ANEMPLOYERS' GUIDE TO QUALITY INTERNSHIPS.

Experiences that work for your company and young people



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CONTENTS

BACKGROUND	4
FOREWORD	5
WHAT IS A QUALITY INTERNSHIP?	6
THE BENEFITS OF QUALITY INTERNSHIPS	8
TIPS AND TRICKS FOR QUALITY INTERNSHIPS	10
BEFORE THE INTERNSHIP	11
Skills assessment	11
Relations with educational institutes	11
A structured internship programme	12
Robust and efficient recruitment	
THROUGHOUT THE INTERNSHIP	13
Induction	13
Supervision	13
Training	14
Fair compensation	14
A positive in-house status	15
AT THE END OF THE INTERNSHIP	16
Review of learning	
Evaluation and certification	16
CONCLUSION	17
USEFUL LINKS	18
REFERENCES	18

Background

This guide is aimed at employers who are interested in setting up internship schemes or who would like to improve the internship opportunities they offer to young people.

It is the outcome of a collaborative project, led by the European Youth Forum, involving the following employers and employer organisations:

- → AbbVie
- → The Adecco Group
- → Microsoft
- → European Public Affairs Consultancies Association
- → FUK Consulting
- → Titan Cement Group

The Guide is thus based on best practices and experiences from the above organisations.

Section 1 outlines what a quality internship is; section 2 details some of the benefits to employers of offering quality internships. Section 3 provides initial tips and ideas for setting up and running a successful, quality internship scheme. The Guide also includes some useful links to further reading and further tools that can help

We hope you enjoy the Guide and find it useful!



Foreword

One of the main priorities of the European Parliament is to tackle the appallingly high levels of youth unemployment.

Creating guidelines for quality internships is essential in this process. It gives young people the opportunity to develop their full potential by advancing their practical skills, gaining a realistic assessment of their strengths and weaknesses and facilitating a swift transition from education into employment. For employers providing quality internships is beneficial because through specific tasks they can identify the interns' potential. Ultimately, any person with experience gained during a quality internship is better prepared for the challenges ahead.

Thus, the Employers Guide to Quality Internships serves as a useful guideline to ensure that first professional experiences of young people in the labour market are educational and fairly rewarded as well as beneficial for both the intern and employer.

Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament





Over the past two decades, traineeships have become an important entry point into the labour market for young people. Fostering the employability and productivity of young people is key to bringing them onto the labour market. However, although traineeships increasingly represent a standard feature in education-to-work transitions, their spread has been accompanied by growing concerns as to their learning content and working conditions. In fact, according to a Eurobarometer survey in 2013, one in three traineeships is substandard regarding these two aspects.

If traineeships are really to facilitate access to employment, they must offer quality learning content and adequate working conditions. Traineeships should not act as a cheap substitute for regular jobs. This is why the European Commission proposed a Quality Framework for Traineeships at the end of 2013 which Member States agreed to put in practice in March 2014.

Obviously, employers' efforts are key in order to provide quality traineeships. Therefore, I warmly welcome the 'Employers' Guide to Quality Internships', which can complement the European Quality Framework for Traineeships. It will provide useful guidance to businesses in ensuring a high quality learning experience and adequate working conditions for young trainees. It is my hope that this guide will be used by as many employers as possible when developing quality traineeships.

Marianne Thyssen, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility

What is a quality internship?

A traineeship is a period of work including an educational/ training component which is limited in time. Traineeships allow young people to gain work practice for the purpose of facilitating the transition from education and training to the labour market.

European Commission, 2013

Internships have become a typical part of the labour market, and a sought-after first experience of the world of work for a young person.

A quality internship can provide huge rewards to a young person and give them a stepping-stone into the world of permanent employment. Research shows that:

- → Study-related work experience increases a graduate's likelihood of finding a job immediately upon graduation by 44%;
- → Study-related work experience reduces the occurrence of skills mismatch by 26% (OECD, 2010).

46% of 18-35 year olds in the European Union have completed at least one traineeship.

European Commission, 2013

But what is quality? And why is it important?

The European Youth Forum answers this in its European Quality Charter for Internships and Apprenticeships. The Charter is an outline of what it takes to make sure that an internship, whether it is undertaken within education or outside, is useful and fair for young people. This means both having educational value, as well as fair working conditions including adequate remuneration. Such principles are essential in making sure an internship is valuable not just for young people, but also for companies, as well as wider society as a whole.

According to the Charter, quality involves three main principles: learning, rights and remuneration.

