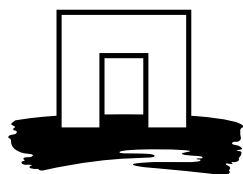


Wageningen University - Department of Social Sciences

# Operations Research and Logistics

## **Academic Internship Course Guide**

December 2019



**WAGENINGEN**  
UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH

### **Profile of the course**

The academic internship is a period of work, study and reflection in a real-world working environment. The aim of the academic internship is to let you experience the potential professional environment in which you could work after graduating from your degree programme. The internship provides an opportunity to work outside Wageningen University at a host organisation, e.g. a company (consultancy firm, industry, etc.), a public institution, a research organisation, another university, or a non-governmental organisation. The tasks you complete have to be of a sufficiently high standard to reflect the desired level of recent Wageningen graduates. You could, for example, work on a research project, a policy document, a communication plan, an evaluation report, a design, or education materials, to name a few.

### **Contact persons, examiners**

For the ORL group Frits Claassen is *thesis- and internship-coordinator*. Based on the topic of the internship Frits Claassen will provide the appropriate supervisor. In case issues with the university supervisor would arise during the internship, the student can contact him.

The internship intake meeting takes place with the *ORL education employee*. During the intake meeting a first indication of the internship topic will be assessed. An intake meeting can be requested by sending an email to: [education.ori@wur.nl](mailto:education.ori@wur.nl)

The specific topic of the internship can be further defined and discussed with the *internship supervisors* (see the supervision information on page 3 of this document).

### **Study load**

A student may perform an internship with a study load of 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, or 39 credits (ECTS) dependent on the study programme.

### **Learning outcomes**

After completion of the internship you are expected to be able to:

- apply knowledge and skills acquired during your study in a working environment;
- expand your professional network;
- work independently with commitment, perseverance and show initiative;
- handle feedback and ask for it timely;
- reflect on your functioning within an organisation;
- adapt to a new working environment and work with a feeling for the organisation;
- plan and keep to a time schedule;
- present major results of your work in writing and orally in a comprehensive manner for a specific audience.

In addition to the above-mentioned learning outcomes, you formulate *your own specific learning outcomes* in consultation and agreement with your Wageningen University supervisor. For example, you may want to formulate personal or technical skills that you would like to acquire or expand on during your internship.

### **Prerequisite knowledge**

The requirements with respect to ORL courses for an internship are equal to the requirements for an MSc thesis. The requirements can be found in the Education Maps on the ORL website. Also other useful documents can be found on the [ORL website](#). Preferably, you do your internship after your MSc thesis. Other requirements can be found in the [Study handbook](#). In addition, you should be officially subscribed as MSc student of Wageningen University.

### **How to find an internship?**

There are two ways to find an internship. Preferably, you find an internship project yourself and arrange approval by Frits Claassen, the ORL thesis- and internship-coordinator. Another possibility is that you can ask Frits Claassen whether he can provide you with

some internship possibilities, via sending an email to [education.orl@wur.nl](mailto:education.orl@wur.nl). Part of the learning process is that you organise all arrangements with the internship providing institute yourself (see the checklist for organising an ORL academic internship at the end of this document). Before you start the internship, you and your internship and university supervisors have to agree on the kind of work to be done; this will be included in the internship contract.

### **Level and approval**

The internship tasks have to be at an appropriate academic level. The description of the task(s) should match the level of what can be expected from a recently graduated MSc student in your field of expertise. Before the start of your internship, you should be in possession of a detailed description of the work involved and that has been approved by the Wageningen University supervisor. In addition, you should be officially registered as an MSc student at Wageningen University for the duration of your internship. In general, an ORL internship will have a quantitative approach, the project can concern operations research aspects (modelling, optimisation, simulation) or logistics (e.g. analysing the supply chain, key performance indicators).

### **Internship Contract and Learning Agreement**

Please use the Wageningen University internship contract and learning agreement (to be downloaded from the [OWI reference site](http://www.wur.eu/orl), also accessible via [www.wur.eu/orl](http://www.wur.eu/orl)). If the internship provider requires you to fill in their own contract, then please do so, but this must always be in addition to the university's learning agreement in which the supervision and learning outcomes are agreed. The internship contract should be signed by the student, the internship supervisor, and your university supervisor, and the learning agreement should be signed by you and your university supervisor.

