

Internships NCP, FEM, FNP, REG

For the internship we have several documents:

1. The internship guidelines
2. The internship agreement/contract
3. The internship evaluation sheet including rubrics

From our experience as internship coordinators we would like to emphasize the following points that can improve the organization and the supervision of Academic Internships:

1. **Orientation phase** - it is the task and the responsibility of the student to inform his/her internship coordinator about internship possibilities by contacting potential internship providers. This is often done by writing an email including a cover letter with a motivation and a CV. Applications are more successful if the motivation and previous experience of the student is highlighted clearly. If this approach is used we recommend that the student discusses the contents of these documents with his/her WUR supervisor before the documents will be sent to the potential internship provider, so that the formulation of the motivation, strengths and other relevant issues can be improved.
2. **Learning objectives** - Students generally underestimate the importance of correctly defining the learning objectives of their internship. However, detailed description of the learning objectives in the contract is important to (1) encourage students to define their expectations from the internship and to decide what they want to learn from the internship, (2) create awareness among the internship providers of what is expected from them with regard to supervising the student, (3) be able to evaluate realisation of learning goals as required in the reflection paper (part of the internship report). Examples for inspiration:
 - Improve skills on finding and integrating literature on ecology and management of
 - Improve communication skills with various stakeholder groups;
 - Learn to organise meetings
 - Learn to inform stakeholders/organisations about
 - Improve team working skills in an organisation;
 - Learn to work independently;
 - Learn to build up networks for possible future jobs;
 - Learn to deal with changing working circumstances;
 - Learn about in practice;
3. **Internship agreement/contract** - this document should be signed before the internship officially starts, and forms the first step towards defining working activities and learning objectives. However, as these issues have often been discussed with the internship provider in more detail, we recommend that the students send in a more detailed plan of activities (proposal), to the WUR supervisor after 2-4 weeks, so that the supervisor can react to the planned set-up of the internship in time.
4. **Presentation** – The proposal shall include the planning of a presentation at the end of the internship. This should preferably be planned and given at the internship organisation, but can also be done in the chair group.
5. **Internship report** – as end product of the internship a report has to be handed in. The specific format of the internship report is defined in the internship agreement. The internship report consists of two parts: (1) the description of the results of the internship activities, such as a research paper, or a detailed description of different tasks/projects performed during the internship period and (2) a reflection paper in which students reflect on the learning objectives and discuss to what extent these have been reached as well as problems encountered during the practical training period. Both reports can be combined, but we recommend to keep them separately. The reflection paper can then be kept as an internal WUR document. By doing so, students can also openly reflect on problems they encountered at their internship providing organisation, without the risk of offending the internship provider. Suggestions for the content of the reflection paper can be found [here](#). The reports form an important measure for the WUR supervisor to evaluate the internship.
6. **Internship evaluation sheet** - The WUR supervisor is responsible for the final mark but should consult the internship provider especially with regard to the evaluation of the professional skills of the student. The evaluation is done based on an evaluation sheet and assisted by rubrics which define the underlying meaning for each mark.