Professional Pathways - Employer Host Notes of Guidance

Contents

Payroll

For the Professional Pathways programme, we have made arrangements with the University's HR team that involves us managing payroll for this scheme. We will sign off the time sheets that students submit and will be unable to process claims for more than 35 hours in total. This is an exceptional agreement for this particular programme and we are unable to offer payroll for our other University internship schemes.

Hours of work

As part of the programme, the University is funding 35 hours of work for a University of Exeter student. The 35 hours are to be completed between 26 June – 7 July, following the employer-led training. The working pattern of these hours can be undertaken in any pattern agreed between you and your matched intern(s), however please note this cannot exceed 35 hours (for each intern), as at this stage we have no funding to offer over this. All hours also must be completed no later than **7 July 2023.** We are advising students to submit their timesheets to us (to be paid), either at the end of each week (if working multiple weeks) or at the end of their 35 hours, and not after every working day as this generates a huge number for us to approve. Their final timesheet must be submitted via the eClaims system for approval by 7 July, or as soon as possible after this date. We will be keeping track of all claims however would appreciate you also reminding them to submit their timesheets.

University of Exeter Staff Email Account (for University colleagues only)

If you wish for your intern(s) to have an Exeter Associate email account, please email us at professionalpathways@exeter.ac.uk to let us know and we can arrange this.

Please also ensure your intern has read and understood the IT regulations which can be found here.

Before your intern starts

We have asked your student intern(s) to reach out to you directly to confirm what they need to do to prepare for starting their internship and arrangements for their first day of work. This could include:

- Agreeing a working pattern.
- Where and how to report for work.
- Dress code for your workplace. Even if your intern is working remotely, you may have expectations of how employees dress when conducting video calls.
- Travel advice to get to your workplace (where applicable).
- Access to food and drink facilities in or near the workplace (where applicable).
- Check they have received and signed their Secondment Agreement. Once signed by the student, Adobe Sign will forward this onto you for signing. All three parties will then receive a fully signed copy.

Most interns have some work experience, but this will likely not be extensive experience of working in a professional environment and like many more experienced professionals, they probably won't have much (if any!) experience of working remotely. As such, communicating a reassuring message before their first day will be welcomed.

Induction and monitoring work and performance

We ask that you provide your intern with; an induction when they begin, set clear objectives for the internship, and to review and evaluate the intern's progress throughout the 35 hours. You are welcome to complete your own induction, or you may wish to use our own checklist we have put together, for whichever parts are relevant to your current work set-up. You can download this **here**.

We recommend that the intern(s) meets with their line manager regularly during the 35 hour internship, particularly if the internship is remote working. When monitoring work content and managing performance, we recommend you keep in touch with your intern about the following key areas:

- A summary of what they have been working on, including how long they have spent on it.
- What is going well?
- Any concerns and their ideas on how to resolve these.
- Information or decisions needed from you/others in your organisation.

Setting SMART objectives

Once you have discussed the scope of the internship project you will want to establish the objectives that you want the intern to achieve in their time with you. Setting SMART objectives will make it clear to the intern what you are expecting of them:

- **Specific** – What exactly do you want the intern to achieve? Is there any chance it could be misinterpreted? Consider asking the intern to explain the project to you as they have understood it, to check that you are "on the same page".

  Measurable – What criteria will be used to measure the success of the project/the intern's role in this? Time saved? Hits on the company website? Revenue generated?

- **Achievable** – Is the project achievable in terms of resources, knowledge, experience and time? Taking into account possible constraints, how can the intern's own objectives for the project be accomplished?

- **Relevant** – How does the project align with the company's goals? Whether they are working on part of a wider project, or a standalone piece of work, explain to your intern the overall impact of their work and how this feeds the company strategy.

- **Time-based** – Ensure the project has a completion date and interim deadlines, where necessary.

Working remotely (10 top tips)

For those managing an intern working remotely, we have compiled "10 top tips for remote working"; though much of this is relevant even to more "conventional" workplace settings!

1. Create a Work Space
Interns are encouraged to create a dedicated workspace to approach working from home in an organised and efficient manner. If their home does not have a separate home office, we advise using a well-lit and least used space in their home that can provide them with enough room for their equipment and resources, ideally away from their rest areas.

They may be sharing their home with their family or flatmates so a protected work space may not be easy. Some ideas they could use include using headphones; have a sign on their room door or laptop 'please do not disturb until …'; build in regular breaks, perhaps to play with the children in the household; or agree with others to not use domestic appliances during a certain time period.

As an employer host, please can you ensure your intern is abiding by working safely with display screen equipment guidance. If your intern has a disability, please can we ask you to consider making reasonable adjustments.

2. Access to platforms and software packages
The intern will need to discuss with you what platforms and/or software packages they need access to, in order to work remotely. Please provide them with the support they need to access the right systems e.g. shared inboxes and cloud file storage such as MS One Drive or Trello.

They will also need to ensure they can access the right communication platforms such as [Skype for Business](); [Cisco Webex Meetings](); [Meeting Owl](); [Google Hangouts Meet](); [Zoom;]() [MS Teams]() and [GoToWebinar]().

We advise interns to be prepared for technology not working. Does their broadband have sufficient bandwidth and where they sit have good enough Wi-Fi strength? If they lose connection could they set up a [WhatsApp Team group]() with you to still communicate to at least let the team know what is happening?

3. Agreeing Clear Expectations
We encourage interns to agree with you:
- How they will stay in touch and who will organise this.
- When their work will be set and reviewed.
- How their performance will be measured and managed.
- Where their work will be stored and who has access it.
- When they will be taking breaks and how them will communicate this with others. Maybe they could enter their working hours in their signature; add an 'out of office' message on their email; enter their working hours on a shared team calendar.
- Who they should contact if they have any problems or their circumstances change.

4. Getting Motivated and Being Productive
We encourage interns to follow the following 3 steps to get motivated and stay productive:

a) Strategise - What do they want to achieve and why? What is the driver or motivation behind this? Set a goal and make a plan list of objectives, then break them down into a list of manageable tasks. Interns' motivation is increased when they understand the bigger picture.

b) Focus - Quantify how long each task takes and book it into their schedule. To prioritise, we must work on the tasks that have the nearest deadline and are deemed to have the highest importance. To establish what are they highest importance activities interns are asked to consider:

- What are their own responsibilities and duties?
- What is their contribution to team duties?
- What is the impact of the work?
- Who requested the work to be undertaken? How important are they to the business and their career e.g., senior position; new customer; loyal customer.
- When was it requested?
- Who is the work being produced for?
- Who is leading on the work?
- Who do they need to collaborate with and what is their availability?
- How long does the work take to complete?
- How can the work be undertaken? Do they know how to undertake the work or does it require additional learning? Have they got access to the right information and systems?

Most people create a long 'To Do List', but once they have decided on their priorities, they can create a 'Must Do Today List'. If they receive a lot of new emails that distract them from their list, perhaps they could consider checking their emails twice a day to see if they need to re-prioritise their day. Would that be okay for you? Try and keep the structure of the day simple. Perhaps you could ask to hear their 'Must Do Today List' and check in if they haven't completed it?

c) Commit - Have they completed everything on the 'Must Do Today List'? If not, reflect upon why this hasn't worked? Is their strategy still correct? Did they prioritise correctly? Did they allocate enough time to each task they booked in? Perhaps they are procrastinating and working on the easy bits rather than the priorities? If so, maybe they should 'eat the frog' or deal with the most challenging task of their day first?

Do they need to build in energisers during the day? A quick stretch, breath of fresh air and a healthy snack can help them press the reset button.

A good way to stay motivated is to also spend a moment at the end of the day to look at everything they have achieved that day and see how completing some urgent tasks have helped them get that one step closer to achieving their goals. Maybe you would like to hear these daily achievements?

Working from home is not all about challenge. We recommend interns reflect upon the positives it brings, for example, they have a flexible job; they can make a cooked lunch; and they can avoid the daily commute, which is also good for improved sustainability. Appreciating the good things in life will help them feel more motivated.

5. Communication Adjustments
Developing and maintaining good working relationships with you and colleagues requires a change in communication when working remotely. As mentioned above, we encourage interns to be accountable about when they are working.

We have asked them to be mindful that their colleagues will have competing demands on their time when working at home, so check when they are available to communicate; it's good to respect the boundaries people set.

People may be under pressure, so helping others, including by being kind and generous with their words will be appreciated. Perhaps the intern could instigate a virtual 'water cooler' chat to connect with colleagues in a non-work way.

6. Virtual Meetings
We have suggested the following to interns:
- Get ready in advance with their technology and agenda items.
- Consider colleagues in other time zones when they set meetings.
- Remember to switch on their camera; blur their background (or choose a suitable location) and consider their non-verbal communication. They will also need to think about how they are dressed and whether it is appropriate for this meeting. It would be helpful if you could relay your expectations on this.
- Invite others in to give their thoughts and ideas. Be specific and ask people by name, otherwise everyone could start talking at once.
- Speak slowly and clearly and pause before responding to others as sometimes there is a time lapse between transmissions.
- Perhaps appoint a meeting facilitator to monitor chat comments during the meeting?
- Avoid distractions like checking email or having side conversations with people in the group.
- Keep a summary of key points and actions after a virtual individual or team meeting. This may be useful for reference later on.

7. Regular Breaks
For the intern's health and wellbeing, it is important to take regular breaks; this includes physically moving and taking a break from looking at their screen. Stepping away from their desk at lunchtime will help them feel re-energised for the afternoon ahead. They could even

Updated 23.5.23

set up reminders to take a break; using apps such as Alexa Flash Meeting can be helpful for this.

8. Personal Support
Where required, the university can offer personal support for your intern(s). The Professional Pathways team could offer initial support. For more specialist support, they may be eligible to access the university's [Student Wellbeing services](#) or the [University's Staff Wellbeing services](#).

9. Flexible Working
If interns wish to change their agreed working pattern, we advise they will need to get permission from you to change this.

10. When to Stop Working
Where there aren't the normal prompts to remind us it is the end of the working day, sometimes people will let the work drift on. We remind interns the importance of a work-life balance to remain a happy, motivated and productive intern!

How to present outputs and outcomes

As there are many ways for the interns to present the outputs and outcomes of their work to you, it is important they understand how you would like that presented. It can be a range of things from a written report to a formal presentation to managers, a 1:1 meeting to go through the work produced or an agenda item at a team meeting. The choice is yours, so consider how you would prefer to receive this information. Please also allow sufficient time during the 35 hours for the intern to prepare and deliver their work to you in your chosen format.

Feedback

At the end of the internship, you and your intern(s) will be asked to complete a feedback form to describe how the internship went and to provide suggestions for improvement. Internship feedback enables us to continuously develop the internships schemes for the future. All of your comments are gratefully received.

Celebrating success

Previous Pathways internships have been a great success, with both employers and interns benefiting a great deal from the experience. We would love for any success to be noted and celebrated. Where possible, we ask you share your successful experience using your normal channels (e.g., LinkedIn) and where relevant using #UoEPathways. There will also be the opportunity to tick a box in the feedback form to say you'd be happy to provide us with a short case study for use in future promotion of the programme.

Support from the Professional Pathways Team

If you have any queries, please contact us at professionalpathways@exeter.ac.uk. Throughout the internship period, a member of our team will also be available to discuss any concerns or issues regarding your intern(s) and their performance and will be available to speak with interns to provide employability assistance.

Updated 23.5.23