



Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin



Careers and Employability for PhD students

Industry Partner Guide- Trinity PhD Student Work-based Learning Experience



NATIONAL FORUM
FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF TEACHING
AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Overview

This framework document is an extract from the Industry Partner Handbook.

Careers, Employability and Work-based Learning for PhD students 10 ECTS module, supports Trinity PhD students with career planning, critical reflection and decision-making and will enable students to establish networks to help support their future careers. It was designed and is delivered in collaboration with a range of industry partners across all sectors and offers a unique opportunity to undertake work-based learning to prepare students for careers in academia and/or industry. A Work-based Learning (WBL) experience is a compulsory part of the module.

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1. Learning Outcomes

By the end of the WBL experience, students should be able to:

- Critically reflect on skills developed through practical experience related to the workplace and on how these skills can be developed further
- Critically evaluate industry partner feedback in relation to their work-based learning experience
- Analyse the work-based learning experience in terms of their personality, values and fit with organisational culture
- Critically evaluate their work-based learning experience in terms of future career direction

2. Three Types of WBL Experience Options

Three different types of WBL experience are available as options in this module:

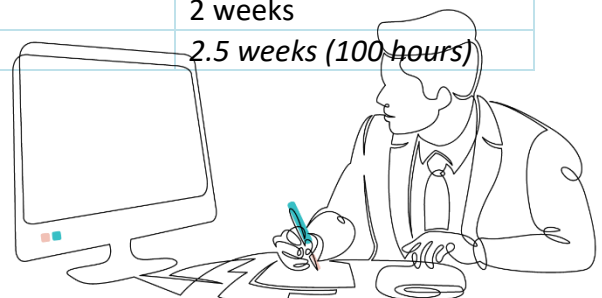
1. A **mini internship**, which for the purpose of this module, is defined as an approved and supervised *immersive work experience* with a host organisation of 100 hours in duration, that meets specific learning goals consistent with module learning outcomes above, is appropriate for a student at PhD level, and is within the scope of the [College Internships and Placements policy](#).

The mini internship may be completed in one block or in separate blocks e.g. a day per week, half days or specific hours. The purpose of the mini internship is to offer students a general exposure to a research or professional organisation, which will include induction, observation and an immersive work experience that creates real value for the host organisation and valuable learning for the student. This includes on-the-job interaction with an assigned supervisor or mentor from the host organisation.

Students will develop professional skills, increase their awareness of a given sector and benefit from the opportunity to make new professional contacts.

Sample breakdown of time required:

Breakdown of weeks/days	Mini internship
Induction	0.5 day
Observation of key activities	2 days
Immersive work with a focus on key deliverables	2 weeks
<i>Total student effort</i>	<i>2.5 weeks (100 hours)</i>





2. A **consulting project**, which for the purpose of this module, is defined as an *independent project* which is undertaken in collaboration with a host organisation over an agreed time period totalling 100 hours, that meets specific learning goals consistent with module learning outcomes above and is appropriate for a student at PhD level.

The purpose of the consulting project is to give students exposure to a specific consulting scenario or challenge in the context of a research or professional organisation, which is likely to include defining the brief, applied research and work on deliverables e.g. proposal of actionable insights and/or solutions in a report and/or presentation. Analyses and recommendations will be evidence based, grounded in academic literature and/or based on organisational tools and approaches.

Students will develop communication and applied research skills, increase their awareness of a given sector and benefit from the opportunity to make new professional contacts.

The host organisation is expected to provide all necessary data and guidance for the project, including an induction and introduction to consulting if required. The organisation will also provide feedback on the quality of the student's deliverables e.g. report and/or presentation. It is expected that the student critically assesses the consulting scenario or challenge and proposes insights and/or solutions that account for the strategic intent, capabilities, resources, mission, values and culture of the host organisation.

Sample breakdown of time required:

Breakdown of hours	Consulting project
Contact hours with host organisation - initial brief, identification of scenario/challenge & progress meetings	8-10
Reading, applied research, scenario/challenge analysis	50-52
Work on deliverables e.g. final report/presentation	40
<i>Total student effort</i>	<i>100 hours</i>

3. Another suitable experience which meets specific learning goals consistent with module learning outcomes above and is appropriate for a student at PhD level, to be agreed with TCS, e.g. development of a new business idea or entrepreneurial venture, community learning.



