

Internship Program

Frequently Asked Questions

What is an internship?

An internship is a supervised, culminating academic experience designed to be both practical and academically enriching. Internships allow students to apply classroom knowledge to real-world experiences. You must be supervised by someone with whom you will interact on a daily basis and work with adequately trained and experienced staff to facilitate your learning experience. Retailing and Tourism Management students will take RTM 499. This internship experience is offered in both the summer and spring term.

If a company advertises an “internship” does it automatically qualify? Or if a company advertises a specific job title does it have to say “internship” to qualify?

There is no universal definition for the use of the word internship so it isn't appropriate to include or exclude all experiences based on whether or not the word internship is in the job title or description. For an internship experience, you should be moving away from front line staffing positions and moving towards management but realizing it may not be possible to move completely away from the front line. You should be moving into a position that would require a college education and some management responsibilities.

When should I take my internship?

Typically, students do their internships either between or during their junior and senior year but are also permitted to take it after they finish their coursework. It is more of a function of having taken the required pre-requisite courses rather than a function of how long you have been in school. The required prerequisites can be found in the course catalog and in MyUK GPS Schedule of Classes.

In addition to my coursework, do I need to have previous work experience?

In addition to prerequisite coursework, RTM 499 also requires 100 approved hours of pre-internship experience, for both the MAT and HMT programs. The pre-internship experience must take place within two years before the internship. You will provide documentation of those 100 hours when you submit your internship contract. This requirement can be placed on your resume and makes you more marketable in the job market.

Do I have to find my own internship?

Yes. Students are expected to find and pursue internship experiences that fit their area of interest and personal preferences. This internship can be paid or unpaid and can be either domestic or international. However, you are welcome to make an appointment to talk with the Internship Coordinator or your Career and Professional Development Advisor to help you develop an application strategy. [The Stuckert Career Center](#) as well as [Handshake](#) are also great resources.

What is the process of getting an internship approved?

The fall term before your internship you will take RTM 340 (Professional Practice/Pre-internship) which will cover the contract process, resume review, and interview skills. Once you have secured a site placement, you need to submit the proof of pre-internship hours and a signed contract by the posted deadline. If you are unsure about whether or not an internship counts, you are welcome to send the information (job description, website, etc) to the Internship Coordinator for review.

When are the deadlines to apply for the internship?

All required documents are due by April 15th for a summer internship and December 1st for spring internship. All your weeks/hours must be completed no later than August 1 and all your paperwork must be submitted by August 2nd.

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So how do I register for my internship class (RTM 499)?

Once your paperwork has been submitted and approved, you will be provided with an override which will allow you to register for the course. Without exception, you will not be permitted to register for the class without the required paperwork.

What is expected of me during my internship?

As close as possible, your internship should simulate full-time work experience. Students are required to complete 320 hours over 8 consecutive weeks. Ideally, you would be 40 hours a week but realizing it may not be possible to have exactly 40 hours every week. In addition to the hourly minimum, your internship must extend for the required weeks as well. You cannot work 80 hours a week for 5 weeks. If you will not be working 40 hours a week, you will need to apply for an exception.

My parents/family has planned a summer vacation during the summer of my internship. Can I go?

Well, it depends. If it is scheduled before or after your 8-10 consecutive week internship, sure you can attend. If it is during your internship, unfortunately, you will not be able to attend the year of your internship. Your internship cannot be interrupted for a vacation. No exceptions will be made to accommodate this request.

Do all my hours need to be at one location?

Yes, your internship should be overseen by one person who can be responsible for supervising you. With that said, they may require you to go visit another store or department to gain some perspective on the organization for a specific period of time which is fine. If you are unsure about this, please reach out to the Internship Coordinator.

Do I need to pay tuition to take my internship?

You will be registered for a course (RTM 499 for 6 credits) and you will be required to pay tuition. You can check with the financial aid office or the UK website for specific information on the tuition rates.

Can I take other classes or have another job in addition to my internship?

Your internship should simulate as much as possible full-time work experience and you will have additional academic responsibilities related to your internship. Student completing their internship in the summer are not permitted to take other classes or have other jobs to make your internship your first priority.

We understand that students completing their internship in the spring may be doing so to save on overall costs. During the spring semester students are allowed to take two additional 3 credit hour courses (Max 12 credits) along with the internship in order meet financial aid requirements.

If you have any questions about this issue, please make an appointment with the Internship Coordinator. You will need to apply for an exception if you will be taking any other courses or working at another job.

My parents are asking lots of questions about my internship. Can I give them the Internship Coordinator's contact information so they can talk with them?

No! Faculty are not legally allowed to speak with anyone else about your academic work without expressed written consent. You are budding adults. This is your responsibility. You need to be the one to fill your parents in on the process, not the Internship Coordinator. You are welcome to share this FAQ sheet with them and that may help answer some of their questions. With that said, please feel free to share the University contact information with your parents in the case of an emergency.