

HDR “Internships” FAQ

Candidates and Advisors



JAMES COOK
UNIVERSITY
AUSTRALIA



Information for Candidates

Can I do an internship as a HDR candidate?

All HDR candidates (both MPhil and Doctorate) are encouraged to consider connecting with industry (research end-users) as part of their research program.

What does a HDR internship 'look like'?

"Internships" encompass a wide range of scenarios beyond the traditional internship placement. You are likely to be undertaking an internship if you have any opportunity to apply research capabilities with a research end user (industry partner) in an area related to your research. These could be:

1. *Integrated Internships examples :*

- You are receiving a top up scholarship from an industry partner and spending a day a week with the industry partner engaged in activities related to your research.
- You are receiving a scholarship from an industry partner and are working on a research project of interest to that partner.
- You are working on a grant (yours or an advisors) connected to an industry partner
- You are working and studying, and your research is connected to your employment/your research is of interest to your employer, and you have agreement about this in writing
- You are a full -time clinician working in a clinical environment and studying your PhD part time and your work is related to your PhD research and this has been captured in writing.
- You are collecting data from a research end-user, and the results will be beneficial / of interest to that research end user, and this is captured in writing (for example, in an email, or in a letter of support for an ethics application).

2. *Independent Internships:*

You have an opportunity to do a short term project (3-6 month preferred) with an industry partner/research end user that is related to but not necessarily the same as your PhD research. These can be paid or unpaid.

If you are unsure if your activity fits the definitions, please contact Fiona Whittenbury at grs.staff@jcu.edu.au

What information does the GRS need from you?

If you are doing an independent or integrated internship as described above, then it is important to let the GRS know. JCU benefits when we report industry engagement to the federal government. Therefore if you have done any Research & Development (R&D) related engagement with a research end user (Industry Partner) that satisfies the following criteria, then you need to report in on your PROGRESS reports

- A PhD candidate
- Related somehow to your candidature or area of research.
- The intention to do the internship was/is captured in writing in the first 18th months of candidature (36 for part time) *This can be as simple as an email.*
- Be a minimum of 60 full-time equivalent days of engagement.
- Can be undertaken on a full-time or part-time basis.
- Mode of attendance can vary, i.e. full-time block, set days per week, part-time, face-to-face or virtual.

Are you already working in industry and studying part time ?

If you are working in industry and undertaking activities related to your thesis and you have an employment contract or something in written form formed in the first 18 months of your candidature then please make sure that you include this information on your next 6-monthly progress report or contact the GRS if you need any further information.

When should I start thinking about a research internship?

Have that conversation with your Advisor early on! Ideally before confirmation of candidature so it can be built into your time lines or at least within the first 18 months (36 for part time candidates) of your candidature.

You will need to have written confirmation (in the form of an email, letter, agreement or statement) of the internship stating the duration, the research & development activities in that first 18 months, but you can do your internship at any time.

How can I find a research internship?

Independent Internships at JCU are self sourced. There are a number of places to start looking for your internship!

- Start by talking to your Advisors. Do they have connections with an Industry partner that you could approach
- APR Intern is the national internships program and has weekly updates of internships coming out. ALL APR Internships are paid internships at \$3000 per month to the candidate.
- The Graduate Research School-may have some contacts through our connections with the divisional work placement teams. Check in with us at the GRS and we can see if we can assist.
- JCU Connect- get in touch with one of the Business Development managers, to see if they have any interested partners.

Integrated internships will most likely be negotiated when you start your PhD through an industry scholarship, project or through your current workplace.

When can I start my research internship?

If you are doing an independent internship, you can start your research internship at any time during your PhD candidature as long as you have completed your confirmation of candidature.

Does the internship have to be related to my research?

Yes. However not directly. For example, using the same methods or using your research skills, but not directly related to your thesis research questions would be fine. Integrated internships will be related to your research degree.

Can the outcomes of my internship be included in my PhD thesis?

Yes- for those undertaking integrated internships otherwise if it is a independent internship, this may be possible but will depend on the specific circumstances of your internship, the Industry partner you will be working with, and the activities you will be undertaking.

