

CAREERS



READING INTERNSHIP SCHEME

ACADEMIC HANDBOOK
2024/2025

A black and white halftone illustration of three students walking in a hallway. A woman is on the left, a man in the middle, and a man on the right. They are all wearing coats and scarves. The background shows architectural lines of a building.

**READING INTERNSHIP
SCHEME**

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"We had a positive experience with the Reading Internship Scheme. The student who participated in the internship was exceptional and demonstrated a high level of commitment to their work. They actively engaged with our team, embraced their responsibilities, and consistently delivered quality results. We were impressed by their professionalism, enthusiasm, and willingness to learn. The program was well-structured, and the communication and support from the Reading Internship Scheme team were excellent throughout the process. We appreciated the opportunity to collaborate with the scheme and believe it offers valuable experiences for both students and organisations."

- 2023 Employer

READING INTERNSHIP

SCHEME

Looking to offer an internship to a student through our Reading Internship Scheme?



What is the Reading Internship Scheme (RIS)?

The Reading Internship Scheme connects University of Reading undergraduate students with UK based organisations and internal University departments through short-term, paid internships.

What RIS aims to do

The Reading Internship Scheme aims to:

- Support University of Reading undergraduates find meaningful work experience, allowing them to build their confidence and develop their employability and transferable skills.
- Support students develop and nurture a professional network.
- Enable students to explore different sectors and try out careers they may not have thought of before.
- Connect organisations and University departments with talented University of Reading undergraduates who can provide fresh ideas that can really make an impact.

“I love this scheme, I think it's one of the best benefits I got from the university as a whole, the fact that we get exclusivity as students at university is a real competitive edge, and it gives us better chances to find a job! Most people want to work, all they need is the opportunity! I found mine here.” -

2023/2024 Intern

1,093

unique students applied to internships in the 23/24 scheme

135

interns placed in 2023/24 Reading Internship Scheme

1,747

applications were submitted by students in the 23/24 scheme

WHY GET INVOLVED

- **Access to high calibre UoR students:** RIS enables you to connect with our talented undergraduates who can provide you with fresh ideas.
- **Streamlined recruitment process:** we take care of the advertisement and promotion for you but allow you full control over who you take on.
- **Support UoR students:** by hosting an intern, you're helping students develop their professional skills and gain valuable work experience as well as an insight into your sector. A lot of students are unsure what they want to do or what's even out there - by offering an internship, you're enhancing a student's CV and helping them understand their long term career goals.
- **Flexible:** internships can run throughout the year, not just summer! We support part-time, full-time, remote, hybrid, and office based internships.

100%

of employers from the 23/24 scheme would recommend RIS to other employers

100%

of students from the 23/24 scheme would recommend RIS to other students

ELIGIBILITY

All University of Reading departments are welcome to take on an intern through the Reading Internship Scheme.

Internships should be entry level positions and should not require significant additional skills and experience beyond what our students will have developed during their academic studies.

"The overall experience was very positive, and the intern was a delight to work with and manage. They were able to fully contribute and manage the project to its successful conclusion with the minimum of supervision. The calibre of the candidates originally presented was very high which helped engender a sense that this vital project would be completed within the required constraints."

-2023 Employer

HOW IT WORKS

To start the process you will need to complete the following steps:

Step 1:

Read this handbook carefully as all important information regarding the scheme is in here. Any questions, please contact the RIS team on ris@reading.ac.uk

Step 2:

Complete our [employer application form](#). The scheme's manager will review your application and come back to you with an offer should your application be successful. Alongside the offer, you will be sent a job description template to complete.

Step 3:

Complete the job description template we send you. We will then advertise your vacancy on our jobs board and promote to students for 3 weeks.

Step 4:

After the closing date of your advert, we will send you all applications via email. It's now over to you to shortlist, interview, and select a candidate that's right for you!

