

G U I D A N C E

Internships

Internships

Work Experiences in Authentic Environments



MVA DEFINITION

Learners perform authentic work challenging to the intern at a worksite or approved location (including virtual) under the guidance of a qualified supervisor. Some placements may include compensation.

MVA-Level Internships Include:

- One hundred twenty hours (at least 60 on-site) of engagement.
- Authentic methods and tools used by professionals in the work environment, including project management and process.
- Work that challenges the intern and aligns with course goals.
- Mentoring from one or more SMEs with multiple interactions throughout the process.
- Performance evaluated by the internship supervisor.

Why?

Students gain invaluable real-world experience by applying their academic knowledge in professional settings.

Through this process, they not only develop critical skills but also learn to navigate the complexities of a professional environment, leveraging their transferable student outgrowths to succeed in their future careers.

Building Professional Networks

Internships offer students the chance to expand their professional networks, connecting with industry experts and building relationships that can lead to future opportunities.

Tailored Learning Opportunities

While schools can develop internships, students can leverage their relationships with community partners to create customized experiences that align with their personal interests and career goals.

Preparing for the Future

Internships serve as a critical bridge between academic learning and the professional world, equipping students with the confidence and competence to succeed in their future careers.



SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS IN PLANNING

- Work should balance exposure across different departments and provide opportunities to engage in meaningful, valuable work on a project. Entry-level administrative tasks should compose a small percentage of the intern's time.
- If possible, the internship experience should include a final and public showcase that celebrates the student's work and the employer's support in the experience.

Pre-MVA Opportunity

Workplace tours, job shadowing, guest panels, and college & career fairs in addition to extracurricular and community activities can help expose students to a variety of experiences that can help guide them towards an internship experience that is well-defined to meet their personal and professional goals.

STUDENT PREPARATION

Practice for the internship interview. Ask for help in and outside of your classroom environment.

Take advantage of the allotted period of time (usually a minimum of two weeks) to become familiar with the requirements and expectations of your upcoming internship experience.

Help students set clear personal goals, and revisit them regularly with both educational educator and internship supervisor.

Review policies, procedures, and resources with students, ensuring they can access them easily.

EMPLOYER SUPERVISOR PREPARATION

Develop an onboarding process that ensures the internship supervisor understands their role, the role of teacher and RWL coordinator, what to expect, and who to contact with questions or issues. Special attention should be paid to the process the supervisor will use to evaluate the intern's performance.

Review district policies with the internship supervisor, including modes of communication and travel, if applicable.

Encourage supervisors to identify an additional on-site mentor who can help support the intern. That person will also undergo the district onboarding process.

Ensure the supervisor is aware of the learning objectives and course goals the intern is expected to master through their work.

Intern Job Description

The internship should include a job description that outlines authentic work responsibilities and provides a general overview of how the intern will collaborate with the hosting team. For virtual internships, clear guidelines should be provided on communication, project management, and virtual access to resources and mentors.

Intellectual Property

Be thoughtful about any potential intellectual property or confidentiality concerns there may be and ensure the student has clearance and is following standard employment policies.



01 Assembling the Team

RWL COORDINATOR

The School has an RWL-informed counselor to refer students to opportunities.

INTERNSHIP SUPERVISOR MENTOR OR SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT

EDUCATOR FACILITATOR

Designated school staff serving as facilitators/coaches for students.

02 Planning

PROJECT PROMPT FROM STUDENT

Identify an opportunity that exists in the world - whether social, economic, civic, etc. Create a coherent project prompt to guide the work.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Engage in an iterative process, like design thinking or lean start-up.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Develop a plan that includes deliverables and a time frame for completion.

03 Quality Considerations

- The internship involves authentic work that will challenge the intern and advance the employer's goals.
- Minimum of 120 hours within a calendar year (at least 60 hours on-site).
- Students have regular check-ins with an internship teacher/sponsor in addition to their managers and mentors.

04 Student Voice, Agency & Support

Refer to Student Centered Practices on Page 24 - 27, but a few things to consider:

- Students request and receive feedback from supervisors.
- Internships can be sourced by a student, intermediary, or school.
- Students can describe their experience and the value of the achievement and are prepared to add it to their resume, portfolio, and/or LinkedIn profile.

05 Assessment & MVA Attainment

- Engaging in at least 120 hours of work, half of which is on-site (or connected virtually).
- Engaging in challenging work that contributes to an authentic outcome for the community partner.
- Demonstrate mastery of course learning standards and reflect on the development of student outgrowths in addition to overall positive feedback from the internship supervisor.



Is a summer job an internship?

Refer back to “Is This Project An MVA?” guidance.

- Does the summer job involve meaningful work that will challenge the intern and advance the employer's goals?
- Minimum of 120 hours within a calendar year.
- Students have regular check-ins with an internship teacher/sponsors.
- Students show evidence of student outgrowths.

What constitutes meaningful work?

- Tasks and projects that provide insights into the potential career path or industry.
- Opportunities to learn technical skills or gain industry-specific knowledge,
- Be wary of too many administrative tasks.
- Should be a “resume-worthy” experience.

Why 120 hours?

A landscape analysis was conducted of national internship programs and feedback from post-secondary institutions and employer partners. The research concluded that 120 hours is considered the baseline number of hours for a quality internship within a single academic year. It also represents a common format to “systemize” in a semester with school schedules. Many existing programs in the region have established programs with the below schedule:

- Four (4) Days: 2 class periods at the internship = 8–10 hours/week.
- One (1) Day: 2 class periods with the internship teacher/coordinator—skill development, readiness building, etc. = 2 hours/week.
- Additional hours might be accumulated through remote work, after school, or on weekends.

SEMESTER TOTAL = 120–150 hours



Internship Workbook for Educators

1. Program Structure
2. Preparing Students
3. Safety and Legal Considerations
4. Monitoring and Evaluation
5. Support for Employers
6. Scaling and Sustainability
7. Case Studies and Best Practices



Resources and Templates

- Sample Internship Application Forms
- Internship Agreement Templates
- Safety Checklists
- Evaluation and Feedback Forms