

Staff Handbook Section  
G14

Internships  
A guide for applicants

Human Resources

W&A

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# Guidance for Internship applicants

To be read in conjunction with the V&A's Internships Policy

## Introduction

1. This guidance is for individuals interested in applying for internship placements at the V&A.
2. Internships are advertised on the V&A jobs website and applications for internships should be made via this web portal.
3. Internships are educational and career developmental opportunities providing practical experience in a particular field or discipline. Commitment to a particular career is usually expected for an internship.
4. V&A internships enable participants to acquire or enrich their professional skills to aid employment prospects, make a contribution to a particular function and gain insight and new perspectives from professionals in an area of work.
5. Internships at the V&A are possible in a number of the departments.  
Please note that internships:
  - usually provide an intern with their first experience of the sector or particular role
  - are normally for current university undergraduates, recent graduates or postgraduates or those who have already completed a recognised training programme in the area of interest
  - are structured, short-term, supervised placements where the emphasis is on on-the-job learning often focussed around particular tasks or projects with defined timescales
  - are generally for a period of one month to six months' duration
  - can be for one to five days per week depending on departmental requirements
  - internships can run at different times of the year but as a rule, applications should be received at least three to six months before the intended starting date of the internship
  - are available to individuals who are 18 years old and above, with no upper limit
  - will be paid at the National Minimum Wage rate per hour.
6. Some educational institutions require a student to complete an placement as part of their studies. These are unpaid student placements and are not be covered by the V&A's Internship Policy. More details about such placements can be found in the Work Experience section of the V&A Career's website.
7. If you are searching for a **job or volunteering opportunity** at the V&A, you should visit the V&A's career's website

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/page/j/jobs>. Any further enquiries can be made to our Human Resources department via: [hr@vam.ac.uk](mailto:hr@vam.ac.uk).

## Pre-placement

### **Application Process for Internships**

8. If you wish to proceed with an application for an internship advertised on the Museum website, please complete the on-line application process according to these Guidelines. Should you be unable to complete the on-line application, please email [hr@vam.ac.uk](mailto:hr@vam.ac.uk) or telephone HR on 020 7942 2937. Please note that speculative applications will not be accepted.
9. To ensure your application is processed:
  - it must be made on the **Internship Application Form**
  - the Application Form must be completed in full and you must supply all the additional information listed (including CV, Applicant's Statement and references)
  - you will either be undertaking or have already completed an undergraduate degree, a post-graduate degree or a recognised training programme in the area of interest
  - you should give a clear description of educational background and previous work undertaken
  - you must indicate your choice of specialism in your chosen area, if applicable.

### **Visa Requirements**

10. The V&A is unable to provide sponsorship for visas for the purposes of internships. If you have a passport from a non EEA country before you apply for an internship you must:
  - check with the British Embassy in your country regarding visa and entry requirements;
  - check online at the UK Border Agency at: <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/> that your information is correct and up to date;
  - it is your responsibility to make all subsequent arrangements regarding work or study visas.

11. EEA or Swiss Nationals have the right to work in the UK and do not need a visa.

### **Financial Information**

12. Internships at the V&A are paid at the National Minimum Wage rate per hour. This will vary depending on your age at the time of completing the internship placement. You can check online at the UK government website at: <https://www.gov.uk/> for the current National Minimum Wage rate per hour for your age.

13. You will be paid only for the hours that you work. This payment will be made monthly in arrears by credit transfer into your bank or building society account on or soon after the last day of each month.
14. Before you apply for an internship you must secure sufficient funds for travelling to London should you currently reside e.g. overseas, and your living expenses whilst in London. It is your responsibility to make all arrangements for accommodation and your day to day living requirements. The minimum cost of living in London is currently estimated at £15,000 per annum.
15. There are no fees, charges for materials or other costs imposed by the Museum for an internship placement.

### **Selection Process for Internships**

16. The selection process:
- usually takes approximately a month, although this can vary
  - after receipt of your fully completed application, made through the V&A's recruitment website, the information is made available to managers of the specialism that you have indicated on the application form
  - if your application is successful you will then be contacted directly by the manager who will supervise your possible internship
  - selected candidates may be invited to attend an interview or informal meeting in the relevant V&A department
  - for candidates from outside the UK, who are not able to attend for an interview, a telephone interview can be arranged
  - candidates should bring a portfolio of work illustrating relevant work experience, technical skills, manual dexterity etc, as appropriate
  - candidates attending interview will be notified of the outcome as soon as possible.
  - Individual applicants who are not selected to participate in the selection process will usually hear from us within a period of two months from when they applied.
17. All data is held in accordance with the V&A's Data Protection Policy.