Step 5:

Once you interviewed, offer your chosen applicant and give feedback to the unsuccessful ones. Let us know the name of your chosen student and the agreed start and end date.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

INTERNSHIP TIMELINES

Internships run throughout the year from November to August. As students have study commitments for the majority of the year, from November to May only part-time internships are available. Then from June to August, students are able to join you on a full-time basis. See below dates and available internship options.

Semester Internships

Operating: November - May

Advertised: October - April

- Part-time only
- 140 hours minimum
- Students are with you until they complete the set hours but **must be finished by 29 August 2025**
- How many hours a student does per week is between you and the student but students **cannot work more than 20 hours per week** (but they can work less). We recommend 10 hours per week to allow students time to study.
- Must be flexible and fit around their studies – remember, sometimes student timetables change last minute so please be understanding and flexible

Summer Internships

Operating: 16 June '25 - 29 August '25

Advertised: January - June

- Part-time or full-time
- 4 - 10 weeks (140 hours minimum)
- Students are with you until they complete the set hours but **must be finished by 29 August 2025**
- How many hours a student does per week is between you and the student so they are able to work full-time or part-time if you prefer. We recommend 35 hours if full-time (above calculations are based on this). You must ensure working time regulations are adhered to and they do not work more than 48 hours in one week.



RIS PAY RATES

Research internships should be entry level positions and should not require significant additional skills and experience beyond what our students will have developed during their academic studies. The level of responsibility and expertise required within the role must be appropriate to the rate of pay.

Within the University's [Temporary Worker Framework](#), there will be a new 'UG University Internships' rate of £11.79 per hour plus holiday pay (coming to around £15.79 per hour with on-costs) suitable for most research internships.

CAMPUS JOBS

Campus Jobs is responsible for paying the student. To enable them to do this, you will need to raise a Recruitment Gateway Request once an intern is selected which confirms the project code to be charged to and the financial authorisation. We will let you know of next steps once you let us know that an intern has been placed.

How much will an intern cost?

There is a rate on the Temporary Worker Framework suitable for most internships called 'UG University Internships' for £11.79 per hour plus holiday pay (coming to round £15.79 per hour with on-costs) which you can select. The overall cost will depend on how long your internship is but below are a few estimated examples:

- 140 hours at £15.79 would be £2,210.60
- 210 hours at £15.79 would be £3,315.90

***Please note this is an estimation only and rates will change each year.**

You can see current Campus Jobs rates on their [Temporary Worker Framework](#). There is also a [calculator](#) on the Campus Jobs webpage to help you estimate minimum and maximum costs of the overall internship depending on the hours you want the intern for.

Internships requiring more advanced skills will need to be assessed against the Temporary Worker Framework by the Campus Jobs team.

Can I get support towards the cost of these internships?

RIS is unable to provide grants to internal University departments. However, there are some options to consider to help you with the costs:

- **SDAs** - SDAs can be used towards research internships. Heads of Schools are in charge of these budgets so do contact your HoS to explore this.
- **Donor Funds** - if you're looking to offer an academic research internship (formerly known as UROP) you may wish to contact the University's Fundraising team to see if any donor funds are available to support you with the cost of your research intern. Please talk to your Head of School about this.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

...and some frequently asked questions!

TERMS & CONDITIONS

By participating in the Reading Internship Scheme, your department is agreeing to the following:

- Your vacancy listed in your registration form will not be advertised elsewhere, as this is exclusive to the Reading Internship Scheme.
- You will supply us with such information as reasonably required in order to set up, promote and arrange the internship.
- You will raise a Recruitment Gateway Access via Campus Jobs and submit your intern's timesheets.
- You will only offer the position to a student who has applied for your position through the Reading Internship Scheme.
- You agree that if you are taking on an intern during the semester, they will not work more than 20 hours per week.
- You will ensure that the job description is an accurate reflection of the work that the intern will undertake, and that the hours submitted on your interns timesheet are accurate.
- It is your responsibility to ensure applicants have equal opportunities in accordance with obligations under the Equalities Act 2010.
- You will notify us once you have appointed an intern but you will do this before the intern starts their internship so that we can provide appropriate support to the student.
- You will provide all applicants you have interviewed with interview feedback within 1 week.
- It is your responsibility to ensure that all applicable legislation has been complied with in connection with the internship including all employment laws and regulations and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- You are responsible for engaging the successful applicant and paying the applicant's wages (via Campus Jobs) and reasonable expenses (via Finance), where applicable.
- You will ensure that the place of work complies with health and safety regulations during the internship including, but not limited to, registered office space and appropriate desk space for your intern to work.
- There will be staff available for the duration of the internship to ensure appropriate supervision and support are always available to your intern.
- The intern is your worker; it is your responsibility to pay your intern in accordance with the assignment offer.

