



MSc Internship Course Guide: Wageningen University

This course guide contains two parts:

- Part A contains general information that applies for MSc internships in all programmes and chair groups.
- Part B contains specific regulations for MSc internships in your chair group.

Additional information that is specific for programmes or chair groups is provided online (via Brightspace and/or webpages).

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Part A: general guidelines and procedures

1. Introduction

This internship guide describes the general internship procedures for all chair groups of Wageningen University. For internship replacing thesis, the Research Practice that has additional learning outcomes and related assessment, a separate course guide applies. The internship guide is meant for staff and students. It includes information about the goal of MSc internships, procedures before starting and during the internship and the assessment procedure.

2. Course profile

The academic internship is a period where you put your acquired knowledge and skills into practice and at the same time gain relevant work experience at an academic level. The aim of the internship is to apply knowledge and perform skills in a potential future work field e.g. a company (consultancy firm, industry, etc.), a public institution, a research organisation, another university, or a non-governmental organisation.

Language: English
Credits: 24-39 ECTS
Period: 1-6

3. Learning outcomes

After successful completion of your MSc internship you are able to:

- I. Justify career interests and ambitions in relationship to the internship project and reflect on professional ambitions and capabilities;
- II. Perform a set of general professional skills at a master level;
- III. Transfer acquired knowledge to a professional context and to conduct advanced work tasks and projects;
- IV. Evaluate the scientific and societal context and relevance of the internship project tasks;
- V. Realize personal learning outcomes (which could include domain-specific skills).

Ad V) In addition to the above-mentioned learning outcomes, you formulate a minimum of two *specific personal learning outcomes* in consultation and agreement with their Wageningen University supervisor.

For example, you may want to formulate personal or technical skills that you would like to acquire or expand during your internship. Make sure your personal learning goals are formulated properly by making use of the guidelines in *appendix A*.

Examples of personal learning goals are:

- I accept and use feedback;
- I work professionally and can deal with a tight time schedule without getting too stressed;

- I am able to reflect critically on the contribution of the domain of my internship provider to society.

4. Study load

Most MSc degree programmes include an internship of 24 credits (*see the description of your MSc programme in the online Study Handbook*). Chair Groups offer internships from 24 to 39 credits. In consultation with the internship coordinator (of the chair group) and your study advisor, you may extend the length of your internship up to a maximum of 39 credits. Extension is only possible in advance and should be accompanied by an extension of the learning objectives.

As a guideline, a full-time internship (42 hours per week) of 24 credits (ECTS) equals 4 months. We expect you to work a fulltime workweek at the internship provider, according to their working times. Mostly, the workweek at an internship provider is shorter than 42 hours, which means that you can use the other hours to work on your internship reports. If you work less than fulltime at your internship provider, your internship duration should be extended to get the same amount of credits.

5. Criteria academic internship

The internship at the Wageningen University (WU) needs to be an **academic** internship. This means that an internship should have certain characteristics that fit a potential academic career path. The internship therefore needs to meet the following requirements:

- Your tasks during the internship require academic level of thinking (i.e. it needs to include a content driven assignment such as working on a research project, a policy document, a communication plan, an evaluation report, a design, or education materials, to name a few).
- Your internship reflects the desired level of a Wageningen graduate (i.e. it needs to be at the level of work that you will do after graduation).
- Your supervisor at the host organization reflects academic professional and intellectual abilities.

6. How to find an internship?

There are differences between chair groups how internships can be found and should be arranged. In some chair groups, it is common practice that you have to find the internship yourself. Other chair groups provide you with internship projects.

In general, you can take the following steps:

- Discuss the planning of your master programme including your internship with your study advisor. Check, in consultation with your study advisor, which chair groups are allowed to supervise your internship. Consult the study advisor or internship coordinator (of the chair group) for tips regarding looking for and finding an appropriate internship.
- Start looking for an internship. Generally, it is a good idea to start searching for an internship at least 3-6 months in advance, and at least 6 months in advance if you plan to do your internship abroad. For a first exploration of potential internships, ask

the internship coordinator, ask fellow students about their internship experience, ask lecturers for contacts, read professional journals or search the internet to find names of possible internship providers and internship supervisors. Student career services also receives vacancies for internship. On the WU-website you can find several databases with opportunities for internships.

