



VRIJE
UNIVERSITEIT
AMSTERDAM

Faculteit der
Rechtsgeleerdheid

Internship guide

Faculty of Law, VU Amsterdam

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Preface

This is the internship guide for the Master's of Law of the Faculty of Law at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.

An internship offers students the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the job market, to improve on their legal skills and to gain work experience. Students will be applying the knowledge they have acquired during their studies in practice, which will give them a clearer idea of what it's like to work as a lawyer in various workplaces. This way students can gain further insight into their own work-related preferences.

This guide is intended for both students getting started on their internship (trainees) and for supervisors working within the faculty (student/internship coordinators) and the workplace (internship supervisors). The guide outlines the requirements for the internship, tips for students on how to find an internship, what can be expected from internship supervision, and the assessment method and criteria.

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1 General information

An internship is a practical training period during the Bachelor's or Master's phase of the Law programme, during which students work on a legal assignment (sometimes a joint assignment) under the supervision of one or more employees at the organisation hosting the internship.

The goal of the internship is to allow students to gain experience in the practical application of theoretical knowledge they have acquired, and the acquisition of new knowledge and skills.

Place of the internship in the programme of study

- In the Bachelor of Law programme, the internship is only an extracurricular activity, and is therefore not a free elective or part of a minor. Internships are shown as being worth 6 EC on the diploma supplements of Bachelor of Law diplomas.
- For Master of Law students, the internship is a free elective within the curriculum, and is worth 6 EC. An additional requirement is that the work activities are sufficiently relevant to the Master's specialisation (that is, there should be sufficient private law, criminal law, constitutional law, administrative law, etc.). For each specialisation, additional requirements may be imposed on the internship. For more information about this, please contact the internship coordinator. The names of the internship coordinators are shown on the vu.nl internship page.

Basis conditions

- Before the start of the internship, the bachelor student has obtained at least 120 EC in the programme in which the student is enrolled.
- It is imperative to obtain the approval of the internship coordinator before the start of the internship.
- It is not possible to complete one internship for two separate specialisations and receive double the number of credits.
- A part-time job in the legal field may not be presented as an internship. Students may not go on an internship at an organisation where they are already employed in another capacity, or where they have already been on an internship in the context of another study programme.
- The student is allowed to receive an internship reimbursement, but whether the student receives this depends on the internship organisation

Duration of the internship (6 EC)

In order to obtain the full 6 EC for an internship, the student is generally expected to work 40 hours for 1 EC. In other words, a full-time internship of 6 weeks equals 6 credits.

Longer internships are permitted but the extra time will not yield extra credits that count towards obtaining the Law degree.

2 Learning objectives and final attainment levels for the degree programme

The goal of the internship is to allow students to gain experience in the practical application of theoretical knowledge acquired during their studies, and the acquisition of new knowledge and skills.

The general learning objectives of the internship:

- Students will be able to work and think at an academic level;
- Students will have the following legal skills:
 - Analytical skills
 - Problem-solving skills;
- Specifically for the Master students: They will have:
 - Research skills
 - Presentation skills.

The general learning objectives are derived from the final attainment levels for the programme.

Learning objectives

After the internship

- the student will have acquired demonstrable knowledge and insight into the way in which the theory discussed in the degree programme is used in practice;
- the student is able to provide a legal opinion on a legal case on the basis of factual information;
- in the event the student has insufficient information, the student is able to indicate what they need to provide an opinion on a legal basis;
- based on the factual and legal context, the student is able to indicate what the ethical consequences of actions are in a practical situation;
- the student is able to draw up a document that complies with the requirements of the professional practice in question;
- the student is able to give a presentation that complies with the requirements of the professional practice in question;
- the student is able to reflect on their learning process within the internship.

3 Finding an internship

Finding a suitable internship takes time. It is strongly recommended for students to look for internships in time, preferably six months before the preferred start of the internship.

Completing an internship during the summer months is less advisable because the internship organisation will probably offer less opportunities for internships. It also affects the options for supervision, diversity of tasks and planned social activities, and needs to be factored into the planning.

Information about internships in the Netherlands

You can find information about how to find an internship at:

- the Faculty of Law's [Career Portal](#);
- websites of law firms and other agencies such as the Authority for Consumers and Markets;
- websites of study associations.

