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**How to Enhance Graduate Employability through  
Mission-Driven Internships**

[www.brookes.ac.uk/enterprise](http://www.brookes.ac.uk/enterprise)

# Overview

## How to Enhance Graduate Employability through Mission-Driven Internships

### WHY

What are the benefits for participating universities, SMEs and the students and recent graduates

The right platform to address current pressing issues including student experience and graduate employability, fast-growing business sectors, agile working, and diversity and inclusivity

Illustrative case studies

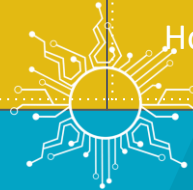
### HOW

How to run an SME micro-internships scheme effectively

A Toolkit to deliver a seamless experience for all parties involved

How to capture the impact created through key metrics

How to build an engaged ecosystem year after year



# Benefits brought by Mission-Driven Internships

## To the universities



- Enrichment of student experience
- Improving student employability and graduate outcomes
- Complimenting academic learning with practical experience
- Engaging with Alumni and local business ecosystem
- Contributing to local economy's recovery and growth

## To the SMEs



- Increased manpower to meet pressing business needs
- Unlocking capacity to deliver additional projects
- Better awareness of how universities and SMEs can collaborate together
- Opportunity to “trial” employing a young individual whom the SME might offer to stay on

## To the interns (students & recent graduates)



- Improved employability leading to better employment prospects
- Opportunity to apply learning to real life situations
- Familiarising themselves with the professional world and entrepreneurship early on
- Building a network of useful contacts for their future career
- Potential to be offered a more long term role after the internship

# How can Mission-Driven Internships counter balance pressing issues

**Post  
COVID-19  
recovery**

**Equality and  
Diversity**

**Access to  
Enterprise and  
Entrepreneurship**

**Sustainability  
and Ethics**

**Agile  
Working**

## Shuwei Lo interned with The Luxury Student

*Feedback from SME:*

*“My intern was brilliant, she definitely had a more grounded consulting skill which was perfect for our plans for the future projects we have in mind. She did great research and made a great strategy for luxury student. I appreciate our time difference was quite difficult but I hope that it was internship was useful.”*

*Feedback from Intern:*

*“Thank you for your email and thank you for this great opportunity. The overall experience was great and looking forward to gaining more industry experience with innovative startups.”*



## Sajal interned with Denim Faygo

*Feedback from SME:*

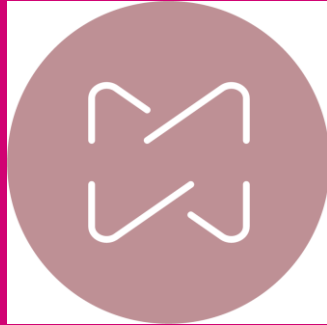
*I wanted to thank you for this opportunity and for your ongoing help throughout the process. Sajal was very hard-working and gave a really interesting presentation regarding the future of DF, focusing on how we can improve our Instagram presence.*

*Let me know if you require any references or reviews for Sajal or the OBU programme. If there are any other opportunities to get involved please let me know as this has been really helpful.*

*Feedback from Intern:*

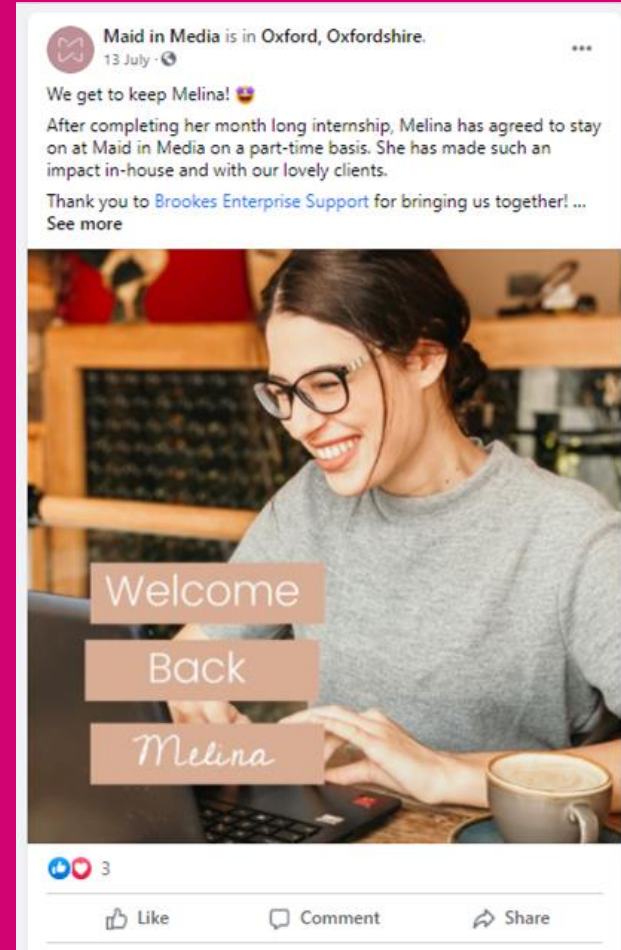
*“Thank you for your email, and thank you so much for the opportunity. Overall it was an amazing experience, getting practical knowledge is always important and with this internship i have gained that. Once again thank you so much for this opportunity and thank you for reaching out to me.”*

## Melina interned with Social Media agency Maid in Media

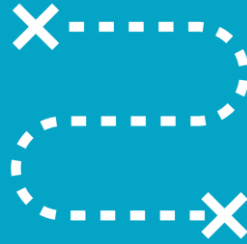


After completion of her internship, Melina was offered a part-time position in the company to work alongside her studies as she is completing an MSc in Marketing and Brand Management.