### **Post Offer of Placement**

18. If successful, you will receive:
- an offer and confirmation of the dates, together with an **Internship Agreement**, which should be signed and returned. Please keep a copy for your reference. The agreement is not intended as a legally binding contract between you and the V&A and it may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party. No employment relationship is intended at any time.
  - a number of forms for completion -
    - Self Disclosure form and Application for Temporary Pass

- o Emergency Contact form
  - o Guidance notes for Basic Disclosure for Security Vetting.
- If there are any changes in your primary contact email address, your living address or telephone number after you apply, please ensure you inform us immediately in case we need to get in touch with you. If we cannot get in touch with you during the period of six weeks prior to the start of the internship, or for a period of one month at any point from receipt of your acceptance of this offer to six weeks prior to the start your internship, we will have to withdraw this offer and consider other candidates for this vacancy. If you have any problems which prevent you from taking up our offer, please let us know as soon as possible.

### **Security Vetting**

19.If you are a successful candidate you will be required to complete a Security Vetting process, including a **Basic Disclosure form**.

20.If you are applying from abroad, in line with Home Office guidance we will need to verify and take a copy of your original ID documentation as evidence of your right to work in the UK. All information is treated in the strictest confidence. The information you provide will be stored in accordance with the V&A's Data Protection Policy.

### During the Internship Placement

#### **Induction**

21.You should receive a short induction including:

- an introduction to the V&A, its history, services, culture and values
- an overview of the V&A and department structure
- an introduction to members of your team
- a tour of your facilities, work areas, canteen , fire exits, etc
- Safety information
- Policies on the Museum intranet site that you are required to observe.

#### **Tasks**

22.Your internship is a genuine opportunity to acquire skills and experience relevant to your chosen professional career. To achieve this:

- you should receive a role description, outlining the role requirements and the short and long-term objectives of the internship and/or projects
- you should be provided with tasks that develop your skills, although of course there will be some basic tasks that you are required to do as there are in most jobs
- you and your supervisor should identify specific work or projects and discuss a work plan or schedule which contributes to your professional and learning objectives, acts as a guide and is open to revision.
- you may work across a number of different areas within the department
- we aim to give you as much diversity in your tasks as possible

- we aim to provide you with some flexibility, for example to attend job interviews, or to complete study requirements.

### **Supervision**

23. You will be allocated a person to supervise you and to conduct regular reviews on your performance in terms of achievements, conduct and future development. You may also be given a mentor to give you more informal support and guidance, and to act as the first point of contact for concerns. In addition the mentor may be able to assist you with advice on different career paths and progression routes. (Your supervisor and mentor may be the same person.)

### **Expectations of Behaviour, Disputes and Complaints**

24. You are expected to be courteous and respectful to staff, volunteers and other interns during your placement.

25. You are expected to follow the V&A's rules and procedures, including security, health and safety, diversity, electronic communications and confidentiality. Where your placement involves working with young people or vulnerable adults, you will be expected to follow V&A safeguarding guidelines for working with children or young people.

26. It is the intention that internships are enjoyable and rewarding to all parties. Any problems that may arise on either side should be resolved through informal discussion. Supervisors and other Museum staff will observe the basic principles of fairness in dealing with any issues of capability or conduct that may arise, pointing out any shortcomings in performance and giving opportunity for improvement. The HR department will give advice on issues that are serious.

27. If the issues prove to be irreconcilable, either side has the option to terminate the arrangement with immediate effect.

28. The Museum reserves the right to terminate a placement immediately should you be guilty of gross misconduct or any negligence resulting in loss or damage to the organisation.

### **At the End of the Internship**

29. Towards the end of the period you may be required to write a short report for your manager (up to 500 words) on the internship, your experience in the department and the Museum.

30. Your manager may give an evaluation of the internship, and may provide a reference detailing the dates of the internship, and what it entailed.