processed and reviewed by each individual major department.
- The SLA process helps employers identify qualified students who can also receive credit for their internship experience.
- Department Internship Contacts for specific major(s) you would like to recruit can be found at:
https://newscenter.sdsu.edu/student_affairs/career/departmentalinternships.aspx

3. What Interns Want

Professional Projects & Networks

- Interns want real work related to their professional development, to learn about your profession and to gain experience they can add to their resume
- Introduce interns to professionals to build their communities and network

Feedback

- Interns want to hear what they are doing well, what areas they need to improve, and clear direction regarding what is expected of them. Meeting with interns on a regular basis (weekly is recommended) to give feedback is recommended.

Experience Work Life

- Interns are looking for the opportunity to learn and gain perspective on the work world, including attending staff meetings, client consultations, networking events, etc.

A Work Space

- Provide interns a physical space to work and the adequate tools needed to perform their work.

Direction

- Interns want a supervisor who is available, experienced and knowledgeable in their field.

4. Orientation

Orientation at the beginning of an internship should cover the following:

- Organization Overview
 - Goals/Mission
 - Company Structure
 - Facilities including parking information and a tour including emergency exits, restrooms, and break room
- Policies/Procedures
 - Safety regulations
 - Security and confidentiality
 - Schedule and time reporting
 - Office culture

5. Intern Program Management

Supervision & Ongoing Meetings

- Assign an experienced professional to monitor and evaluate intern performance.
- The supervisor and intern should meet regularly (weekly is recommended) to provide guidance with projects.

Assignments & Reporting

- The supervisor and intern should set specific goals at the beginning of the internship with a plan and time frame for completion of projects. Creating learning outcomes at the beginning of the internship is recommended.

Expectations

- Supervisors should be clear about their organization's expectations up front and give students an opportunity to voice their own expectations for the internship.

Opportunities for Growth

- Provide opportunities for increasing responsibility as the internship progresses.

Evaluation

- Evaluate strengths and discuss areas needing growth and development.
 - For interns receiving academic credit, employers may be contacted by the department internship coordinator via phone, on-site visits, and/or written evaluations.
- Discuss intern's career goals and plans

6. Internship Resources

Department Internship Contact List

https://newscenter.sdsu.edu/student_affairs/career/departamentalinternships.aspx

Service Learning Agreement Master List

<http://bfa.sdsu.edu/prosrvcs/servlearning.htm>

Employer Aztec Career Connection Account

employer.sdsu.edu

Paid vs. Unpaid Internships

https://newscenter.sdsu.edu/student_affairs/career/internshipemployers.aspx

Career Services Internship Central

internships.sdsu.edu



SAN DIEGO STATE
UNIVERSITY

Career Services
Division of Student Affairs

SDSU Internship Definition and Characteristic Matrix

San Diego State University Recognizes the NACE Internship Definition: An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent.

Internship Characteristics Matrix

It is recommended that employers, students, and faculty/staff refer to the Internship Characteristics Matrix below in order to find information that SDSU requires, recommends, and finds not applicable to the three categories of internships: paid, paid for academic credit, and unpaid for academic credit.

Characteristics of the Experience	Internship Paid	Internship Paid for Academic Credit	Internship Unpaid for Academic Credit
The student and employer clearly understand that there is no expectation of compensation	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Required by SDSU Refer to the Updated Fair Labor Standards Act
The internship provides training that would be similar to that which would be given in an educational environment, including the clinical and other hands-on training provided by educational institutions	Recommended	Required by SDSU Refer to the Updated Fair Labor Standards Act	Required by SDSU Refer to the Updated Fair Labor Standards Act
The internship is tied to the student's formal education program by integrated coursework or the receipt of academic credit	Recommended	Required by SDSU	Required by SDSU Refer to the Updated Fair Labor Standards Act

Updated February 5, 2018

SDSU Internship Definition and Characteristic Matrix

Characteristics of the Experience	Internship Paid	Internship Paid for Academic Credit	Internship Unpaid for Academic Credit
The internship accommodates the intern's academic commitments by corresponding to the academic calendar	Recommended	Required by SDSU Refer to the Updated Fair Labor Standards Act	Required by SDSU Refer to the Updated Fair Labor Standards Act
The internship's duration is limited to the period in which the internship provides the intern with beneficial learning	Recommended	Required by SDSU Refer to the Updated Fair Labor Standards Act	Required by SDSU Refer to the Updated Fair Labor Standards Act
The student's work complements, rather than displaces, the work of paid employees while providing significant educational benefits to the student	Recommended	Recommended	Required by SDSU Refer to the Updated Fair Labor Standards Act
The student and employer understand that the internship is conducted without entitlement to a paid job at the conclusion of the internship	Not Applicable	Recommended	Recommended Refer to the Updated Fair Labor Standards Act
Student works under close supervision of existing staff	Recommended	Required by SDSU	Required by SDSU
Supervisor is a full time salaried professional in the student's intended career field	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
Employer provides student the opportunity to develop career readiness competencies (see page 5) that can be used in multiple employment settings	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended

Updated February 5, 2018

SDSU Internship Definition and Characteristic Matrix

Characteristics of the Experience	Internship Paid	Internship Paid for Academic Credit	Internship Unpaid for Academic Credit
Employer is providing job shadowing opportunities that allow a student to learn certain functions	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
The internship has a clear start and end date that corresponds to the semester schedule in which they are enrolled agreed on prior to the start date	Recommended	Required by SDSU	Required by SDSU
Employer provides student with a clear position description	Required	Required by SDSU	Required by SDSU
Student is provided with specific learning outcomes	Recommended	Required by SDSU	Required by SDSU
Employer provides students with an opportunity to make professional connections	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
Full time (12+ units) students should work 10-15 hours per week and it is recommended not to exceed 20 hours per week	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
One unit of academic credit is equal to 45 hours (may vary by department)	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
Student meets with site supervisor regularly and receives feedback on performance	Recommended	Required by SDSU	Required by SDSU

Updated February 5, 2018

Internship Definition and Characteristic Matrix

The following types of internships need to be discussed with the Department Internship Contact in the academic department. View contact information at: <https://goo.gl/Jwnfyw>

- **Virtual/Remote Internships**
- **International Internships**
- **Internships governed by accrediting bodies**
(for example, Council on Social Work Education)
- **Student learning opportunities**
(practicums or clinical training)

Intern Checklist - "Employee" or "Trainee"

Is your intern an employee or a trainee? Here are some considerations to review to help you determine if your interns meet the six criteria set forth by the Fair Labor Standards Act (see page 8). If you can affirm that your intern meets these criteria, your intern is a "trainee."

- ☐ The work is an integral part of the student's course of study
- ☐ The student will receive credit for the work or the work is required for graduation
- ☐ The student must prepare a report of his/her experience and submit it to a faculty supervisor
- ☐ The employer has received a letter or some other form of written documentation from the school stating that it sponsors or approves the internship and that the internship is educationally relevant (SDSU's Service Learning Agreement)
- ☐ Learning objectives are clearly identified
- ☐ The student does not perform work that other employees perform
- ☐ The student is in a shadowing/learning mode
- ☐ The employer provides an opportunity for the student to learn a skill, process, or other business function, or to learn how to operate equipment
- ☐ There is educational value to the work performed, i.e. it is related to the course the student is taking in school
- ☐ The student is supervised by a staff member- can not be a fellow intern
- ☐ The student does not provide benefit to the employer more than 50 percent of the time
- ☐ The employer did not guarantee a job to the student upon completion of the training or completion of schooling



Fact Sheet #71: Internship Programs Under The Fair Labor Standards Act

This fact sheet provides general information to help determine whether interns must be paid the minimum wage and overtime under the Fair Labor Standards Act for the services that they provide to “for-profit” private sector employers.

Background

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) defines the term “employ” very broadly as including to “suffer or permit to work.” Covered and non-exempt individuals who are “suffered or permitted” to work must be compensated under the law for the services they perform for an employer. Internships in the “for-profit” private sector will most often be viewed as employment, unless the test described below relating to trainees is met. Interns in the “for-profit” private sector who qualify as employees rather than trainees typically must be paid at least the minimum wage and overtime compensation for hours worked over forty in a workweek.*

The Test For Unpaid Interns

There are some circumstances under which individuals who participate in “for-profit” private sector internships or training programs may do so without compensation. The Supreme Court has held that the term “suffer or permit to work” cannot be interpreted so as to make a person whose work serves only his or her own interest an employee of another who provides aid or instruction. This may apply to interns who receive training for their own educational benefit if the training meets certain criteria. The determination of whether an internship or training program meets this exclusion depends upon all of the facts and circumstances of each such program.

The following six criteria must be applied when making this determination:

1. The internship, even though it includes actual operation of the facilities of the employer, is similar to training which would be given in an educational environment;
2. The internship experience is for the benefit of the intern;
3. The intern does not displace regular employees, but works under close supervision of existing staff;
4. The employer that provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the intern; and on occasion its operations may actually be impeded;
5. The intern is not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the internship; and
6. The employer and the intern understand that the intern is not entitled to wages for the time spent in the internship.

If all of the factors listed above are met, an employment relationship does not exist under the FLSA, and the Act’s minimum wage and overtime provisions do not apply to the intern. This exclusion from the definition of employment is necessarily quite narrow because the FLSA’s definition of “employ” is very broad. Some of the most commonly discussed factors for “for-profit” private sector internship programs are considered below.

