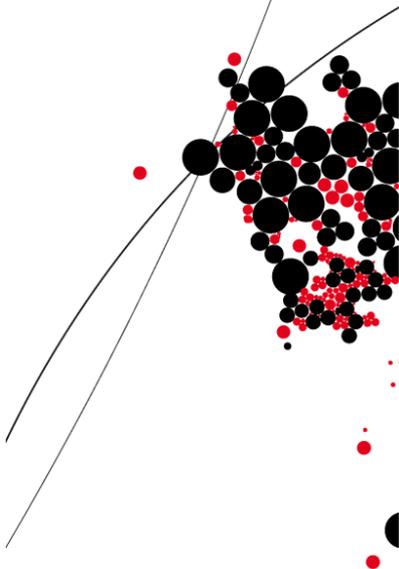# UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE.

Master Communication Studies (M-COM)

Course manual:

- **Master Internship** **(5 EC)**
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Mobility Online internship registration

https://www.utwente.nl/en/education/current-students/educational-systems/#mobility-online

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Content of the manual

1   General description M-COM internship (5EC)

The master 5 EC M-COM internship is one of the electives in the master COM programme. In relation to the Master Thesis research - and collaborating with an external organization - the M-COM internship can offer students the opportunity to also gain practical experience in the work field.

Master Thesis as the starting point

Starting point for the M-COM internship is a Master Thesis project in collaboration with an organization, company or institute. In that case an organization may provide students with a case study, context or participants for their master thesis research. This may allow students to spend time at the organization and possibly become involved as a communication expert in some (practical) side activities. Based on being involved in these (side) activities, professional competencies can be developed as well as the demonstrating the ability to link or apply academic (master-level) knowledge to a practical context. These side-activities can be closely related to the master thesis project, but could also involve activities outside the scope of the master thesis. As long as the activities do fit the professional field of a communication expert. However, in all cases, the master thesis is the point of departure. Once a connection with a company is made related to the master thesis, the option is there to add or link the M-COM (5EC) internship.

Study load and duration of the internship

The master internship has a study load of 5 EC, equal to 140 hours of study load. It is required for students to spend at least 120 hours as an intern in an organization. The remaining 20 hours can be used for meetings with a supervisor at the university or reporting activities.

In consultation with the company students are free to make arrangements on how to schedule the internship hours. Note that 120 hours is a very limited amount of time; only 15 working days of 8 hours..! There are many options such as:

- Practically speaking, a student could opt for doing a one month internship (of 32 hours a week) at the start of the thesis project to get to know the company and have one day a week available to work on the master thesis.
- Another option could be to spread the internship hours over a longer period of time and maybe have one internship day each week for a period of 15 weeks and work on your thesis for te remainder 4 days a week.

!...Important…! The 120 hours to spend at a company is the minimum requirement for a 5 EC internship. You can agree with the company, to spend more internship hours. Note however that this may affect the schedule and duration of your master thesis project.

Make clear arrangements with the company

When collaborating with a company for your master thesis and opting to take on the 5EC M-COM internship, we advise students to make clear arrangements with the company about the master thesis research versus the internship activities. Typically these arrangements are made in an internship agreement / contract drafted by the company in consultation with the student.

Again, take the master thesis project as the point of departure. Preferably, make arrangement about the master thesis project (research activities) an next to that, indicate that a certain amount of hours will be spend on internship activities. A copy of this internship contract, between the student and the company, must be send to the COM internship and graduation coordinator (Mark Templeman / m.h.tempelman@utwente.nl).

Preferably draft-up a two-party agreement between you as a student and the company. The proposal for your master thesis and the preparation report (holding the learning goals) for your internship, basically are your learning agreements with the university. The BMS faculty internship coordinator (Leonie ten Have / l.s.tenhave@utwente.nl) can assist students with questions about the internship agreement.

!!...Important…!! : In the case the company requires the University of Twente to co-sign the internship agreement, this them has to be coordinated in consultation with the BMS faculty internship coordinator (Leonie ten Have / l.s.tenhave@utwente.nl) and may require some time to be processed by the University of Twente legal department.

