

Questions to answer to support your virtual internship experience (Planning Phase)

Feel free to use this copy to respond/ideate/brainstorm your answers to the questions that best support the work you hope to accomplish for your students/industry.

Clarify the Real Problem

- What's your WHY? What's the actual challenge vs. the symptom I'm seeing?
- If I asked students to define the problem/their WHY?, how would their answer differ from mine?
- What would a successful virtual internship look like in concrete, observable terms?

Respond here:

Shift Perspective (helpful if you have existing internships/WBL opportunities)

- If I were a student in this program, what would frustrate me most?
- What would a skeptical outsider say is the biggest challenge to making this work?
- How would someone who runs a high-performing version of this program approach this?
- If I had to defend our current internship model, what's actually working that I shouldn't lose?
- How am I inviting industry perspectives to shape the experience?

Respond here:

Challenge Assumptions

- What am I assuming is "fixed" that might actually be flexible?
- What rules or structures exist because "we've always done it this way"?
- If I had to solve this without adding time, budget, or staff, what would I change?
- What would I do if I knew this solution had to fail first before it worked?

Respond here:

Generate Options (Divergent Thinking)

- What are 5 radically different ways to approach this (not just slight tweaks)?
- What would a "minimum viable experiment" look like for each idea?
- Where could I borrow ideas from outside education (business, startups, design, etc.)?
- What's the boldest change I'd make if there were no consequences?

Respond here:

Focus on Students + Impact

- How does this challenge impact student agency, engagement, or ownership?
- Where are students already showing the behaviors I want—and how can I amplify that?
- What would students design if they were in charge of fixing this?
- Are we optimizing for compliance or for meaningful learning?

Respond here:

Narrow + Decide

- Which option has the highest impact with the lowest complexity?
- What can I test in the next 2 weeks—not next semester?
- What would make this feel like a win quickly?
- What am I overcomplicating?

Respond here:

Reflect + Iterate

- What evidence will tell me this is working (or not)?
- What will I stop doing to make room for this change?
- How will I capture student feedback in real time?
- If this fails, what will I learn that improves the next iteration?

Respond here: