Université de Montréal

Department of Linguistics & Translation

Professional Training

BEST PRACTICES
FOR LANGUAGE E-NTERNSHIPS
IN VIRTUAL MODE

Employer & Student Guide for a Successful

E-nternship in Virtual Mode

April 2020

Introduction

Full-time virtual and part-time internships have been part of University of Montreal's language internship platform for several years.

The remote mode has recently developed on a widespread scale in an unprecedented short time for the vast majority of activities and workforce. How can employers onboard one or more remote trainees while still offering a valuable supervised work experience? How can students develop their learning and enhance their professional skills remotely?

This guide presents recommended best practices for language internships remotely and provides students and employers with solutions that will help better define everyone's duties and responsibilities.

The proposed resources aim at enhancing the organizational practices already in place and familiarize students with principles of telework in professional context. This—non-exhaustive—document will be updated as students and employers share their experience with us. Feedback from all is encouraged to improve these tools, resources and best practices.

April 2020 Update

Due to the pandemic crisis, University of Montreal offers internships in telework exclusively (not on-site) as of March 16, 2020, and until further notice in writing from the Head of Professional Training at the Department of Linguistics and Translation.

We sincerely thank our employers & partners for their kind collaboration in this exceptional situation.

Virtual Language Internships Platform

Full-time virtual language internships meet all academic requirements and real work assignments. They are supervised, evaluated and credited according to the criteria and guidelines of our [Translation Programmes](), for Bachelor's degree (COOP or regular) and Professional Master's degree.

Courses covered are as follows :

› TRA2001, TRA3001, TRA3002 *Stages COOP*   (Bachelors' Degree)

› TRA2950 *Pratique en milieu de travail*   (Bachelors' Degree)

› TRA6515 *Projet en milieu de travail*   (Professional Master's degree)

(The course TRA2900 *Téléstage*, due to its normal remote and part-time criteria, is not covered in this guide).

On-site internships & virtual internships harness **extensive professional language skills**: translation, terminology, project management, computer-assisted translation tools and translation memories, technolinguistic internships, lexicon creation, revision & editing, proofreading, collating, documentary research, linguistic evaluation, or other related skills.

Remote internship is a temporary or permanent arrangement established by the employer or set up by the University, according to mutually agreed terms and conditions. The option of a remote or on-site arrangement is not up to the student.

Virtual working mode—especially when deployed urgently due to an incident, a disaster, a threat or any kind of urgent situation—may constitute a challenge for organizations hosting students.

At times of exceptional situations, **success of business continuity** depends on workforce readiness. Therefore, employers are encouraged to include interns in their business continuity planning as soon as their recruitment is confirmed.

Onboarding students remotely

A variety of options are available to greet and guide students to make them feel welcome.

- Live greeting by **video call** with the supervisor

- **Virtual meeting with the team** (often working remotely), the reviser and the project manager

- **Prerecorded webinars**

- **Tutorials** for translation software

- Orientation **toolkit** documentation or **e-book**, etc.

Virtual training and orientation modules

Students' initial training usually consists in several components :

- Presentation of the **organization**, its **products & services**

- Presentation of the **translation team** and **internal procedures**

- Training on **technology**, **processes** and **project management**

- Terminology **resources** & reference documentation **by client & by sector**

- Training on **business continuity plan**, with the following objectives:

  o Make **students better acquainted** with the plan's components.

  o Ensure that students understand their **role and responsibilities** and are **well prepared in the event of an incident, a disaster, a threat or an emergency** that would require the deployment of teams off-site, on virtual mode or in satellite offices.

  o Include students—like regular employees—in **organizational mandatory guidelines** to all staff and make sure they are included in **cascading communications**.

  o Provide students with **instructions and emergency coordinates** of contacts and team members, as well as coordinates for information technology contacts, should computer reset or account unlock be needed.

Detailed sequences of virtual language internships

On-site and virtual internships both follow terms and conditions of employment agreed upon at the time of internship approval.

