



Student

# INTERNSHIP HANDBOOK

**Kirkwood**

WORKPLACE LEARNING  
CONNECTION

Kirkwood Community College shall not engage in nor allow unlawful discrimination against individuals involved in its educational programs and activities on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion, age, disability, or actual or potential parental, family, or marital status.

If you have questions or complaints related to compliance with the policy, please contact the Vice President of Human Resources at Kirkwood Community College, 313 Kirkwood Hall, 6301 Kirkwood Blvd. SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404, Telephone: 319-398-5572, Email: [equity@kirkwood.edu](mailto:equity@kirkwood.edu), or the Director of the Office for Civil Rights U.S. Department of Education, Citigroup Center, 500 W. Madison St., Suite 1475, Chicago, IL 60661-7204, Telephone: 312-730-1560, Fax: 312-730-1576, Email: [OCR.Chicago@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.Chicago@ed.gov).

## Workplace Learning Connection History

Workplace Learning Connection (WLC) is a story of success and positive return on investment for our business partners, local young people, area schools, and communities in east-central Iowa. WLC was established in 1998 as an intermediary — or go-between — connecting schools with local businesses in the Cedar Rapids area and has grown to include the public, private, and parochial school districts in the seven-county service area consistent with Grant Wood Area Education Agency and Kirkwood Community College. Thus, WLC serves students, educators, employers, and communities in Benton, Cedar, Iowa, Johnson, Jones, Linn, and Washington counties.

WLC partners with middle and high schools within each district to provide programming both in and outside the classroom, which serves to better prepare students to enter and succeed in the world of work. Career development programming that WLC organizes includes speakers in the classroom, financial literacy fairs, worksite tours, mock interviews, career fairs, STEM events, high school job shadows, high school internships, and teacher externships. WLC impacts tens of thousands of local students each year through our partnerships in the community with hundreds of businesses.

## Staff Contact Information

[www.kirkwood.edu/wlc/meetourstaff](http://www.kirkwood.edu/wlc/meetourstaff)

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## WLC Mission Statement

We believe in a vibrant community with a workforce ready for a changing world, and we support the next generation as they navigate and connect to our shared future.

We are connecting today's students to tomorrow's careers through high-quality, age-appropriate work-based learning opportunities.

We **convene** local, regional, and/or state leaders, practitioners, and customers across sectors to ensure youth success. We **connect** and broker services to youth, public partners, and private partners, including schools and training organizations, employers and workplace partners, social service and community organizations, and families and neighborhoods. We **measure** effectiveness and ensure the quality and impact of youth-serving efforts. We **sustain** effective practices through advocacy and progressive policies.

## Internship Objectives

After completing an internship, a student should be able to:

- Apply knowledge to real-world problems in a real-world-experience setting.
- Develop sound decision-making skills through the professional experience.
- Describe and demonstrate appropriate professional conduct in a work environment.
- Determine a better understanding of their career interest.

## Eligibility

The WLC internship program is available to high school juniors and seniors in our service area. Rising juniors may apply the summer after 10th grade. Sessions are fall, winter, spring, and summer. Summer internships will be reflected on the upcoming fall transcript. Students should meet with their counselor to determine if they are a good fit for an opportunity. Students should have excellent attendance, be self-motivated, and be mature enough to handle a professional environment outside the classroom. During the school year, students need time in their schedule to complete onsite hours.

## Advantages of Work-Based Learning

Work-based learning effectively prepares students to enter and make progress in the world of work. However, no instructional method can perfectly simulate the real-world job environment.

### Student Advantages:

- Increases motivation and improves student retention.
- Develops responsibility and maturity by strengthening resourcefulness, problem-solving skills, self-confidence, and self-discipline.
- Provides opportunities for occupational exploration prior to making long-term and costly investments in more training or education.
- Offers an organized plan of training on the job under actual business conditions.
- Develops interpersonal skills through professional interactions in job settings.
- Makes academic instruction relevant and applicable to the workplace.

### Employer Advantages:

- Provides workers who bring new ideas, fresh approaches, and enthusiasm for work.
- Offers direct input into education and training needed for the students. Improves the image and prestige of the industry and/or business among student learners and community members.
- Provides an opportunity for the employer to make a difference in the future workforce.

### Community/Workforce Development Advantages:

- Increases student awareness of the employment prospects in their community.
- Promotes a closer relationship between the community and school.

## Preapplication and How to Apply

The student should meet with their school counselor to review the contents of Appendix A, B, C, and D.

## Selection Process

WLC programs provide equal opportunity to all persons regardless of sex, race, age, creed, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, or disability.

- Students apply online, their parent/guardian gives

permission, the teacher reference submits a recommendation, and the school contact recommends the student as ready for the experience.

- Students are vetted through an interview by a panel of business/school representatives.
- Based on their application, interview, schedule, and career availability, students may be selected to the program and placed. **Applying for a WLC internship does not guarantee a placement.**

## Interview Process

First impressions are important! Select students are vetted through the interview process with a panel of business professionals and school representatives. The student, parent/guardian, and school will be notified of the student's interview time; school absences are excused. Prior to interviewing, the student should review:

- How to Prepare for an Interview (see Appendix E)
- Sample Interview Questions (see Appendix F)

Go into the interview with a confident and poised attitude! Stay engaged! Pay attention to all students being interviewed and consider how you would answer questions. Listen and you'll leave with more than one interview experience!

## Credit

An internship is considered a course and most districts give credit as Pass/Fail. Districts should place the internship on the student's official high school transcript and identify the appropriately endorsed educator to monitor and grant credit for the course. There are minimum requirements for students in order to pass and/or earn transcript inclusion.

- Complete and return the **Internship Agreement Form** to WLC by the specified date.
- Complete the **on-site hours** as required by the school and/or specified by the host.
- Attend, be prepared for, and participate in **three mandatory career development meetings** sponsored by WLC. (see Appendix G)
- Complete the **Internship Workbook** provided by WLC.
- Complete the **student survey** at the end of the internship session.

## Attendance

Once a student is placed:

- The student and internship host establish a mutually beneficial schedule at their initial meeting.
- Regular attendance and punctuality is critical. Students should not miss scheduled days at their internship and should arrive on time. If a scheduled day is missed due to inclement weather, school delay or cancellation, a family emergency, or a student illness, it is the student's responsibility to contact the host and negotiate a make-up time during the same internship session.
- Transportation is the responsibility of the student.
- Attendance and participation in the three career development meetings is required. An excused absence from Meeting 2 will result in a make-up assignment with a prescribed due date.

## Withdrawal/Dismissal

If a student chooses to cancel, they must notify their WLC internship coordinator no later than one week prior to the start of the internship. In addition, they should follow their high school class drop policy and notify their high school representative immediately to determine if it will impact their GPA.

- Each student intern has an obligation to adhere to WLC guidelines and procedures to maintain professional standards of conduct at all times. If a student fails to follow WLC guidelines and procedures or his/her behavior otherwise interferes with the operation of the program or disrupts a business, corrective measures may be taken, up to and including immediate dismissal from the program with no partial credit awarded.

## Internship Hours

- Hours are negotiated between the intern and host as outlined on the Agreement Form.
- Hours are completed within the session dates provided by WLC.
- The number of hours required will be provided by the WLC coordinator and must not exceed those hours.

## Dress Code

In general, WLC students should dress in business casual apparel. There may be some dress code variations based on the site at which the student is interning. The student is to confirm appropriate attire with their host prior to beginning their internship. Any clothing/footwear required must be borrowed or purchased prior to the first day on site. See the school counseling office if financial assistance is needed and they may be able to assist with ideas. Students are expected to look professional on site!

## Parent Support

Parents are a valuable resource to assist their child through the process of an internship. Please seek parental guidance on internship opportunities available on our website. In addition, parents can offer advice on how to thoroughly fill out an application as well as preparing for the interview process. Such things as professional dress and behavior may be parental strengths. If the internship is in an area with strict confidentiality, please discuss with parents what can or cannot be discussed. In addition, throughout the internship, have regular talks about how to make the best of the internship and learn the most. Most importantly, parents are strongly encouraged to discuss safety in the workplace with regard to general safety, harassment, transportation, and weather.

This program is a class that puts the student in the adult world of work. This has been requested by the student with the parent/guardian, school, and references agreeing that the student is ready for it. One focus of the program is helping students improve self-advocacy by communicating directly with the host and WLC internship coordinator. This should be an area of growth during the internship process, and the school, parents, WLC, and host should encourage it. Any concerns or questions should be posed by the student to their host or internship coordinator. Parents may need to contact an internship coordinator with a question or concern but should not reach out directly to the student's host, attend meetings with the student, or attend the internship. Sometimes the parent is directly invited to the host site, which is fine and may be a part of the safety or confidentiality policy.