- Check out the procedure for the relevant chair groups by contacting the internship coordinator or checking the information on their website, in portals, etc. Make sure that you know how an internship is arranged at the chair group that will supervise your internship.

7. Internship Plan: contract and Learning Agreement

Before the internship starts, you, the supervisor of your internship organization (indicated as *host supervisor*) and your supervisor from the Wageningen University (indicated as *WU supervisor*) have to agree on the content of your internship. This agreement is included in the internship plan, consisting of the Internship contract and the Internship learning agreement (see *appendices B and C*).

Internship contract

The **WU internship contract** (see overview of downloads in *appendix D*) is the preferred contract to use for your internship. However, if the internship provider requires you to fill in their own contract then please use the checklist of *appendix B* to check for tips and potential bottlenecks related to the internship contract. It also includes guidelines for a separate NDA (Non-disclosure Agreement), if applicable.

A non-WU internship contract requires an extra check with Legal Services of the specific Science Group. Calculate about two extra weeks for this check. You, the host supervisor and the **internship coordinator of the chair group** need to sign the contract. Issues with contracts can always be checked; you can contact the internship coordinator if you have questions about the contract.

Learning Agreement

The **Learning Agreement** (see overview of downloads in *appendix D*) is a personal learning agreement with a description of the internship assignment, your personal learning outcomes, the and agreement on supervision, planning, evaluation moments, and (if applicable) risk assessment. You and your **WU supervisor** sign the learning agreement.

Students from non-EU countries might face problems with immigration rules if they are planning to do an internship in a EU country outside the Netherlands. In the Netherlands a tripartite contract is necessary (requirement of IND; a tripartite contract is signed by the internship provider, the internship coordinator of university and the student). In that case, non-European students do not have to apply for a working permit. In other EU countries it can happen that you need other documents, like a working permit. If so, it could be impossible to do your internship in another EU country due to time consuming procedures. It could be that you need a letter from our university stating that you are registered as student at the university and that the internship is a compulsory part of your study programme. In case you need additional support, please contact the internship coordinator. Furthermore, it is wise to contact the specific Embassy to check which documents are necessary.

8. Supervision

Before the start of the internship, the internship coordinator of the chair group needs to appoint a supervisor and examiner for your internship. Each chair group organizes the distribution of supervisors differently. Contact the internship coordinator of the respective chair group to check their specific procedure.

During your internship you will have two supervisors: the host supervisor and the WU supervisor, as also stated above.

1. The *host supervisor* is your supervisor on behalf of the internship provider. They will guide you through your daily activities and give feedback on your performance. Preferably, your internship host supervisor is a university graduate. If not, they should at least reflect academic professional and intellectual abilities. Your internship organization determines who your internship supervisor is.
2. The *WU supervisor* advises and supports you before the start of the internship by supervising the completion of the learning agreement and the contract (e.g. defining specific personal learning outcomes, clarifying questions concerning the internship contract, etc). Your WU supervisor supports you during the internship through facilitating evaluation moments (e.g. progress evaluation, discussing difficulties, giving advice, etc). Your WU supervisor also supports you at the end of the internship by giving feedback on the final internship reports.

9. Approval for starting the internship

Your internship is approved when:

- The internship coordinator approves your internship, including the check if your internship is at an academic level (see the criteria for an academic internship).
- You have an agreed upon and signed internship contract.
- You have an agreed upon and signed learning agreement.
- You are registered as an MSc student at Wageningen University for the duration of your internship.

10. Internship activities

You may opt for a research driven internship at a research organization, a more general oriented internship at government or non-government organization or a commercially oriented internship in the private sector. Keep in mind that different internships may result in different products and outcomes, but also have different contractual agreements (think about confidentiality issues and legal issues). In case of issues with contracts, you can contact the internship coordinator, as explained in paragraph 6.