Here are some tips to improve employers and students experience.

For employers:

- For a good start, specify the internship **objectives, tasks and expectations**.
- Should exceptional circumstances require tasks to be adjusted, clarify the contract and discuss with the intern **how his/her individual talents** can best contribute to the company.
- Let the student know about **working hours** and **attendance expectations** (if the work schedule is flexible, specify the conditions).
- Assign translation tasks **on a progressive basis** while adjusting performance as needed. Working from home requires adaptation, which is more or less easy depending on each individual.
- Ensure you get **feedback** from students, listen attentively and provide constructive advice.

For students:

- Execute assigned translation tasks according to **established processes** and **delivery schedules**.
- Promptly **notify** supervisor/project manager if deadlines cannot be met.
- Regularly evaluate workload and show initiative in off-peak periods.
- Be easy to reach during normal working hours and establish a **connection/disconnection schedule** (agree with the employer on attendance expectations).
- Notify the employer **of any absence** or necessary change to the schedule.
- Communicate any change in **personal coordinates** to be easy to reach.
- Consult **institutional email** on a daily basis for messages from the University.

Cybersecurity warnings

Students have the following duties and responsibilities:

- Follow the **instructions** for technology provided by the employer.
- Respect **security of data, documents and files** entrusted by the employer.
- Keep laptop or computer pertaining to the employer **at home at all times**.
- **Never** work in a **public** place (café, restaurant...) whether with the loaned computer or your own machine.
- If possible, use preferably a wired connection at home rather than Wi-Fi.
- Make sure to **log off** at the end of the working day and before any break and **protect your passwords**.

Data confidentiality warnings

Students have the following duties and responsibilities :

- Respect the employer's **confidentiality** requirements of all the following data:
    - **Client** documents, in both source and target languages
    - **Contents** of translation memories, corpora, terminology databases, glossaries, lexicons, reference documents specific to the employer or its clients
    - **Client Names**
    - Any other data or information belonging to the employer or its clients
- Immediately **notify** supervisor/project manager if any information, data, documents or physical resources (laptop, computer) are lost, stolen or damaged.

Reminder

Protecting client information and confidentiality is a requirement for language professionals. This provision is included in the Code of ethics of the *Ordre des traducteurs, terminologues et interprètes agréés du Québec.*

Remote supervision of translation students

Supervisors play a key role in the success of internships, as they guide students in carrying out professional training activities and lead them towards objectives achievement.

Supervising Students Remotely takes place under conditions that are similar to on-site internships.

› Follow-up, feedback meetings and team meetings are conducted by video or conference call.

› Revised texts are accessible to students through the organization's files & directories or passed on to them.

› Interns may contact their designated mentor, reviser, terminologist or project manager for questions they may have while they work on their assigned translation projects.

› Performance expectations are based on a progressive scale and agreed upon at the beginning of the placement and explained to students.

› In case of immediate deployment of remote arrangements due to exceptional situations, performance expectations must take into account possible initial delays (installation at home, computer configuration, connection, accesses) or any other students' personal situation that may arise.

Project Management

Clients notes, instructions and language preferences are accessible to interns in the project management platform. Project managers and interns are encouraged to communicate on a regular basis to complete and deliver the project and deliver it within the deadlines agreed upon with clients.

Translation project managers are invited to contact students in order to:

o Validate how students are doing
o Confirm they have a good understanding of expectations and related deadlines of their assignment.
o Discuss priorities, postpone some deadlines if possible, or reassign a translation project to another team member if necessary.

Virtual learning context and remote development of professional skills

Telework placement allows students to deploy, in addition to professional skills, interesting transversal capabilities, such as:

› ability to anticipate issues and manage priorities

› digital communications abilities (clear communication via chat, video call or email)

› learning new collaborative tools

› ability to concentrate and manage distractions.