## Communication and Cellphone Policy

Once a student is selected and begins their internship, communication regarding the student will be with the internship coordinator via phone, email, and/or site visits during the session. Communication is important and the responsibility of all parties involved.

Students should remember that cellphones are considered cameras, which are prohibited at most internship sites due to confidentiality. In general, cellphones should be silenced and not used during internship hours. Parents should have an alternate number to reach the student in an emergency.

## Liability and Fair Labor Standards

To access the complete Work-Based Learning Guide from the Iowa Department of Education, please go to [www.kirkwood.edu/wlc/learningguide](http://www.kirkwood.edu/wlc/learningguide).

What Employers Need to Know Regarding Federal Law:  
[www.kirkwood.edu/wlc/fairlabor](http://www.kirkwood.edu/wlc/fairlabor)

## Insurance

Unpaid interns are covered under their home school district workers' compensation policy during their internship. Paid interns hired by the company fall under the employer's workers' compensation policy. Business hosts are encouraged to seek information regarding appropriate property liability coverage from their company's insurance provider.

Iowa School-to-Work Legislation Information:  
[www.kirkwood.edu/wlc/schooltowork](http://www.kirkwood.edu/wlc/schooltowork)

## Weather

Since transportation is the responsibility of the student, in the case of inclement weather, WLC follows the student's school district weather policy. If a district is closed due to inclement weather, the student should not attend. Safety is our main priority. Students are expected to communicate with their host.

## Safety

### STUDENT SAFETY IS EVERYONE'S PRIORITY!

#### Basic Steps in Risk Awareness:

- Parents should discuss workplace safety with their child.
- School guidance or administration should discuss workplace safety with the student.
- The host should provide an orientation at the worksite on safety.
  - ◆ Student should understand job responsibilities.
  - ◆ Student should identify potential risks.
  - ◆ Student should inform the host and WLC supervisor of any concern.
  - ◆ Host should remember the Rule of 3 (requiring at least three people are present) and maintain an open-door policy.

#### In the Event of an Incident:

- Student should document the date, time, persons involved, and the situation.
- Student should inform the host and WLC supervisor immediately.

#### Examples of Safety Risks:

- Harassment, such as sexual or racial.
- Identity protection, such as social security number if hired.
- Physical hazards, such as weather, asbestos, machinery, etc.
- Biological hazards, such as biohazardous waste.
- Chemical hazards, such as in a laboratory setting.

#### Additional Information:

- [www.youthrules.gov](http://www.youthrules.gov)
- [www.kirkwood.edu/wlc/hiringiowateens](http://www.kirkwood.edu/wlc/hiringiowateens)  
(Page 8 has a list of jobs too dangerous for individuals under 18.)

## Appendix A

### Student Checklist

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Preapplication: Meet with your counselor to review this checklist.**

##### **Fit and fees:**

- Is an internship a good fit? Has the student explored a career area with coursework, volunteering, school clubs, and job shadows?
- What are good options for the student's strengths and interests? ([www.kirkwood.edu/wlc](http://www.kirkwood.edu/wlc))
- Are there fees involved with the site that you have requested that are listed on the description? Background check, hospital scrubs, steel-toed boots, etc.?

##### **Transportation to internship site:**

- Do you have a reliable source of transportation?
- Do you have access to resources for gas?
- Is the potential travel requirement and location of the internship site supported and understood by you and your parent/guardian?

##### **Your schedule availability/understanding of program requirements:**

- Do you have time in your daily school schedule to accommodate the internship requirements (on-site hours, WLC meetings, and Internship Workbook)?
- Is this internship part of your confirmed school schedule for the session requested? (Blocks of time at the beginning or end of the school day work best.) Is there flexibility in scheduling?

##### **How to apply:**

- Go to our website [www.kirkwood.edu/wlc](http://www.kirkwood.edu/wlc) (click "internships").
- Apply online via our internship portal, during an open application period (check with your counselor for dates).
- When applying, make sure to use correct capitalization, and spelling, and be thorough with answers. Your application will be shared with the interview panel and potential business host.
- Provide correct contact information, including Parent/Guardian, and Teacher and Outside Reference.
- It is YOUR responsibility to follow up with them, sharing that emails may be in junk/spam.
- You may have a career interest or business that is not on our website. When applying, you may choose "WLC – Site Under Development" and add information to "Special Requests."
- **An application is not considered complete until the teacher recommendation is complete and the parent and school approval is submitted. Sign on to the student dashboard to check progress, which will be indicated with green check marks. It is the STUDENT'S responsibility to monitor this.**

## Appendix B

### Parent/Guardian Approval Form

Student's Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Attendance/GPA/IEP Information/Medical Status

I grant permission for the high school office to release information regarding my child's attendance/GPA/IEP Information/Medical Status to Workplace Learning Connection (WLC) and potential business hosts. I understand this information is required for application to and participation in the WLC Student Internship Program and that information may be shared with the supervisor at the internship worksite.

**Are there any physical accommodations needed for this child to have a successful internship?**

**Yes / No (circle one)**

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Attendance/GPA/IEP and/or 504 Information/Medical Status Agreement: (check one)

I AGREE to the above statement.

I DO NOT AGREE to the above statement.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Media/Marketing Release

I agree to allow my child's photograph, videotape, or motion picture image that includes his/her name or likeness or any recording that includes his/her voice to be used in marketing materials to promote WLC. I understand that my child's photo/image will only be used in a positive manner in publications, print advertising, promotional materials, or any other medium to inform others about the career exploration activities coordinated by WLC for students throughout the Grant Wood AEA 10 region. I give my consent to have a WLC member contact my son or daughter at a future date to review their career development.

#### Media/Marketing Release Agreement: (check one)

I ALLOW my child's image or name to be included in media or marketing pieces.

I DO NOT ALLOW my child's image or name to be included in media or marketing pieces.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Participation Release

I am the parent or guardian of the student whose name appears above and I have authority to make legal decisions for the benefit of this child. I authorize the release of my child from his/her school to attend the three career development meetings sponsored by WLC and required by the internship program.

I recognize that work-based learning opportunities of this nature have a risk of lost or stolen property, injury, or even death during transportation to, from, on site, and during the activities. I, on behalf of the child and for myself, waive any and all claims of liability arising from the child's participation in this opportunity, including claims against the following parties (and their employees, contractors, and volunteers): WLC, the school and school district that the child attends, and the employer who hosted the work-based learning opportunity.

I agree to defend, hold harmless, and indemnify WLC, the school, and school district that the child attends, and the employer who hosted the student(s) (and their employees, contractors, and volunteers) from and against any and all claims of liability that derive from claims that I or my child make against any other party arising from this worksite opportunity.

#### Parental Approval and Participation Release Agreement: (check one)

I have reviewed this application and approve this internship application.

I have reviewed this application and DO NOT APPROVE this internship application.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Best way to reach you: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C

### Teacher Recommendation

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

This student has applied for an internship through Workplace Learning Connection. Would you please help the selection process by providing the following information about this student?

	Excellent	Above Average	Average	Needs Improvement
Attendance/Punctuality				
Cooperation/Teamwork				
Asks Questions				
Follows Directions				
Solves Problems				
Takes Initiative				
Responds to Suggestions				
Personal Appearance				

Student's Strengths:

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Student's Areas for Improvement:

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Other Comments:

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D

### Outside or Personal Recommendation

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Student: \_\_\_\_\_

This student has applied for an internship through Workplace Learning Connection. Would you please help the selection process by providing the following information about this student?

	Excellent	Above Average	Average	Needs Improvement
Student demonstrates dependability and is conscientious of timely follow-through				
Student communicates well with others				
Student works productively with others				
Student demonstrates initiative and self-direction				
Student demonstrates accountability by meeting expectations				

Student's Strengths:

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Student's Areas for Improvement:

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Other Comments:

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_ Organization/Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E

### How to Prepare for an Interview

- **Arrive for your interview at least 5 – 10 minutes early.** If you're unsure about location and live close, make a trial run so you know how long it will take to get there; remember, traffic is heavier at the start and end of the workday. Punctuality is important. Do not speed to get to the interview on time; instead, leave with time to arrive.
- **First impressions have a high impact.** Take care with the way you dress and groom yourself to show that you take the opportunity seriously. Wear wrinkle-free clothing and NO JEANS. For most jobs, business casual is suitable. That means a nice pair of pants with dress shoes and a collared shirt for guys; a tie is a nice touch! Girls can do with or without the collar but should wear a nice blouse and pair it with nice pants or a skirt of appropriate length. Hair should be neat, and avoid excessive cologne, makeup, or jewelry. Take off your outdoor coat and DO NOT CHEW GUM. Bring a notepad to jot down questions, points to remember, and the interviewer's name.
- **The receptionist, secretary, or staff member who greets you may not be your interviewer.** However, you can bet that the interviewer will ask about their impressions of you. Sit up straight, look them in the eye, smile, and converse respectfully with them.
- **Greet the interviewer with a firm handshake,** warm smile, and look them in the eye. Make note of their name to use during the interview. Address the interviewer as Mr. or Ms. unless invited otherwise.
- **Turn your cellphone off and resist the temptation to peek.**
- **Exude energy, enthusiasm, and a positive attitude.** When sitting, avoid slouching and lean slightly forward like you are eager to hear the interviewer. Do not cross your arms.
- **Take inventory of your strengths prior to the interview.** Be prepared to describe situations where you have used your assets to get things done. Draw upon academics, school activities, sports, and volunteer work for examples, especially if you have not held any or many jobs.
- **Review common questions and answers for interviews.** Practice answering questions with a friend or family member so you can speak confidently during your interview. Do not be intimidated if you do not have qualifications for a job. Express a genuine eagerness to learn the job. Answer questions by restating the question in your answer. Always answer with complete sentences and avoid slang.
- **Be prepared to say why the internship interests you.** You can reference things like tasks, work environment, and what you hope to learn. Everything being equal in terms of qualifications, interviewers will pick the candidate who seems most interested.
- **At the end of the interview, do not be afraid to ask questions.** Focus on issues like the nature of the work and when you might expect to hear from them.
- **Effective follow up after your interview can separate you from the other candidates.** After leaving, write a thank you note expressing gratitude for the interview and stating briefly why you think the internship is a good fit. A card is great with legible handwriting, but email is acceptable. This is not required.
- **Be ready to let the interviewers know your availability for the internship.** During which term do you have time in your schedule to complete the hours necessary for the internship? If you have a tight schedule full of classes and extracurricular activities, how will you manage to complete the internship? Meet with your school guidance counselor prior to the interview to consider these questions so you are prepared with an answer. If you will be completing your internship in the summer, know your vacation and extra-curricular schedule so placement can be determined.
- **If anything changes from the time you completed your application, let WLC know immediately so we can communicate with you as effectively as possible regarding the status of your internship.** That includes availability for the experience, address, phone number, cellphone carrier, email, etc.

## Appendix F

### Sample Interview Questions

Tell me about yourself ...

Why did you apply for this internship experience?

What do you know about the career that interests you?

What are you hoping to learn during your internship?

What subjects do you most enjoy at school? Why?

What classes or activities have you participated in that have helped you prepare for this internship? How?

Do you feel your grades are a fair assessment of your abilities?

Give me one example of when you've used your problem-solving skills.

How would you balance school along with your internship?

How would your teachers describe you? What would your best friend say?

What three words would you choose to best describe yourself?

What's the most important thing to you on your resume?

If money was not an issue, what would you change about your high school experience?  
Tell us your favorite thing about your school.

Besides this internship experience, what are you doing now to prepare yourself for your career goals?

Do you have any volunteer or community service experiences you would like to share?

What are your three greatest strengths? Areas for improvement?

How do you handle meeting tight deadlines?

What accomplishments are you most proud of?

What motivates you to do your best?

Share an example of how you've been able to motivate team members.

Define the word "leader." How do you fit in the definition?

Are you more comfortable leading or following? Explain why.

Give an example of how you work on a team.

Why should we consider you for this internship?

What are you passionate about? How so?

## **Appendix G**

### **WLC Career Development Skills**

Prior to and during the three career development meetings with WLC, students go through the process of how to be successful in the workplace. Curriculum includes the following:

#### **Prior to the Internship:**

- Application Process
- Interview Preparation & Interviewing
- Goal Setting

#### **During the Internship:**

- Professionalism & Worksite Expectations
  - ◆ Attendance
  - ◆ Dependability & Responsibility
  - ◆ Confidentiality
  - ◆ Work Ethic
  - ◆ Attitude & Character
  - ◆ Appropriate Dress
  - ◆ Safety in the Workplace
- Verbal & Written Communication
  - ◆ Speaking & Listening Skills
  - ◆ Emails
  - ◆ Phone
  - ◆ Texting
  - ◆ Messages
  - ◆ Communication Styles
  - ◆ Social Media
- Employability & Transferable Skills
- Networking
- Resume Writing
- Teamwork & Problem-Solving
- The Art of a Thank You



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[www.kirkwood.edu/wlc](http://www.kirkwood.edu/wlc)