



Undertaking Your Internship: *guidelines for a quality outcome*

► An **internship** is a short-term work experience offered by an organization —a business entity, a research institute, a public body, etc.— to provide some entry-level exposure to a particular field of work or industry. It usually aims to provide learning experience subsequently leading to work in a particular domain. As an intern, you are required to spend time working on a specific project acquiring substantial insights into a specific field. Making industry connections and developing both hard and soft skills is also intended. Sometimes, an internship could lead to immediate employment and also further learning as in the case of undertaking research or even doctoral studies.

*What is an **Internship** and **Why** do one?*

In summary, an internship, besides its academic inclination, is a platform where you step into the real world where you could build your career.

► As an **intern**, you get the opportunity to work hand in hand with expert industry professionals and reputed and accomplished academics/researchers and acquire good exposure to what a career for you would entail in that field. Your internship can also help you figure out what you want to do (or do not want to do!) in your career and then make it easier to find a full-time employment in that domain. Besides, you will be given the opportunity to start building your professional network that will be extremely important in many fronts in the years to come.

***Advantages** of doing a good internship.*

► There are a number of ways to **find an internship**. Popular methods include:

***Where** to find an internship?*

- A. **Campus Resources**: either Environmental Campus Birkenfeld (ECB) or the Institute for Applied Material Flow Management (IfaS) could be a good primary resource for you to check if there are any opportunities for an internship at any of the large



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number of projects, they are engaged in at present (or will be in the near future). ECB website, many of its institutional websites, and also the on-campus bulletin boards/notice boards display these opportunities regularly. Apart from that, you may contact the IMAT Management Office, IMAT Contact Point (www.imat-master.com/contact), and also the professors/academics you are in touch with throughout your studies to inquire about possible internships.

- B. **Online Resources:** you have access to a wealth of global resources via the worldwide web. You can find the internship of your choice, either paid (**more on this below!**) or non-paid, leading to a career or to gain unique experience/exposure at a world leading organisation. However, it could take a long time, a lot of patience and also it will require a lot of high-calibre correspondence with persuasion.
- C. **IMAT Alumni/Professional Network:** get connected and ask around for help. There are plenty of help and resources you can tap into and mobilise.

In a nutshell, we advise you to know your academic and personal timelines and **start early** to secure an internship of your choice. Prepare yourself with the basic tools such as your up-to-date resume/CV, letters of recommendations (if required), letter of motivation, and also good communication skills before reaching out to others/organisation with your inquiry.

*It can take a relatively long time to find an internship. So, **start early.***

As in the case of securing employment, you will have to prove your worth, competence, and passion. Be prepared!

► **Securing an internship** requires time, patience, skills and also a lot of preparation. Following basics are required, nonetheless.

*Get the **basics** sorted and get them right!*

- A. Start early
- B. Polish your cover letter and resume to perfection
- C. Prepare for potential interviews and correspondence



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D. Ask for help and mobilise your resources way in advance

► Your **internship duration** and its requirements vary according to the degree you are qualifying for.

Duration of your internship & other technical details.

For students enrolled in the master of sciences, the practical study phase (e.g. internship) amounts to 30 credit points (ECTS) and is fully integrated into the standard study period. This corresponds to a workload of 900 hours and thus usually a duration of 16 weeks with weekly full-time participation. Completion with part-time participation is possible with a correspondingly adapted duration. The practical study phase can be replaced by corresponding periods at a foreign university or by a semester abroad.

For students enrolled in the master of engineering, the internship or practical material flow management research project amounts to 6 credit points (ECTS) and is also integrated into the standard study period. This corresponds to a workload of 180 hours and thus usually a duration of 6 weeks with weekly full-time participation. Completion with part-time participation is possible with a correspondingly adapted duration.

Visualised in Figure 1 below are the generic requirements and the duration of an internship according to the programs. These requirements may vary or amended from time to time. Therefore, please consult your academic guidelines before embarking on searching for an internship.

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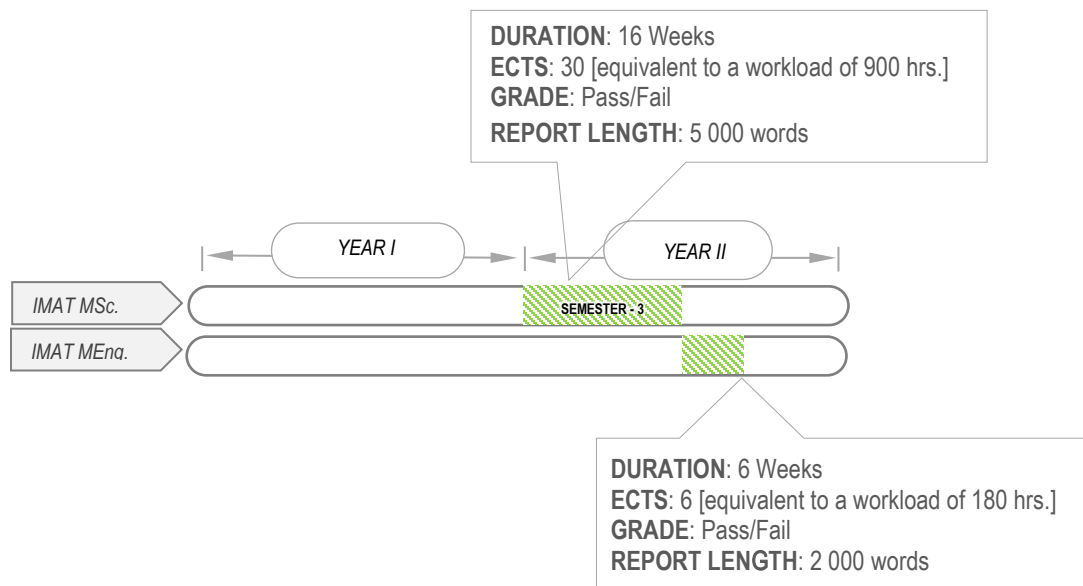


Figure 1. Technical summary of internships: IMAT MSc. Vs. MEng.

► You have the freedom to carry out your internship anywhere in the world. We encourage you to find a location/place suitable for your needs and schedule. We also encourage you to look for opportunities within the **IMAT Network University** where you have access to the affiliated universities—in Japan, Taiwan, Mexico, and Brazil—and seven non-affiliated partner universities—in Canada, Portugal, Morocco, Sudan, Oman, India, and Sri Lanka. You may request for an introduction to the IMAT-NU coordinators to explore the internship opportunities via IMAT Management Office.

Location of your internship could be anywhere in the world!

The onus is on you to organise the internship and finance it (in the case of non-paid internships), arrange your travels including the procurement of visa(s) if required. The IMAT Management Office can support you in this regard.



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▶ The **general procedure** for undertaking your internship is as follows.

1. Find your internship placement
2. Finalise all administrative requirements:
 - a. Registration, if required, at host's end and IMAT Management Office
 - b. Setting and communicating the start/end dates
 - c. Arrangement of supervision (one external/host supervisor and an internal supervisor is required)
 - d. Travel and accommodation arrangement (if applicable)
3. Commencement of the internship
4. Advise/supervision consultation sessions (if required)
5. Completion of the internship and closure
6. Formulation of the internship report
7. Formal presentation of work (if required by the host and/or IfaS)
8. Submission of the report for evaluation/grading

*Awareness of the **general procedure** of your internship can help managing the process and achieving good results.*

▶ You may (and allowed to) undertake **paid internships** if offered by the host. However, you are required to consult the regulatory limits set by your student visa/residence permit and strictly comply with that. The onus in that regards is on you to check the regulatory requirements and also to arrange the paid internship contract between you and your host institution.

*Follow the guidelines for **paid internships** according to your visa regulations.*

▶ Given the scope and nature of your internship and the organisation you will work for, your work may involve intellectual property [IP] and/or proprietary information and related matter. And your work may also result in IP. In the respective cases, perhaps, you will be requested to ratify a non-disclosure agreement [NDA] or similar legal contract(s) between you and the host institution to clarify the legal ownership of your work. Such contracts/agreements may be **signed between you and**

***IP, NDAs** and related matters.*



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the host institution at your will and you and you only will be liable for any and all consequences thereof. Neither the Trier University of Applied Sciences nor the Environmental Campus Birkenfeld nor any of its affiliated institutions and/or its programmes (such as the IMAT Master Degree Programmes) shall be a party to such agreements nor made liable under any such agreement or consequences thereof.

Should you have any doubts or need assistance/clarification regarding such contracts, you may consult your academic advisor duly.

► The ***Internship report*** is a mandatory requirement for your grade evaluation. Therefore, you are expected to produce quality output in the form of a technical synthesis summarising your internship undertaking. The report should present all the details concisely including the following.

Specifics of the internship report.

- A. Technical details of the internship: *title, dates, location, institution, supervisors, etc.*
- B. The host institution's profile: *a concise description of the institution and its principal work.*
- C. Key undertaking(s) of the internship: *internship tasks, objectives, methods applied (if applicable), findings or results, impacts of the outcomes, scientific value and its relation to your current studies, outlook, etc.*
- D. Personal evaluation of the internship: *quality of work and experience, its value/contribution towards your current studies, future studies and your career development.*

*Please also fill the **Self-Evaluation Form** in **Annex I** and attach it to your internship report.*

- E. Official notification of the completion of your internship: *dated, signed and franked notification by the principal supervisor*



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Specifics of the internship report given below must be adhered to.

- A. Paper size: A4, standard margin (1" on all sides)
- B. Font: Times New Roman
- C. Font size:
 - a. **Titles** – 12, 14, 16, etc. according to the needs of styling.
 - b. **Body** - 11
- D. Line spacing & alignment: single spacing; justify
- E. Columns: single
- F. Language & spelling convention: English; British or American spelling convention is accepted but not a mix of both.
- G. If others work are involved in your report, make sure to cite and reference them properly.

NOTE: The style of citation and referencing accepted at the IMAT Master Programme is the **American Psychological Association's** style (see: <https://apastyle.apa.org>).



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Annex I:
Self-Evaluation Form

Self-evaluation criteria of the work and organization		Rating
Given tasks	Relationship to the knowledge gained through lessons	
	Comprehensibility	
Time	Worktime and schedules	
	Deadlines per deliverable	
Supervision	Validation of finished work	
	Communication	
Guidance	Teaching	
	Problem solving	
Team work	Comprehensibility	
	Exchange of work and ideas	
Responsibility of performed tasks	Evaluation of results and its quality of delivery	
Work environment	Space	
	Resources and accessibility	
Open question	What knowledge and input from the IMAT programme did you apply during your internship? What knowledge application was lacking?	

Rating Scale:
5 – Very good; 4 – Good; 3 – Normal; 2 – Bad; 1 – Very Bad