



THE OFFICIAL

INTERN HANDBOOK

FOR INTERNS & EMPLOYERS

Toronto
Metropolitan
University

School of Graphic
Communications Management
The Creative School

VERSION 15, UPDATED June 2025



ABOUT

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook is designed to be a comprehensive resource for both interns and employers about the GCM internship program. The content of this handbook was collected from a variety of sources including GCM's website (www.torontomu.ca/gcm), internship preparation presentation for third year students, the GCM Student Handbook, and information from GCM faculty including Chair of the School of Graphic Communications Management, Natalia Lumby, and Contract Lecturers, Diana Varma, Kevin Gregg and Donna Cormier. This document was designed by Mary-Anne Buerano.

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ABOUT

THE SCHOOL OF GRAPHIC COMMUNICATIONS MANAGEMENT

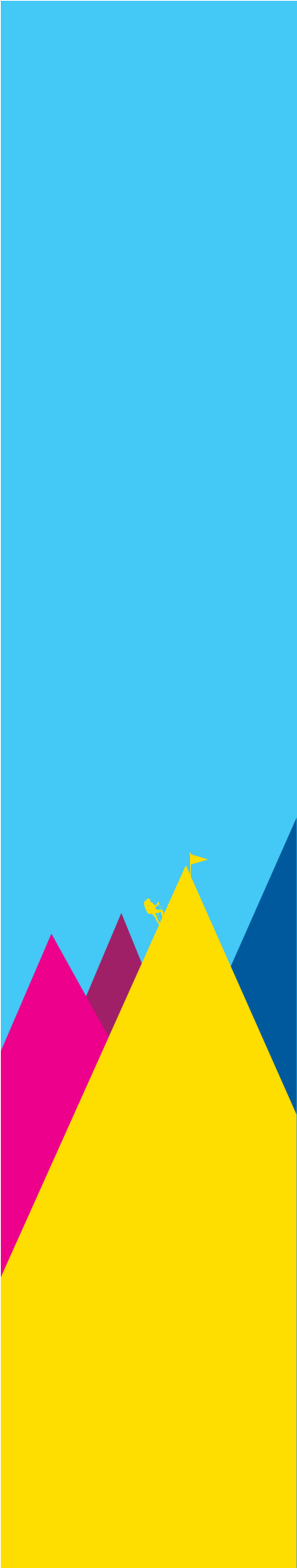
The School of Graphic Communications Management (GCM) at Toronto Metropolitan University (previously Ryerson University) provides a unique experience for its senior students to help them gain real world experience, apply practical knowledge, and transition into the workplace. GCM students provide valuable skills to employers in various areas, including but not limited to: premedia, press, post-press, document design, estimating, sales, marketing, digital media, asset and business management. We sincerely appreciate the involvement of employers in our internship program.

CORE FUNCTIONS

The core function of internship is to provide GCM students with an experiential learning opportunity that enables hands-on application of concepts, builds professional contacts, and strengthens their knowledge of the industry. It is also an opportunity for interns and employers to work closely with one another in a mentorship style relationship to facilitate work integrated learning.



GCM's internship program requires students to complete **300 hours of paid work**. Internships take place in the summer following students' third year OR in the fall semester of students' final year of study (assuming students have followed the recommended enrollment pattern). In third year, students prepare for internship through a series of classes and briefings. The internship will be evaluated in WKT 608. Many companies continue to employ interns part-time throughout fourth year and hire them full-time after graduation. GCM helps students find internships through our annual Career Fair and current job listings. Students can complete an internship in Canada or abroad, wherever they are legally permitted to work.



GOALS

FOR INTERNSHIP

Apply and strengthen an intern's knowledge of the graphic arts industries

Provide potential future opportunities

Access to major industry players

Refine career goals

Broaden industry experience

Strengthen connections to industry

Earn money!

Strengthen resume

For the intern to learn more about themselves, their strengths, and areas for improvement

Strengthen understanding of how companies operate

Have fun!

As of 2023, students must secure a **paid internship with a minimum of 300 hours**, which may be completed through one or more internships.

GCMCC (Connect & Collect) points earned through students' first three years in the program can be applied towards the 300 hours (up to 60 hours total = 60 GCMCC Points).

Students must register their internships online via a link provided on the D2L Internship organization and it must be approved by GCM's Internship Coordinator. **Hours worked prior to registering and obtaining approval of an internship are not counted.**

WKT 608 Prerequisites:

GCM 220, GCM 370, GCM 375

Students must complete their 300 internship hours before enrolling in WKT608.

REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNSHIP



All internship opportunities must be approved by GCM's Internship Coordinator. Information regarding legal internships is available at:

<https://www.labour.gov.on.ca/>



POSITIONS

THAT QUALIFY

EXAMPLES OF POSITIONS THAT QUALIFY

- Estimator
- Customer Service Representative
- Salesperson / Account Manager
- Manager / Assistant Manager
- Premedia Operator
- Press Operator / Assistant
- Bindery Operator / Assistant
- Packaging Specialist
- Marketing Specialist
- Digital Media Specialist
- Lab Technician
- Technical Support
- Graphic Designer
- Business Development
- Management Position
- Web/App Design/Development
- eBook or ePub Development
- Print Buyer / Purchaser
- Quality Control / Inspection

An internship position is a great opportunity if a student will be using **GCM-specific skills** in internship, they are **paid** for their work (at least minimum wage) AND they are working in a location where they are surrounded by **members of industry**.

IMPORTANT: If the intern's desired position is outside of the scope of the positions listed, it is the intern's responsibility to contact GCM's Internship Coordinator ASAP to ensure the position qualifies. If the position is not approved, it will be the responsibility of the intern to find a suitable position that is within the scope of the jobs listed above. Additionally, if the student wishes to embark on an experiential learning opportunity through GCM's exchange program (in lieu of an internship), the student must speak with GCM's Internship Coordinator and GCM's academic advisor.

WORKING FOR

- Design Company
- Ad Agency
- Equipment Manufacturer
- Software Company
- Paper Company
- Ink Company
- Vendor of Consumables
- Printer or Premedia
- Brand Owner
- Publisher, Magazine or Publication
- Research Organization
- Government (City, Provincial or Federal)
- A University, School or Other Institution
- Non-Profit Organization

POSITIONS

When students are seeking out opportunities and they are unsure as to whether or not they would qualify as an internship, they should ask themselves the following:

THAT QUALIFY

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Is this a position where I will be mentored by experts in the graphic arts industry?

Will this be an experiential learning opportunity where I will be given ample opportunity to learn new skills related to what I've already learned in GCM?

Will I be surrounded by the culture of the industry in a structured environment?

Will this opportunity allow me to grow my abilities and expand my expertise?

”

If students answer “yes!” to all of the above, they are well on their way to finding a great internship. If they answer “no” to any of the above questions, it is likely not a suitable internship experience. There is a difference between an “internship” and a “summer job” and the School of Graphic Communications Management wants students to have the best possible experience, which is why a “yes” is required when answering the above questions. This is truly for the students’ benefit, both now and for their future career.

IMPORTANT: Students wishing to work for family businesses are discouraged due to issues of impartiality in evaluation. Additionally, students working in a family business are unlikely to receive the same type of work experience as they would elsewhere, which could be disadvantageous to the student in the long-term. For this reason, the internship must be at an “arm’s length relationship” from the employer(s) and supervisor(s). Internships where the employer or supervisor is a fellow student, family member, or close friend are not permitted.

IMPORTANT NOTES

International internships must be approved by GCM's Internship Coordinator and TMU Global Learning, and can take up to six months to organize.

INTERNATIONAL INTERNSHIPS



Completing an international internship is allowed and working abroad can provide a fantastic opportunity to grow professionally and personally during an internship. In the past, the School of Graphic Communications Management has had interns work across North America, as well as in Australia and Asia. If an intern wishes to complete their internship abroad, **they are responsible for obtaining the necessary visas to legally work in the desired country.**

All students completing their internships abroad **MUST** register with TMU International and complete the mandatory forms eight weeks prior to departure.

More information can be found at [**www.torontomu.ca/ri.**](http://www.torontomu.ca/ri)



It is every student's responsibility to find a suitable and approved internship. GCM assists through Career Fair and opportunities to network with industry, however students are required to take initiative and seek out opportunities in a variety of ways.

Additional ways to find a suitable internship include:

- Trade shows
- Plant tours
- Industry events and dinners
- Clubs and student groups
- Staff and faculty
- Part-time job postings
- Competitions, contests, and conferences
- GCM website and Listserv postings
- Directories and trade magazines
- Employment ads in newspapers
- Knocking on doors
- Your network of personal and professional contacts
- Online job search websites

NOTES TO STUDENTS

Career Fair occurs each year for current third and fourth year GCM students. Each student can have up to 10 interviews (each 10 minutes in length) in a “speed dating” format. Students may be required to attend a briefing session prior to Career Fair, as well as a dedicated sign-up time. **Each student may only participate in Career Fair once for Internship and once for Graduates in their academic career.**

- Arrive early and dress professionally
- Bring tailored resumes and cover letters
- Check your TMU email for updates
- You will receive an email a week before Career Fair sign-up that lists the companies and positions available – prepare by selecting desired companies and researching them
- Sign up for interviews the week prior to Career Fair
- You may or may not get to interview with your first choices
- You may not contact attending companies prior to Career Fair

ABOUT

CAREER FAIR

HEALTH & SAFETY

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All workers have the right to return home each day safe and sound. We are ALL responsible — employers, supervisors and workers — for preventing workplace illness and injury.