Before this internship, Melina did not have any work experience on her CV linked to her field of study therefore her employability was limited. Now she is working directly with the business owner gaining an understanding of what entrepreneurship is like on a day to day basis and getting paid to work in a job relevant to her skills that will set her career on a promising path.



# How to deliver this internship scheme effectively



Mapping out deliverables, stakeholders involved, T&Cs and timeline  
Frameworks, Metrics and Impact Capture  
Co-creation with SMEs and interns inputs

# Mapping out deliverables, stakeholders involved, T&Cs and timeline

## Deliverables

- Expected outcomes from the scheme for the interns, the SMEs and the university in the short, medium and long term
- The parameters of the internship (duration, number of hours worked, payment terms, remit of intern's and SME responsibilities, selection process, complaint procedure, communication lines)

## Timeline

- Work out a realistic timeline allowing enough time to set up all necessary processes to ensure a smooth and effective delivery and to gather the interest of interns and SMEs. (suggested 3-6 months preparation time)
- Micro-internships of between 4-8 weeks, full-time or part-time working hours provide powerful impact in a short timeframe.



# Mapping out deliverables, stakeholders involved, T&Cs and timeline

## Stakeholders Management

- For the interns: Detailed internship role descriptions, skills and experience required, conflict of interest to be declared. Professional behaviour expected, support available when needed.
- For the SMEs: Present internship objectives and responsibilities, working conditions, specific expectations and any conflict of interest. Transparency about the interns' limited work experience, encourage a nurturing approach.

## Terms and Conditions

- Three-party contract laying down the terms and conditions and requiring the signature of the SME, the intern and the university. A template with core terms can be used with the possibility to add in additional terms as and when required.
- Contract to be signed once the match making between SMEs and interns is completed and before the work starts.

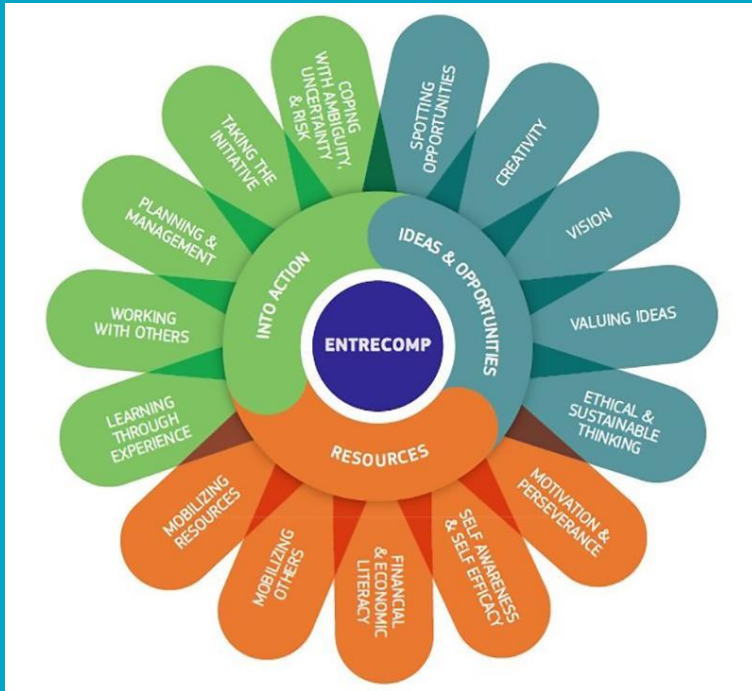
# Frameworks, Metrics and Impact Capture

## Key Facts & Figures to capture:

- Number of interns and SMEs who benefited from the scheme
- Length of the internship and whether it involved PT or FT hours
- Main areas of responsibility (Marketing, Communications, Operations, etc)
- Satisfaction upon completion of the internship for the SMEs and the interns
- Learning takeaways from the interns and the SMEs
- For the interns: measure improvement between start and end of the internship on a set of metrics including confidence and self-esteem, development of knowledge and skills, employability awareness, opportunities that have come out of the internship.
- For the SMEs: measure improvement between start and end of the internship on a set of metrics including whether business objectives for the internship have been met, was the experience of taking an internship satisfactory and did it have a positive impact on the business, would the SME take on other interns in the future, did the business gain something from the internship they wouldn't have gained in that time frame otherwise.

# Internships to support Enterprise Education

## The Entrepreneurship Competence Framework



### ENTRECOMP

EntreComp is a free, flexible reference framework that can be adapted to support the development and understanding of entrepreneurial competence in any setting.

It identifies 15 competences in three key areas that describe what it means to be entrepreneurial.

You can use this framework to map out which entrepreneurial competencies the interns will develop with the internship and capture impact.

## Co-creation with SMEs and interns inputs

In the 3-6 months planning phase leading up to the internships, identify a select group of suitable SMEs and interns to form two separate focus groups.

Utilise this resource as input into your planning paying particular attention to their experience taking part in the scheme, ensuring expectations are managed, communication is transparent and accessible, and everyone's time and input is managed wisely throughout.

These two groups can become strong advocates of the scheme.



# Summary

Running a mission-driven internship scheme effectively is a powerful tool to address multiple pressing issues and directly enhances employability prospects.

Universities can play a key role through the delivery of these internships in supporting their students and recent graduates whilst at the same time forging strong connections with their local SME ecosystem therefore boosting their local economy.

The value of these internships can be measured across a wide range of quantitative and qualitative metrics and the results can easily be scaled through agile working where the internships can take place virtually from anywhere in the world.

# Questions welcome



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