WEHI
brighter together

Research Computing Platform

Student Handbook

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Introduction

The Research Computing Platform (RCP) is a collaborative, multi-disciplinary lab that supports and advocates for researchers and their computational research needs at WEHI.

RCP has established a 100% remote, unpaid student internship program with subjects provided at the University of Melbourne. We did this to leverage the experience we have in the RCP of working with student software interns by collaborating with labs.

Because this is unpaid, we aim to get students via the official programs at the University of Melbourne so they can obtain course credit.

This program allows us to share our knowledge and experiences with the students to help them to build their confidence so that they know that they have the skills and initiative to handle future situations.

There are three intakes during the year, Semester 1, Semester 2, and Summer.

We aim to share the information from our current student interns to our future student interns. We do this by getting our current students to document the nuances of the project and the challenges that they faced.

We are constantly trying to improve the experience for our students and always appreciate feedback.

While our most consistent feedback is to have an in-person work environment, we are only providing 100% online work environments.

Students at RSE Parkville lunch that happens on the second Thursday of each month.

Philosophy

Proactive

Documentation is Key

Students need to recognise the limited time they have and what they can achieve. This is why documentation is key to ensure information is passed to future students.

Proactive

Collaboration is vital

There are multiple internships running at the same time. We encourage students to collaborate within projects and across sister projects (similar projects) via co-working meetings.

Concept-first approach

It is important for students to understand the high-level concepts of the domain the student is working in. This increases the independence of the student to work through complexity.

Proactive

Test your limits

The ability to learn quickly by doing your own research is important. Finding out how fast you learn and where your limits are, in a safe space, can help you to know yourself better.

Proactive

Benefits for Students

There are many benefits for student interns in this program to help them progress in their careers by giving them opportunities to grow and learn in a safe environment and achieve their potential, which builds confidence.

Many students start the program having some level of technical skills, but very little understanding of how important it is to know the nuances and concepts of the work environment and domain knowledge.

This is why we give them the time to research the concepts and give them feedback on how to refine those concepts.

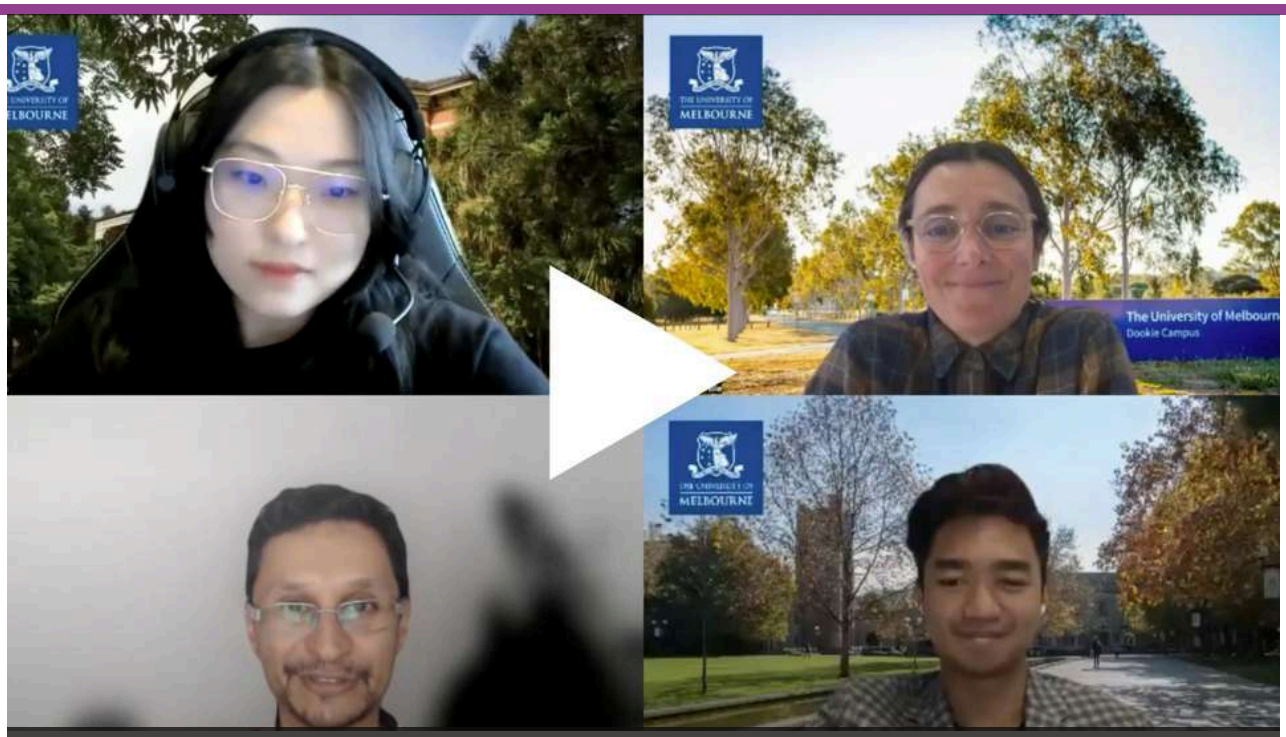
Student interns are provided with honest feedback to show where their skills and abilities place them, what kind of organisation they might be a good fit with, and how they can improve during and after the internship.

Students also get the opportunity to learn real-world skills such as keeping meeting notes, documentation, learning how to communicate, and giving presentations.

Students also get the opportunity to deal with realistic data and real world problems, where the answers and the technical solution is not so clear as in their coursework.

Students are encouraged to self-direct during the internship. Balancing what the student wants to do and benefiting WEHI is a great example of a fantastic project.

All in all, students have the opportunity to leave the internship with an improved sense of confidence that they have the ability to handle new environments and domains, even if they haven't worked in that area before. This is the best outcome we can hope for as supervisors.



Top L-R: Youran Zhou, Marika Benetti-Hille. Bottom L-R: Rowland Mosbergen, Gilbert Putra.

Numbers behind the program

17
student projects

104
student interns

19,000+
hours of effort

4.7/5
student rating

9
projects per intake

30
students per intake

Code of Conduct

This was originally taken from the Code of Conduct from Django. This is a snippet of the full Code of Conduct on the website.

This community is made up of a diverse mixture of researchers, research software engineers, professionals and students.

Diversity is what we are hoping to improve our communities and workplaces, but it can also lead to communication issues and unhappiness.

To that end, we have a few ground rules that we ask people to adhere to. This code applies equally to founders, mentors and those seeking help and guidance.

This isn't an exhaustive list of things that you can't do. Rather, take it in the spirit in which it's intended -a guide to make it easier to enrich all of us and the technical communities in which we participate.

This code of conduct applies to all spaces managed by the group. This includes chat rooms, the mailing lists, events, and any other forums created by the platform which the community uses for communication.

In addition, violations of this code outside these spaces may affect a person's ability to participate within them. If you believe someone is violating the code of conduct, please let us know.

The key points are:

- Be friendly and patient.
- Be welcoming.
- Be considerate.
- Be respectful.
- Be careful with the words you choose.

We strive to be a community that welcomes and supports people of all backgrounds and identities. This includes, but is not limited to members of any race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, colour, immigration status, social and economic class, educational level, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, size, family status, political belief, religion, and mental and physical ability.

Your work will be used by other people, and you in turn will depend on the work of others. Any decision you take will affect users and colleagues, and you should take those consequences into account when making decisions. Remember that we're a diverse community, so you might not be communicating in someone else's primary language.

Not all of us will agree all the time, but disagreement is no excuse for poor behavior and poor manners. We might all experience some frustration now and then, but we cannot allow that frustration to turn into a personal attack. It's important to remember that a community where people feel uncomfortable or threatened is not a productive one. Members of the community should be respectful when dealing with other members as well as with people outside the community.

When we disagree, try to understand why. Disagreements, both social and technical, happen all the time and we are no exception. It is important that we resolve disagreements and differing views constructively. Remember that we're different. The strength of this community comes from its diversity. Different people have different perspectives on issues. Being unable to understand why someone holds a viewpoint doesn't mean that they're wrong.

Want to know more?

All the information on this page is on the website's main student page via the QR code down below.

FAQ

There is a FAQ on the website under "Key Documents to review and FAQ".

This FAQ provides information on:

- Applying for the internship program,
- Onboarding onto the program,
- What is expected at meetings, and
- What is expected when you finish.

Key Milestones and Emails

The Key Milestones and Emails page can be found under "Key Documents to review and FAQ".

At the bottom fo the Key Milestones and Emails page you can find the onboarding emails that are sent out throughout the intake to remind students of the expectations of the program.

Learn real world skills

We prepare students for the real-world by teaching them:

- how understanding the domain problem and the users is more important than technical skills, and how to work on a complex, ambiguous project,
- showing them how to become as independent as possible,
- show them how to document and share knowledge to others in a professional manner,
- explain how a software maturity model can help clarify expectations, and
- teaching them how to work productively in a remote environment.

We even tell students how to try to avoid the top 5 mistakes that students make.

Available Projects

There is a list of available projects under the title "List of student intern projects".

These projects change from intake to intake, so please reach out if you are unsure via email: mosbergen [dot] r [at] wehi [dot] edu [dot] au.

How to Apply

We suggest that you write a 1 page cover letter introducing yourself, along with your resume. You can find more details under "How to Apply".

This is a popular program as we can get over 60 applications per intake for only 30 student places. This is why it can be challenging to accomodate all students. We do try our best to provide feedback but this is limited due to the numbers involved.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