(Ontario Ministry of Labour)

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In many workplaces, students will experience manufacturing environments where understanding health and safety practices is critical. Students and employers should understand their health and safety rights and responsibilities. If there is ever a question of safety, students should not hesitate to refuse unsafe work. Below you will find the Ontario's Ministry of Labour resources.

[Occupational Health and Safety Act](#)

[Health & Safety Awareness Training](#)

[Working With Chemicals \(WHMIS\)](#)

[Report an Incident](#)

[Ministry of Labour Site](#)

INTERN REFLECTION

The student's reflection survey is to be completed by the intern near the end of the internship. It is completed online and the link will be provided at the end of the intern's placement. Questions are asked that summarize their experience.

REPORT TO MANAGEMENT - Completed in WKT608

This assignment is designed to be a report of recommendations to management based on the student's experiences and observations. This is a document created by the student for the employer and the course instructor and employers will receive a copy of their intern's report. Most companies find this report and the recommendations contained within very valuable.

INTERNSHIP EVALUATION

The employer evaluation is to be completed by the intern's immediate supervisor near the end of the internship. The evaluation is completed online and the link will be provided to the employer at the end of the student's internship. The evaluation will be shared with the student and we encourage employers to discuss the evaluation with the student. Total Hours Worked will be confirmed by the Employer as part of the evaluation survey.

Detailed information about the expectations and deliverables of WKT 608 will be made available to students via D2L and discussed in GCM 370.

EVALUATION & LEARNING OUTCOMES



EXPECTATIONS

OF THE INTERNSHIP COORDINATOR

- Guide students in finding a suitable internship.
- Act as a point of contact for both interns and employers.
- Assist with solving problematic situations.
- Conduct site visits to the intern's place of employment to meet with both the intern and the supervisor to ensure a positive experience for both parties.

GCM's Internship Coordinator
gcminternship@torontomu.ca



INFORMATION FOR INTERNS

GCMCC GCM CONNECT AND COLLECT

The GCM Connect & Collect app is a way for GCM students to record their connections with industry and collect credit towards internship hours. Students are encouraged to “connect and collect” for the duration of their first three years in the GCM program, leading up to internship.

Students can apply up to 60 points towards their internship hours. **1 cc point is equal to 1 hour.** Opportunities where students interact directly with industry (whether for course credit or in an extracurricular capacity) will qualify for points.

To participate in the program:
www.gcmcc.ca

To learn more:
www.torontomu.ca/gcm

QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions or concerns about this process, please do not hesitate to contact GCM's Internship Coordinator who can be reached at gcminternship@torontomu.ca.

REGISTRATION WITH FIT

Internships must be registered as soon as the intern has confirmed their employment with their employer. Internship hours will **not** count until an internship is registered and approved by GCM's Internship Coordinator, which can take up to 3 business days.

Interns who have secured an internship (in writing with their employer) are required to complete an online registration form through The Creative School's Internship Tracker (FIT) system (the link is available within the GCM Internship D2L Shell). The registration process asks basic questions about the internship employer, duties and responsibilities of the intern, necessary course pre-requisites, and emergency contact information.

Students will also use the FIT system to upload all necessary internship documentation required by the university, as well as complete a reflection survey and view the employer evaluation once internship is complete.

HOW TO REGISTER YOUR INTERNSHIP



EXPECTATIONS

OF THE INTERN

Prior to starting their internship, it is the intern's responsibility to read and sign a contract with their employer and to keep a copy for themselves. Under no circumstances should the student accept an internship based upon a verbal agreement. Students are also required to complete a waiver and EHS Certification.

- Act in a professional manner at all times.
- Uphold Toronto Metropolitan University's Policy 61 - Student Code of Non-Academic Conduct
- Uphold all agreements made with the employer.
- Facilitate the signing and uploading of all internship forms required by Toronto Metropolitan University (you can find out more about this through the GCM Internship D2L site).
- Ask questions if unsure.
- Ask questions in the spirit of continuous learning and professional growth.
- Check TMU email and D2L regularly.

It is not recommended that the intern carry another part-time job and/or summer courses while immersed in their internship.

PREPARATION CHECKLIST

All bolded items are mandatory

September - December (of Year Prior to Internship)

- ☐ Start to think about the type of internship positions and companies you would like to work for.
- ☐ Speak to fourth year students about their internships.
- ☐ If you wish to complete your internship abroad, perform extensive research including necessary visa requirements.
- ☐ Attend industry events, trade shows, guest speaker talks, plant tours, and any other event where you can engage with members of industry.
- ☐ **Record all participation in industry events in GCM's Connect & Collect app (www.gcmcc.ca).**
- ☐ Compile a list of all of your industry contacts (from plant tours, trade shows, guest speakers, industry events, competitions, etc.) as a resource to aid in the search for an internship.
- ☐ Attend internship information sessions.
- ☐ If you do not have a valid driver's licence, you may wish to consider working towards one, as this may be a requirement for some positions.

PREPARATION CHECKLIST

January to Now

- ☐ Create and/or update your LinkedIn profile.
- ☐ Create and/or update your online portfolio of work.
- ☐ Assess privacy settings and update social media accounts to reflect a professional image.
- ☐ Have several friends and family members, instructors, and/or resume writing professionals review your resume to ensure it's error free, professional, and relevant.
- ☐ Research companies you might like to work for and use the GCM Internship Tracker to compile a list of companies you apply to, including follow-ups.
- ☐ Utilize TMU resources - Workshops at The Career Centre, Career Boost Opportunities and Postings in D2L.
- ☐ Reach out to people and companies you'd like to work for to inquire about internship positions.
- ☐ Continue to apply and track for internship positions, attend interviews, and network to secure an internship.
- ☐ Reach out to **AT LEAST 10 companies/opportunities/postings/people per day** until you have secured placement.

PREPARATION CHECKLIST

- ☐ Check the internship D2L site for information and updates.
- ☐ Speak with GCM's Internship Coordinator if you are unsure whether a position qualifies for internship.

AFTER YOU HAVE SECURED AN INTERNSHIP

- ☐ Work with your employer to establish a start date and end date. Ensure that you will have completed the required 300 hours before you commence WKT608.
- ☐ Read and sign your contract. Keep a copy for yourself.
- ☐ Register your internship via the link provided on D2L to the FIT (The Creative School Internship Tracker) system. This must be done as soon as you have secured employment. Your hours will not count until your internship is approved by GCM's Internship Coordinator (can take up to 3 business days).
- ☐ Sign and upload all paperwork to FIT within the first 5 days of work: **Letter of Agreement, Student Liability Waiver, and Safety Module Certificate.**
- ☐ Check-In Survey's will be sent to you periodically throughout your internship via a LINK from FIT. Be sure to complete the survey to let us know how you are doing.

COMPLETION CHECKLIST

AS YOU ARE NEARING THE END OF YOUR INTERNSHIP

- ☐ The internship coordinator may reach out to organize a visit to your location to review your experience directly.
- ☐ Complete the Internship Reflection Survey through FIT.
- ☐ Discuss your internship evaluation with your direct supervisor (supervisors are sent the evaluation near the end of internship and are asked to complete it within 5 business days). This is also where your total hours will be documented.
- ☐ Wrap up your internship placement, including thanking your employer for the opportunity and determining ways to stay connected to your new colleagues.

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Isn't an internship just the same as a summer job?

Not exactly. The internship's main focus is on the learning experience of the intern and using GCM-specific skills you've acquired.

Can my current job count toward my internship?

Only hours you work AFTER approval of your internship will count. Under no circumstances will hours worked prior to the scheduled start of internship count.

Can my internship be outside of the GTA?

Yes, this is encouraged!

Can I complete an internship outside of Canada?

Yes, but it is your responsibility to meet all immigration and work visa requirements. Therefore, if you are seriously interested in working abroad, do not leave this to the last minute. International visa can take time to arrange.

What if I don't complete all 300 hours?

You should make every effort to complete your internship hours. Any situation in which a student does not complete their 300 hours before the start of the next semester will be examined on a case-by-case basis. Remember that GCMCC points can be used towards up to 60 hours of internship.

Where can I get help with my resume and cover letter?

Books, websites, GCM's Internship Coordinator and TMU's Career Centre - www.torontomu.ca/career

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INTERN FAQs

QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions or concerns about this process, please do not hesitate to contact GCM's Internship Coordinator who can be reached at gcminternship@torontomu.ca.

