

Title	Externships for Teachers, Tutors and Trainers
Description	This is a toolkit for VET providers that are considering using an externship model of continuous professional development(CPD) for teachers/tutors/trainers
User	VET providers and teacher. Some elements of the toolkit would be used by employers
Goal	To provide the VET provider, teacher/tutor/trainer and employer with clarity around the nature and benefits of externships and the stages involved in an externship
Objective	Allows VET providers, teachers/tutors/trainers and employers consider the elements of an externship model of CPD and supports the implementation of an externship model for a VET provider
Method	This can be made available online, electronically or in hard-copy, as appropriate
Recommended Use	By VET providers, teachers/tutors/trainers and employers exploring alternative models of CPD for programme staff. And for supporting teachers/tutors/trainers and employers when undertaking/providing an externship.
When	When planning models of CPD for programme staff
Language	English
Further links	

Work Based Learning Externships for Teachers and Trainers

What is an Internship?

An internship involves first hand experiential learning and is typically a period of time an individual spends working in another organisation with the objective of learning and developing from the experience.

Most people are familiar with the term 'internship' but may not be as familiar with the term 'externship'. One of the most common types of WBL for teachers is a teacher externship. Internships and Externships are similar in that they provide temporary work experience to help individuals gain skills and relevant experience in specific field areas. Internships often involve some form of payment while externships are not usually paid.

An externship is generally much shorter in duration than an internship and because of its short duration can sometimes involve more job shadowing than hands-on experience.

Purpose of an Externship

The Externship Model of professional development can support teachers, tutors and trainers to:

- expand their knowledge, skills and confidence (academic, technical , 21st Century etc.) and make connections between the curriculum, programme or subject they teach and the workplace
- learn through direct experience about needs, realities, trends, challenges and practices in different institutions or work environments
- develop an understanding of workplace practices to ensure that what they do in the classroom with learners is more informed, meaningful and up to date so that learners are better prepared for current, emerging and future career opportunities and meeting employer / industry needs
- expand their capacity to implement meaningful and engaging teaching and learning methodologies in the classroom by drawing on case studies and real world work examples
- engage meaningfully with employers and develop mutually beneficial working partnerships and understandings about workplace and education requirements and expectations.

Length of an Externship

An externship can in theory be any length from one day to several weeks or months and can take place at different times of the year depending on the arrangements possible at local level in different college / centre types, e.g. during periods when learners are out on work placements, at the start of the academic year before classes commence, in term time when a visiting guest business / industry representative might cover classes or during holiday periods when a teacher, tutor or trainer might wish to make their own personal professional development arrangements. The length and scheduling will in practice be influenced and decided on by several factors or considerations.

Some of these might include:

- the time of the year and the length of time a teacher, tutor or trainer can realistically be released from their college or centre if the externship is being scheduled during term time
- the arrangements that can be put in place for the learners while the teacher, tutor or trainer is participating in an externship programme to minimise disruption of their learning
- the type of skills, learning or/ experience the externship will provide and how much time is needed to realistically achieve this
- the number of teachers, tutors or trainers participating in externships and any overlapping periods
- the level of commitment and time the host placement / employer can dedicate to the externship.

Types of Externship Opportunities

Externships opportunities are diverse, for example:

- Placements in Industry / business linked to specific programmes being delivered by teachers, tutors or trainers

- International study trips / exchanges to gain cultural insights and practical experience of different systems
- Placements in educational institutions e.g. for the purpose of comparing approaches, standards, benchmarking etc.
- Observer-ships e.g. involving observation and work shadowing.

How to Source an Externship

Externships can be sourced in many ways. A few examples include:

- Approaching a company or organisation that the college / centre already has a relationship with e.g. through student work experience placements, supplier of goods or services to the college / centre etc.
- Word of mouth e.g. by talking to friends, family or colleagues to seek recommendations or contacts
- Making contact with professional associations or networks
- Conducting keyword searches on the internet e.g. targeting specific company types and following up with a personal contact
- Attending exhibitions or job fairs and talking to personnel on stands
- Making connections through LinkedIn
- Getting ideas for companies by reading magazines and newspapers e.g. business sections, advertisements etc. and following up.

Stages Involved in an Externship

Stage 1: Planning the Externship

- A teacher, tutor, trainer indicates an interest in participating in an Externship. They identify an area of a programme that they teach (or will be teaching in the future), that they would like to be the focus of their externship e.g. they might identify one or more learning outcomes from a programme.
- The Teacher, Tutor, Trainer completes *an Application Form* (appendix 1) and uses this as the basis on a preliminary discussion with their Principal, Head of Centre or other appointed person. The form addresses areas such as externship

area of interest, specific focus of externship and objectives, possible host companies / employers, possible length of externship and when it might take place etc.