If you have any questions about the terms and conditions, please contact us on ris@reading.ac.uk

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Find below some frequently asked questions.

How long is my internship?

The minimum length of an internship is 140 hours. You will be asked to specify the length of your internship in your application form and we will confirm the agreed length in your offer from us.

What days/ hours does my intern work?

Working hours and days are between you and the student. However, please be mindful that students will have study commitments and changing timetables - a level of flexibility is required to part-take in the Reading Internship Scheme.

How many hours can a student do during term-time?

During the semester, students are not permitted to work more than 20 hours per week. Those students holding a Student Visa will be restricted to working a maximum of 20 hours (pre-sessional and International Foundation Programme students have a maximum 10 hours) across all their paid and voluntary work during the formal term time.

How many hours can a student do during summer?

Undergraduate students are able to work-full time hours in formal University vacation periods.

How much do I have to pay my intern?

In accordance with Campus Jobs' Temporary Worker Framework

How does the intern get paid?

Through Campus Jobs Timesheets.

Can my intern work from home?

Yes, we support office based, hybrid, or fully remote (in the UK) internships. If your internship is fully remote, please ensure there is still sufficient support given to your intern - some students may find it more difficult to reach out to you via online methods to ask a simple question so we'd encourage you to set up regular catch-ups or think about hybrid or office based for the first part of the internship whilst the student is settling in.

Can my intern work from a different country?

No, we do not support this. Students must be based in the UK when they are undertaking their internships. We make students aware of this.

RECRUITING YOUR INTERN

You've received your offer from us and the job description template. **Now what?**

WRITING YOUR JOB DESCRIPTION

If your application is successful, we will send you an offer detailing the internship, length, and any other information you provided us. You will also be sent a link to complete your internship description - we will use this to advertise your internship.

Please ensure you complete our internship template as opposed to sending your own job descriptions over as the template we send captures all necessary information to advertise your role. We will ask you the following:

- **Research Project Title:** Each academic internship will be advertised as 'Academic Research Internship' but this project title will appear in the job advert.
- **Internship Info:** length, full-time/ part-time, remote/hybrid/office, ideal start date
- **About your Department/School:** The role will be advertised under 'University of Reading' but make sure to include a bit about your school/ department here - students will be interested in where they are going!
- **About the research project:** Include things like: why the research is important, what it's trying to solve, objectives of the research, and what the student's role would be. If this project is part of a bigger research project make sure to include this to give the student insight into 'the bigger picture' and a better understanding of their part.
- **What the student will get up to:** Students will want to know what they are there to do. You may wish to use bullet points here to make it concise and easy to read. Please do not be vague here - if they will get involved in specific research methodologies, make sure to clearly outline here.
- **Ideal skills for internship:** mention some skills or experiences you feel the intern may need in order to successfully undertake the internship. Remember that these are undergraduate students with little or no previous experience so be realistic with what you're putting here.
- **What students will get:** why should the student apply to you rather than any of the other research internships? Stand out from the crowd by telling the student exactly what they will get out of this internship!
- **Job sectors/ occupational area (tick box):** you'll be asked to select which occupational areas your internship falls into. This allows us to target specific students that indicated they're interested in your area.