3. Confidentiality

Clear rules of engagement will be agreed between the host organisation, the student and the Academic Supervisor for the duration of the WBL experience. This will include a confidentiality agreement and the protection of intellectual property associated with research projects. Academic Supervisors are requested to discuss this with students in advance of the WBL experience and to facilitate student participation in an intellectual property training module if required.

4. Sourcing the WBL experience

Students undertaking the module are required to proactively source their own WBL experience from across a range of sectors, in either academic or non-academic settings. Some students may get connected to suitable experiences through their Supervisor or existing research collaborations in their School/Dept. In addition, TCS will work with industry partners and supervisors to develop suitable WBL opportunities. These will be advertised on MyCareer, our online careers portal. TCS will ensure that the WBL experience meets both student and module requirements.

5. Selecting the WBL experience

Students must consider the work completed through attending relevant careers sessions in the module and their completed *Skills Audit and Reflective PDF* (see support for students below) when selecting their WBL experience. Critical reflection on this information will assist them to make an informed decision when making their selection.

For those experiences developed by TCS, industry partners provide a 'wish list' of skills (e.g. data analytics, project management) and areas of focus for the year ahead (e.g. sustainability) which will be reviewed annually. This information is used to create a WBL specification, which will detail:

- type of WBL experience – mini internship, consulting project or other
- key activities and deliverables required
- timing and length of experience available
- skills level (both general and discipline-specific) required to undertake this experience
- specific skills which will be developed through undertaking this experience
- details of the recruitment process e.g. CV, interview and associated application deadline

6. Duration of WBL experience

Students will be required to complete 100 hours on their WBL experience. This is separate to time spent on module assessment. In some cases, a longer work-based experience contract may be available with an industry partner e.g. 3 or 6 months. In this case, 100 hours of this experience can be used to count towards achieving the required module credits.



7. Timeline

The timing of the WBL experience will depend on the student's research schedule and that of the host organisation, so they can fit it around their research commitments. TCS will advertise WBL opportunities developed with industry partners once a year for experiences to take place before the end of that academic year.

8. Payment

It is recommended that students are paid an appropriate stipend in line with worker directives for all WBL experiences undertaken as part of the module, up to a maximum of 100 hours. Students may need to become employees of the host organisation to facilitate payment. In such cases, TCS must be satisfied that any employment contract offered to students does not impact on the conditions of their PhD funding. Working hour directives will also apply for non-EU students.

9. Support for students

As part of this module, students are supported before, during and after the WBL experience.

1. Pre-WBL experience:

The Academic Supervisor facilitates the student to attend relevant TCS sessions including:

- An online session *Preparing for your work-based learning experience*, which will cover work expectations, organisational culture and emotional intelligence. Students will complete the *Intercultural competence and the global workplace* online session, which will assist them to appreciate cultural difference and develop their intercultural competence in a work context.
- An informal group 'coffee chat' will be held with a facilitator from TCS to explore and discuss any queries about the WBL experience and to share this learning with other students.
- Completion of their individual online *Skills Audit and Reflective PDF* and attending other relevant careers sessions such as *Mapping Skills onto Career Options*, *Designing your Career*, *The Art and Craft of a great CV & Cover Letter*, *Presenting your Best Self at Interview* and *Networking with Confidence*.

TCS ensures that students are aware of the range of job search and application supports that are available, e.g. CV/LinkedIn Clinics, Shortlist.Me video interviews, live practice interviews and one-to-one careers guidance appointments.

The College Disability Service supports the student and the host organisation to work together to ensure that students with disclosed disabilities are reasonably accommodated during their WBL experience.

2. During WBL experience:

TCS manages the relationship between the student and the host organisation in liaison with the Academic Supervisor. The Supervisor also facilitates the student to undertake the WBL experience. In the case of international internships, specific arrangements will be put in place to monitor the internship and offer support to the student in cases of emergency.



TCS will hold regular live webinars for students undertaking WBL experiences to address any queries students may have and to encourage collaborative learning and support.

Review meetings between the student and the host organisation supervisor will take place during the WBL experience, the purpose of which will be clearly set out. The number of meetings is subject to the duration and type of WBL experience.

3. Post-WBL experience:

Students and host organisations will give feedback on their WBL experience to TCS, which the student can also share with their Academic Supervisor. TCS will facilitate a face-to-face workshop *Reflecting on your work-based learning experience* to aid critical reflection on skills developed and to assist with making plans going forward.

