

Career Lab UK Summer Internship Programme 2025

Student Intern Handbook

This guide is for students who are taking part in the Career Lab UK Summer Internship Programme 2025.

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1. Top tips for starting your internship

Congratulations on successfully securing your internship! You've tackled the challenging part and demonstrated to your employer that you're capable of fulfilling the role effectively. It's common for many students to feel nervous when embarking on a new experience like this. Here are some top tips to help you settle into your internship, from our student connectors:

- A. Remember that the first day will set the tone for the rest of your internship. Be sure to meet with your manager and discuss the following:
 - The priorities of your job role and how your work fits into the team/organisation
 - Meeting other colleagues and who to ask for support
 - The communication preferences of your manager and team (email, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Slack, etc.)
 - Procedures for requesting annual leave and what to do if you feel unwell
 - Your working hours and where you will be working, if you are in a hybrid role

If your manager does not organise this meeting, do not be afraid to be proactive and email them. Indeed has a useful guide for [professional email etiquette at work](#).

Example email:

'I'm really looking forward to this internship. Do you by chance have any availability today or tomorrow for a brief chat? I'd like to ensure that I understand my priorities so I can start to make a positive contribution to the team.'

- B. Although some of your work may be remote, ensure to dress smartly on your first day. After this, you will be able to judge the culture and dress code of the office and adapt accordingly.
- C. If you are not sure about something, make sure to ask your manager or another member of your team. They will be happy to help you and it demonstrates your proactive attitude to finding a solution.
- D. Start building your networks and talk to colleagues, clients and stakeholders. Don't be afraid to get involved in different projects, as you never know where they will lead you.

For more tips on developing work-ready skills, such as participating in meetings, navigating internal messaging software such as Slack, or delivering a presentation, visit [Mind Tools](#).

As a Sussex student, you have also free access to over 16,000 courses on [LinkedIn Learning](#) that cover a huge range of personal and professional development areas. You will also earn badges which will appear on your LinkedIn page and attract employers. [Log in using your Sussex credentials](#) to get free access to online training, including [turning your internship into a job](#).

2. Getting paid

Your employer will provide you with a formal contract of employment covering your rate of pay, holiday entitlement, expected hours of work, and sick pay arrangements. However, it is important to also familiarise yourself with your tax and national insurance obligations. These will be deducted automatically from your salary before you are paid, however in many cases you'll be able to reclaim your tax as your wage will be under your 'personal allowance'. For full details on tax and National Insurance, visit our page on [Wages, tax and National Insurance numbers](#). If you have any questions about getting paid, please ask your line manager in the first instance.

Your rate of pay per hour will be at least £13.85 with London-based employers, or £12.60 with employers based elsewhere in the UK.

3. During the internship

Approximately midway through the internship, an internship visit may be conducted with you by the Careers and Entrepreneurship team. This gives both the Employer and Intern an

opportunity to share feedback on their experiences so far. The team will be in contact with the Employer to arrange a visit, however due to capacity, we unfortunately will not be visiting every organisation. Nonetheless, the Internships team is available to support you and would encourage you to get in contact if you would like a visit.

4. Share your story

Once you have settled into your internship, we would love you to share your story. We are looking to showcase a range of internship experiences, and welcome you to get involved! Whether it's creating a 'day in the life' video, writing a blog or answering some case study questions, we want to hear from you. If you are interested, please contact the Internships team at Internships@sussex.ac.uk.

5. Finishing the internship

At the end of the Internship, make sure to thank your colleagues for the opportunity to work with them. You may also want to use this opportunity to connecting with them on LinkedIn, or other professional networks.

We would also encourage you to ask your line manager for a reference letter or LinkedIn recommendation, to support your future job applications.

The Internships team will ask you and your Employer to each complete an evaluation form about your internship experience. You will submit this directly to the University. We value your feedback to help improve our future programmes, and ask that you please ensure the form is completed promptly.

Once you have finished your internship, it's also time to reflect on the skills you have learnt and developed through your experience. Remember to update your CV so you can showcase this new work experience. In Autumn, you will be invited to attend an online workshop for how to articulate your internship experiences on your CV and in interviews. You can alternatively attend any of our [CV and application workshops](#).

Further employment and networking:

As you come to the end of your internship, it's a good chance to network with your colleagues and other stakeholders. You may like to seek their career guidance, for example:

- Ask about their career path and where they have worked previously.
- If you enjoyed a particular aspect of your work and are interested in the client's area of business, let them know that!

- Are there opportunities for employment with this employer? If so, where can you find their vacancies?
- Job-seeking – ask for recommendations of where and how to look for work in the sector.
- Ask their advice about what you can do to improve your chances of getting employment in the sector.
- Seek a recommendation on LinkedIn.

Remember that all Sussex students and graduates (three years after graduation) can continue to [access Careers and Entrepreneurship support](#), including 1-1 appointments with a Careers Consultant, access to the CareerHub vacancies board and attendance at online and in-person events.

6. Enjoy!

Your internship has been designed to develop your existing skills and learn some new ones, build your confidence, and expand your networks. We hope it is an enjoyable experience, and we look forward to receiving your feedback.

7. We're here to support you

If there is a problem during your internship:

If you feel things aren't working out as well you had hoped, the Internships team is here to support you. This could include discussing issues around your tasks and responsibilities, struggling with your workload, or feeling nervous in the workplace. In the first instance, please reach out to your line manager. However, if your issue is not resolved or you do not feel comfortable speaking to your employer, do not hesitate to get in touch, by emailing internships@sussex.ac.uk.

Remember to also regularly check your Sussex emails, as well as work emails.

Adjustments:

If you require or believe you may need adjustments to facilitate your participation in the internship, we are also here to assist you. Please contact Jasmin Tse, Programmes Officer: J.Tse@sussex.ac.uk for further advice. We partner with disability and neurodivergence experts, [EmployAbility](https://employability.org.uk), for independent support and guidance. If you would like to contact them for a confidential discussion, please register with them and then email info@employability.org.uk.