130

internships advertised in the 2023/24 Reading Internship Scheme

1,747

applications submitted overall by students in the 2023/2024 Reading Internship Scheme

14

average applications per vacancy. On average, a student applies to 2 internships

MAXIMISING ENGAGEMENT

What makes a job description appealing to students?

We conducted some research on internships from the 2022/2023 scheme that received the most and least number of applications. Below are some of the most common themes we picked up on and how to mitigate them.

Internship title: make it clear, engaging, and easy to grasp

The title is so important when it comes to advertising an internship - it's the first thing a candidate sees! The title determines whether or not someone will actually click on a job; it entices people to read the full job description. Without an engaging title, students won't give your role a second look. In the 2022/23 scheme, the least popular roles all had one thing in common: ambiguous, unclear, or complicated titles that students didn't understand.

Location: remember we're in Reading!

As a Reading based University, it's not surprising that the most popular roles tend to be located around the Reading area or areas easily accessible via public transport to and from Reading. If your research project requires to travel away from Reading particularly somewhere with limited public transport, bear in mind that your applications may be limited. You may wish to offer your academic internship on a fully remote basis which is fine but please communicate expectations and working hours clearly on your job spec.

Being open minded: different degrees will help you diversify

Be open to a range of degree disciplines – remember that this is an interest based scheme. The skill that you're looking for may come from extracurricular activities that a student undertakes alongside their studies! The most popular internships from 2022/23 clearly stated that they were open to students from all degree programmes. If you put on your advert that you prefer a specific degree, you will immediately put off the rest of the student population and narrow your own talent pool.

Perks & Benefits: why should students apply to you?

Most of our popular internships explicitly stated benefits to students: mentoring, training & development, additional research insights, etc. Sometimes we will have departments advertise similar internships at the same time with identical titles - a good way to set yourself apart is by including some benefits!

Clear & Detailed Descriptions: more is more when it comes to job specs!

Students will want to know what the internship entails and what they will be doing. Do not write a vague job description - you will either end up with unsuitable candidates or not get any applicants.

Asking for too much: keep the requirements short and realistic

RIS is all about helping students who may not have any previous experience or are looking to explore something completely new. So, be open minded about the essential skills you look for and try to focus more on transferable skills. The most popular roles in the 2022/23 scheme made it clear that previous experience was not necessary, and that enthusiasm and willingness to learn were more important. Those that stipulated many requirements did not do well with applications.

ADVERTISING YOUR ROLE

Once you've written your job description (using all the hints and tips from the previous pages to maximise your applications!), you must submit it to us via the online form. We will then look over it to ensure it is suitable to be advertised and aligns to the appropriate rate of pay

We will then advertise the role on our jobs board for **3 weeks**. As soon as your role is live, we will let you know along with the closing date so you know when you can expect to hear from us with the applicants.

HOW DO STUDENTS APPLY?

Students apply to a RIS internship by completing an anonymous application form. This form is very simple and asks 3 questions:

1. What knowledge, skills, or experiences do you have that are relevant for this position?
2. What excites you about this internship in particular?
3. Any other relevant information you'd like to share (optional)

RIS is designed to help University of Reading students gain much needed work experience whilst also earning a competitive salary. By introducing anonymous application forms, we hope to make RIS more inclusive by levelling the playing field and not hindering students who perhaps have less to put on a CV than others.

“The recruitment process was good. I found **the required questions allowed me to talk about my experience and keen interest in the role**. Learning about the business and asking questions made an impression with the director which helped me to land the internship role.” - 2023/ 2024 Intern



SHORTLISTING STUDENTS

After the internship advert expires, we will send all applications to you via email. As all the applications are anonymous, you will have to communicate to us who you wish to interview. Each application will have a reference number on it – you will have to send us a list of the reference numbers you'd like to shortlist for interview. We will then release the students' contact details to you and you are free to contact them to arrange interviews. We recommend you shortlist 3 to 5 students in order to fully inform your selection - students tend to apply to more than one internship so it's good for you to have reserve candidates.

We do expect that you review and shortlist candidates in a timely manner and ask that you contact us with your chosen candidates within 1 week of receiving applications.

