



VRIJ  
UNIVERSITEIT  
AMSTERDAM

School of Business  
and Economics

# Capita Selecta: INTERNSHIP POLICY

HRM, IM, LCM, MC, S&O

Master of Science Business Administration

Master of Science in Business Administration  
Human Resource Management, International Management, Leadership & Change Management, Management Consulting,  
Strategy & Organization

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam  
School of Business and Economics (SBE)  
De Boelelaan 1105  
1081 HV Amsterdam  
The Netherlands

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**Internship coordinators**

HRM: Dr. Evgenia Lysova ([masterthesis-hrm.sbe@vu.nl](mailto:masterthesis-hrm.sbe@vu.nl))  
IM: Dr. Alexander Gorgijevski ([masterthesis-im.sbe@vu.nl](mailto:masterthesis-im.sbe@vu.nl))  
LCM: Dr. Maral Darouei ([masterthesis-lcm.sbe@vu.nl](mailto:masterthesis-lcm.sbe@vu.nl))  
MC: Dr. Koen van Bommel ([masterthesis-mc.sbe@vu.nl](mailto:masterthesis-mc.sbe@vu.nl))  
S&O: Dr. Valérie Duplat ([masterthesis-so.sbe@vu.nl](mailto:masterthesis-so.sbe@vu.nl)mailto:)

**Business Administration programme director**

Dr. Jos Akkermans ([j.akkermans@vu.nl](mailto:j.akkermans@vu.nl))

**M&O secretariat [4A-64]**

Ms. Monique van 't Hull  
Ms. Willemijn Dekkers  
[secretariaat.mo.sbe@vu.nl](mailto:secretariaat.mo.sbe@vu.nl)



## CAPITA SELECTA INTERNSHIP POLICY

Students in the MSc Business Administration programmes HMR, IM, LCM, MC and S&O have the opportunity to do a credited internship (*as capita selecta*) during their master studies. If you are seeking to conduct a non-credited internship you may reach out to SBE Career Services ([careerservices.sbe@vu.nl](mailto:careerservices.sbe@vu.nl)), a general manual may be found at <https://vu.nl/en/student/elective-space/internships-faculty-sbe>.

We distinguish three types of internships students can opt for to receive 6 ECs:

1. Work experience internship
2. Research internship
3. Thesis extension internship

### 1. Work experience internship:

This internship allows students to work alongside employees in order to gain practical experience and get a taste of how it is to work at a professional organization (broadly understood, e.g., business firm, government, non-governmental organization); if unclear (e.g., hospital, family business, restaurant, school), students have to consult with their internship coordinator for eligibility before starting the internship.

To qualify for credits, students must meet the following requirements:

- a. Before the start of the internship:
  - i. Submit a **work contract**, which shows that the internship will comprise at least 168 working hours (equivalent to 6 ECs) and has started after the official beginning of the academic year for which credits are to be granted.
  - ii. As socialization in a work environment is an important part of the internship trajectory, students ideally spend the majority of the working hours in the internship firm's office. However, in post of the COVID-19 pandemic, this may prove to be difficult as teleworking has become the norm across many organizations. Still, frequent interaction with colleagues on projects is highly desirable, if not a requirement for an internship. Please consult with the internship coordinator who can decide on a case-by-case basis whether the internship sufficiently complies with the "socialization in a work environment" criterion.
  - iii. To be able to graduate in the ongoing academic year, students need to complete the 168 working hours in the internship by **August 15<sup>th</sup>** (the internship itself can go longer however, you will then not be conducting the internship as a VU-student unless you register and pay tuition fees for the subsequent academic year).
  - iv. Credits will only be granted if the student obtains **written approval of the internship by the internship coordinator** of their respective specialization programme **before** the official start of the internship.
- b. **It is only possible to start a credited internship in period 5 (April 2 onwards).** Internships that start before period 5 do not qualify for credits. If necessary, faculty (i.e., internship coordinator) can sign a declaration of student status. After completion of the internship:
  - i. Submit an overview of tasks carried out during the internship. Students should demonstrate that these tasks were of an academic level.
  - ii. A reflection paper on how the internship contributed to the student's personal development and how work experience and the academic programme are interlinked (1,000 words).
  - iii. A written assessment by the company's internship supervisor (1 page) or the company's internal internship evaluation form.
  - iv. The official internship evaluation form provided by the BA Master programme, filled out and signed by company supervisor (see appendix).
  - v. **All materials must be submitted not later than 21 days after the completion of the internship and by 15<sup>th</sup> of August at the latest (even if the internship extends beyond the 15<sup>th</sup> of August). All submissions that come late will receive a maximum grade of 6.0.**

- vi. After 15<sup>th</sup> of August, you can no longer be regarded as a VU-student, thus you cannot undertake internships that stretches beyond this date unless you register and pay new tuition fees extending your student status into the following academic year.
- vii. Upon the moment of submitting the internship materials you will no longer be considered active at the internship company by VU/the study programme. That is your internship has concluded from a study perspective.

Evaluation:

- Work internships are evaluated on a 1-10 scale based on the BA Master programme work internship grading scheme (see appendix). While the evaluation by the internship firm has a large influence on the final grade, the quality of the internship report will also be considered in the grading.
- Work internships are assessed by the thesis coordinator of the respective specialization programme who also acts as internship coordinator (first contact point for handling questions, etc.).

Practical recommendations:

- Students are advised not to underestimate the workload of writing a master's thesis and pursuing a credited internship at the same time.
- NonEU students must sign a tripartite (3 party) internship agreement with the employer and the university. The internship coordinator for the specific master specialization can help in these cases. **The coordinators do not co-sign for standard contracts of EU students.**
- You need to be registered as a student for the entire duration of the internship. We cannot assist you with internships post-graduation.

Additional demands for **management consulting** programme:

- Work experience activities must be on a 1<sup>st</sup> year consultant level. This work can be performed at a relevant consulting firm, but internal consulting/advisory functions within organizations other than consultancies are possible as well. Internship proposals will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

## 2. Research internship:

This internship allows students to address a specific business/management problem with the aim to produce a research report as a product of the internship. Research internships typically take a practice-oriented and solution-driven perspective (e.g., writing up a case/research report, policy briefing, advice or consulting project). Research internships can be combined with the master thesis in terms of topic and focus (e.g., gathering data during the internship and then using that data for both the thesis and the report).

For the research internship, students can collaborate with a company and/or ongoing applied research projects and apply scientific concepts to solve a problem in practice. Scientific concepts must relate to the curriculum of the MSc BA programme. The exact specifications of this kind of approach are flexible and should be discussed with the supervisor.

A research internship can also take place at an SBE department (e.g., Management & Organization) where students collaborate with a faculty member and for instance use previously collected data or work with an existing questionnaire or other methods of data collection.

Research internships can also lead to developing a PhD proposal. This and similar "outputs" of the internship should be discussed in advance with the internship coordinator and thesis supervisor.

Evaluation:

- Research internships are evaluated on a 1-10 scale based on the BA Master programme research internship grading scheme (see appendix).
- Research internship reports need to be handed in no later than June 30<sup>th</sup> unless otherwise formally agreed with the supervisor and internship coordinator.
- Research internships are supervised by an M&O faculty member that students should approach individually (e.g., connected to an ongoing research project unrelated to the thesis; not necessarily also

the thesis supervisor if topics are different). The master's thesis supervisor, involved in the writing of the research report, also grades this internship. The thesis coordinators are not assessing the research internships.

- The internship can be done in collaboration with a company/organization (i.e., to identify a managerially relevant problem to address), but no minimum of contact hours at the company is required.
- To receive credits for a research internship, students need approval from their (thesis/other) supervisor as well as the internship coordinator in advance. In general, the internship report qualifies for credits provided that:
  - The report is distinctly different from the master's thesis
  - The report has a theoretical component
  - The report has a length of about 15-20 pages (+/- 6,000 words)

In the first place the initiative to organize an internship is the responsibility of the student. However, internships may also be organized by an individual faculty member (on ad-hoc basis) or by a special internship programme organized by a department. The SBE career services may also help students to approach potential internship partner organizations.

### 3. Thesis extension internship:

For students with high ambitions regarding their thesis and who aim at publishable results, the CS internship offers the option of expanding their research efforts. To be eligible for this option you need to meet the following requirements:

- The additional research and data collection is a unique addition over and above the 15 EC thesis.
- Research expansion implies an extra workload of 6 EC (i.e., 21 days full-time).
- Both your thesis supervisor and the internship coordinator need to formally approve your plan.
- In your thesis, you have to add to your preface the acknowledgment that capita selecta internship has been used to intensify the thesis research.
- You add as an appendix a reflection of a minimum of 600 words in which you explain how the extra work has improved your research.
- You need to provide the full transcripts (for qualitative research) or a separate results report (for quantitative research).