- As part of the discussion, address how learners might be supported when the teacher, tutor, trainer is away on the externship e.g.
 - are the learners on work experience themselves at this time?
 - what type of substitution arrangements can be put in place if needed?
 - can the externship be done before / after courses start / finish?
- During the meeting if there is agreement in principle to the externship taking place, an action plan is drawn up using the *Externship Action Plan* (appendix 2). This sets out and agrees how the externship will be further progressed and implemented.
- A potential host company / organisation is contacted and a plan for the externship is agreed. A named person is identified who will be the point of contact and mentor in the company / organisation. Goals and expectations are clarified and agreed for all parties.

Stage 2: During the Externship

To maximise the externship opportunity a teacher, tutor, trainer should:

- Engage as appropriate in a range of activities; see appendix 3 - *Sample Activities During an Externship*
- Ask questions; see appendix 4 - *Sample Questions to ask during an Externship*
- Be aware of and sensitive to employer needs and wishes and workplace requirements
- Be realistic about what can be achieved in the time available balanced with making the most of the opportunity
- Keep a log and record experiences
- Reflect on how things are going and how the externship is potentially supporting the delivery of a programme to learners and what new ideas, case studies, approaches etc. might be implemented in the classroom

- Think about what peer sharing could take place with colleagues when you get back to your college / centre
- Start to complete appendix 6 - *Evaluation of Externship by Teacher, Tutor, Trainer*

Stage 3: After the Externship

- Contact the host company / employer to thank them for the opportunity
- Invite that the host company organisation complete an evaluation form appendix 7 - *Evaluation of Externship by Host Company / Organisation*
- Reflect on learning and skills achieved during the externship
- Finish completing appendix 6 - *Evaluation of Externship by Teacher, Tutor, Trainer*
- Disseminate and share the learning experience from the externship at college / centre / organisation level
- Make recommendations to management on any aspect of the process that needs adjustment for future externships
- Implement the learning from the externship in the classroom with learners

Externship Application Form**(Appendix 1)**

Sections 1-9 should be completed by the applicant in advance of a meeting with the Principal, Head of Centre or designated person

1. Teacher, Tutor, Trainer Name:	
2. College, Centre Name	
3. Proposed externship host	
4. Proposed length of externship	
5. Proposed dates	
6. What do you hope to achieve by undertaking this externship?	
7. What programme module will this externship support? How will it link with the programmes Learning Outcomes?	
8. How will this externship benefit your Learners?	
9. What provision might be made for your learners during your externship?	

Signed:**Date:**

Externship Action Plan

(Appendix 2)

To be completed during the meeting with the Principal, Head of Centre or designated person

Outcome of discussion (Application Form Sections 1-9) with Principal, Head of Centre, or other appointed person and next steps to be taken

Signed:

Principal, Head of Centre, or other appointed person

Date:

Signed:

Applicant

Date:

Sample Activities During an Externship

(Appendix 3)

1. Visit different departments within the company / organisation to get a good overview of the roles, range of work, facilities etc. available
2. Arrange for HR to provide an insight into recruitment, roles /positions, skills needs, pay and conditions, training, performance review processes, policies and procedures etc.
3. Request resources that might give an insight into the company / organisation e.g. annual reports, brochures, articles, online links, PowerPoint presentations etc.
4. Job Shadow in different sections / departments or with employees with different roles
5. Keep a log / prepare a presentation that can be used when you return to your college / centre to share your learning with other teachers / tutors / trainers
6. Build a portfolio of resources that can be used with learners when you return to the classroom.
7. Provide the company / organisation with knowledge of the VET/FET sector and the opportunities for employing VET/FET graduates and further networking opportunities

Sample Questions to ask during an Externship

(Appendix 4)

The questions below provide some ideas about the type of questions a teacher, tutor or trainer might ask either before and /or during an Externship to help gain insight into the host placement and maximise opportunities for learning. Questions can be directed as appropriate to managers, supervisors, HR personnel, employees etc.

