Christopher's was an excellent internship. He was very quickly able to slot into doing very productive work with us, benefiting our organisation and giving him a real insight into the workings of business life in the waste industry.

DAVID HOPPER
Waste Services Manager, Stirling Council
Internships at the University of Stirling

The Stirling Internship Programme has been created to help businesses and organisations access the knowledge and skills of our students through offering paid internships during the holiday period. Many of the internships are with small to medium sized employers who are looking to recruit graduates on a full-time basis. This is a great opportunity to work for a growing business, who you never know may be a future Apple or Amazon!

Why Internships are important

Graduate employers look for more than just a good degree result. An increasing number of graduate jobs are secured through undertaking structured internships or demonstrating relevant work experience. Employers are looking for applications from students who have spent time developing transferable skills through employment experience as well as through other activities.

The Stirling Internship Programme has been created to help businesses and organisations access the knowledge and skills of our students who will work on a project or support a range of activities during the key holiday periods.

 Undertaking an internship demonstrates your commitment to employability, providing you with opportunities to gain valuable work experience and training which will help your future graduate job prospects.

Six reasons why you should consider an internship

Become more employable: Boost your CV and stand out from the crowd in order to have an edge in the graduate job market.

Help fund your studies: Earn while you learn.

Network with employers: Make professional connections.

Test your career options: Internships can ease your transition into future careers and provide you with an insight into the sector.

Develop practical experience: ‘Real world’ business experience, enabling you to put theory into practice.

Develop transferable skills: Communication, team work, problem solving, decision-making, initiative, creativity and confidence building.

Did you know?

37% of top graduate recruiters expect their graduate positions to be filled by those who have worked in their organisation.*

More than 4/5 of the UK’s leading graduate employers are offering paid internships for students and graduates.*

*Source: High Flyers Research Ltd
Graduate Market 2014
Why did you want to do an internship?
I thought an internship was great because I could have practical experience and apply what I had learned during the classroom part of my course. In addition, the internship was really good preparation for job applications, as I could draw on examples of where I had faced challenges/learned new skills/delivered projects in a working environment which would be very useful for future job applications and interviews.

How did you find out about the placement and what was the selection process like?
I found out about the placement through a member of staff at Stirling Management School who was teaching a manager of a local authority waste department as part of an MBA programme. I had an interview and they agreed to take me on for a six month internship as a Recycling Promotions Officer within the waste services division.

Who was the internship with?
The internship was with Stirling Council in the Waste Services department.

What did you enjoy most?
My role of Recycling Promotions Coordinator was good fun. A key challenge involved trying to change public behaviour to increase willingness to recycle food waste and I designed an intervention and experiment to measure the success of this. In addition, I examined the business case for purchasing a large recycling machine which tested not only my analytical skills, but also my interpersonal skills, as I had to meet with sales representatives from manufacturing companies to find out about the performance of these machines.

What was the objective of the internship placement and how long was it?
The objective of the placement was to increase recycling levels in the Stirling Council area and it lasted 6 months (from February to September)
What was it like?

My placement was challenging and hands-on and I had the opportunity to participate in a variety of different projects. Most of all, I worked with really lovely people in a friendly office.

How do you think it has helped towards planning your future career?

My internship deepened my awareness of environmental and sustainability issues which are, of course, central to my PhD which is looking at environmental entrepreneurship.

What new skills did it give you?

I learned project management skills, as I was involved in several initiatives at once and these skills have remained with me and have influenced my approach to my PhD work. I became familiar with designing processes and presenting them using software which is a very useful skill in an organisation. Beyond that, I also honed my presentation skills, as I had to present reports about my projects and recommend courses of action to managers.

Do you have any recommendations or advice to give other students?

I would urge students to take into account the fantastic opportunities available in small business, the public and voluntary sector and to consider approaching these organisations proactively if there are no formal schemes available.

For more information on internships at Stirling

www.stir.ac.uk/current-students/careers/internships/