More information about job market orientation can be found on the website of the Faculty of Law's [Career Services](#).

Internship abroad

You are responsible for finding and arranging your internship abroad. The Outgoing Student Exchange Team is the contact person for internships outside the Netherlands. You can find a lot of information

about internships abroad online. See for example:

- The [European Law Students' Association](#) (ELSA) that brings together law students and young lawyers from almost every European country. ELSA organizes initiatives such as an exchange programme for legal internships with law firms, institutions and businesses abroad.
- [AIESEC](#) also offers challenging opportunities that will enable you to live and work abroad in the fields of management, development, information technology and education.
- There are also internship opportunities available at EU bodies and the Council of Europe, as well as at businesses in the EU (if you meet certain conditions, you may be eligible for a Leonardo da Vinci scholarship to help complete an internship at an EU business).
- In the context of the Life Long Learning Programme, Erasmus Scholarships are available for internships at businesses, centres for training and education, research centres and organisations in other EU countries. Erasmus scholarships are only available for full-time internships in the EU with a duration of two months or over. For more information go to: [scholarships abroad](#) or send an email to erasmus@vu.nl.

Applying for an internship

Always use the term **student/internship** specifically when applying for an internship. This is because an internship is different to the position of junior associate (advocaat-stagiaire) but the terms are similar in Dutch.

Applying for a placement usually involves sending a cover letter, a CV and a transcript. For questions or help in writing a cover letter or a CV and preparing for a job interview, please see the website of the [Career Services](#).

The job interview

In preparation of the interview, it is advisable to gather information about the office or the internship organisation and formulate answers to the following questions:

- why do you want to complete an internship at this organisation?
- why did you choose this position?
- why are you the most suitable candidate for this organisation and position?
- what can you offer the organisation?
- what do you expect to get out of the internship?

The job interview also provides the opportunity to sample the company culture of the potential internship organisation.

4 Approval from the internship coordinator for the specialisation

The student will inform the internship coordinator of the programme / specialisation in question of the fact that an internship position has been found, and will request approval of the internship by sending the completed application form (Appendix 4) by e-mail.

- the internship host organisation (name, address, contact information),
- the duration of the internship,
- the tasks that will be performed, and
- the learning goals of the internship, as formulated on the application form.

The internship coordinator is responsible for assessing whether the academic and legal level of the internship has been adequately guaranteed. This depends to a large degree on the nature of the tasks that will be performed during the internship.

The internship needs to be approved by the internship coordinator if the student wants to let it count as an elective (master's) or to have it mentioned on the Diploma supplement (bachelor's).

The internship coordinator verifies that the internship assignment meets the requirements and that the host organisation is able to provide a sufficient level of supervision. The internship coordinator must give approval before the start of the internship. If a student embarks on an internship before receiving the approval of the internship coordinator, it will not be recognised.

5 Confirmation of the internship

After the internship coordinator has approved the internship, the student and the supervisor at the internship host organisation make agreements with regard to the internship. These agreements should be set down in writing. A model internship agreement is shown in Appendix 3.

Please note: The student is responsible for submitting the internship agreement, including agreements made with the internship coordinator.

6 Supervision of the internship

The internship coordinator has the following duties:

- determine whether the internship complies with the requirements in terms of level, scope, content and supervision;
- arranging and archiving the internship agreements and internship reports;
- mediation for conflicts between the trainee and the internship supervisor.

The internship coordinator is responsible for assessing the internship (pass or fail).

When questions occur, the internship coordinator may consult the supervisor at the host organisation. The internship coordinator may visit the organisation where the internship takes place if this is deemed to be necessary.

Division of roles between internship coordinator (VU) and internship supervisor (practice)

The division of roles between the internship coordinator and the internship supervisor means that the internship supervisor is responsible for all aspects relating to the practical experience, while the internship coordinator is responsible for the process of assessment of the internship according to the standards of the Faculty of Law.

The internship supervisor:

- ensures that the student is given the opportunity to gain useful practical experience and has access to the necessary facilities at the internship location;
- has an advisory role in relation to the assessment of the internship by the internship coordinator.

7 Assessment of the internship

The internship coordinator will assess the internship based on:

- the internship report made by the student
- the internship assessment as mentioned in Appendix 2.