### **Supervision**

During your internship you will have two supervisors:

1. The *internship supervisor* is your supervisor on behalf of the internship provider. He/she will guide you through your daily activities and give feedback on your performance. Preferably, your internship supervisor is a university graduate.
2. The *university supervisor* advises and supports you before the start of the internship, e.g. on defining specific personal learning outcomes, finding an internship position that meets these goals, clarifying questions concerning the internship, and assessing your performance at the end of the internship. If you experience difficulties during the internship that cannot be discussed with the internship supervisor, do not hesitate to contact the university supervisor who is there to help if difficulties arise.

For a successful internship, it is important that you not only discuss progress with the internship provider, but also that you regularly inform the WUR internship supervisor. Therefore, we recommend that you discuss your progress and performance with your internship provider and university supervisor at least twice (e.g. after one month and towards the end of the internship). In addition, regular contact (e.g. monthly) between you and your university supervisor is important to discuss progress in terms of internship tasks and personal learning goals, planning the next phase, and any other issues that may have arisen during the internship. It is important that you take initiative to inform the university supervisor and ask for specific feedback that the supervisor then can provide.

Before the start of the internship, you, your internship supervisor and the university supervisor agree on the number and frequency of contacts and means of feedback. This will be included in the learning agreement.

### **Activities during the internship**

During your internship you will work on one or more tasks/projects provided by the internship provider. You will have a position equal to a junior employee at an academic

level. You can work on tasks leading to one main deliverable or on tasks leading to several deliverables. It is also possible that you contribute to joint deliverables in which the individual contributions are not clearly demarcated.

#### *Report on results*

Your internship supervisors should support you during the writing of your report on the tasks done during the internship. In the introduction of the report you write the goals and framework of the internship project supported by a theoretical underpinning with literature. In addition, the report should contain a description of the methods used during the internship and if applicable the obtained data/used body of knowledge. Finally, the report should contain the results of your internship project, a conclusion and discussion. The report may be labelled 'confidential' by the internship provider. Before starting the internship, you, the internship provider and the university supervisor will agree on and sign a confidentiality agreement. Confidential products will be stored by Wageningen University, but will not be accessible for third parties without prior consent of the internship provider and Chair Groups involved.

At the end of the project you have to write an abstract of max. 200 words about your completed project on the title page of your report. The abstract has to be checked by your supervisor and send to [education.orl@wur.nl](mailto:education.orl@wur.nl). This information will be put on our website <http://www.wur.eu/orl> as example project to inform other students. The abstract will be used anonymously and should not contain confidential results.

#### *Personal reflection Report*

In addition to the report on results, you have to write a report in which you reflect upon the internship itself (i.e. content, organisation, company, country, etc.) and especially on your functioning within the organisation and the personal goals you formulated in consultation with the university supervisor. For this report, you will be guided by your university supervisor. Questions that could be addressed in your personal reflection report are:

- Which personal goals did you define?
- What activities did you perform to attain these learning outcomes?
- Did the activities all together help you achieve the learning outcomes and your personal goals?
- How do you evaluate your performance on these activities?
- Could you have done things in another way? And if so how?
- What did you experience as your strong and weak points?
- What can you do to improve your weak points?
- How can you use your strong points to strengthen your other skills?
- Which gaps did you identify in your personal knowledge and skills with respect to the activities you had to perform?
- Did you perform the activities in a team and, if yes, what was your contribution?
- How well did you function within the team?
- What were your strong and weak point in cooperation?
- How will you use your strong and weak points to improve cooperation?
- Did you get good insights in the structure of the organisation, and did you feel a part of it?
- What were your experiences with the culture and structure of the organisation?
- Is there a code of conduct? Did you and your colleagues in the organisation comply with the code of conduct and professional ethical standards of the internship organisation? Did you encounter other ethical issues?

In general, the report should at least contain an explanation of the learning outcomes formulated at the start of the internship, a critical evaluation of the extent to which these outcomes were reached (including the activities relevant for each of them), and a set of new learning outcomes, formulated during and at the end of the internship. Obviously, the content of the report is much more important than its length, but as a rule of thumb, a personal reflection report should at least cover four pages / 2200 words.