The contents and type of activities are different for each internship. Besides the internship activities you will also:

- Work out the learning agreement and a detailed action plan for the internship;
- Complete the project assignment(s) and activities to the best of your abilities;
- Plan and execute a progress evaluation with the host supervisor;

- Plan and execute evaluation moments with the WU supervisor (including the progress evaluation);
- Present the outcomes of the internship at the internship organization (if possible, invite the WU supervisor for the final presentation);
- Write two reports on the internship: 1) a report on the content and context of your internship (in case of an internship consisting of several interlinked projects) or a research report (in case of a research driven internship) and 2) a reflection report.

11. Progress evaluation and - communication

For a successful internship, it is important that you discuss progress during your internship with both your supervisors. To realize this, a progress evaluation moment needs to be organized with your host supervisor to discuss your progress and performance so far, when looking at the initial internship plan. It is important that you take initiative to inform the WU supervisor by sending the progress evaluation form in time and ask for specific feedback. If you experienced any shortcomings in your supervision, then this is a good moment to discuss it as well. In case of severe problems regarding dedication, skills, knowledge or communication, your WU supervisor, together with the internship examiner, may decide to terminate the internship project. This will then be registered in OSIRIS.

Appendix C provides a format for the progress evaluation.

Before the start of the internship, you agree with your host supervisor and your WU supervisor the number and frequency of contact moments and means of feedback (part of the Learning Agreement, see the overview of downloads in *appendix D*).

12. Project report and reflection report

You will produce two internship reports: a project report and a reflection report. Depending on the internship the project report could take the shape of:

- a set of deliverables plus a context report;
- a research report.

a. Project report

This project report assesses the **academic quality** of the internship.

- In case of an internship consisting of several interlinked projects the product can be a *set of deliverables* plus a *context report*. The set of deliverables provides an overview of the products created during the different assignments, while the context report contains a description of the assignments, the scientific context of the internship, an overview of the internship activities and a reflection on the products vis-a-vis the list of requirements; the usability for the organization, academic relevance (see the learning agreement).
- In case of a research driven internship, the report can be a *research report*. The research report addresses at least the description of the research assignment, the scientific context of the internship, research methods, results of the assignment, conclusions and discussion.
- In all cases, the presentation is included in the appendices of the report.

In exceptional cases, the internship provider may label the report or other products '*confidential*'. For legal guidelines, see the contract format (download available in *appendix D*). Wageningen University stores these confidential products, but will not make them

accessible for third parties without prior consent of the internship provider and chair groups involved. Wageningen University uses the reports for visitation purposes only.

b. Reflection report

The reflection report assesses the **academic skills** that you were able to apply or learn during the internship. In the reflection report you reflect on how you achieved the learning outcomes of the internship. The reflection report is about 1500 words and includes the following components, making use of the outcome of the progress evaluation:

- Motivation for the internship.
- A reflection on the general learning outcomes of the internship.
- A reflection on your personal learning goals as set in the learning agreement.
- A reflection on the relation between your master programme versus your internship, and your potential professional career and future work field.

You will hand in your reports as soon as possible after finishing your internship, ultimately one week before the assessment and always in communication with your WU supervisor.

13. Assessment of the internship

The internship is assessed on both the skills and the content aspect of the internship. An approved internship plan (including the WU internship contract, a workplan plus the Internship learning agreement) is a **prerequisite** for a student to be allowed to start an internship.

The assessment strategy below shows the relation between the learning outcomes and the different parts of the assessment.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment				Reflection report
	Performance	Project Report	Oral presentation	Oral examination	
I Justify career interests and ambitions in relationship to the internship project and reflect on professional ambitions and capabilities.	X				X
II Perform a set of general professional skills at a master level.	X	X	X		
III Transfer acquired knowledge to a professional context and to conduct advanced work tasks and projects.	X	X	X	X	
IV Evaluate the scientific and societal context and relevance of the internship project tasks.		X		X	
V Realize personal learning outcomes (which could include domain-specific skills).					X
	50%	40%	5%	5%	pass/fail

The responsibilities of the different actors involved regarding the assessment of the various aspects, including their weight, is organized as follows:

Aspect	% in grade	Responsibility <i>I = info in evaluation</i> <i>G = grade</i> <i>A = advice to the examiner</i> <i>FG = final grade</i>			Grading format	
		host supervisor	WU supervisor	WU examiner	Mark (1-10)	Pass/fail
1. Performance	50	G	A	G + FG	X	
2. Project report	40	I	G	G + FG	X	
3. Oral presentation	5	G	A	G + FG	X	
4. Oral examination	5		G	G + FG	X	
5. Reflection report	-		G	G + FG		X
Final grade	100			FG	X	

A rubric is used for feedback and grading . The assessment of the host supervisor is communicated to the WU supervisor using the form **internship-evaluation-by-supervisor**. At the end of the internship period, results of all assessments are collected in an **assessment form** in OSIRIS. The final grade is administered in OSIRIS.

14.Delay and possibility to do a resit

The start and end date of your internship is registered in the learning agreement. In order to pass the course, you get two possibilities to discuss a complete draft report before you hand in the final report. If the final report is insufficient but your supervisor expects that you will be able to finish the project within two extra months, the final date will be extended. Afterwards the final report will be graded and the mark will be registered in OSIRIS. If you are not able to hand in a satisfactory report within two extra months you should start all over again (not necessarily with the same supervisor, in the same chair group or with the same internship). If you should start all over again, this is still considered as a resit.

15.Further information on travel policy WU, insurances and grants

Travel policy for students

Are you planning to travel abroad or, as an international student, are you temporarily travelling back home in the context of your studies at Wageningen University & Research? Find out in good time whether this trip concerns a **risky area** (source: Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and if so, you will have to receive permission. In that case, you should submit a **travel request** together with your internship coordinator.

You will need to complete a form that also functions as a checklist to ensure you are well-prepared for your trip. This checklist includes (mandatory) precautions to be taken, such as travelling together with a student who is already familiar with the area, (additional WU)

insurance, safety training, registration in Kompas (Foreign Affairs), and recommended vaccinations. You can find the form on the website mentioned below.

For actual information on travel policy WU, check the website:

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

Health Insurance

Dutch law requires everyone, including employees and students of WU, to have a health insurance policy. Depending on the choice of the traveller, this may or may not provide coverage abroad. Students are responsible for ensuring that they are adequately insured for the area in question. In the event that repatriation is required, the traveller must communicate with the contact person of their own travel insurance policy.

Travel Insurance

Students participating in internships and/or conducting thesis work abroad as part of their study programme at the University are covered by the collective travel insurance of Wageningen University & Research. The general terms and conditions for this insurance are available for view at the desk of the Student Service Centre (SSC).

Liability insurance

According to Dutch law, students are obliged to have their own private liability insurance (=WA verzekering). An accident insurance is advised.

Grants

Note: this is only relevant for internships in foreign countries.

For information about grants see the following websites:

- <https://www.wur.nl/en/Education-Programmes/Study-Abroad-and-Exchange-Students/Outgoing-from-Wageningen-University.htm>
- <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>

Part B: Additional regulations and guidelines ENR group

1. Finding an internship

START EARLY! It is highly advisable to start in time to

- Discuss your plans and wishes with your study advisor
- Explore the range of opportunities for internships
- Discuss your plans and wishes with the ENR internship coordinator (sampo.pihlainen@wur.nl)
- Subscribe to the ENR newsletter to receive updates on internship opportunities (send an email to rolf.groeneveld@wur.nl to subscribe)
- Follow the ENR group on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/WURENR>
- Search the Wageningen University Thesis and Internship Projects database (TIP; <http://tip.wur.nl>) for internship opportunities
- Prepare a motivation letter and CV (*you can contact the Student Career Centre for tips on motivation letter and CVs*).

2. Preparing the internship

Once you have found an internship:

- Check with the ENR internship coordinator (sampo.pihlainen@wur.nl) if your internship meets the criteria and who will be your WU supervisor during the internship
- Discuss the size of the internship with your supervisor and the study advisor
- Register your choice in OSIRIS.

After the WU internship supervisor has approved your internship:

- Inform other organisations where you are applying that you have accepted a position elsewhere
- Discuss the exact internship tasks with the host supervisor and WU supervisor
- Fill in two forms: the internship contract and the learning agreement.

The *internship contract* is like an employment contract between you and your internship host, plus Wageningen University. It stipulates agreements on issues such as your remuneration, days of leave, and office hours. Wageningen University has its own standard internship contract. ***It is highly recommended that you use the WU contract instead of the contract provided by your internship host.*** If your internship host insists on using their own standard contract, be sure to pay close attention to the regulations in that contract. The Wageningen University contract should give you a good idea of what you can reasonably expect from your internship provider. See Appendix B for a checklist of issues to be scrutinized in the internship contract. The internship contract is to be signed by you, the internship host supervisor, and the designated representative of Wageningen University, which for the Section Economics is Marrit van den Berg (marrit.vandenberg@wur.nl).

The *learning agreement* is your agreement with your Wageningen University supervisor on

- The nature of your internship activities
- Your personal learning outcomes
- The dates of the start of your internship, the progress evaluation, and the end date

- The supervision plan, i.e. such arrangements as the frequency of feedback meetings, updates to your supervisor, and so on
- The documents to be submitted to the university (see above about the deliverables and the context report)

Think carefully about your personal learning outcomes. An internship is a unique opportunity to learn skills and gain insights that would not be as easily available in a university, so make use of that! Ideally you would

- Describe your learning outcomes actively: "After completion of this internship I want to be able to..."
- Devise a strategy for yourself to attain the learning outcome.

3. During the internship

- Discuss your with your host supervisor your learning outcomes, how you plan to attain them, and how your host can support you in that
- Plan regular feedback meetings with your host supervisor
- Plan the progress evaluation with the host supervisor and the WU supervisor

4. Finalisation

4 weeks before the end of the internship

- Arrange a day, time, and location for the oral presentation at the internship provider
- Communicate with your WU supervisor about the planning of the reports and the internship defence. At the ENR group we try to form, whenever possible, colloquia of 2-3 presentations, i.e. MSc thesis proposals, BSc theses, MSc theses, and internships.

3 weeks before the end of the internship

- Provide a draft portfolio of products to the internship provider for a check on a correct representation of the organisation and projects, and on confidentiality.

1 week before the examination

- Submit the project report and the personal reflection report with your student number and internship code to your WU supervisor. Check your approved study programme (SPA) for the correct internship code.
- The host supervisor will send the signed evaluation form of your performance to the WU supervisor.

5. Extra for internships abroad

- If applicable: arrange the permission to travel to risk areas (see WU travel policy).
- If possible, apply for grants.
- Make sure you have the right vaccinations for the travel destination(s).
- Arrange proper insurances.
- Timely apply for a student visa if necessary.
- Arrange travel tickets.
- Arrange housing.
- Fill in the 'OV studentenkaart buitenland' and hand in the OV card to receive a refund of travelling costs (*for Dutch students only*).

Appendices

Appendix A: Guidelines for defining your personal learning goals

Why is it important ?

Setting up your personal learning goals supports you to focus on your learning process and progress during the internship. These learning goals are the behavior and knowledge areas that you identify as important for your learning. Your goals should be useful for you, yet they should not be only self-serving. Working on your personal intended learning outcomes should enhance your functioning within the internship organization and result in a higher quality end product. Therefore, it is useful to discuss your personal learning goals with your supervisors. Your previous lectures or peers with who you worked during earlier projects, might already have some useful feedback that provides you with input for defining your personal learning goals.

How do I define personal learning goals?

For the internship you need to formulate a minimum of two personal learning goals, e.g. related to your professional career ambitions, specific domain knowledge you want to obtain or specific skills you want to improve. For each learning goal you follow the following steps.

Step 1. Choose elements from the different domains of learning (academic/scientific and social learning), as an inspiration to set up personal learning goals. Choose elements you feel personally motivated for to work on in the coming months.

Step 2. Describe in one sentence the learning goal in general terms. Start with “I” and formulate your goal positively and active. Describe what you aim for. Make it active in the sense that you state the desired outcome. Do not state what you do not want, state what you want.

For example: ‘I accept and use received feedback’.

Or: ‘I determined if the tasks, structure and working environment of the internship provider is an appropriate career goal for me’.

Step 3. Create a visual analogue scale running from 0 to 5, and define the level of attainment you aim at. A ‘5’ means an optimal performance in relation to the specific learning goal you want to improve. Describe the desired level you are aiming to achieve in a short description. It can be a combination of the three aspects knowledge, skills and your personal attitude (or conviction).

E.g. aspects related to

- Knowledge: learning to know and apply knowledge.
- Skills: learning to do.
- Attitude: learning to be (i.e. related to others and yourself, sense of care, sense of responsibility (integrating values in your own value system).

Example of the desired attainment level at in case of ‘*I accept and use feedback*’.

‘I have an open attitude and pro-actively ask for feedback. Furthermore, I have a conversation about that feedback to truly understand it. Based on this conversation, I design a plan to implement relevant feedback and consciously use that plan during my internship. I

welcome feedback from my colleagues and host supervisor. I check with them whether I have improved regarding the feedback they gave me.'

Step 4. Indicate your current level of performance.

Make a description of your current level of performance regarding the learning goal (assess your own abilities, e.g. by including elements of knowledge, skills and attitude). It helps you to make clear which steps need to be taken to be able to improve.

Example present performance:

'I am open to receive feedback from most of the involved persons, but only if I trust them. I hardly ask for feedback. I struggle with selecting relevant feedback, but do create and partially execute my plan to implement the feedback if it seems relevant to me.'

Step 5. Indicate the way you are going to achieve your personal learning goals. Determine what is reasonable for you to act upon within the coming months. Make sure that you set yourself SMART action points (specific, measurable, acceptable, realistic, well-timed).

Example: Within the forthcoming two months ...

-I ask the host supervisor and I will look on internet to provide me with elaborate information on receiving feedback and set up my own rules.

-I practice receiving feedback from my internship colleagues by asking them for feedback about my behavior.

How to use your personal learning goals?

The personal learning goals are the basis for your reflection report (by means of a self-assessment). They are key elements of your development throughout the internship and help you to prepare for your future career.

Although setting up personal learning goals supports you to focus on what you want to learn, they should always be related to your functioning at the internship. It is important to realize that learning goals are not static. You are free to adjust them in between if necessary, for example during the progress evaluation (see *appendix D*).

Appendix B: Checklist when other internship contracts are used

Note: using the WU contract form (aligned with all Dutch universities by VSNU) is strongly advised.

1. Make sure that the period of the internship is correctly addressed (start and finish data; no open end).
2. Make sure that your internship assignment is well described and that the plan for the internship (your learning agreement), is part of the contract.
3. Make sure that there are clear agreements regarding working hours, facilities and possibilities for leave.
4. Be aware that the author rights of the internship reports belong to you.
5. Be aware that it is clear to whom the intellectual property rights of the outcomes of the internship belong; most likely to the employer.
6. Be aware that the WU is allowed to use the internship reports for accreditation purposes (including confidential reports).
7. Make sure that no penalty clause has been included in the agreement;
8. Make sure that your internship coordinator or WU supervisor checked the specific agreement before you sign it.

Checklist for a separate NDA (non disclosure agreement), partly overlapping the checklist above:

1. Make sure you agree upon a certain period of time for the confidentiality.
2. Make sure you that your WU supervisor, the examining board, WU examiners and the accreditation panel have access to the confidential part of your report(s).
3. Make sure that no penalty clause has been included in this agreement .