Internship assessment based on reflection on learning goals

Before or at the start of the internship, and in consultation with the host organization, students need to formulate personal and academic / subject specific learning goals based on the SMART principle. During the internship students will be involved in practical / daily tasks. As a result of the practical internship experiences students will be able to reflect on their personal learning goals. Apart from the practical experiences, students are also expected to incorporate and apply academic knowledge and/or literature to be able to reflect on the academic / subject specific learning goals.

2 Pre-requirements of the M-COM internship

The basic requirement is that you will conduct a master thesis research in collaboration with an organization or company. Next to this an additional requirement involves that the student can also be involved in practical side activities at this organization or company.

Formally therefore the educational requirements for starting a M-COM internship are the same as for starting the master thesis project, being: successfully completed 15 EC, among which the core course Essentials in Communication Science and active participation in the Research Topics course.

In the case the pre-requirements are met, students can schedule to start their internship at any given moment. This may also be somewhere halfway in an educational quartile. All as long as the duration of internship at the company of at least 120 hours will be met.

3 Learning goals as the basis of an internship

To be able to assess an internship, learning goals need to be set by the education as well as by the student. Very much different, as compared to regular course in a programme, it is not the education but you as a student who will set the (content related) learning goals, based on your (intrinsic) motives to take on an internship. In regular master courses the content of a course and related learning goals are predefined by the teaching staff, as a result of which, a student's knowledge will be assessed during an exam or based on an assignment. In an internship however, the student needs to indicate what he or she wants to gain from the internship by elaborating at least two (2) relevant personal learning goals and at least two (2) relevant academic / subject specific learning goals. Apart from these (content related) learning goals needed to be set by the student, the education has set some general learning goals related to the internship as a course and to be ultimately able to assess the internships.

Learning goals of the M-COM internship set by the education:
In order to be able to assess an internship following learning goals are set by the education:

1) Based in an internship preparation report, the student is able to describe the expectations regarding the content of the internship in terms of 1) describing the host organization and internship position as well as 2) an elaboration the personal and academic / subject specific learning goals, and 3) a process description of hand-in deadlines and contact moments with UT-internship supervisor.

2) Based on the internship reflection report and evaluation of the host organization, the student demonstrates the capability to reflect on the practical experiences gained in relation to the predefined personal learning goals.

3) Based on the internship reflection report and evaluation of the host organization, the student demonstrates the capability to reflect on the predefined academic / subject specific learning goals, by connecting relevant academic knowledge to the internship context.

4) Based on the internship reflection report the student is able to elaborate on several points of discussion in relation to future personal / professional developments; hence, the take-out of the internship

Learning goals to be set by the student

Students need to formulate and elaborate on at least two (2) personal as well as two (2) academic / subject specific learning goals. The learning goals need to be elaborated according to the SMART principle. There are many resources to be found on the internet, related to the SMART principle of formulating learning goals. Consult these resources when formulating your learning goals. In general the SMART principle requires learning goals to be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time related. Based in this principle students are required to a) formulate the learning goals and b) elaborate on the learning goal.

a) The formulation of a learning goal in itself is basically a short or summarized version of a learning goal. For example following personal learning goal: "By having performed at least three presentations before the end of my internship, I want to be able to assess my improvement in presentation skills". This learning goals is formulated according the SMART principle.

   - Specific   → improving presentation skills

   - Measurable   → based on assessing at least three presentations

   - Attainable   → presentations are common in internship host organization

   - Relevant   → presentations are relevant for a communication professional

   - Time related   → before end of the internship

b) However, apart from the formulation of the learning goal itself, students are also required to elaborate on their learning goals based on the SMART principle. This basically provides additional or background information related to the learning goal. Concerning before mentioned example learning goal, this would result in an elaboration of following aspects / questions:

   - Specific   → why is improving presentation skills important to you?

