

Frequently Asked Questions

Potential Hosts of Massey University Communication Interns

How does Massey select its students for the communication internship programme?

The internship programme usually requires a student have at least a B- average across their previous two years of study. Students must then request entry to this programme and complete a pre-internship process, which further demonstrates their commitment to the internship experience.

What are the expectations for prospective hosts?

Our interns are keen to have experience across the breadth of marketing and communication roles, and we work with prospective interns to find placements that fit their professional goals and aspirations. As such, we often have more hosts than interns, and so there is no guarantee of any organisation hosting an intern in any given semester.

Interns are similar to graduate employees in that they are capable of taking on and completing tasks without close constant supervision, but they will need a workplace advisor who can keep an eye on them, answer their questions, give them feedback and ensure appropriate professional tasks are set for them. A member of staff who works in the field will usually be the intern's first source of information about the host organisation and will guide them as to what is expected from the host organisation. In addition to the workplace mentor/advisor, each intern also has an academic advisor. This is a member of CJM staff who works with the intern regarding the academic component of their internship. The academic advisor mostly stays in the background during the placement but keeps in regular contact with their intern to provide support as needed.

What happens during an internship placement?

Internships can be based on a specific project, or an intern may shadow individuals or teams in your organisation that work in the field to see what working life is like 'on the ground.' Either way, it is expected that as part of their placement, host organisations provide consistent opportunities for the intern to develop professional skills and experience.

Interns are capable of professional entry level work and they are often noted for their writing skills and creative and social media capabilities. In smaller host organisations, interns have even (with host guidance) been able to successfully complete highly strategic activities such as designing and implementing communication plans or revamping marketing materials. However, hosts are to remember that this is often the intern's first professional experience, and so may require mentoring and advice when asked to complete major projects. Interns are keen to learn about both their host organisation and their chosen profession, and we actively seek out hosts who will support interns taking that first step into their professional futures. In most cases, interns work on site to fully immerse themselves in your workplace culture. If your organisation is mostly remote-first, we may need to confirm that you can provide sufficient workplace support to the intern prior to placement.

We expect our interns to be exemplary in following all policies and procedures of the host organisation and in pursuing their duties, and to always conduct themselves in a highly professional manner. Hosts usually take time on an intern's first day, if not earlier, to make clear to their intern any organisational practices and standards to which they must adhere while on placement.

To complete an internship, an intern must complete between 100-120 hours on internship tasks. How this is divided is negotiated between the intern and host prior to the start of placement—for example, one day a week during the semester, or in a concentrated block during non-study periods are two popular options. What is important is the timing of the placement works for both host and intern. Interns are not to exceed 120 hours of 'work' time as an intern.

Are interns paid? Are we committing to employing the intern?

An internship is part of a student's study experience, and so there is no expectation that hosts pay interns during the 100-120 hours of placement. The only exception is if the intern will be expected to travel as part of their placement, in which case travel costs should be borne by the host. This will be negotiated prior to starting the placement. Interns understand that the placement is no guarantee of any ongoing commitment or relationship between themselves and their hosts at the conclusion of the internship, including a job. If hosts want the intern to stay with the organisation after the conclusion of the internship, that is an employment negotiation between the organisation and the individual intern. However, Massey graduates are highly sought after and hosting an intern is also no guarantee they will accept any offer of ongoing employment.

What support is there for interns and hosts?

There are three Communication Internship course coordinators; one based in Albany, one in Manawatū, and one based in Wellington who also supports interns studying regionally/via distance. Their role is to work with each local intern, academic advisor, and the workplace advisor as needed to ensure that internships are a great experience for all concerned. Coordinators can be reached via the contact below.

All interns are strongly encouraged during their placements to actively engage with their hosts to take on meaningful workplace experiences appropriate for their professional level and career aspirations. As such, interns are encouraged to talk with their workplace mentor about tasks and opportunities. If we have significant concerns about the nature of the placement or the work undertaken, we may approach hosts to develop a more appropriate work plan, or we may withdraw the intern from the host organisation.

What is the internship contract?

Once both host and intern have agreed to an internship, the host will be asked to sign a standard internship contract with Massey covering the intern's time in the organisation. This contract refers to standard protections under law such as around health and safety and includes clauses around liability and other protections for both hosts and interns. This contract, once signed, ensures both host and Massey intern are protected and understand their commitments around the placement. We also have a special contract to more easily facilitate organisations that host multiple or consecutive interns throughout the year.

When do internships operate?

We offer the internship during three study periods – Feb-June, July-Nov and Nov-Feb (summer) each year. It is usually expected that an intern complete their placement within one of these periods, though exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis. Host organisations can contact their local internship coordinator to indicate they are willing to take on an intern, or a potential intern may approach you directly. We encourage prospective hosts and interns to talk informally first about duration, timing and nature of tasks during a placement before committing formally to the internship.

What happens at the end of a placement?

Once the allotted time with the organisation is completed, hosts are asked to provide feedback about their intern via an online evaluation link, which your intern will provide towards the end of their placement. This 5-minute short survey helps us monitor intern performance and how "workplace-ready" our students are. Your feedback is valuable as we seek to develop student preparedness and better understand workplace needs. On the last day of placement, we also encourage hosts to make time to sit down with their intern to talk about and formally 'close out' the placement.

Who can I talk to about hosting interns?

If you are interested or would like further information, please contact Academic Programmes Administrator Claudia Silva, who will connect you with the internship coordinator in your region.

Email: c.silva@massey.ac.nz

ph: +64 4 979-3758