This research internship opportunity could for instance be applicable to interview studies (e.g., doubling the number of interviews and the coding), a multi-method design (e.g., adding an experiment), or additional and more complex quantitative designs (e.g., doing your study at two moments in time). The option does not apply to designs that use existing datasets, Internet inquiry, or other labour extensive forms of creating a data file.

#### **Qualitative Research**

In the case of an interview study, you need to do at least 12 additional semi-structured or open interviews of 45 minutes, on top of the 12 interviews we ask for a regular thesis. This adds up to ca. 4 hours for the interview, 6 hours for transcribing, and 4 hours of coding for each additional interview. The doubled dataset of 24 interviews will create better saturation in an explorative study and can improve the chances of publishing based on these data if you have that ambition.

Sample calculation of work hours (intensified interview study):

Activity	Estimated work hours
Data collection 12 extra interviews	48 hours
Transcribing 12 extra interviews	72 hours
Data analysis 12 extra interviews	48 hours

The required output for the thesis extension internship is a file with the 12 additional fully transcribed and coded interviews that you conducted for the additional data collection. This output will be graded for the

quality of the interview transcripts and the coding. Also, you need to write a reflection report of at least 600 words about how the additional data collection and results have impacted and improved your main thesis study.

Alternatively, it is possible to conduct more cases if you chose a case study design. You always need to discuss your expanded research design with your thesis supervisor first and seek approval.

### Quantitative Research

In the case of quantitative research, you also have several options:

1. You can gather longitudinal data from at least two time waves (in case of regular survey data) or four time waves (in case of a diary study). You will need to gather at least 400 participants at T1 in case of longitudinal data or at least 100 participants at T1 in case of a diary study to maximize the chances of retaining a sufficient number of people for the final wave of data collection.
2. You can gather multisource data (e.g., not only employee perceptions but also supervisor ratings). You will need at least 200 participants (i.e., matched data of employees with supervisor/peer data).
3. You can gather multilevel data (e.g., individuals within units/teams, companies within countries, etc.). You will need at least 40 teams/units, with at least 5 participants per team.
4. You can conduct an additional new study to complement your primary thesis study (e.g., combine a cross-sectional study with an experiment), which can be in the form of a mixed-method design. The number of participants needed requires on the type of additional study that you perform and will be determined together with your thesis supervisor.

Sample calculation of work hours (longitudinal and multilevel data):

Activity	Estimated work hours
Data collection	40 hours
Data preparation	24 hours
Preparation for data analysis <i>Includes getting familiar with analyses</i>	64 hours
Data analysis	24 hours
Interpreting findings	16 hours

Sample calculation of work hours (experiment):

Activity	Estimated work hours
Planning	64 hours
Data collection	48 hours
Data preparation	16 hours
Data analysis	24 hours
Interpreting findings	16 hours

The required output is the additional data file and analyses. This data file and the analyses will be graded by the master's thesis supervisor for quality of the data and analysis and interpretations. Also, you need to write a reflection report of at least 600 words about how the additional data collection and results have impacted and improved your main thesis study.

## INTERNSHIP LEARNING OBJECTIVES



**Have the advanced academic and research skills to contribute to the body of knowledge**  
*Students demonstrate a command of the academic and research skills necessary to make academic, professional and societal significant contributions to the disciplines of strategic management and organization studies.*

### Short Description specific to Internships:

- You are able to translate practically relevant problems into (academically) relevant research questions and you design and execute a project using a systematic, analytical approach in a real business environment.



**Have thorough knowledge of relevant theory and methods, and an evidence-based approach to solving complex business problems**

- *Students show a critical mastery of core strategic management and organizational theory, quantitative and qualitative methods, and of state-of-the-art thinking about the discipline.*
- *Students design substantiated solutions to complex practical problems and find opportunities to formulate innovative ideas based on appropriate theories, methods, and techniques commonly used in the field of strategic management and organization studies.*

### Short Description specific to Internships:

- You are able to apply theoretical knowledge in a specific organizational context and know how to formulate relevant recommendations for practice based on your knowledge acquired.



**Have the professional and social skills to interact with other professionals**

*Students demonstrate excellent social and communication skills both orally and in writing in multi-stakeholder contexts.*

### Short Description specific to Internships:

- You are aware of the roles and needs of different types of stakeholders that you need to interact with as a professional.



**Have a broad horizon beyond the professional area**

*Students formulate their own opinion on Master's related issues from the perspective of an academic, a professional and a member of society, and based on deliberate decision making and ethical concerns.*

### Short Description specific to Internships:

- You are able to work well in a team and you skilled in providing and receiving feedback.