   - Measurable   → what are assessment criteria to assess improvement?

   - Attainable   → how do you know for sure that you are able to do three presentations?

   - Relevant   → what evidence do you have to prove that presenting is relevant?

   - Time related   → why this time frame, why not half way the internship?

   Answering these questions will help justifying the goals and will provide more information about actions required to meet or to be able to reflect on the learning goal.

Personal vs academic / subject specific learning goals

Important is the distinction between personal and academic / subject specific learning goals. In general the personal learning goals refer to aspects such as professional or practical skills a student wants to obtain as a result of the internship. Above mentioned example of improving presentations skills could be one of them. But, aspects such as developing a more assertive behavior or gaining Google Analytics skills could be topics for personal learning goals as well. Academic / subject specific learning goals on the other side may be more complicated to formulate or may require more deliberation upfront.

Depending on the student's interest or chosen focus area in the master COM programme academic / subject specific learning goals may cover various topics. It is however important that there is a clear link between an academic / subject specific learning goal and the content of the master programme on the one hand and the activity (or some activities) in the organization or company, on the other hand. It may, for example, very well be the case that certain topics discussed during one of the courses are of interest to further investigate during an internship. For example topics such as, application of behavioural targeting principles in e-commerce (Digital Marketing Comm. & Design), the physical design of retail / shopping environments (Digital Marketing Comm. & Design), the application of UX-elements in app design (Technology & Comm.) or employee perceptions towards CSR initiatives of an organization (Organizational Comm. & Reputation).

Academic / subject specific learning goals are expected to be elaborated in the same fashion as the previously illustrated example of a personal learning. An example of an academic learning goal would be: "By the end of the internship, based on my involvement in the implementation of at least three social media advertising campaigns, I am able to evaluate the extent to which the implementation of the ad-campaigns meet the design criteria as known from literature / academic knowledge". Further elaboration of this learning goal according to the SMART principle would be based on following questions:

- Specific   → why are design criteria in social media ad-campaigns of interest to you?

- Measurable   → how are you able to do this evaluation; what are (established) criteria?

- Attainable   → can you be involved in the implementation of at least 3 campaigns?

- Relevant   → is the topic of the learning goal relevant in relation to your master programme?

- Time related   → is it feasible to perform such an evaluation within the internship period?

4   Requirements of the internship organization or company

Primarily the requirements of the host organization are related to the scope of the master thesis project, as this is the basic requirement for connecting a M-COM internship. Hence, the nature of the collaboration in terms of master thesis research expectations and what the organization or company will contribute to the master thesis is of key importance.

Next to this - and for an internship to be successful - a student must be part of a team or department of reasonable size in order to gain professional competencies which (most likely) relate to the personal goals. Hence, regarding the side activities you will perform, you must be able to interact with other employees in order to be coached on the job. This can be a small team of three employees, but preferably aim at being part of a team of five or more people in order to experience daily work dynamics.

Finally, the organization or company will also be asked to evaluate the student's performance and contribution as an M-COM intern. As such it would be beneficial if the mentor in an organization or company has some experience in the professional field of communication. Most likely this will be the case, since students will also collaborate with the company regarding their master thesis project.

5   Finding an organization or company

In order to start looking for an organization or company, the key question is of course: "what will you be researching for your master thesis..?"

Taking the Research Topics course as a starting point
This question is typically being elaborated during the Research Topics course in which students write a research proposal aimed at starting a master thesis project. The topic you would want to investigate during your master thesis is typically a topic - within the domain of Communication Science - that has your genuine interest. In the weeks before the start of the Research Topics course we will ask students to fill-out a theme inventory. The M-COM teaching staff will add (a wide range) research themes from which you can chose, but you are also free to come up with your own theme of interest. As long as the theme fits withing the domain of Communication Sciences. Hence, fit's within either one of the three focus area's as described on our website or relates to the content of the M-COM courses.
While elaborating your proposal in the research topics course, you may want to search for companies that would be interested in collaborating with you on your topic of interest. In that case, always ask yourself the question: "what will the organization or company add or contribute to your master thesis research..?" Does this involve a case study or a research context..? Maybe the company can help you to recruit participants or respondents (e.g. internal communication). Or, maybe the company can help you with designs of communication stimuli (e.g. package or environmental designs).