81% of trainees state that they developed skills during their traineeship that were later useful in their professional life.

European Commission, 2013



LEARNING

Internships should primarily be an educational experience where young people can develop the skills and competencies they need to enter the labour market. Learning objectives and tasks should be outlined in a written agreement; the intern should have a supervisor in order to ensure these objectives are reached; an evaluation system should be in

place to monitor the progress of the intern and the quality of the internship. Such educational principles will mean that both intern and employer are striving towards the ultimate goal of the experience: a young person that can take on a job and contribute productively to the labour market with appropriate skills and know-how.

"My internship experience was so rich and eye-opening - I learned so much about myself and what I am interested in and where my strengths and weaknesses are -in fact, after my internship, I decided to completely change my direction and to switch my field of studies completely to reflect the new skills and interests I gained through the experience."

Imane, Germany

RIGHTS

In order for this experience to be a safe and fair one, an intern should be informed of their rights just as any employee working in a company. The employer should inform the intern of their social and labour rights, their responsibilities towards the organisation and any health and safety risks in the work place.

"A quality internship means having the opportunity to move permanently to a job afterwards."

Julien, France

REMUNERATION

Finally, for internships to be accessible to all young people, an intern should be fairly reimbursed or remunerated for the work they carry out. For internships that take place within the educational system, this involves being reimbursed for the cost it takes to do the internship. For internships outside edu-

cational pathways, so called 'open-market internships', this involves appropriate remuneration for work carried out. Paid internships ensure that all young people can afford to do an internship and that, as a result, the company has access to all possible talent available on the market when hiring an intern.

"Being paid a decent living wage for my internship enabled me to really commit to the job, giving myself and my employer a more positive experience as a whole."

Maria, Portugal

The benefits of quality internships



Quality internships are clearly a beneficial experience for young people but they can also provide great rewards to employers. How can quality internships benefit your company?

Internships can build your early career talent pipeline

Quality internships are one way of ensuring that young people have the skills that you need for your company. They offer you an opportunity to attract young talent and **train and test** their skills to see if they can take up a permanent role-minimising the risk and cost of hiring the wrong person, and generally optimising the recruitment process for early career hires.

"It is of utmost importance to acquire work experience as early as possible, especially in order to develop the soft skills crucial in any business in which personal or client relations are essential. We look for people with emotional intelligence, which can only be developed through daily work and interaction."

Adecco

"We take as much time and trouble selecting our interns as we do for permanent staff. That is because our interns make a real contribution and, very often, become our permanent staff. There's no doubt that seeking to provide a quality internship experience for good, young people has been a wise investment in our company's future."

EUK Consulting

Internships can impact positively on your company

Young people contribute with fresh ideas that can inject creativity and a new perspective

into your company's work. They can bring enthusiasm, energy and a positive challenge to the status quo. Interns are often experiencing the world of work for the first time and they therefore tend to show a strong dedication to the job and determination to prove their abi-

behind the scenes" experience possible: let them be part of a regular team, let them do real work, and look to them for ideas and innovation - don't stifle their creativity because you may otherwise lose the chance for the next big idea."

Microsoft

offering quality work experience opportunities to young students and graduates of a university, you are also creating potential for partnerships with schools and universities. This allows you to share what your skills needs are and which

> profiles you look for with the world of education. This contributes to skills matching and ensuring that the gap between education and industry is bridged, for future, long-term recruitment ease.

"Give interns the best and authentic "look

lity, leading to loyalty and commitment that is invaluable in a future employee.

Internships can improve your reputation

Offering quality internships schemes can be a mark of quality for a company, both amongst young graduates and amongst other business partners and stakeholders. Young interns that are treated as full team members and given the chance to contribute and become young ambassadors for your company, enabling you to gain recognition amongst graduates and also ensuring you are perceived as a company that is giving back to the community it is a part of.

Internships can increase the confidence of your team through up-skilling

If interns are provided with supervisors and mentors, this can provide your junior staff with management experience and thus build their leadership and management capabilities. This also creates a culture of learning and training which can benefit your team as a whole.

Internships can create opportunities for Public-Private partnerships

Quality internship schemes provide an opportunity to create public-private partnerships, especially with the world of education. Through



"Interns are fully immersed in our regular teams and become part of our product cycle. The benefits are mutual: not only does the intern experience the environment at a major tech company and mentorship by senior developers but Microsoft itself draws immense benefit from the fresh ideas and energy brought to the team."

