

Planning a work placement or internship*

– Short Checklist –

** In English-speaking countries, the terms 'work placement' and 'internship' are sometimes used synonymously but often differ in meaning depending on the duration of the work-experience period or when it is undertaken. For the sake of readability, the term 'internship' will be used in this document for all such periods of work experience.*

Phase 1: Define your hopes, expectations and goals

- Identify the main goal of your internship in terms of your professional development
 - The four most common main objectives are: career orientation, qualification, specialization and networking.
- Clarify dates, times. etc.
 - Think about when, where and in which sector you want to undertake an internship.
- Specify your detailed internship goals
 - Specify in as much detail as possible the skills you want to develop and the experiences you hope to gain as an intern.

Phase 2: Finding the right internship – The application and interview process

- Find a company or organization that matches your objectives and expectations
 - Take a look at Saarland University's career portal where a wide range of internship positions are advertised.
- Write your cover letter, compile your CV and prepare your application
 - The Career Center offers a range of events designed to help students with the application process.
- Preparing for the interview
 - Find out as much as you can about the company, particularly its corporate mission and strategic vision.

Phase 3: Working as an intern

- Demonstrate commitment, but don't go overboard.
 - When working as an intern try to find a healthy balance between wanting to make a good impression and being overeager.
- Don't lose sight of the goals you previously set yourself
 - Keeping track of your objectives will help you achieve what you set out to do as an intern.
- Keep a diary of your internship
 - The notes you make during your internship will be a real help when it comes to compiling a report for the compulsory work-experience phase of your degree programme.

Phase 4: Reviewing your internship

- Reflect on all that you achieved
 - Use the questions in the comprehensive checklist as a guide.
- Identifying your successes and shortcomings
 - Compare the results of your internship with the goals that you originally set out
- Draw up a plan for what you want to focus on in future
 - Working as intern can give you valuable insight into which professional and personal skills you need to develop or improve.
- Maintain your new network of contacts
 - Keep in touch with the people you connected with during your internship.