**Are self-reflective professionals**

*Students take responsibility for their own learning and critically reflect on their own aspirations, strengths and challenges.*

### Short Description specific to Internships:

- You are able to reflect on your own role in the organization and on your personal development.

*Please note that the emphasis of these learning goals may vary based on the type of internship that you pursue.*

## INTERNSHIP ASSESSMENT AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES MATRIX

Format	Academic and Research Skills	Knowledge of theory + methods and solving complex problems	Professional Social Skills	Horizon Beyond the Professional Area	Self-Reflective Professional
<i>Work Experience Internship</i>		X	X	X	
<i>Research Internship</i>		X	X	X	
<i>Thesis-extension Internship</i>		X	X	X	
<i>Optional Voluntary Internship (0 ECs*)</i>					

\* All SBE students have the possibility to do an internship at any organization and of any length in order to gain practical experience, e.g. after finishing their thesis. Credits (6 ECs) will be granted only to those internships that meet the evaluation criteria and submission requirements of one of the three types outlined above. In addition, you will need formal approval from the internship coordinator for any internship that results in 6 ECs.



## APPENDIX

### VU SBE WORK INTERNSHIP EVALUATION SCHEME

Start/End Date of Internship: _____	Duration of Internship (weeks): _____
Date of Evaluation by Company: _____	
Student Name & ID; Specialization: _____	
Organization Name & Address (please specify unit in organization, e.g. corporate development department/project/team XYZ): _____	
Faculty Internship Coordinator: _____	
Brief description of Internship content (job/key tasks): _____	
Company Supervisor & Job Title: _____	
Company Supervisor email/phone: _____ / _____	
Company Supervisor signature: _____	

**Please attach:**

- Internship Job Description
- Company Supervisor Comments (i.e. strengths, areas for improvement, etc.)
- Company Internship Evaluation Form (if applicable)

**Rating by company supervisors of intern's performance in the following areas:**

**Rating Scale:**

5 = **Excellent** - far exceeded expectations (8.5-10)  
4 = **Good** - met and exceeded expectations (7.5-8.0)  
3 = **Satisfactory** - met expectations (7.0)  
2 = **Fair** - somewhat met expectations, but needs improvement (6.0-6.5)  
1 = **Unsatisfactory** - did not meet expectations (< 6.0)

1) Oral communication	1	2	3	4	5
2) Written communication	1	2	3	4	5
3) Initiative/Proactivity	1	2	3	4	5
4) Interaction with staff	1	2	3	4	5
5) Ability to learn	1	2	3	4	5
6) Independence	1	2	3	4	5
7) Professional attitude	1	2	3	4	5
8) Planning and organization	1	2	3	4	5

9) Quality of work	1	2	3	4	5
10) Creativity	1	2	3	4	5
11) Knowledge & Skills	1	2	3	4	5
12) Overall Rating	1	2	3	4	5

Elaboration on scores by company supervisor (optional):

Company supervisor signature:

## VU SBE RESEARCH INTERNSHIP EVALUATION SCHEME

CRITERIA	ASSESSMENT (MARK YOUR CHOICE WITH "X")
1. PROBLEM STATEMENT, MANAGERIAL RELEVANCE & OBJECTIVES	≤5.5 (insufficient): no problem statement provided and no managerial relevance demonstrated; need for practice-based intervention unclear; objectives of the study remain unclear.
	6-6,5 (sufficient): brief problem statement provided and managerial relevance demonstrated; need for practice-based intervention is explained; objectives of the study are explained.
	7-7.5 (good): comprehensive problem statement provided and managerial relevance clearly demonstrated; need for practice-based intervention comprehensively explained; objectives of the study are clearly explained.
	8-8,5 (very good): very comprehensive problem statement provided and managerial relevance clearly and innovatively demonstrated; need for practice-based intervention comprehensively explained; objectives of the study are clear and show societal relevance beyond immediate problem context.
	≥9.0 (excellent): excellent and highly comprehensive illustration of problem statement; clear, innovative and intuitively convincing demonstration of managerial relevance; business/managerial need for practice-based intervention is immediately clear and well justified; objectives of the study show their societal relevance beyond immediate and broader problem context, including critical reflection of the implications when objectives might be reached.
2. EMBEDDEDNESS IN THEORY OR MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORKS	≤5.5 (insufficient): problem is not grounded in relevant theory or managerial frameworks applied; use and applicability of theory or management frameworks are insufficiently summarized.
	6-6,5 (sufficient): problem is grounded in relevant theory or managerial frameworks applied; use and applicability of theory or management frameworks are summarized.
	7-7.5 (good): problem is grounded in relevant state-of-the-art theory or managerial frameworks applied; use and applicability of theory or management frameworks are summarized and shortcomings are shown.
	8-8,5 (very good): problem is clearly grounded in relevant state-of-the-art theory or managerial frameworks applied; use and applicability of theory or management frameworks are evaluated critically and shortcomings are clearly elaborated.
	≥9.0 (excellent): excellent and very advanced grounding of problem in relevant state-of-the-art theory and/or managerial frameworks; strong justification for use and applicability of theory or management frameworks, along with critical evaluation of shortcomings and challenges in relation to theory and practice.
3. EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACH (METHODOLOGY)	≤5.5 (insufficient): Unclear which evidence study draws on for analysis, how data is aligned with problem statement, and what the data collection strategy is.
	6-6,5 (sufficient): Evidence study draws on for analysis is aligned with problem statement. Data collection and analysis strategy is mentioned.
	7-7.5 (good): Clear description which evidence study draws on for analysis and justification how evidence is aligned with problem statement. Data collection and analysis strategy is comprehensively explained.
	8-8,5 (very good): Clear and in-depth description which evidence study draws on for analysis and justification how evidence is aligned with problem statement. Data collection and analysis strategy is comprehensively explained and theoretically grounded.
	≥9.0 (excellent): Precise, in-depth and complete description which evidence study draws on for analysis and justification how evidence is aligned with problem statement and theories/frameworks used; data collection and analysis strategy is comprehensively explained, innovative and theoretically grounded.
4. DATA ANALYSIS	≤5.5 (insufficient): Unclear data analysis and ambiguous relationship to problem statement.
	6-6,5 (sufficient): Data analysis addresses the problem statement and objectives of the study but remains superficial.
	7-7.5 (good): Data analysis comprehensively addresses the problem statement; objectives of the study are clearly met.
	8-8,5 (very good): Data analysis comprehensively addresses the problem statement; objectives of the study are clearly met and presented in an innovative way tailored to target audience.
	≥9.0 (excellent): Highly sophisticated data analysis that extremely comprehensively addresses the problem statement and is correctly conducted in all aspects; objectives of the study are exceeded and show a deep understanding of the problem context and full awareness of key issues relevant for business and management, including societal implications.

CRITERIA	ASSESSMENT (MARK YOUR CHOICE WITH "X")	
5. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS		≤5.5 (insufficient): Managerial implications of the research findings and/or conclusions are not provided.
		6-6,5 (sufficient): Managerial implications of the research findings and/or conclusions are provided but remain superficial and are not immediately applicable.
		7-7.5 (good): Managerial implications of the research findings and/or conclusions are comprehensively explained, and are immediately applicable in relation to the problem statement.
		8-8,5 (very good): Managerial implications of the research findings and/or conclusions are comprehensively explained and directly linked to study objectives; and provide innovative solutions immediately applicable in relation to the problem statement.
		≥9.0 (excellent): Extremely well crafted and critical discussion of managerial implications of the research findings; conclusions are spot-on and include sophisticated reflections directly linked to study objectives; study provides several significant and innovative suggestions for future management practice and research (precisely explained, meaningful and practical).
6. REPORT STRUCTURE AND STYLE		≤5.5 (insufficient): The report is not structured in a reasonably clear manner and/or references are incomplete.
		6-6,5 (sufficient): The report is structured in a reasonably clear manner and references are complete and the language used is correct.
		7-7.5 (good): The report is structured in a very clear manner, references are complete, and the language used is correct.
		8-8,5 (very good): The report is structured in a very clear manner, references are complete, language used is correct; thesis layout is professional and tailored for target audience (academic or practitioner).
		≥9.0 (excellent): Extremely rigorous editorial quality (e.g., spotless document, carefully structured and edited to highest standards) that could be submitted to company executives immediately without further editing.
7. RESEARCH ETHICS & PROCESS MANAGEMENT		≤5.5 (insufficient): The student needed much more supervision than regular, and/or had an unprofessional or unethical attitude.
		6-6,5 (sufficient): The student had a professional and ethical attitude towards performing research, but did not work independently.
		7-7.5 (good): The student acted independently throughout the thesis process and had a professional and ethical attitude towards performing research.
		8-8,5 (very good): The student acted independently, and had a professional, ethical and critical attitude towards performing research.
		≥9.0 (excellent): The student has worked independently and s/he can take almost all credit for an original and high-quality report; student has kept supervisor well informed of plans and progress; student had a superb professional/ethical research attitude.
GRADE		
Plagiarism score: (obligatory)	%	