Similar To An Education Environment And The Primary Beneficiary Of The Activity

In general, the more an internship program is structured around a classroom or academic experience as opposed to the employer's actual operations, the more likely the internship will be viewed as an extension of the individual's educational experience (this often occurs where a college or university exercises oversight over the internship program and provides educational credit). The more the internship provides the individual with skills that can be used in multiple employment settings, as opposed to skills particular to one employer's operation, the more likely the intern would be viewed as receiving training. Under these circumstances the intern does not perform the routine work of the business on a regular and recurring basis, and the business is not dependent upon the work of the intern. On the other hand, if the interns are engaged in the operations of the employer or are performing productive work (for example, filing, performing other clerical work, or assisting customers), then the fact that they may be receiving some benefits in the form of a new skill or improved work habits will not exclude them from the FLSA's minimum wage and overtime requirements because the employer benefits from the interns' work.

Displacement And Supervision Issues

If an employer uses interns as substitutes for regular workers or to augment its existing workforce during specific time periods, these interns should be paid at least the minimum wage and overtime compensation for hours worked over forty in a workweek. If the employer would have hired additional employees or required existing staff to work additional hours had the interns not performed the work, then the interns will be viewed as employees and entitled compensation under the FLSA. Conversely, if the employer is providing job shadowing opportunities that allow an intern to learn certain functions under the close and constant supervision of regular employees, but the intern performs no or minimal work, the activity is more likely to be viewed as a bona fide education experience. On the other hand, if the intern receives the same level of supervision as the employer's regular workforce, this would suggest an employment relationship, rather than training.

Job Entitlement

The internship should be of a fixed duration, established prior to the outset of the internship. Further, unpaid internships generally should not be used by the employer as a trial period for individuals seeking employment at the conclusion of the internship period. If an intern is placed with the employer for a trial period with the expectation that he or she will then be hired on a permanent basis, that individual generally would be considered an employee under the FLSA.

Where to Obtain Additional Information

This publication is for general information and is not to be considered in the same light as official statements of position contained in the regulations.

For additional information, visit our Wage and Hour Division Website: <http://www.wagehour.dol.gov> and/or call our toll-free information and helpline, available 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. in your time zone, 1-866-4USWAGE (1-866-487-9243).

U.S. Department of Labor
Frances Perkins Building
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20210

1-866-4-USWAGE
TTY: 1-866-487-9243
[Contact Us](#)

* The FLSA makes a special exception under certain circumstances for individuals who volunteer to perform services for a state or local government agency and for individuals who volunteer for humanitarian purposes for private non-profit food banks. WHD also recognizes an exception for individuals who volunteer their time, freely and without anticipation of compensation for religious, charitable, civic, or humanitarian purposes to non-profit organizations. Unpaid internships in the public sector and for non-profit charitable organizations, where the intern volunteers without expectation of compensation, are generally permissible. WHD is reviewing the need for additional guidance on internships in the public and non-profit sectors.

Sample Internship Description

Name of Company: XYZ Marketing Group

Title of Internship: Marketing/Advertising Intern

Compensation: \$XX per hour (internships can be paid, paid for academic credit, or unpaid for academic credit)

Company Description: XYZ Marketing Group is a marketing consulting company located in downtown San Diego. With a client base of over 500 small and mid-size companies, the XYZ Marketing Group provides unparalleled one-on-one service in the areas of branding and social media. We are looking for a qualified intern to join our marketing/advertising team. The intern will participate in various stages of print and online marketing campaigns. This intern should be prepared to work in a fast-paced team environment, and will finish the internship having gained broad experience in various aspects of marketing. The internship program at XYZ Marketing Group is for academic credit and is paid.

Intern supervisor name & contact information: Susy Q; 888 888-8888; suzyq@xyzmarketinggroup.com

Requirements: Company is looking for an undergraduate (junior or senior) student, who is majoring in marketing, advertising, or communications. This person should have excellent verbal and written communication skills, with extensive knowledge of Web and social media. PowerPoint, Word and Excel experience is a bonus, and will be considered when choosing the best applicant for this internship position.

Objectives:

- Learn our corporate culture and basic day-to-day communication/work processes.
- Learn the industry and business needs of our top clients
- Learn how to prepare creative and effective presentations
- Learn how to perform analysis of marketing and sales data
- Client Research – Learn the importance of it, basic expectations, how to present findings
- Contact Reports – Sit in on meetings to observe and take notes. Learn how to format and draft contact reports based on your meeting notes.
- Assist in the creation of signage, circulars, mock ups, e-mail campaigns, online promotion, etc.
- Seek and analyze competitor marketing and sales materials both on and offline
- Enter contact information into contact management systems
- Provide support to social media efforts
- Maintain tracking report of public relations activities

TO APPLY: Email your resume and cover letter by MM-DD-YYYY to suzyq@xyzmarketinggroup.com