Shortlisted students receive a trigger email from RIS alerting them that they've been shortlisted and prompting them to keep an eye on their emails. So, please get in touch with the students as soon as possible as they'll be waiting to hear from you! Unsuccessful students also receive a trigger email to inform them that they've not been successful. **We expect all shortlisted students to be interviewed.**

INTERVIEWING STUDENTS

It is now over to you to contact the students and arrange interviews! We recommend that a minimum of two staff members complete the interviews and if the internship is going to be primarily on-campus that the interviews also happen on campus. If you have any questions on your obligations during interviews please refer to the University's Recruitment & Selection procedure.

We ask employers to conduct interviews in a timely manner in order to make the process quick and effortless for both student and employer. From the time of letting us know of your shortlisted candidates, we ask that you make contact with the students within 1 week. Remember that they get notified once we send you their contact details - they'll be waiting for you to get in touch.

MAKING AN OFFER

Once you've conducted your interviews and selected a student, it's time to make an offer! Please offer the student yourself. Once the student accepts, please let us know the name of the student as well as the agreed start and end dates of the internship.

Please provide feedback to unsuccessful candidates you've interviewed. This will help them improve for their next interview.

ONBOARDING YOUR INTERN

You've offered an intern and they accepted.
Now what?

CAMPUS JOBS RECRUITMENT GATEWAY

Once you have successfully recruited an intern and have notified the RIS team, you will need to complete a Recruitment Gateway request via Campus Jobs to demonstrate that the funding is available for your intern. We will always be there to support you with next steps so don't worry as we will remind you of this when the time comes!

Once the request is approved Campus Jobs will set up your intern and will contact them with an offer and instructions on how to complete a right to work check (if they are not already set up with Campus Jobs).

At this stage, please liaise with Campus Jobs in regards to when the intern is able to start etc. RIS will support you with the internship but we cannot help with Campus Jobs related enquiries.

HOW ARE STUDENTS PAID?

Students are paid through Campus Jobs. They will submit online timesheets to you which you will need to approve by the relevant deadline to ensure they are paid in time. Students will be paid monthly on the last working day of the month.

Please refer to the [Campus Jobs website](#) for more information on this.

KEEPING YOUR INTERN ENGAGED

It may be that you recruit an intern months before the intern is actually due to start. This is completely fine and a good way to secure a keen student early. However, it's important to keep the communication going! Make sure you occasionally reach out to them before they start - ask them how they're doing and let them know you're excited to have them on board. This will help keep your intern engaged and enthused!

MANAGING YOUR INTERN

While completing an Undergraduate Internship, students will be 'workers' of the University of Reading and will need to be supported appropriately. The Reading Internship Team in conjunction with the Campus Jobs Service will be on hand if there are any issues or if you need support in preparing to welcome your intern to your organisation. We will also send you an Internship Tracker to support you.

Some top tips to help your organisation get the most out of RIS:

- Make sure you **have a clear project in mind** for your intern. The project should clearly outline your goals and objectives so your intern knows exactly what they are there to do.
- Rather than using an intern as an extra pair of hands, **think of a project** that would really add some value to your organisation!
- **Check in on your intern** at least once a day to see how they are getting on.
- Remember that for many students your internship is their first professional experience so you should **communicate your expectations clearly** (such as working hours, tasks, dress code if applicable and so on). Make sure to have an induction on your interns' first day so you can go through all of this.
- **Allow your intern some creative freedom** and ask for their input – our talented students come from a range of backgrounds and disciplines and will undoubtedly have a different perspective on things! This can not only help your business improve but it will also make your intern feel more valued.
- **Praise/ constructive criticism** - this is a learning experience for students so it's important to help them learn. Often this will be a student's first experience so praising them or providing constructive criticism will help them grow professionally.

HOST AN INTERN

If you'd like to host an intern through the Reading Internship Scheme this year, we'd love to hear from you!

Fill out an [application form](#) or get in touch with us on ris@reading.ac.uk