

INTERNSHIP MANUAL

BSc POLITICAL SCIENCE

2022-2023

General information

Period: Elective space: September 2022 - January 2023
Students: (Third year) students BSc Political Science
Coordinator: drs. Boris Slijper – b.slijper@vu.nl

Content

Why do an internship?	p. 01
What is the duration of an internship?	p. 01
What are the substantive requirements of an internship?	p. 02
What is the procedure prior to the commencement of the internship?	p. 03
What do guidance and supervision entail during the internship?	p. 06
How will the internship be assessed?	p. 07
Appendix: Exit qualifications Bachelor's programme Political Science	p. 09

WHY DO AN INTERNSHIP?

Goal of an internship

The goal of an internship is threefold:

- Firstly, an internship offers students the opportunity to gain experience in the professional field. By doing so, the student becomes acquainted with (a section of) the professional field which is entwined with Political Science. Such an experience will aid the student in deciding on further steps in his or her study and professional career.
- Secondly, an internship enables students to apply knowledge and skills which they developed during their Bachelors studies, in practice. By doing so, students become aware of the manner wherein theoretical insights and academic knowledge is put at use in practice.
- Thirdly, an internship enables students to gain competencies and skills which they otherwise would not develop (as much) as part of the academic programme. Examples of competencies and skills which are part of the professional context, are: Working together in a team, abiding by an organisation's schedule, making daily decisions. Such skills and competencies form a valuable addition to the student's development, and prepares him or her for their professional careers.

POLITICAL SCIENCE

Bachelor's programme Vrije Universiteit

Analytical & practical skills

Internship

*Analytical, practical &
professional skills*

Some examples of organisations where Political Science students have held an internship, are:

- Media → VPRO Tegenlicht, NOS, Nieuwsuur, Omroep Powned.
- Political factions → D66 Amsterdam, GroenLinks second chamber, D66 Zaanstad, Volt Europe, D66 second chamber.
- Organisations → Province of Noord-Holland, Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

WHAT IS THE DURATION OF AN INTERNSHIP?

Duration of an internship

In the Bachelor's programme Political Science, an internship can be part of the elective space which is 30 EC in total and scheduled in the first semester of the third year. In consultation with the internship coordinator, the internship can commence earlier or later. An internship counts for a minimum of 12 EC, which equals two months of working full time. With each additional month of working full time, the student obtains 6 EC extra with a maximum of 30 EC. 1 EC equals 28 study hours. The division between working hours and the number of EC, is:

EC	HOURS	WEEKS (FULL TIME)
12 EC	336 hrs.	9 WEKEN
18 EC	504 hrs.	13 WEKEN
24 EC	672 hrs.	17 WEKEN
30 EC	840 hrs.	21 WEKEN

WHAT ARE THE SUBSTANTIVE REQUIREMENTS OF AN INTERNSHIP?

Substantive requirements

An internship meets several substantive requirements which are specific for the Bachelor's programme Political Science. The requirements serve to guarantee the internship is connected to the programme. Prior to commencement of the internship, the student motivates how the substantive requirements will be met in the internship work plan. After the internship has been concluded, the student motivates how the requirements indeed have been met in the internship report.

1a) The student independently conducts tasks on the level of Bachelor year 3 (level 300).

The first criterium for a suitable internship is the opportunity it offers for the student to contribute (relatively) independently on the basis of his or her capabilities as a political science student. Examples are: (Co-)designing a research inquiry on request of a third party, (co-)executing analysis, (co-)writing a policy brief, (co-)organising a conference or other public event, (co-)developing an election campaign or awareness campaign, (co-)executing a policy evaluation, etc. The goal of the internship is thus not met when primarily mundane or less challenging tasks, such as sorting an archive or taking care of a weekly mailing, are executed. The internship coordinator assesses whether or not the planned tasks are sufficiently challenging.

1b) A research internship at a university takes up 24 or 30 EC and has a distinguishable research component, on the level of Bachelor year 3 (level 300).

Students who are contemplating to do a Research Master after their Bachelor's studies, as a preparation for a possible PhD trajectory, can also opt to undertake an **academic research internship**. Such an internship can take place at the Department of Political Science and Public Administration, or elders at the Faculty of Social Sciences at the VU, or also at a different university in the Netherlands or abroad. The following criteria apply to an academic research internship:

- The internship constitutes at least 24 EC;
- The internship results in at least one written final product meeting the standards of Bachelor level 300, through which the student has further developed his or her analytical skills;
- Next to conducting actual research, the intern also becomes acquainted with the academic work practice by taking part in meetings, visiting at least one conference or seminar, and visiting at least one PhD ceremony (preferably for a PhD candidate in social sciences), and creates an overview of the different phases and their requirements of an academic career by reflecting on job vacancies for different positions at university.

- 2) The internship is related to the Bachelor's programme Political Science in a substantive manner.

The second criterium can be interpreted broadly: Substantive alignment between the internship and the Bachelor's programme Political Science can, after all, be realised in various ways. The student can choose to do an internship at a wide variety of organisations, companies and institutions. For instance, at political parties, media companies, societal organisations, government agencies, international organisations; but also at private companies. The substantive alignment is safeguarded on the basis of the particular tasks the student needs to execute.

- 3) The internship is supervised by a suitable external supervisor.

An intern is a student in training and is not equal to a typical employer. Guidance of the intern and supporting the intern throughout the learning process, demands supervision of someone who works for the organisation where the internship is held and who is able to support the intern in developing professionally. The external supervisor is required to reflect on the tasks done by the intern at the end of the internship.

~Be aware~

The internship coordinator can deny an application for an internship if it does not meet the requirements.

WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE INTERNSHIP?

Procedure

Students who are contemplating doing an internship in (a part of) their elective space, should start to figure out for themselves which sector or type of institutions attracts them in their second year of their studies. Try to gain an overview of various options and leads for an internship in a timely manner. For instance, check the Canvas page of the FSS Career platform. Also check relevant websites. Some institutions accept requests for an internship position the whole year round. Also, do not be shy! Rather, be proactive, for instance by sending letters even in the absence of a vacancy for an internship position. Acquiring a suitable internship position takes time and demands effort on the part of the student. Count on a period of six months between orientation and commencement of the internship.

~Be aware~

The responsibility for acquiring an internship position lies with the student who needs to take action on time.

Start and end date of the internship

Formally, the internship is part of the student's elective space and therefore takes place in the first semester of the third study year. If so desired, the internship can also commence earlier or later. It's the student's responsibility to make sure his or her academic schedule is suitable. The study advisors are available to help the student design a study plan.

Internship proposal

When the student is in contact with an organisation providing an internship, a proposal for an internship is submitted to the internship coordinator via email. On the basis of the proposal, the coordinator judges whether the proposed internship is unsuitable or *preliminary* suitable. The internship proposal consists of the following components which need to be relayed as detailed as possible:

- What the internship providing organisation is;
- What the suggested start and end dates are;
- What the amount of EC the proposed internship entails;
- What type of tasks the intern will be doing;
- In what manner the internship is relevant addition to the Political Science programme.

Internship work plan

As soon as the internship providing organisation has accepted the intern, or when the discussions about the internship with the host organisation are nearing finalisation, the student needs to set up an **internship work plan**. Both the internship coordinator of the Bachelor's programme Political Science, and the internship supervisor from the host organisation, are asked to approve the internship work plan. Ideally, the internship work plan is submitted prior to commencement of the internship. This is however not always possible. In such a case, make sure to submit the internship work plan no less than three weeks after commencement of the internship. The internship work plan consists of **a minimum of 1500 words** and is made up of the following components:

- 1) Information about the internship institution.
In addition to practical information such as the name and location of the organisation and the department hosting the internship, give a clear picture of what the organisation does and its position in society.
- 2) Duration and scope of the internship.
The intended start and end date of the internship; the number of hours per week the student works; the size of the internship in terms of EC; which other activities the student undertakes besides the internship (study subjects, side job).
- 3) Intended tasks.
Describe in as much detail as possible the work that will be done. Also, describe what the work will yield: Will there be one or more end products that can be shown afterwards? If not, how will it be demonstrated that the intern has made a contribution?
*A **university research internship** must produce at least one written end product in accordance with Bachelor level 300, in which the student further develops his or her analytical skills. Please indicate what the intended end product(s) are.*
- 4) Substantive relevance of the internship.
Indicate in as much detail as possible in which way the intended work is an extension of the Bachelor course in political science; motivate also which analytical and practical skills acquired in the study programme so far will be applied; and motivate with which courses of the Bachelor programme the internship is related.

5a) Learning goals of the internship: Exit qualifications Bachelor Political Science.

In case the student follows a regular course, the manual states how its learning objectives work towards the learning outcomes of the Bachelor Political Science. For the internship, the student motivates this himself. Read the learning outcomes in the Teaching and Examination Regulations, Faculty of Social Sciences, Bachelor's programme in Political Science, Part B2, Article 10.3 (VUweb), see Appendix I. Explain how the internship contributes to the achievement of which learning outcomes.

5b) Learning goals of the internship: Professional goals.