### *Oral presentation*

At the end of your internship, you may be expected to give an oral presentation to the internship provider. The internship supervisor is expected to attend your presentation and provide feedback. Preferably, the university supervisor will also be present. If this is not possible, then the presentation should be given (a second time) at the Chair Group Staff-Student Presentations. In both cases a copy of the slides should be sent to the university supervisor.

The presentation of an internship is max 15 minutes, with max 5 minutes of discussion. To sign-up for the ORL Student Presentations, please send the following information to [education.ori@wur.nl](mailto:education.ori@wur.nl) (e-mails with incomplete information will not be considered):

- The name of your supervisor;
  - Type of presentation: in this case: internship;
  - Company / organisation you are working for;
  - The title of your presentation (this will not be changed afterwards on the website).
- Please check also the ORL Student Presentation Guidelines on our website.

### *Examination*

After finishing your portfolio of deliverables, your personal reflection report and the oral presentation, you will have an oral defence with your ORL supervisor/ examiner. The internship supervisor is allowed to be present as well, but this is not obligatory. In the defence, you will be assessed on the extent you have mastered your internship subject and the quality of your reflection on the internship project. The report on results, the personal reflection report and a copy of the oral presentation and a written (non-binding) advice of the internship supervisor must be provided to the university supervisor/examiner at least two weeks before the defence.

### **Assessment of the internship**

Wageningen University is responsible for the assessment and the final grade. The internship supervisor must provide an evaluation of your performance during your internship and a non-binding advice about the grade. Therefore the Evaluation by Supervisor Form ([OWI reference site](#)) can be used. However, the advice from your internship supervisor may differ from the grade given by the university supervisor and examiner due to differences in expectations and assessment of your work between the supervisors, and differences in grading levels between organisations and countries. The assessment will be based on five elements:

- the report on results;
- the personal reflection report;
- the oral presentation;
- the oral defence;
- the evaluation of the performance by the internship supervisor at the internship provider.

For assessment by the university supervisor/examiner, the Wageningen University Assessment Form and rubric ([OWI reference site](#)) should be used. At ORL we use the following relative weights for the learning outcomes: Professional skills 40% – Report internship 40% – Self-reflection on internship 10% – Presentation 5% – Examination 5%.

### **Insurance**

A 'normal' travel accident and luggage insurance may not be sufficient if you go abroad for your internship. You may want to use the free WUR travel accident and luggage insurance if you go on an internship abroad. For more information, go to the Student Service Centre (SSC). This insurance is applicable only during the actual internship; if you plan to travel after your internship, you will need to take out a personal travel insurance for that purpose. It is not wise to have two insurances at the same time as there can be disagreement on which insurer should pay in case of an accident. Therefore, if you have a

(continuous) travel insurance policy, you should cancel that for the period of your study abroad, but make sure that it is reinstated when you start your travels after your internship.

You have to ensure that your own health insurance has world coverage. All students automatically have a liability insurance (=WA verzekering) during study activities (lab work, field work etc.), but not during their leisure time.

### **Grants**

For information about grants see the following websites:

<http://www.beursopener.nl/content/index.asp> (unfortunately in Dutch only)

<https://www.wur.nl/en/Education-Programmes/master/Study-grants.htm>

<https://www.wur.nl/en/Education-Programmes/Current-Students/Travel-Funding.htm>

There are Erasmus+ grants available for Wageningen students who do their internship (this internship can also be a voluntary or after graduation) and thesis abroad:

[www.wur.eu/grant-internship](http://www.wur.eu/grant-internship)

### **Checklist for organising an ORL academic internship**

For all internships:

- Find an internship
- Make an appointment with Frits Claassen, the thesis- and internship-coordinator for approval
- The coordinator will provide a supervisor
- Fill in Wageningen University Internship Contract and Learning Agreement together with Wageningen University supervisor and internship supervisor
- Hand in Wageningen University Internship Contract and Learning Agreement at:
  1. the secretary of the supervising chair group
  2. the study advisor of your study programme.
- If applicable fill in the internship contract of the host institution

For internships abroad:

- If possible apply for grants
- Arrange proper insurances
- Make sure you have the right vaccinations for the country you are travelling to.
- Apply for a visa
- Arrange tickets
- Arrange housing
- Fill in the form 'OV studentenkaart buitenland' and hand in your OV card in order to receive a refund of travelling costs (for Dutch students only)