An *Industry Mentoring Programme (IMPART)* will also be available to students who wish to continue their relationship with host organisations over the longer term. It is also proposed to hold an annual PhD Careers Conference to showcase WBL experiences and support student learning.

10. Assessment Details

TCS will oversee the assessment of the WBL experience, which includes:

1. The host organisation giving feedback to the student using the *Industry partner feedback form*, which will include a feedback matrix with scoring, qualitative feedback, and an overall 'exemplary/satisfactory/room for development.' TCS will also receive evidence of satisfactory completion.
2. Students will complete a self-assessment, which will involve critical reflection on their WBL experience and skills gained. The assessment rubric will be explained to students in advance. This is a formal assessment, with a 10% contribution towards the final module grade.

Students will also attend a webinar with TCS to address any queries they may have, discuss the assessment rubrics and engage in peer learning.

11. Supervision of students on WBL experience

The host organisation plays a key role in supporting students on their WBL experience. Review meetings between the student and their host organisation supervisor will take place during the WBL experience, the purpose of which should be clearly set out. The number of meetings is subject to the duration and type of WBL experience.

Benefits to the Supervisor:

This represents an excellent development opportunity for the host organisation supervisor to acquire and develop supervisory skills. It is also an opportunity for the supervisor to strengthen their links with Trinity, which may lead to future opportunities.



12. As a Supervisor, how can I help the student make the most of their WBL experience?

- **Set goals together:** work together with the student at the beginning of the WBL experience to define some SMART (Specific, Measurable, Assignable, Realistic, Time-related) goals. Encourage them to make a simple plan for working towards those objectives and review the progress they are making. Be sure to acknowledge what you have achieved together.
- **Encourage students to reflect on their experience:** encourage your student to be open to new experiences and to reflect on what this might mean for their future career.
- **Give feedback:** You are required to give feedback to the student using the *Industry Partner feedback form*, which will include a feedback matrix with scoring, qualitative feedback, and an overall 'exemplary/satisfactory/room for development.' TCS will also require evidence of satisfactory completion.
- **Encourage students to access more help if needed:** All Trinity students have access to a dedicated Careers Consultant for their programme in TCS in addition to other student supports such as personal counselling and disability-related issues. See <https://www.tcd.ie/students/supports-services/>. The student's Academic Supervisor and School will also support the student to undertake the WBL experience and in any relevant discussions.
- **Next steps:** Your organisation may also wish to continue the relationship with the student after the WBL experience, by participating in the *Industry Mentoring Programme (IMPART)*.

13. Value for Industry Partners

There are many benefits to you in partnering with us in the Trinity Careers Service (TCS) to develop and offer WBL experiences to suitable PhD students in your organisation.

Benefits to the Host Organisation

- **Top talent:** Trinity College Dublin offers a world-class research environment that attracts and develops the very best talent and allows our PhD students to excel during their time in the University and beyond. Trinity has research strengths that span the Sciences, Medicine, Engineering, Arts and Humanities and boasts a truly international PhD community.
- **Relevant skills:** Trinity PhD students come equipped with many relevant skills such as applied research, problem-solving and critical thinking. Depending on your industry sector, many of our students also have advanced technical skills and knowledge which will allow them to actively contribute to key projects and tackle strategic business challenges in your organisation.
- **Student diversity:** students from Years 2-4 of a full-time PhD programme (Years 2-6 part-time) from across all disciplines will participate in this module so you will have an opportunity to engage with a wide variety of students.
- **Build brand awareness:** hosting a WBL experience is great way to increase awareness of your organisation, communicate your culture and build your brand on campus.
- **Spot future talent:** it presents an opportunity to talent spot students and to develop a talent pipeline for future opportunities in your organisation.



- **Flexibility:** many PhD students are flexible in terms of their schedule so that a mutually beneficial working arrangement can be arranged.
- **Partner with us:** it is an opportunity to establish and/or develop a partnership between your organisation and Trinity College Dublin, which may lead to future collaborations.
- **Convenience:** you can advertise and promote your WBL experience opportunities through the Trinity Careers Service, allowing interested students to apply direct to you.
- **New initiatives:** it is an opportunity for your organisation to play a key role in this new and innovative module.