Criteria for In-Person and Virtual/Remote Internships

All internships associated with RICP, must meet the criteria of a legitimate internship as outlined by NACE, the National Association of Colleges and Employers:

1. The experience must be an extension of the classroom: a learning experience that provides for applying the knowledge gained in the classroom. It must not be simply to advance the operations of the employer or be the work that a regular employee would routinely perform.
2. The skills or knowledge learned must be transferable to other employment settings.
3. The experience has a defined beginning and end, and a job description with desired qualifications.
4. There are clearly defined learning objectives/goals related to the professional goals of the student’s academic coursework.
5. There is supervision by a professional with expertise and educational and/or professional background in the field of the experience.
6. There is routine feedback by the experienced supervisor.
7. There are resources, equipment, and facilities provided by the host employer that support learning objectives/goals.

If the internship is unpaid, the position must be compliant with the FLSA #71 (Internship Programs under the Fair Labor Standards Act)

Additional Criteria for Virtual/Remote Internships

With the current restrictions and uncertainties of the COVID-19 health crisis, virtual/remote internships have become prevalent. All internships regardless of whether they are virtual/remote or in-person should meet the NACE standards and FLSA standards outlined above. Virtual/remote internships present additional challenges to ensuring a quality experience and therefore must meet the following criteria:

- The organization and student need to agree on a clear, detailed position description, which covers all expectations and outlines what will constitute a successful internship.
- The internship site must use some type of online project management tool that is shared and will allow the supervisor to go online and monitor the work to be completed. Work must be stored in a "cloud" and not on a personal computer.
Additional Criteria for Virtual/Remote Internships (continued)

- The internship includes a regular required e-mail report (weekly, at a minimum) where the student asks any questions that he or she may have and provides information such as hours worked, challenges or problems encountered, and results obtained.
- The internship includes a weekly virtual meeting on Skype or a similar technology; if virtual meetings are impossible, weekly phone conversations are expected.
- The organization should make the virtual intern a part of regular operations as much as possible, for example, including the intern in virtual company meetings, etc.

Additional Resources


- Starting and Maintaining a Quality Internship Program – Compiled and Edited by Michael True, INTRUEITION.COM/InternCube.com