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Can I get an internship on my own (without Career Fair)?

Absolutely! This is encouraged. Students are ultimately responsible for finding their own internships.

Once I finish my 300 hours, what should I do?

You are encouraged to continue with the placement until the end of the agreed contract, but the final decision is yours. Please ensure that you honour whatever commitment you have made to the employer.

Can I combine two jobs into a single internship?

Yes, although it requires some coordination on your part. Let GCM's Internship Coordinator know your situation and register each internship in FIT separately. Combining 3 or more jobs is only permitted with advance approval of GCM.

Can I take courses at the same time as internship?

This is strongly discouraged. If you believe it is truly necessary, speak to GCM's Academic Coordinator.

What do I do if something goes wrong during internship?

There is support available throughout your internship from GCM's Internship Coordinator.

Who should I ask if I have any questions about internship?

Please contact GCM's Internship Coordinator.

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INTERN FAQs



INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYERS

ROLE OF THE EMPLOYERS

IN THE INTERSHIP EXPERIENCE

We sincerely appreciate each and every employer who participates in GCM's Internship Program. You play a critical role in the success of the program and the development of our students.

One of the best ways to recruit and retain talent is to hire and mentor students as interns.

Direct supervisors play an integral role in the internship process and we hope that they will facilitate a mentorship-style working relationship with the intern to make the learning experience as valuable as possible. Supervisors can enrich the internship experience by providing training, assigning work, monitoring performance, conducting performance evaluations, providing encouragement, providing feedback, and helping to integrate the intern into the culture of the organization. Hands-on work experience is the fundamental reason that the GCM internship program is so successful and it is the reason a large part of why our students graduate from the GCM program with technical skills, business knowledge, and confidence.

When a student is working on site, it is expected that employers provide students with a site and safety orientation as part of a larger orientation. As with all employees, we expect employers to provide interns with the protective equipment necessary to perform their job.

NEW! GCM's Internship Coordinator will be contacting interns and employers about site visits/phone calls during placements. These visits are not meant to be "spot checks", but rather an opportunity to connect with the intern and employer to ensure that the internship experience is positive for both parties.

- Provide a contract or written agreement of roles, responsibilities, and expectations to the intern.
- Sign all internship forms required by the university (provided to the intern by Toronto Metropolitan University).
- Provide the intern with a safe working environment, including a comprehensive site orientation.
- Provide adequate formal and informal training to the intern in order for them to feel confident completing the tasks you assign.
- Provide on-going mentorship to students to promote professional development.
- Provide informal and formal feedback of progress. You will receive an email from GCM's Internship Coordinator towards the end of the internship placement with a link to an online evaluation form that will count towards the student's grade.
- Respond to the Internship Coordinator's request for a site visit/phone call.



EXPECTATIONS

OF THE EMPLOYER

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When is the internship start and end date?

We allow students to work part time and remotely. Students must complete a minimum of 300 hours. Start and End dates are up to the employer and agreed to by the student. Although you are certainly not obligated to, many employers ask our students to work part-time throughout their final year of school.

What's the average wage for student interns?

Most of our students typically make between \$18 - \$22 per hour. Interns must be paid at least minimum wage (in regular installments) for their work and follow the Ontario ESA.

How many interns can I hire?

A single department within a company can hire no more than 3 GCM interns to work at the same time in the same location.

What if the position I'm hiring for falls outside of the jobs listed in "Positions that Qualify" section?

If you are unsure as to whether the internship position you are looking to fill is suited to a Graphic Communications Management student, please do not hesitate to contact GCM's Internship Coordinator at gcminternship@torontomu.ca.

Who should I approach if I have questions about internship requirements?

Please contact GCM's Internship Coordinator at gcminternship@torontomu.ca.

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EMPLOYER FAQs



CONTACT

DONNA CORMIER, GCM'S INTERNSHIP COORDINATOR

gcminternship@torontomu.ca

Please contact with all internship inquiries.

TARAS KARPIUK, GCM'S DEPARTMENTAL ASSISTANT

gcmadmin@torontomu.ca

416.979.5050

Please contact with all Career Fair inquiries.

**NATALIA LUMBY, CHAIR OF GCM AT TORONTO METROPOLITAN
UNIVERSITY**

nlumby@torontomu.ca

416.979.5000 (ext. 556750)



“

**MENTORING IS A BRAIN
TO PICK, AN EAR TO
LISTEN, AND A PUSH IN
THE RIGHT DIRECTION**

- John Crosby

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