Taking an organization or company as the starting point

Maybe you are already very interested in a particular organization or company, because they are involved in interesting products or services. In that case, you may also start contacting tis organization or company about the possibilities to collaborate regarding your master thesis project. In that case the process is kind of reversed compared to taking the Research Topics course as a starting point. In that case you need to find the fit between the organization or company with one of the topics within the domain of Communication Science or one of the focus area's of the M-COM programme. During the Research Topics course, you can then elaborate a proposal about this topic and subsequently investigate this during your master thesis in collaboration with this organization or company.

Looking at internship vacancies as a starting point

Another way of finding an organization or company to collaborate with is by means of looking at available internship position or internship vacancies of organizations.

!...Important…! Do consider that organizations often recruit interns for a (full-time) 5 to 6 month period and that the internship tasks are often already established. It then depends to what extent you are able to actually connect your master thesis research with this organization / company in order meet the M-COM requirements.

However, these vacancies may very well serve as a starting point to get in contact with an organization. If the interest turns out to be mutual, you are then able to discuss your personal interest (regarding duration and working hours) as well as your research interest concerning your master thesis. Maybe at the end this will prove be successful. There are many internship recruitment websites available, where internship positions are advertised, such as:

- Stageplaza (Dutch)
- Integrand
- Indeed
- Undutchables
- Graduateland
- Together abroad

6 Approval and registration of the internship

Approval of host internship organization

The M-COM internship coordinator (Mark Tempelman / m.h.tempelman@utwente.nl) will need to approve the internship, based on your master thesis plans, the type of organization and scope of the expected internship. Once approved, the internship coordinator will assign a university supervisor. In order to get the approval from the internship coordinator please send information about your master thesis plans and details of the organization (name, website etc.) to the internship coordinator (Mark Tempelman – m.h.tempelman@utwente.nl).

Registration of internship in Osiris and Mobility Online

!...Important…! You cannot register yourself for the M-COM internship in Osiris. Once the internship has been approved, the COM administration will add the M-COM internship to your study progremme in Osiris.

However, students at the University of Twente are obligated to register their internship in the Mobility Online system. A student manual is available to guide you through the registration steps in the system.

7 Supervision and assessment

The main supervision over the internship tasks will of be done by the mentor from the internship host organization. This mentor will provide the internship tasks and guide the student through the related work procedures. Apart from that, the mentor of the host organization is expected to discuss on a regular basis the progress of the student related towards the pre-set learning goals. Finally the mentor of the host organization will evaluate the overall internship performance of the student, by filling out an evaluation form.

Students will also be assigned to a university supervisor who is a member of the M-COM teaching staff of the master Communication Studies. This supervisor can provide a student with feedback and resources regarding the elaboration and reflection on the academic / subject specific learning goals. If practically feasible the university supervisor conducts a site visit at the host organization to visit the intern and meet the mentor. If this is practically not feasible a skype meeting can be organized. In all cases, the student is responsible for organizing such a site-visit or skype meeting. Finally the university supervisor is responsible for assessing and grading the internship performance of the student. The university supervisor will involve the evaluation of the host organization mentor in the grading. If desired or required the university supervisor can contact the host organization mentor to discuss the assessment and grading of the internship performance.

8 Deliverables for assessment

In order for the university supervisor to be able to assess and grade the internship performance of the student, following deliverables must be handed in:

1) Internship preparation report → 25% of final internship grade

   Deadline: must be handed in within 7 days / one week after the start of the internship.