The internship report

The internship report consists of at least the following:

- a description of the internship organisation;
- a broad description of the tasks performed;
- an overview in the form of a table or diagram with a detailed display of the work carried out by the student each week (students are advised to keep this up to date during the course of the internship);
- a further description of three cases in particular, with a focus on the legal problem in question (this part consists of at least 500 words);
- a reflection on the question of whether ethical questions and possible consequences have arisen;
- a reflection on his/her own performance including answers to the following questions:
 - Which three experiences during the internship did the student find particularly instructive and why?
 - Which aspect of the internship duties did the student find especially valuable and why?
 - Which aspect of the internship duties did the student experience as less positive and why?
 - Which aspect of their own performance was the student especially satisfied with?
 - Which aspect of their own performance was the student less satisfied with?

The report should not be much longer or shorter than 2000 words. The report will be considered as incomplete if one of the elements mentioned above is lacking. The report will also be considered as unsatisfactory if the use of language is deficient.

The internship assessment

The assessment by the internship host organisation concerns among other things the following:

- technical and legal knowledge;
- analytical skills;
- written communication skills;
- oral communication skills;
- effort;
- social skills (within the organisation and with third parties)
- final assessment

See also Appendix 2.

The student hands in the internship report and the internship assessment within 15 working days after completion of the internship to the internship coordinator. The internship will be assessed as 'fail' if the student hands in the report **too late**.

Interview

After evaluating the report and the assessment the coordinator may have a short interview with the student if that is deemed to be necessary, by phone or by videoconference.

The final assessment (pass/fail) will be determined by the internship coordinator. The student will not receive an assessment in the form of a grade. The internship coordinator will take care of the registration of the result with the Education administration.

8 Complaints or problems

In the event of any problems during the internship it is vital that the student takes immediate action. In the event of any problems or concerns about the internship, the student should contact the internship supervisor first. If the problem is not solved or not solved entirely, the student must contact the internship coordinator. The internship coordinator will then try to solve the problem in cooperation with the student and the internship host organisation.

In the event of conflicts between the student and the internship coordinator, the Examination Board will serve as mediator (examencommissie.rechten@vu.nl).

The Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam is not liable for any damage whatsoever arising as a result of or in connection with the internship and/or caused or suffered by the student.

Appendix 1

Timeline internship

1. The student contacts the internship coordinator of the specialisation in question six months prior to the preferred start of the internship.
2. The student will then look for an internship and/or apply for an internship.
3. The student has been hired for an internship.
4. The student will submit the internship to the internship coordinator for approval.
5. The student ensures that the agreements between the student and the internship host organisation are recorded in an internship contract or confirmation letter.
6. The student submits the internship contract or confirmation letter to the internship coordinator.
7. The student completes the internship.
8. During the internship the student will keep track of a list of tasks/activities performed.
9. After the internship the student writes an internship report.
10. The student hands in the internship report and the internship assessment form within 15 working days after completion of the internship to the internship coordinator.
11. The internship coordinator assesses the internship and passes the pass/fail mark on to the Education administration.

Appendix 2:

Assessment of the internship by the supervisor of the host organisation

You have recently supervised a student from the (study programme/specialisation) Faculty of Law, VU University Amsterdam. Please complete this form: your assessment plays an important part in the final assessment of the internship. Incomplete forms will not be taken into consideration.

Name of student	
Internship host organisation	
Department	
Supervisor at the organisation	
Internship period	

	Good	More than satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	N/A
Independence					
Initiative					
Knowledge levels					
Critical ability					
Amount of work carried out					
Quality of the work					
Flexibility in the event of problems and criticism					
Cooperating with colleagues					
Verbal communication skills					
Written communication skills					
Accuracy					
Overall impression					

General impression / any additional comments

Would you like to host students from Faculty of Law, VU Amsterdam, more often in the future?

☐ Yes, from the Bachelor's /Master's degree programme / specialisation in

☐ Perhaps, because

☐ No, because

Name of internship supervisor	
Date	
Signature of internship supervisor	

Appendix 3:

Model internship agreement

BACHELOR'S AND MASTER'S IN LAW, FACULTY OF LAW, VU UNIVERSITY AMSTERDAM

The undersigned,

1. **[name of organisation]**, located in, legally represented in this matter by, hereinafter referred to as the internship host organisation, and

2. Student **[name of student]**, residing in, hereinafter referred to as the student,

agree that the student will go on an internship at the internship host organisation from .../... until .../... for ... hours per week, subject to the following conditions:

Article 1

Said internship is not a compulsory component of the Law degree programme (hereinafter referred to as the degree programme). The internship is exploratory, instructive, and participatory in character.

Article 2

The student has ascertained that he/she meets the degree programme conditions that apply to the internship.

Article 3

The student's work activities at the internship host organisation consist of the following:
[description of the assignments/work activities].

Article 4

The student shall receive from the internship host organisation a **[gross/nett]** payment for the work carried out as part of the internship of € per month.

The student **[shall/shall not]** be entitled to reimbursement of his/her travel expenses.

Article 5

The student shall carry out work during the internship under the supervision of the internship host organisation.

Article 6

The student must comply with the rules, regulations, and instructions that apply at the internship host organisation in relation to health, safety, and confidentiality. These are made known to the student upon conclusion of this agreement.

Article 7

Students are subject to the rules on working hours and reporting sick that are usual at the internship host organisation. These rules are also made known to the student upon conclusion of this agreement. In the event of sickness, the student **[is/is not]** entitled to continue to receive his/her internship payment.

Article 8

The internship host organisation shall give the student the opportunity to fulfil his/her agreements with the internship coordinator of his/her degree programme and, if present, the internship supervisor of his/her master specialisation.

Article 9

The internship host organisation designates ***[name of employee of internship host organisation]*** as the supervisor within the organisation, charged with supervising the student at the place of work. The student and the organisation supervisor will discuss the progress of the internship work activities once a week, and more frequently if necessary.

Article 10

The internship host organisation shall involve and inform the student as much as possible regarding the day-to-day operations in the department and within the organisation as a whole.

Article 11

At the end of the internship, a discussion shall be held between the student and the supervisor referred to in Article 9 for the purpose of assessing the internship. The findings will be recorded on an assessment form provided by the student.

Article 12

The internship coordinator of the Faculty of Law, VU Amsterdam, ***[programme / specialisation]***, shall be responsible for the process concerning the assessment of the student's internship according to the requirements of the Faculty of Law.

Article 13

In the event of any problems during the internship, the student should first contact the internship host organisation supervisor referred to in Article 9. If this does not resolve the problem, the student or aforementioned supervisor may bring it to the attention of the internship coordinator referred to in Article 12.

Article 14

The agreement shall end:

- a. at the end of the agreed period;
- b. if the student leaves the university;
- c. if the parties so wish; or
- d. if one of the parties so wishes, providing the procedure mentioned in Article 13 has been pursued and providing discussions between parties designated by the internship host organisation and by the university have not led to the creation of any conditions under which the internship could proceed.

Agreed and signed

at ***[place]*** on ***[date]*** by:

the internship host organisation,

[signature]

the student,

[signature]

Appendix 4:

Application form

Prepare in triplicate: one copy for the student, one copy for the supervisor of the internship host organisation, and one copy for the internship coordinator of the programme / specialisation (signed by the student and company internship supervisor).

Student information

Name	
Studentnumber	
Phonenumber	
E-mailaddress	
Programme	Bachelor Law / Master Law, specialisation _____ * (*delete what is not applicable and fill in if necessary)

Host organisation information

Organisation	
Address	
Postal code/City	
Phonenumber	
Name of internship supervisor	
Phonenumber of internship supervisor	
E-mail of internship supervisor	

Information on internship assignment

Name of internship coordinator from programme	
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Internship assignment	
Learning goals	
Start of internship	
End of internship	
Number of weeks	At least 6x40 hours fulltime or an equivalent parttime. For parttime internships, an Excel document with hours worked must be kept. This document must be signed by the student and the supervisor from the host organisation and must be submitted to the internship coordinator of the program after the internship.
Hours worked	
Submission date of report	
Component	Internship

The internship host organisation provides the necessary facilities to properly carry out the assignment.

The Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam is not liable for any damage whatsoever arising as a result of or in connection with the internship and/or caused or suffered by the student.

Any additional agreements:

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Signed for approval,

Location and date:

Signature student,

Signature supervisor from internship host organisation,