

Organising a Placement

Identifying the right organisation for you

Enquiries and questions: arts.unimelb.edu.au/students/wil/contact

It is important to start organising your placement as soon as possible. At least a couple of months prior to your enrolled semester is ideal. While organising the placement is the responsibility of the student, there are many Faculty and University resources available to assist you.

Identifying organisations to approach

1. Determine what sort of work/organisation/industry interests you, keeping in mind that the placement must be related to your course and possible career direction. If you are having difficulty being clear about your career interests or deciding on what sort of placement which you want, attend a Stop 1 careers session, to discuss with a careers consultant. Drop in careers enquiries sessions are available every Wednesday and Friday.
students.unimelb.edu.au/stop1/whats-on-at-stop-1
2. Identify specific organisations to approach by asking around in your network, and searching online. Develop a prioritised list of organisations. Go beyond the most obvious organisations in your interest area as often the demand for placements will be greater in well-known organisations. It is also a really valuable exercise to explore the 'landscape' of organisations involved in a career or interest area.
3. Note that the organisation doesn't have to have an established internship program – an organisation may not have thought of taking on interns but is happy to consider the idea when approached. Sometimes organisations with established programs may be more difficult to access – because applications may be competitive, and the requirements/timing of the organisation's program may not fit easily with the subject requirements/timing.

Approaching organisations

1. Prepare a resume and a letter/email. If you would like guidelines, please refer to the formats provided.
arts.unimelb.edu.au/students/wil/placements
2. It is recommended that you have the drafts of your resume and letter/email reviewed at Stop 1. Drop in resume and cover letter review sessions available every Wednesday and Friday.
students.unimelb.edu.au/stop1/whats-on-at-stop-1
3. Advise the Subject Coordinator of the organisations you intend to approach – they may have contacts or suggestions about organisations.

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Approaching organisations (cont.)

4. You can 'cold call' organisations, but it is easier if you have a contact within the organisation to approach directly - so make use of your network (staff, other students, family) to identify contacts.
5. If you don't have a contact, before sending an application, phone the organisation to determine to whom you should send your application. Explain that you're looking for a placement as part of an internship subject run by the University of Melbourne, and find out who is the best person to contact, their email address and phone number.
6. Send your resume, and email or letter to organisations you wish to be placed with. Ideally, you should only contact one organisation at a time (to avoid being invited to interview with several and then having to 'reject' a well-intentioned offer!) If time becomes tight, perhaps contact several in a short space of time.
7. If you don't hear back within a week, ring the person you emailed to gently remind them of your request. Once you are sure the recipient has received your enquiry, don't follow-up more than once.
8. Organisations will want to arrange an interview to discuss the internship. Treat this like a job interview – dress appropriately and prepare by researching their organisation so you are well informed about their core business, their clients and how they are organised.
9. At the interview, they may ask you some typical interview questions eg 'Why are you wanting to do an internship with us?', 'How would this placement assist with your career?' But more generally, it will be a discussion about what you might do in the placement. This is a two-way conversation and the employer will be interested to hear what you would like to do. The type of work you undertake in the placement will be determined by your subject, but typical examples include report writing and research, marketing and content assistance, or assistance with general work tasks.
10. If you would like to talk about an upcoming interview - particularly the issue of what you might do in your placement - please contact your subject coordinator.

Finalising placement approval

11. If necessary for your subject, complete the subject enrolment application form by the due date. This form will be located in the 'Eligibility and requirements' tab of your subject's handbook entry. It is not necessary to have your placement finalised when you submit this form, but you should be able to show that you are working well towards this.
12. When your placement is finalised, advise your subject coordinator which organisation you'll be doing your internship with, what the placement involves and the name and contact details of your supervisor.

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Finalising placement approval (cont.)

13. You will be provided with a University of Melbourne Risk Assessment Form to complete and a Student Declaration form to submit to your subject coordinator for final placement approval.
14. Following approval, the organisation will then be emailed University documentation. The supervisor will be provided with a Vocational Placement Letter Agreement (VPLA) from the University that sets out respective roles and responsibilities of the University and the placement agency.