

Onboarding New Interns: A Checklist for Host Organizations

An effective onboarding process helps both the student and the supervisor. It increases the intern's sense of belonging in a new learning environment, reduces the time it takes for them to reach desired productivity levels and improves their overall learning and performance.

Before First Day of Work	Date Completed
Send introductory email with point-of-contact and arrival details	
Send general info about your organization, office, policies and regulations	
Send any administrative paper work that can be signed in advance	
Set-up designated work space, email and organization accounts, and arrange for office keys	
Develop a training plan and schedule for first few weeks	
Send email to your team announcing arrival of new intern and distribute orientation plan to relevant team members	

During First Day of Work	Date Completed
Welcome new intern and show them their workspace	
Tour the office; introduce intern to staff, location of washrooms, lunchroom, emergency exit, first aid kit and other key health and safety hazards and resources (*Be sure to follow standard health and safety processes as you would for any new staff)	
Provide keys/access cards, work station, supplies	
Review hours of work, schedule, pay schedule, overtime policy, and vacation planning	
Discuss procedures for scheduling time off and unexpected absences	
Review departmental policies for cell phone, personal calls, social media and personal computing	
Computer and telephone orientation (log-ins, password, networks, email, voicemail)	
Review accommodation policies; discuss any required accommodations	
Discuss organizational goals and/or priorities for Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity	

Complete any outstanding forms	
Review employee resources and supports e.g. employee resource groups, health and wellness services	
Provide general organization/industry orientation materials to be reviewed	
Consider assigning a team member to take intern to lunch; ensure intern is now included (as appropriate) in team activities	

During First Two Weeks	Date Completed
Schedule introductory meeting with supervisor to: review job description, responsibilities, student learning goals, competencies and expectations, frequency of future meetings, how to receive questions and how often intern can expect to receive feedback	
Provide training plan and schedule; consider opportunities for networking	
Review requirements of the university for performance appraisals and timelines for updates and other communications	
Review contact information for university internship coordinator and procedure for information sharing	
Arrange for any company and/or department specific training (e.g. computer software training)	
Ensure site-specific health and safety training is complete	
Review team meeting protocols and expectations	
Schedule 1:1 meetings on an ongoing basis to provide ongoing and consistent feedback	
Provide meaningful work (either training or substantive work) with increased responsibility	
Contact university staff if any concerns arise	
Ask student for feedback about their first two weeks	

Sources:

Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario. 2016. *A Practical Guide for Work-Integrated Learning*. Queen's Printer for Ontario.
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