

Centre for Human Rights Education Masters of Human Rights - Human Rights Project

Internship - Frequently Asked Questions for Organisations¹

Why does the Master of Human Rights at Curtin University offer an internship program?

Scholarship in human rights is most meaningful when it is part of a dialogue between human rights academia and organisations that are active in the field. Offering students the opportunity to undertake an internship as part of their Masters of Human Rights degree is a strategy to develop partnerships between human rights scholars and practitioners, and between academia and the field.

What skills do our students gain from undertaking an internship?

Undertaking an internship aims to equip our students with the skills and understanding required to make a meaningful contribution to the human rights field. It allows them to apply and develop the skills learned through the undergraduate and postgraduate studies in a real life situation.

What benefits do organisations gain from the internship program?

The Internship program is structured to be mutually beneficial for the student and the organisation. Participating organisations gain another staff member for the duration of the internship. Through participation in the Internship Program, organisations working in human rights also become active players in training future Human Rights practitioners, and are able to get the first look at some outstanding students looking for employment. Through on going participation in the internship, organisations are able to make a contribution to human rights scholarship at a post-graduate level. Such partnerships can also foster broader opportunities for human rights practitioners and University engagements, such as through research collaborations, guest lectures and joint-events. The Centre for Human Rights Education would be very happy to discuss such opportunities with you.

What kind of organisations can participate?

Organisations that work in human rights can host a student. This includes organisations involved directly with human rights issues, including areas such as women's rights, the environment, health, youth and development. These could be government organisations, NGOs, networks or coalitions. See our Case Studies for some of the organisations that students have undertaken their internship at.

¹ The structure and content of this FAQ has been adapted from the following website
http://sydney.edu.au/arts/sociology_social_policy/postgraduate/2012_pgcw_ssp_human_dc055_01.htm

What sort of work can our students do?

We expect our students to work at a professional level, undertaking the kinds of tasks normally expected in your workplace. Past students have undertaken research; developed educational toolkits; drafted strategy papers; drafted policy; undertaken refugee casework; and program planning and evaluation. See our Case Studies of some of the organisations that students have undertaken their internship in.

What skills do our students bring to their internship placements?

Our students are highly skilled and dedicated to gaining hands-on practical experience in an organisation working in human rights. To be accepted into the Master of Human Rights, students must have an undergraduate degree. Many also have relevant work experience.

The [Masters of Human Rights](#) offers a 1.5 year program full-time (or equivalent part-time). By the time an internship commences, students have successfully completed 8 units of their degree requirements, refining their understanding of human rights issues and developing key communication skills.

What do organisations need to do to participate in the program?

Host organisations are asked to discuss with the potential student a defined 'internship project', which has a human rights focus and which the student can complete during their placement (often host organisations like to nominate 2-3 key tasks, which the student will work on).

How long is the internship and when is it offered?

The Internship is a minimum of 20 working days of approximately 7 hours per day, although many students choose to work longer than this. It can be done full or part-time. The Internship usually starts mid-year or at the beginning of the year (over the semester break and at the beginning of semester) to fit in with a student's timetable. Some students can accommodate a longer placement and at different times of the year.

The date/length of the internship should be organised between the student and the host organisation, and requires the final approval of the Unit Coordinator.

What supervision is needed?

Students are expected to work independently under the guidance of a staff member, nominated by the host organisation as a suitable internship supervisor. However, for some interns it may be their first experience of working in the field of human rights, and they may require active supervision. At all times, the Unit Coordinator is available to support the placement experience for both students and the organisation.

What kind of support can the University provide during a student's placement?

The Unit Coordinator is available to work with participating organisations to resolve any problems that may emerge during the Internship. The organisation should feel free to contact the Unit Coordinator at any time if they are experiencing any difficulties.

What are the reporting requirements?

- A one page **internship offer form** outlining the student's internship project and the skills they would learn in the execution of this project. This is to be sent to the Unit Coordinator prior to the student starting their internship at your organisation.
- The Centre for Human Rights Education **Fieldwork Agreement Form** will need to be read and signed.
- A two-page **end of internship report form** at the end of the placement.

What about insurance?

When fieldwork activity is a course requirement, as in the case of the Human Rights Project Units, students are automatically insured by Curtin University. There is no need to complete additional insurance forms.

For the host organisation, the Curtin University Faculty of Humanities Fieldwork Agreement Form clarifies insurances and liability with your organisation.

Who can I speak to for more information?

The Coordinator for the Human Rights Project Units, is happy to discuss further questions or queries via email or phone.