2) Internship reflection report → 75% of final internship grade

   Deadline: must be handed in within ten working days after finishing the internship

3) Evaluation form of host organization → mandatory requirement for grading

   Note: must be filled out at the time of the reflection report is handed-in

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1) The internship preparation report (25% of final internship grade)

With the preparation report the first learning goal of the education will be assessed. In the preparation report the student will describe the host organization, the internship position and elaborate on the expectations regarding the internship period by elaborating his or her own learning goals. The volume of the preparation report is expected to range between 2.000 and 2.500 words (excluding title page and enclosures). The preparation report needs to consist out of following content elements:

- **Description of the host organization and internship position.**

  This section needs to be elaborated in +/- 750 words and will account for 10% of the grade of the preparation report.

- **Formulation and elaboration of the personal learning goals.**

  This section needs to be elaborated in +/- 750 words and will account for 30% of the grade of the preparation report.

- **Formulation and elaboration of the academic / subject specific learning goals**

  This section needs to be elaborated in +/- 750 words and will account for 50% of the grade of the preparation report.

- **Description of proposed contact moments with the university supervisor.**

  This section needs to be elaborated in +/- 250 words and will account for 10% of the grade of the preparation report.

Additional information and deadline

The language of the preparation report is English and the report must be handed in by e-mail at the internship coordinator (Mark Tempelman) no later than 7 days / one week after the start of the internship. The university supervisor will grade the preparation report. The grade of the preparation report must be sufficient (=> 5,5) If the preparation report is assessed insufficient, the students can revise the report based on feedback provided. When a revision of the report is necessary, the maximum grade of the preparation report is limited to a six (6).

2) **The Internship reflection report (75% of final internship grade)**

The internship reflection report will basically contains the internship experiences, reflection on the goals and conclusions of the internship in relation to the expectations as set-out in the preparation report. The volume of the internship reflection report is expected to range between 3.000 and 4.000 words (excluding title page and enclosures). The internship reflection report is expected to contain following content elements:

- **Description of the performed internship tasks and gained experiences.**

   Preferably according the STAR-principle (Situation, Tasks, Actions and Results), the student describes the internship tasks he / she was involved in during the internship. This section needs to be elaborated in +/- 1.000 words and will account for 10% of the grade of the internship reflection report.

- **Reflection on the personal learning goals**

   As a result of the performed internship tasks, the student will reflect on the personal learning goals as elaborated in the preparation report. This section needs to be elaborated in +/- 1.000 words and will account for 30% of the grade of the internship reflection report.

- **Reflection on the academic / subject specific learning goals**

   Based on the internship experiences and used academic knowledge / literature, the student will reflect on the academic / subject specific learning goals as elaborated in the preparation report. This section needs to be elaborated in +/- 1.500 words and will account for 50% of the grade of the internship reflection report.

- **Conclusion and discussion section.**

   Based on the internship tasks and reflection on the learning goals, the student will draw up a general conclusion as a result of the internship as well as point out some aspects of consideration for the future. This section needs to be elaborated in +/- 500 words and will account for 10% of the grade of the internship reflection report.

Additional information:

The language of the internship reflection report is English and the report must be handed in by e-mail to the internship coordinator (Mark Tempelman) no later than 10 working days / two weeks after the end of the internship. The university supervisor will assess the internship reflection report. The grade of the internship reflection report must be sufficient (=> 5,5) If the internship reflection report is assessed insufficient, the student can revise the report based on feedback provided. In the case a revision / retake of the report is necessary, the maximum grade of the internship reflection report is limited to a six (6).

3) **The evaluation form of the host organization (mandatory requirement for grading)**

The evaluation of the host organization is an important aspect of the assessment of the internship, as it serves to validate the assessment of the university supervisor. The student is responsible that the mentor / supervisor of the host organization fills out the evaluation form. The mentor of the host organization will evaluate comparable assessment items as the university supervisor. This evaluation will therefore be used compared with the assessment of the university supervisor. In the case of large discrepancies, the university supervisor may contact the mentor / supervisor of the host organization to discuss certain assessment aspects. This may also be the case when the mentor / supervisor of the host organization would appreciate a contact moment with the university supervisor before the final grading of the internship.