Microsoft



"Internships give the employer the opportunity to shape and mould the skills most works with universities to create acade-

AbbVie

Tips and tricks for quality internships

Many companies and organisations are leading the way in ensuring that the opportunities they give to young people have a long-lasting positive impact on the individual, the company and wider society as a whole. In a project lead by CSR Europe on quality internships, it was revealed that a majority of the companies interviewed were already abiding by several principles outlined in the European Quality Charter: Around 90% of companies surveyed offer regular meetings with supervisors and clear written learning objectives to their interns (see Useful Links for access to survey)







practical tips quality internship schemes in your organisation?

Before the internship

Interns ought never to be an afterthought: view them as a substantial part of your longer-term workforce planning and ensure you are fully prepared to take them on.

SKILLS ASSESSMENT

Before taking on an intern:

- → Make an initial assessment of what the skills needs of the company are;
- → Assess how many interns you need;
- → Assess what the capacity of training and supervision facilities for an intern are;

This will ensure that when an intern is on board, they do not end up on a 'photocopying' internship, but can contribute concretely to the goals of a company, thus allowing you to reap rewards from your investment in time and money and them learning what it is like to work in your organisation.

RELATIONS WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTES

Once skills needs have been identified, you can approach universities, training centres and other educational facilities that can provide you with the young people equipped with the skills you are looking for. This can create a bridge between educational providers and the needs of the labour market and can contribute on a long-term basis to some of the societal issues currently at play in the relationship between education and labour market needs.

INPRACTICE:

Titan Cement in F.Y.R.O.M: 3-month internship for students

The internship scheme aims to build a strong connection between the business sector and education of young students, particularly in the field of technical skills.

The programme involves 17-18 year old pupils undergoing training for 2 days a week over the period of 3 months, combining classroom training with practical application in a plant workshop environment. The internship is completed under the mentorship of company experts and specialists as well as the schoolteacher of the students.

This initiative of Titan Cement company Cementarnica USJE has been positively recognised by the Ministry of Education and Science of the F.Y.R.O.Macedonia and has allowed the company to strengthen its bench with potential employment candidates already trained on the spot by the company's own experts.

TITAN Cementarnica Usje: http://www.usje.com.mk/index_en.html?Lan=EN

A STRUCTURED INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

Coming up with a clearly defined internship programme will ensure that your internship is not only valuable to young people, but also helps you attract talent and young potential. Consult various colleagues in different departments and see if there are any specific areas of work to which they feel an intern could contribute. A structured internship programme should ensure that:

- → An intern has clear, written learning goals that need to be achieved;
- → An intern is given the opportunity to see different areas of the business/organisation;
- → An intern is given a range of tasks that enable them to work on different skills;
- → An intern is given the opportunity to learn from other employees;
- An intern has regular meetings with their supervisor to monitor progress;

Make sure to concretely build into the internship this educational element. Simple things such as once-a-week career panels over coffee breaks, and 'lunch and learns' give the internship an on-going educational structure and purpose, allowing both intern and employer to benefit from it as far as possible.

ROBUST AND EFFICIENT RECRUITMENT

The recruitment of an intern is an opportunity for employers to ensure that they get the right people into their organisations. In the best case, interns may also be offered to stay long term.

When you offer a quality internship programme the recruitment process can mirror that of any 'regular' position.

- → Make sure that you create a clear job description, including the skills and competencies your organisation needs;
- → In the vacancy announcement/advertisement, ensure the length of the internship is stated, as well as remuneration or reimbursement details;
- → Give feedback to the people that you've interviewed for the role. This will help young people improve their interview skills, and it is important for creating an overall positive image of your organisation towards young talent.

Such an investment in the recruitment process will save you the time of going through countless CVs and will guarantee that you attract only the best candidates for the role.

INPRACTICE:

Adecco Way to WorkTM The Adecco Experience

As the world's leading provider of HR solutions, Adecco facilitates the transition from education to work and matches young people to companies through innovative work-based training schemes. As a global employer, Adecco offers hundreds of internships and apprenticeships across the globe.

Adecco Way to Work™, launched in 2013, is a global initiative to address the lack of experience and the skills mismatch which are one of the barriers to the entry of young people into the workforce. Adecco Way to Work™ 2014 was structured in 3 phases:

The Adecco Street Day involved over 7,700 Adecco employees who took to the streets in more than 900 cities. They met over 600,000 people offering career guidance, free training workshop and tips for interviews and CV preparation.

The Adecco experience: thanks to the cooperation of leading client companies, Adecco placed 88 young people in valuable one-month paid job experiences. The candidates had the chance to learn key workplace skills in a wide range of roles.

The CEO for One Month: one of the candidates was selected to become the 'CEO of Adecco Group for one month' - a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be mentored by the Adecco Group CEO in a unique work experience.

Adecco Way to Work™ will keep helping young people to unlock their potential and ensure they can access available opportunities.

https://www.adeccowaytowork.com www.facebook.com/AdeccoWaytoWork



Throughout the internship

During their time at the organisation, interns should be treated with the same professionalism and duty of care as regular employees, with a focus placed on their learning throughout their time there.

INDUCTION

Once your intern has been selected and is starting at the organisation, it is crucial to ensure their first experience is a positive one. A simple intern induction checklist can make sure nothing goes amiss. This checklist should include:

- → Introducing the intern to the organisation, its values and mission, as well as to all staff members they will work with;
- A tour of the facilities;
- Providing the intern with relevant health and safety information;
- Giving the intern a copy of the Code of Conduct or working rules;
- → Making the intern aware of complaints channels that are in place;
- → Going through desired learning objectives of the intern and task and duties as stated in the job description;
- → Setting up times over the first few weeks where the intern can meet relevant staff members and find out what their role in the organisation is;

SUPFRVISION

Ensure that interns have a supervisor and that this supervisor is trained in their responsibilities. The role of a supervisor is to guide the intern through their internship, acting as a point of contact in case of concerns and queries, as well as supporting the intern in their professional development:

- Establish a monthly assessment for the intern to review progress and satisfaction with the internship;
- → Establish a mid-term review to assess the intern's progress against the written learning objectives;

You can also encourage a buddy system – where junior staff of the company 'buddy' with new interns, acting as a friendly source of advice and guidance.

Such supervision will ensure that the intern feels fully part of a concrete learning process in the company. It can help you ensure that you are making the most of the intern's skills and their time with you.



TRAINING

FAIR COMPENSATION

As part of this educational process, allow interns to attend training that can enhance their professional skills. Give them access to training that regular employees have; if that is not possible, organise cost-effective in-house training conducted by staff members themselves over lunch or coffee breaks. Topics can be as simple as business etiquette delivered by someone from HR, or Advanced Excel delivered by someone in your Finance or IT team.

Such opportunities are not only for the benefit of the intern; they also allow the staff of an organisation to develop professionally too, working on their presentation skills and, ultimately, their leadership credentials.

Be sure that you are giving your intern fair compensation. Take local legal advice to see what the legislation is in your country; and find out what funding opportunities are available, including tax subsidies, that can help you take on a paid intern. Not paying interns has become common practice but it is not the way responsible businesses function. Paying your intern appropriate compensation means that you give all interested candidates the chance to apply: which is particularly crucial for sectors that need specific skills. It also means that you are not discriminating against young people that cannot afford to work for free – ultimately, you avoid being socially regressive, and can instead be a leading example for corporate social responsibility.

INPRACTICE:

Technical and engineering internships at Microsoft and Skype

Each intern sets Core Priorities together with their manager during the 2nd week (of their 12-week internship). It is these priorities that guide the intern throughout their time with us. A successful internship is evaluated based on how these priorities were or were not accomplished.

Tech talks and training happens throughout the internship. However, it is important to stress that we look to our interns to self-drive their learning. They not only have access to talks and training but also to internal libraries, excellent mentors, and renowned thought leaders in the area of Computer Science, etc.

Simply instant messaging with renowned computer architects or grabbing coffee with famous researchers is all highly encouraged. Our engineering teams foster an environment of continuous learning and open collaboration – our interns are certainly a part of this.

Each intern has a dedicated manager and mentor. Both individuals are hand-selected by engineering leaders and are accountable for the interns experience and success. "Supervision" is probably the wrong term here because our interns aren't as much supervised as guided. They don't complete "tasks" but rather use their creative energy and skills to innovate and jointly solve complex problems with our teams.

http://www.microsoft.com/about/corporatecitizenship/en-us/ youthspark/



A POSITIVE IN-HOUSE STATUS

Making the internship programme visible within the company itself can help the development of your own employees too. Create a culture where employees who participate, either as supervisors or 'buddies', get recognition for investing time and are also seen as being potential future leaders in the company. Getting leadership buy-in from the start ensures this.

A visible and internally well-respected internship programme can then also create a culture where interns are perceived as full members of the team, thus encouraging them to contribute more concretely to the team goals and fostering a sense of loyalty and commitment to the job, and to the company also after the internship.



At the end of the internship

A quality internship should lead to a young person that has new professional experiences and that is better equipped to enter the labour market.

REVIEW OF LEARNING

In order to create a sense of ownership and loyalty, include an end-of-internship presentation for the intern to present the work they have done to the team, and what they have learnt throughout the programme.

EVALUATION AND CERTIFICATION

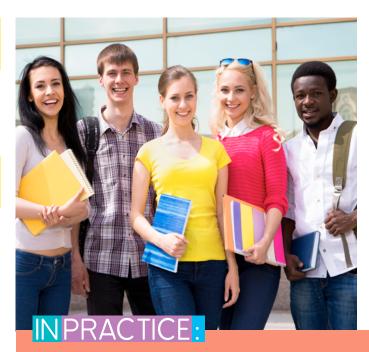
Ensure the supervisor has an internship evaluation meeting with the intern, where they review whether learning objectives have been met and how the intern has performed in their role at the organisation. Questions to be addressed can include:

- → How well has the intern met the learning objectives?
- → What projects have they completed or contributed to?
- → What have they learnt that makes them more prepared for the labour market afterwards?
- → How well do you think they have performed as a member of the staff?
- → In what areas do they have room for improvement?

You should also discuss honestly the possibility of the intern remaining in the company as a permanent employee, and if not an option, discuss their future career steps and in which way you can help and advise them in these steps.

Ensure that there is also space for the intern to give feedback to the supervisor, so that the supervisor and your organisation as a whole can learn from the intern themselves.

Finally, make sure that you give the intern a letter of reference, or a written certification, that includes the tasks completed, skills learnt and an overview of the intern's performance as a whole. This is invaluable for the intern for future job applications.



Internships leading to jobs at AbbVie

AbbVie's University Relations teams lead strategic campus recruitment initiatives to engage and recruit top talent for the Development Programs and functional areas with anticipated openings for university-level talent. Intern candidates recruited for these anticipated openings participate in the AbbVie Summer Internships programme and have an opportunity to interview at the end of the summer to be considered for a full—time position before they complete their internship

The conversion rate of eligible 2014 interns, for AbbVie in the US, to 2015 full-time positions on Development Programs hires was 44%. Conversion is defined as the number of interns eligible for full-time employment who were converted to full-time Development Program employees. AbbVie Ouside-US in 2014 will hire close to 300 interns across 17 countries and expect to have a similar if not higher conversion rate.

Conclusion

Internships can help young people in so many ways: by training them for specific jobs, by giving them the chance to try out a profession and by giving them skills that can help them find permanent employment. But these benefits can only be guaranteed if there are certain guiding principles to internship schemes.

Employers have an important role to play in this process. This guide has shown that there are certain easy steps to take to ensure the internships you offer help young people in this period of transition whilst also allowing you to make the most of the potential of youth, and reap the rewards of investing in the future.

Many employers are already leading the way in offering young people educational, fair and valuable opportunities to enter the job market. With this guide, we hope that more will join this trend.



Useful links

INTERNSHIP QUALITY

The European Quality Charter for Internships and Apprenticeships

http://www.youthforum.org/quality-internships/

The Charter outlines the minimum criteria necessary to ensure that an internship is a valuable, safe and fair experience for a young person.

Apprenticeship and Traineeship schemes in EU27: Key Success Factors

http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?do-cld=11348&langld=en

European Commission research outlining key success factors of already existing apprenticeship and traineeship schemes in the European Union. Includes a country specific annex.

TOOLS TO GET STARTED

Towards Quality Internships and Apprenticeships: Introducing the Quality internships and apprenticeships assessment tool.

http://www.csreurope.org/quality-internships-apprenticeships-qia-tool-2014

This tool produced by CSR Europe is designed to assist companies in assessing and improving the quality of their internships and apprenticeships.

Work experience placements that work

http://www.cipd.co.uk/binaries/work-experience-placements-that-work_2012.pdf

A guide from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) on how employers can provide quality internships in the UK.

COMMITTING TO QUALITY

Signing the European Quality Charter

Companies can pledge to provide quality internships through signing the European Quality Charter on Internships and Apprenticeships. Join the many companies that have pledged their commitment at:

http://www.youthforum.org/quality-in-ternships/

Quality Label

http://www.internsgopro.com/

You can also get rewarded for your internship schemes. InternsGoPro is an organisation that rewards companies that offer quality internship schemes with a Certified Quality Label, based on the European Quality Charter.

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