INTERNSHIP FAQ FOR EMPLOYERS

What characteristics are necessary for an experience to be considered a legitimate internship?

Source: NACE – A Position Statement on U.S. Internships

- The experience should be educational with clearly defined learning objectives/goals related to the student’s academic coursework.
- The Employer should not dependent upon intern and the intern should not displace existing or future employees.
- The experience has a beginning and an end, and a job description with desired qualifications.
- There is supervision and routine feedback by a professional with educational/professional background relevant to the internship.
- Resources, equipment, and facilities are provided by the host employer that supports learning objectives/goals.

Is it necessary that a student receive academic credit for the internship?

No, WMU does not require that a student receive academic credit for an internship. Requesting academic credit is optional and the decision to evaluate the internship and award credit hours is the responsibility of the academic department where the student is enrolled.

How do interns receive academic credit?

Students may see their academic or faculty advisor with a job description or letter of offer from the employer to have the paid internship evaluated for consideration of academic credit before they begin work.

Does the intern need to be paid?

Source: U.S. Department of Labor

Internships with the for-profit, private sector should be paid. Typically, interns are hired as temporary employees, paid an hourly rate and are covered by your organization’s worker’s compensation, discrimination, and sexual harassment protection policies.

Internships with the not-for-profit (government, hospital, school, social service agency) sector may be offered as an unpaid experience and should meet all of the characteristics necessary for an experience to be considered a legitimate internship. (See No. 1 above)

How much do we need to pay the intern?

WMU collects data from employers on hourly compensation rates, relocation and housing stipends. Contact us to discuss a competitive internship compensation structure. Some employers offer Interns benefits such as parking, housing stipend, bonus, commission, tuition reimbursement, product discounts, meals and travel reimbursement.

Can I hire the intern as an independent contractor? (i.e. issue a 1099)

Paying an intern as an independent contractor is not allowed because interns are not considered to be experts in their field nor should work without training and supervision.

How do I hire an intern from Western Michigan University?

There are three main strategies to recruit qualified candidates for an internship position: 1) Post the position on BroncoJOBS; 2) Attend a career program or career fair; and 3) Speak to a professional student organization.

How do I find students to work on a project in my organization?

Some faculty use projects as part of a course. Typically, the organization defines the scope and deliverables of a project and provides access to the necessary resources (people, data, and environment) to the student team assigned to the project. The Career Center can provide referral to a relevant course and faculty person. Planning often occurs 3 to 5 months prior to the course offering.