During the internship, the student will also practice and develop professional skills. These may include presentation skills, customer contact or contact with third parties, demarcating your boundaries, discussion skills, cooperation, dealing with perfectionism, dealing with (constructive) criticism, dealing with setbacks, receiving compliments, acting in a stressful environment, planning, etc. Which professional skills are applicable depends on the type of organisation where the internship takes place and what the role of the intern is. Specify at least 5 professional skills that are important in the internship and motivate how these are expected to be developed. If necessary, the professional goals are formulated in consultation with the internship supervisor of the organisation providing the internship.

6) Supervision.

Specify who your supervisor is and what his or her function is in the internship-providing organisation. Indicate what agreements have been made about the manner of supervision and the frequency of consultation.

7) Appendix: internship contract.

A copy of the signed internship contract must be attached to the internship work plan. Most organisations have their own contracts. If necessary, the internship coordinator can provide a model contract on request. For the required parts of the internship contract, see the Faculty's Internship Regulation.

In case of a **university research internship**, the internship work plan must also motivate the following:

8) Academic work practice.

Explain how the internship will acquaint you with the academic work practice: Which seminar or congress or other kind of research meeting will be attended, which PhD ceremony (of a candidate in a social science) will be attended, on which website(s) vacancies will be posted to get an idea of the requirements for an academic career, and what other initiatives will be developed. These intentions may change during the internship, in consultation with the supervisor. However, it is necessary that preliminary plans have already been made.

~Be aware~

After receiving the internship work plan, the internship coordinator may request an improved version. After the internship coordinator has approved the internship work plan, it must be signed for approval by the internship supervisor of the organisation providing the internship. After all, the internship supervisor must be aware of the goals that the student has set. **The internship is only formally approved after both the internship coordinator and the internship supervisor have agreed to the work plan.**

WHAT DO GUIDANCE AND SUPERVISION ENTAIL DURING THE INTERNSHIP?

Role of internship supervisor and host organisation

The responsibility for guidance of the intern during the internship lies primarily with the organisation providing the internship. Organisations may differ in the way they provide guidance. The student-trainee is responsible for obtaining clarity on the way in which the guidance is given; this must also be elaborated in the internship work plan. If the supervision is insufficient, the student-trainee must make this known within the organisation. If necessary, the study advisor or internship coordinator of Political Science can be asked for advice on how to respond in such a situation.

Role of internship coordinator Bachelor Political Science

- The internship coordinator of the Bachelor's programme of Political Science maintains contact with the student, on his/her initiative, prior to the internship. The internship coordinator can be contacted for questions. The internship proposal and the internship work plan are submitted to the internship coordinator for approval.
- The internship coordinator also takes care of the assessment of the internship. At the end of the internship, the internship report is submitted to the internship coordinator. An additional conversation is held with the intern, and in exceptional cases also with the internship supervisor of the organisation providing the internship.
- The internship coordinator plays no role in the period between the formal approval of the internship and its assessment. However, the internship coordinator can be approached by the intern in case of questions or problems during the internship.

Role of intern

In addition to performing the tasks agreed upon with the organisation which is providing the internship, the following tasks are expected of the intern during the internship:

- Keeping a logbook. To be able to write the internship report, the intern must maintain an overview of the performed tasks. Therefore, keep a meticulous record of these in a logbook.
- Reflect regularly on the learning objectives formulated in the internship work plan. The internship report must indicate how the learning objectives were actually achieved. If during the internship certain learning objectives are insufficiently worked on, this must be indicated to the internship supervisor. In such a situation, the tasks can be slightly adjusted so that the learning objectives can still be met.
- If the internship is not going well, the intern is responsible for discussing this with the internship supervisor. If this does not lead to an improvement, the intern can seek advice from the study advisor or the internship coordinator.

HOW WILL THE INTERNSHIP BE ASSESSED?

Internship report

Within two weeks after the end of the internship, the student hands in the internship report. The report reflects extensively on the components of the internship work plan and thus on the internship itself. The internship report is **not** submitted to the internship supervisor of the organisation. The internship report is at least 3,000 words (there is no maximum, excluding attachments) and consists of the following parts:

- 1) Understanding of the internship providing organisation.
Now that you have become acquainted with the internship-providing organisation from the inside, you probably have a different and more comprehensive view on it. Motivate how your understanding of the organisation has changed.
- 2) Hours worked.
Motivate whether the intended hours were indeed worked; if not, why not. Also indicate whether the combination with other activities (university courses, a side job) has made the internship more difficult or not.
- 3) Tasks performed.
Indicate as specifically as possible which tasks were performed. Attach a complete overview per week, based on the logbook. Also indicate the results of the work: what type of deliverables were created. If relevant, attach an overview of this as well.
- 4) Substantive relevance of the internship.
Indicate as specifically as possible in which ways the work carried out is indeed an extension of the Bachelor's programme in Political Science; also motivate which analytical and practical skills acquired during the study have been applied; and also motivate with which courses of the Bachelor's programme in Political Science the internship is indeed related and how.
- 5a) Learning objectives of the internship: learning objectives Bachelor Political Science.
For each learning objective, as motivated in the internship work plan, indicate in detail whether and how it has been achieved. Also motivate, again in detail, how this has contributed to the realisation of which exit qualifications of the Bachelor's programme in Political Science.
- 5b) Learning objectives of the internship: Professional objectives.
For each learning objective, as motivated in the internship work plan, indicate in detail whether and how it has been achieved. Probably some skills have been developed that were not expected beforehand. Indicate how this development took place.
- 6) Guidance.
Specify how the guidance from the organisation providing the internship was given: What was the frequency of contact, did you experience the guidance as supportive, etc. Note: The internship report will not be read by the internship supervisor, so you can be completely honest.

7) Notable moments.

Describe at least two moments from the internship that were notable. This may be because something unexpected happened, or because you experienced the moment as positive or negative. Indicate what happened, how you reacted, what it brought you, and how you look back on it.

8) Attachments.

Add as attachments: The internship work plan; the internship contract; a complete and detailed overview of performed tasks based on the logbook; an overview of what the work has delivered, with any demonstrable end products; the assessment of the internship by the internship supervisor of the organisation providing the internship. The attachments do not count towards the total word count of the internship report.

In case of a **university research internship**, the internship report must also include the following:

9) Academic work practice.

Describe how the internship served as an introduction to academic work practice: Which seminar or conference or other type of research meeting was attended, which PhD ceremony (of a social science candidate) was attended. Based on the tracked vacancies for different positions within a university, indicate what is required per level of an academic career. Finally, reflect on the academic work practice and the requirements for an academic career and motivate whether you are considering a career in academia.

Assessment

- The internship supervisor of the organisation providing the internship is requested to motivate an assessment of the internship. A standard form will be provided by the student-trainee to the supervisor. The completed form will be **added as an appendix to the internship report**.
- In exceptional cases, on the initiative of the on-site internship supervisor or the intern or the internship coordinator, a meeting might be scheduled between the supervisor and the coordinator. The intern may be present at this meeting.
- Apart from submitting the internship report, the intern must end the internship in an appropriate manner, which will probably include a final interview with the on-site supervisor.
- On the basis of the internship report, the internship coordinator fills out the assessment form. The student receives the completed assessment form during a conversation between the internship coordinator and the intern. During this meeting, the internship is reviewed and the assessment form is discussed. In accordance with the Internship Regulation FSW, the student receives a 'satisfactory' or 'non-fulfilled' for the internship and the credits are awarded or not.

APPENDIX: EXIT QUALIFICATIONS BACHELOR'S PROGRAMME POLITICAL SCIENCE

Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER)

Faculty of Social Sciences

Bachelor's programme in *Politologie*

track: Global Politics

Section B2: Programme specific – content of programme

10. Programme objectives, tracks, exit qualifications and language

Article 10.3 Exit qualifications

1. Exit qualifications

Article 10.3 – Exit qualifications

A graduate of the study programme will:

Have good knowledge and understanding of:

- the core political phenomenon of social-conflict regulation by the state or by private or semi-private institutions, including the underlying power processes;
- the increasing internationalization of the public domain and how this influences governance and policy at different, often interacting levels;
- the most important theories in modern political science, especially those in respect of general and comparative politics, the doctrine of international relations and normative political theory;
- methods and techniques in social scientific research, in particular those important for politicological studies; and,
- the specific position of political science by comparison with other social sciences.

Be able:

- to analyse and interpret political data, including in the national and international context;
- to assess politicological research results for their reliability, validity and usability;
- to apply politicological knowledge and insights to current social issues;
- to process knowledge drawn from other relevant disciplines and to apply this in the analysis of social and political problems;
- to recognize, based on their knowledge of normative theories, the value loading of both scientific theories and policy intentions;
- to function within a group and to contribute to joint research and suchlike products;
- to provide clear oral and written reports of their politicological knowledge and understanding; and,
- to complete the entire empirical cycle by carrying out basic scientific research under supervision.

Display:

- a demonstrable interest in the causes of and background to political phenomena;
- a critical attitude towards academic politicological literature and towards prevailing views on politics;
- intellectual integrity and a willingness to self-criticise.