The questions below have been either inspired, adapted or taken from the Teacher Externship Guide developed by the College and Career Academy Support Network (2010) <http://casn.berkeley.edu/resources.php?r=251>

1. Please provide a brief description and / or history of your company / organisation
2. Who are your clients or customers?
3. How is your company / organisation structured?
4. What business or industry changes / issues are impacting on your company / organisation?
5. What changes / issues do you anticipate will impact on the company / organisations future development?
6. Describe the company's / organisations culture
7. How many people are employed?
8. Do you see the local labour markets' need for new workers in your field increasing, decreasing or remaining steady?
9. In what specific areas, if any, is there new job growth? How might this labour market change in the next five years?
10. What level of education, training, skills, or experiences does an applicant need for an entry-level position? What new skills are required of entry-level employees?
11. What is the entry-level wage?
12. How do you locate future employees?
13. What, if any, industry certifications do you consider desirable for a prospective employee?

14. Does the company expect new employees to possess soft skills and if so, what skills do they expect them to have? (i.e. punctuality, formal or informal atmosphere, dress code, etc.)
15. What is your company policy on attendance / tardiness?
16. Describe a typical workday for an employee?
17. What training do you give employees?
18. How do you evaluate employees?
19. What are the positive / negative aspects of working in your company / organisations field?
20. What skills are recommended for workers in the field who wish to advance?
21. What is the role of technology in the company / organisation? How has technology affected the company / organisation? What new technologies are emerging in this field?
22. What should I be teaching in my classroom / programme to prepare learners for employment in a company / organisation like this?
23. What would you recommend teachers, tutors, trainers do to strengthen the relevance of colleges / centres to the workplace?
24. In terms of the content and learning outcomes that learners engage with in their courses, is there evidence of a connection between the curriculum and the work place? Do you see any gaps existing?
25. Are there areas that our college / centre could enhance, so as to better prepare learners for work placements?
26. What advice would you give a student who is interested in working in an organisation / company like this?
27. Would you be willing to speak to my class group about your work?

Externship Log**(Appendix 5)**

Name of Extern:	
Name of Host Company / Organisation:	

Date	Time In	Time Out	Hours	Description of activities

Date	Time In	Time Out	Hours	Description of activities

Date	Time In	Time Out	Hours	Description of activities

Date	Time In	Time Out	Hours	Description of activities

Date	Time In	Time Out	Hours	Description of activities

Evaluation of Externship by Teacher, Tutor, Trainer**(Appendix 6)**

Name:	Position:
College Name:	Company Name:
Date:	Duration of Internship:
VET/FET Sector:	

1. Give a brief description of the company:

2. Is there an established relationship between the college and the company already? If so, please give details:

3. Does the company expect young people to possess soft skills and if so, what skills do they expect them to have? (i.e. punctuality, formal or informal atmosphere, dress code, etc.)

4. In terms of the content and learning outcomes that learners engaged with in their course, is there evidence of a connection between the curriculum and the work place? Please comment on where you see potential gaps existing:

5. From your discussions and observations are there areas that the college can enhance, so as to better prepare learners for their work placement?

6. Are there any challenges in preparing learners for this particular workplace? If so what are these challenges and how might the college address them in the future? (i.e. access to relevant training materials, fast changing sector, time learners spend in the work place etc.)

- 7. In your opinion, are students being prepared appropriately for this type of work place in terms of their content knowledge and the skills and competences they need to effectively function in the organisation? If you answer no what areas or approaches might be considered in the future?**

- 8. Having met with the company and experienced the work place, are there any areas you would change in relation to the following:**
- a. Your teaching approach**
 - b. The content knowledge and competences you are developing**
 - c. How you might assess learners**
 - d. Other**

- 9. How beneficial was this experience for you? Would you recommend this to your colleagues?**

10. How might this experience be enhanced in the future?

Evaluation of Externship by Host Company / Organisation (Appendix 7)

Host Company:	
Contact (Individual Completing Evaluation):	
Position:	
Telephone:	email:
Name of teacher, tutor, trainer who undertook the externship:	
Date(s) of externship:	

Please rate the externship by ✓ the statement / number that best represents your experience:

1 = Strongly Disagree (SD) 2 = Disagree (D) 3 = Somewhat Agree (SA)
4 = Agree (A) 5(A) = Strongly Agree (SA)

Your company / organisation...	1 SD	2 D	3 SA	4 A	5 SA
1. Was contacted in sufficient time before the start of the externship					
2. Was clear about the expectations of the externship and your role					
3. Felt it was a beneficial experience for the teacher, tutor trainer					
4. Felt it was a beneficial experience for your company / organisation					
5. Would engage in an externship again					

Comment:

Signed:

Date: