



# EMPLOYER GUIDE TO SUCCESSFUL INTERNSHIPS

## Set expectations

Establish clear expectations for the internship program from the start. This should include relaying how and how often interns are expected to communicate and engage with their supervisor and team, confirming their work schedule, discussing items such as dress code and company policies, reviewing delivery of compensation (if provided), and setting up goals for the experience. Keep in mind many interns will be participating in their first professional experience and may require additional guidance, grace and mentorship.

## Onboarding & training

Employers should prepare in advance for the intern's arrival and provide the necessary tools and software required to be successful in the role, including technical support (particularly in fully remote internships), as well as onboarding materials, such as required HR paperwork.

To set interns up for success, start the internship experience with orientation on the first day. This

should include time for introducing the intern(s) to other staff members, discussing company policies, setting up weekly check-in meetings and a system for tracking work hours, reviewing workplace expectations, getting interns started on their first projects, and reviewing learning goals with them. Many interns will also need guidance on simple items such as protocol for taking lunch breaks and reassurance that asking questions is encouraged.

## Prepare supervisors

Staff who are new to supervising interns should be trained on company protocols and best practices to ensure a successful experience. Supervisors should contact the internship director to discuss internship requirements or any challenges that may arise. Elon University is here to provide support in the journey.

## Connect interns

Some companies find providing a buddy or mentor for their interns (outside of their supervisor) can be helpful for answering

questions and ensuring the intern is comfortable in their work environment. Additionally, providing space and time for interns to meet with or grab coffee with other colleagues to assist with their learning and expand their network is always appreciated.

## Internship conclusion

Ensure the internship has an end date from the beginning of the experience. Near the conclusion of the internship, review the intern's performance and provide critical feedback. Feedback is most helpful if provided throughout the experience. Consider ways to keep in touch with the intern after the experience, if desired, and submit any required paperwork with HR and with Elon University.

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## Internship criteria

An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates classroom knowledge with practical application.

### Criteria include:

- extension of the classroom
- transferable skills
- routine feedback and supervision
- a minimum of 80 or 160 work hours for 1 or 2 credits, respectively
- defined start and end dates
- clearly defined goals
- company-provided resources
- a supervisor with a background and expertise in communications

The criteria are based on guidelines provided by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) and Elon University.

## Supervisor responsibilities

Supervisor will:

- verify internship hours completed as outlined in work agreement
- provide a robust learning experience for intern, including access to necessary equipment and technology
- discuss the intern's learning goals
- provide on-going and timely feedback
- explain confidentiality within the context of the internship
- provide an overview of the office, professional expectations, and any policy information that the intern needs
- complete an end-of-term evaluation of intern's performance and provide a grade
- notify the internship director if there are any conduct concerns

**TOP LEFT:** Celsey McMahon '25, a sports management and journalism double major, served as a game day operations intern for the Atlantic Coast Conference. During league football telecasts, she worked in the Game Day Operations Center – located in the Bank of America Tower – assisting with video reviews and charting plays, penalties and timeouts. In fall 2023, McMahon was one of 12 Elon students conducting internships in Charlotte, and one of four students interning with the ACC. **ABOVE:** Teddy Morgan '25, who served as an email marketing intern for NASCAR, stands near his desk in the organization's corporate offices in Charlotte.



**For more information, visit [www.elon.edu/communications](http://www.elon.edu/communications)**

## A student-centered education

Elon University is a private institution in North Carolina with nearly 7,000 students, with approximately 1,400 studying communications and sport management. As soon as students set foot on campus, they have unparalleled access to equipment and facilities in year one. Plus, they can join one of nine school-led extracurricular initiatives and six student media organizations supporting student advancement.

Elon is one of a few institutions nationwide to effectively combine sport, event management and recreation, providing comprehensive career preparation. Through a curriculum infused with Elon Learning Experiences (Internship, Leadership, Service, Study Abroad and Undergraduate Research), students learn about the business of sport, a multi-billion dollar industry.



## Where is Elon?

- **30 minutes from Greensboro**
- **1 hour from Raleigh**
- **1 hour, 45 minutes from Charlotte**