

# Everything you need to know about a... **LEGAL INTERNSHIP**

## WHAT IS AN INTERNSHIP?

An internship is a short-term work experience (ranging from weeks to months) offered by companies for people—usually students, but not always—to get some entry-level exposure to a particular career area. It is as much of a learning experience as it is work. Ideally, interns spend their time working on relevant projects, learning about the field, making connections, and developing both hard and soft skills. Internships sometimes even lead to full-time job offers.

## LEGAL INTERNSHIP

As a law student, or a student simply interested in law, obtaining a legal internship is the best possible way to gain experience and to add to your CV with respect to law. Internships are usually undertaken by penultimate (second last year) or final year students. This happens outside of term time, usually during summer. Generally, an individual takes it upon themselves to apply for internships.

However, lot of college courses in Ireland require students to partake in mandatory work placement/internship during term time, this is usually organised by the college itself.

**HELLO**  
my name is

Intern



Some law firms offer a programme where first- and second-year law students can visit the office for one day to get a better understanding of how the firm works.

During the day the students will get the chance to shadow a trainee solicitor and get some advice on applying for summer internships. At the end of the day, they should have a better understanding of how a law firm works and what the role of the trainee solicitor involves.



# WHY ARE INTERNSHIPS SO POPULAR?

Legal internships offer a great opportunity to get some experience of the working world. They provide the opportunity to learn how the material you are learning in college can apply in a professional setting. It's an important part of building a core of experience that can help you in identifying or choosing your specific career path in law.

It also adds considerably to your CV and will help you impress at interview in terms of showing dedication to your chosen career area.



## THE ROLE OF A LEGAL INTERN

The roles and responsibilities of a legal intern will vary depending on the type of law firm that they are employed by. However, most internships will involve completing tasks such as:

- **research**
- **assisting senior staff with paperwork and other assistant jobs**
- **completing minor legal work for the firm**
- **sitting in on talks and/or trials conducted by solicitors and barristers**

Interns work under the supervision and with the assistance of experienced lawyers.

If a firm thinks highly of an intern, they may offer them an extended internship, or even possibly a traineeship to work at the firm full-time after university.





# APPLYING FOR INTERNSHIPS

Most law firms will offer a limited number of internships every year to students/graduates. However, this does not mean that all students will get an internship, and competition for places is typically very high. As a result, it is really important for applicants to stand out from everyone else!

Good academic results will never hurt your chances, and some places will only take on interns who have achieved a specific grade in university. There are other ways in which individuals can improve their chances of selection, however....

- joining and being an active member of your university's law society
- extracurricular activities
- being elected as class representative for your year
- demonstrating volunteer work



Many firms provide an online application for internships, with deadlines to submit the relevant documents. However, this is not the only way of obtaining an internship; it is equally as important to get in contact with anyone you know in the legal profession, and to demonstrate persistence and eagerness in looking for work. Equally, if you are unsuccessful with an application, look for feedback, and try and engage with the employer as best you can; they might remember you the next time!

# APPLICATION AND INTERVIEW PROCESS

1

Research which law firms are offering internships and take note of the application closing dates.

2

Take time to carefully create your CV and cover letter.

3

Submit your application before the closing date (you can apply to as many as you like).

4

Next you will either receive notification that you haven't been chosen or that you have succeeded in making it to the interview stage.

5

If you are successful in securing an interview...  
  
Research the company and prepare for your interview.

6

Dress appropriately and conduct yourself in a friendly, polite manner for the interview. Use this opportunity to showcase your talents and communication skills.

7

Once the interview is over, consider following up to thank them for their time.

8

Receive notice informing you if you have secured a spot on the internship or not.