QUESTIONS ABOUT COMPENSATION AND INTERSHIPS

Our approach:

The University of Victoria facilitates experiential learning opportunities that typically provide students with some type of compensation; UVic’s Co-operative Education Program helps students find paid work experience that relates to their academic studies (mandatory or optional, depending on the academic program), while UVic’s practica and internships are part of formal academic programs and include academic credit.

UVic also encourages students to gain work experience through service learning opportunities, co-curricular opportunities, volunteer opportunities with community organizations and other groups.

Co-op as an economic hiring option:

If your budget is limited, co-operative education may be an affordable way to hire a student employee. You can hire qualified students on a short-term basis, and may be eligible to apply for funding. This will likely enable you to extend insurance and other coverage to the student, which may be more difficult when hiring an unpaid intern.

Engaging student employees:

Students are typically more engaged in the workplace when they receive some type of compensation, as this helps them offset living costs AND lets them focus on contributing to the workplace.

Resources around employment standards and compensation:

Unpaid internships have been in the news lately for offering inappropriate compensation. If you’re considering hiring an intern, please refer to the following sources for information about employment standards and terms of compensation (this is not a comprehensive list of useful resources, but is intended as a place to start):

- BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training provides details on the definition of “work”, “practicum” and “internship” and the wages required by law.
- Guide to the BC Employment Standards Act
- Internship legislation across Canada
- Canadian Internship Association describes provincial employment standards legislation regarding interns.