Advice for students

A number of [resources for virtual internships](#) are available and listed in appendix of the present guide. Students must define their own workspace, even if it is small (roommate, university residence, family, etc.), to establish a routine of connection/disconnection and to continue to socialize with colleagues in the internship cohort. The virtual learning mode allows students to develop more autonomy than in on-site internships and increases their sense of responsibility. It is important that students do not put unnecessary pressure on themselves and take time to adapt to this new context, as it is normal to progressively develop their adaptability.

Our language professions are very suitable for remote practising; more than half of our professionals are self-employed in the language industry in Quebec. Indeed, virtual internships constitute an awareness-raising exercise for this opportunity of professional status.

Advice for employers

› Employers can foster relationships of trust by integrating students into good team practices and establishing flexible communications protocols :

▪ regular quick meetings

▪ frequent updates

▪ listening & feedback

▪ use of individual talents through a collaborative approach and sharing

- ▪ socialization, reinforcement of engagement and motivation (animation, activities, virtual coffee, end of internship celebrations...)

Remote work requires everyone's adaptation. Students may have more questions. The availability and empathy of supervisors are encouraged.

Several resources for employers are available in appendix of the present guide, including remote onboarding and supervision guidelines.

Finally, employers can benefit from a larger, geographically unlimited pool of young talents, broaden their recruitment pool and strengthen their brand.

Hybrid on-site/remote internships & Re-Entry Plans

Virtual internships constitute a remote work plan in their entirety; however, should hybrid arrangements or re-entry plans be considered, employers and students are advised that the decision to resume on-site internship is exclusively made by University of Montreal according to its health and safety guidelines & policies to ensure safety of its students. Employers and students must consult their contact below before materializing any on-site re-entry plan.

Follow-up & information

Employers and interns are invited to direct their questions or comments, or to seek advice on virtual language internships, or on any specific situation, to the following contact information.

Information: Dominique Bohbot, head of professional training, Department of Linguistics & Translation.

514.343.6368 or at dominique.bohbot@umontreal.ca

Resources

A page of resources for employers and students follows in appendix.

Appendix: Online resources

RESOURCES FOR EMPLOYERS

Onboarding students remotely, **Cooperative Education and Work-Integrated Learning-Canada** (CEWIL Canada), published in April 2020

Accueillir un stagiaire à distance, **Enseignement coopératif et apprentissage en milieu de travail Canada** (ECAMT Canada), published in April 2020

Supervising Students Remotely, **Cooperative Education and Work-Integrated Learning-Canada**, (CEWIL Canada), published in April 2020

Superviser votre stagiaire à distance, **Enseignement coopératif et apprentissage en milieu de travail Canada** (ECAMT Canada), published in April 2020

Desk Jockeys no more, Leaving the office behind, **HighFive 360 Tech**, spotted in April 2020

La gestion à distance, **Ordre des traducteurs, terminologues et interprètes agréés du Québec**, published on April 6th, 2020

Guide d'implantation du télétravail en organisations, **TechnoCompétences** (Comité sectoriel de main-d'œuvre en technologies de l'information et des communications), published on April 6th, 2020

RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

Tips for working at home, **Cooperative Education and Work-Integrated Learning-Canada** (CEWIL Canada), published in April 2020

Télétravailler efficacement, **Enseignement coopératif et apprentissage en milieu de travail Canada** (ECAMT Canada), published in April 2020

Établir des limites en télétravail, **Ordre des traducteurs, terminologues et interprètes agréés du Québec**, published on April 6th, 2020

Guide d'ergonomie, **Direction de la prévention et de la sécurité, Université de Montréal**, updated on April 6th, 2020.

UNIVERSITY OF MONTREAL: IMPORTANT LINKS

Internships, Resources & Services, **Department of Linguistics & Translation**, **Université de Montréal**

Document Resources in Translation & Translator's Tools (terminology databases, online language tools, dictionaries, virtual shelves and more…), **Les Bibliothèques, Université de Montréal**

Information
Dominique Bohbot, head of professional training
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