How is a research internship different from a work placement as an undergraduate?

This is not a required part of coursework for you. Internships are optional for research candidates and requires undertaking research and development for/with the industry partner.

What is the definition of an Industry partner?

An Industry partner must meet the Government definition of a **Research End-User** which is:

An individual, community or organisation external to academia that will directly use or directly benefit from the output, outcome or results of the research.

Examples of research end users includes businesses, governments, non-governmental organisations, communities and community organisations.

Specific exclusions of research end-user are:

- Other higher education providers
- Organisations that are affiliates, controlled entities or subsidiaries (such as Medical Research Institutes) of a higher education provider
- Equivalents (international or domestic) of the above exclusions

I am a PhD candidate who is more than 18 months FTE into candidature; can I do an internship?

Yes, you can complete an internship.

I am a Masters of Philosophy candidate; can I do an internship?

Yes, you can complete an internship

Can I do my internship on a part time basis, for example, 1-2 days per week?

Yes, provided that the internship spans a minimum of 3 calendar months and the total equivalent of 60 FTE working days, the time that you spend on your internship is flexible and can be negotiated with your academic mentor and industry partner.

Does a research internship need to be undertaken on-site with the research end user?

No, you may undertake your approved internship on-site, on-campus, or remotely.

Are internships paid or unpaid?

It depends on the internship. For Integrated Internships you may be employed full or parttime by the industry partner.

With Independent internships, all APR Internships are paid but other NGO internships or those with international organisations may not be.

For an unpaid independent internship, the GRS has a small amount of seed funding which can be applied for if you are not a scholarship holder and you wish to do an internship which happens to be unpaid. Please see more about **the Davis Fund** here and talk to the GRS.

If you are a current Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarship holder and you are receiving a paid internship your scholarship will be put on hold for the duration of the internship.

How will my internship stipend be paid?

It depends. Usually, for an independent paid internship stipend, the industry partner or APR Intern will pay JCU the full amount and then this will be paid to you in fortnightly installments by the Graduate Research School.

What will happen if I am on a JCU PhD Scholarship?

If you are on a Scholarship and you secure a **paid independent internship**, your scholarship (and candidature if a domestic candidate) will be put on hold whilst you receive payment of the internship.

If it is an **unpaid internship** we can continue to pay your scholarship stipend if it's done within the period covered by the PhD scholarship, and your candidature progress remains satisfactory. However, as the scholarship is continuing there will not generally be an extension to the due dates for PhD milestones or submission.

I am an international candidate, can I participate in an internship?

Yes, participation is open to all candidates. Before proceeding with an internship, you and your advisor need to confirm that you are able to complete both your PhD and the proposed internship within your existing candidate visa duration. Obtaining an internship is not a basis for requesting an extension for an international student visa.

Can I do a research internship for shorter/longer than 3 months?

Yes, you can. However, for independent internships, the ideal is the equivalent of 60 days FTE.

Who will the academic mentor be?

During the internship, candidates are supervised by someone from industry and a JCU academic mentor. This does not have to be your primary or secondary advisor but in most cases it will be.

Do I need to complete any assessments as part of the internship?

Candidates who are undertaking an independent internship will complete an internship proposal at the beginning, and a presentation and report at the completion of the internship.

Many candidates who are undertaking an integrated internship may have other deliverables which will be negotiated with the industry partner.

If I am part of the Cohort Doctoral Studies Program can I count the work I am doing as part of an internship?

Yes. As long as the work is related to your research and you can say it is for at least 3 months or 60 FTE working days, something has been agreed in writing with your employer in the first 18mths of your candidature (or 36mths part time). Make sure the GRS know about this by including the information in your progress reports and sending the GRS written evidence of the 'internship'.

Information for Advisors

JCU would like to encourage and support all HDR candidates who would like to undertake an internship during their higher degree by Research.

However, it is important for advisors to note new changes which have been introduced by the federal government that will affect **PhD candidates only**. This will mean that there will be 'eligible' and "non-eligible" internships for reporting purposes.

The federal government is encouraging industry internships for research PhD candidates by providing long term financial incentives where Universities will be rewarded for research **PhD candidates** that graduate having undertaken a three-month or longer industry internship, commencing/agreed within the first 18 months of enrolment.

What is an eligible internship?

An eligible internship for reporting purposes must be the following:

- **A PhD candidate**
- **Related somehow to the area of students research.**
- **The intention to do the internship was/is captured in writing in the first 18th months of candidature (36 for part time) *This can be as simple as an email.***
- **Be a minimum of 60 full-time equivalent days of engagement.**
- **Can be undertaken on a full-time or part-time basis.**
- **Mode of attendance can vary, i.e. full-time block, set days per week, part-time, face-to-face or virtual.**

We don't want to make it confusing for candidates, and therefore are not going into the details of eligible or non eligible. We would like to capture and report on as much information as we can that will fit into the criteria above under 'what is an eligible internship'

Why should I encourage my candidate to undertake an internship ?

The number of research PhD graduates has grown significantly over the last decade and opportunities to gain employment in academia are limited. Internships help build new employment pathways beyond academic roles.

Industry will benefit from more opportunities to host research PhD candidates, which will bolster their ability to harness ideas and concepts for innovation, and encourage the recruitment of high-calibre PhD graduates.

There are also mid to long term funding implications. If we do not report internships our research funding base is likely to fall. For more information please see [government information page](#).

What does an internship look like?

"Internships" encompass potentially a wide range of scenarios beyond the traditional internship placement. It can include any agreed piece of work that involves R & D with an 'industry partner', for example an employer, or engagement with JCU- industry contracted research, grants etc. – as long as there is a written agreement (an email would suffice) in the first 18 months and a minimum of 3 calendar months in duration, and at least 60 full-time equivalent (FTE) days of engagement.

What are some examples?

At JCU we refer to the internships as independent or integrated. Examples of these are as follows:

Integrated Internships :

- Your candidate is receiving a top up scholarship from an industry partner and spending a day a week with the industry partner engaged in activities related to their research.
- Your candidate is receiving a scholarship from an industry partner and are working on a research project of interest to that partner.
- Candidate is working on a grant (yours or theirs) connected to an industry partner
- Candidate is working and studying, and their research is connected to their employment/their research is of interest to their employer
- Your candidate is a full -time clinician working in a clinical environment and studying your PhD part time and your work is related to your PhD research and this has been captured in writing.

Independent:

Your candidate has an opportunity to do a short term project (3-6 month preferred) with an industry partner/research end user that is related to but not necessarily the same as their HDR research

What is an academic mentor and why does an internship need one?

An Academic mentor is not a formal title. It is a role that oversees the rigor of the research project, oversee reporting and actively engage with the industry partner usually with an independent internship. As an academic mentor on an internship, you do not have to be on the candidates advisory panel, but most are. Early Career Researchers, external advisors are also encouraged to take on this role.

What information do I need to provide to the GRS?

If your candidate is undertaking an internship, the candidate will need to supply written evidence of the internship in the first 18 months of full time candidature (or 36 months of part time candidature).

We would need to have it noted in **section 5 of a progress report** that the candidate has fulfilled an internship based on the criteria listed above and that there is written evidence

supplied to the GRS of this with days of engagement and the dates. This would then be saved in the student file.

As an Advisor do I get any monetary incentive?

If you have chosen to be the academic mentor for [APR Internships](#) (independent internships) you will receive \$1000 per internship. The academic mentor will receive a one-off payment for their support and supervision of an intern. This money will be paid to the university and placed in the mentor's research account for use to cover placement related expenses; i.e. travel associated with the internship, the purchase of hardware, software, books and journals, or conference attendance. It cannot be paid to the mentor as a salary top-up.

For non APR internships you will not receive any financial incentive at this stage.

What is my role as an Advisor?

- Check that candidates report possible internships on progress reports
- Assist candidates in building industry engagement for integrated internships where possible
- Assist candidates in finding stand alone internships by referring them to industry contacts
- Act as a Advisor mentor for candidates (yours or others).



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