

**2026**

**MA**  **A**

# **INTERNSHIP GUIDE**

# Table of Contents

Presidents' Address	3
Benefits of an Internship	4
Program Structure	5
Important Dates for Applications	6
Service lines	7
Application Process	9
Resume Tips	11
Resume Boosters	13
Networking Opportunities	14
Interviews 101	15
STAR Examples	16
Spotlight on MASA's Internship Experiences	17
Make the most of your Internship	19

# Presidents' Address

The Monash Accounting Students' Association (MASA) is a non-for-profit, student-led organisation dedicated to bridging the gap between university students and industry professionals in the accounting and business world. Our mission is to create meaningful opportunities that help students connect with industry leaders, develop professionally, and thrive personally within a supportive and ambitious community.

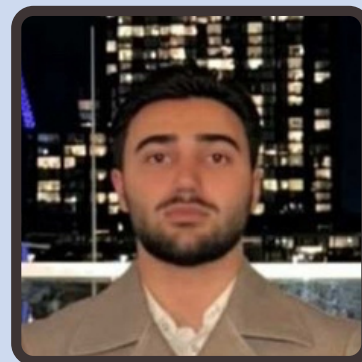
Led by a passionate and driven team, MASA is committed to fostering an environment where students can build lifelong connections, explore diverse career pathways, and make the most of their university experience.

As President for 2026, I am incredibly honoured to lead an organisation that continues to empower students and inspire growth. Accounting is more than just balancing sheets, it's a foundation that opens doors to countless opportunities across banking, finance, consulting, private equity, and beyond. MASA aims to showcase the versatility of an accounting background while equipping our members with the confidence, skills, and network to succeed in any field they choose.

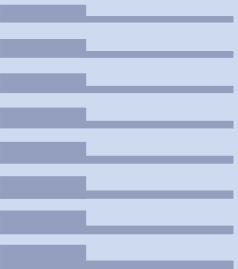
Through our networking nights, professional development workshops, and social events, MASA strives to help students build their careers while growing as individuals. Whether you're discovering your path, seeking industry insights, or simply looking to meet like-minded peers, MASA is here to support and guide you every step of the way.

If you see our team around campus or at one of our events, don't hesitate to say hello, we'd love to meet you! Stay connected with us on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn, and keep an eye out for updates on our upcoming events and initiatives.

University is a time to learn, grow, and create unforgettable experiences. While the journey can be challenging at times, you're never alone, MASA is here to help you navigate, connect, and reach your potential. Together, let's make 2026 a year of opportunity, connection, and success.



**Parsa Aghajani**  
President



### **Exposure**

Internships are often your first real introduction to the professional world. While they may only last a few weeks, the impact extends far beyond the program itself. An internship gives you exposure to real clients, real work, and real expectations, helping you better understand both the industry and where you see yourself within it.

### **Career opportunities**

For many accounting and professional services firms, internships are a key pathway into graduate roles. Although an offer is not guaranteed, strong performance, initiative, and a positive attitude can lead to return offers or even part-time opportunities during the semester. In many ways, your internship becomes an extended interview where your day-to-day work speaks for itself.

# Benefits of an Internship

### **Insight**

Internships give you meaningful insight into what a firm and its service lines actually look like in practice. Programs are designed to provide a realistic snapshot of the work, team culture, and client engagements, allowing you to decide whether the role suits your interests and strengths. This exposure helps you make more informed career choices than research or networking alone ever could.

### **Skills development**

Beyond technical knowledge, internships help you develop practical workplace skills that university cannot replicate. You learn how to manage deadlines, communicate professionally, collaborate in teams, and adapt to professional expectations. Gaining this experience early means you enter full-time work with greater confidence and readiness.

### **Networking opportunities**

Interning creates valuable opportunities to network and build relationships. As an intern, people expect you to ask questions and reach out, which makes it easier to connect with managers, seniors, and peers. These conversations often lead to mentorship, referrals, and future opportunities that continue long after the program ends.

# Program structure



Vacation programs are short term paid employment opportunities that are undertaken during university breaks, such as the summer period (November to February) and mid-year period (June to July). Generally lasting 4 to 12 weeks, these programs are designed for students in their penultimate year of study and often serve as a direct pathway to a graduate position.

As a vacationer, you may work in different service lines such as audit, tax, consulting and advisory, making it a great opportunity for exposure to multiple areas.

## Day to day



Vacationers are typically placed into teams and assigned a buddy, which allows them to consistently receive feedback and support.

The expectations of this role may include contributions to the team's assigned work, attending meetings, preparing presentations, organising documents, and actively engaging in bonding events with fellow colleagues.

In addition to administrative tasks, participants work closely with their teams on live client projects. Through participation in hands-on project work, vacationers build key professional skills including communication, teamwork and problem-solving.

## Networking



Vacationer programs often include networking events and social initiatives that enable students to interact with fellow vacationers, senior professionals as well as colleagues across the firm, fostering valuable connections and expanding their professional networks for future career opportunities.

Vacationer programs provide a well-rounded introduction to the professional environment, combining practical work experience with structured development and networking opportunities. It is an amazing opportunity to gain industry experience, build employability skills and form work connections.

# Applications — Important Dates

Understanding recruitment timelines is one of the most overlooked yet important parts of preparing for internships and early-career programs. Many students assume applications open later in the year, only to realise that major firms begin recruiting far earlier than expected. Being aware of these timelines allows you to prepare strategically rather than rush applications under pressure.

While exact open and close dates change year to year, a common pattern for penultimate year internships is:

<b>Late February to March</b>	Most Big 4 firms open applications for their summer internship and pre-penultimate programs. For example, PwC Trainee Program applications open on the 23rd of February 2026.
<b>March to May</b>	Many firms continue reviewing applications, hold online tests/interviews, and finalise internship cohorts.
<b>July to August</b>	Some firms may release a second round of offers or extended roles. However, do not rely on mid-year openings, as the primary recruitment cycle occurs in Semester 1.

**Start preparing your resume and have a clear understanding of which divisions you are interested in by Semester 1** (February–April), even if applications haven't opened yet. Note that for pre-penultimate programs, though they are shorter and less intensive, they still follow structured application processes.

**Set reminders around late February / early March**, as most Big 4 internship applications open then. Monitoring firm career pages and following firms on LinkedIn can help ensure you do not miss application dates. If possible, register for early-career alerts on firm career pages so you know immediately when applications open.

The key takeaway is that preparation should begin before applications open. January and early February are ideal times to refine your resume, practice behavioural interview responses, and research firms. By understanding the recruitment calendar and planning ahead, you reduce stress and position yourself more competitively when opportunities arise.

# Service Lines

## Audit and Assurance

### What is it?

The audit and assurance service line focuses on reviewing a company's financial statements to ensure they are accurate and comply with accounting standards. The purpose is to provide confidence to stakeholders that the financial information can be relied on.

This work involves interacting with different areas of a business and understanding how financial information is recorded and reported. Compared to other service lines, audit tends to follow a more structured process and timeline, often tied to reporting periods.

### What will you be doing?

As an intern, you will likely assist with testing transactions, checking supporting documents, and working through sections of the audit file. This can include tasks such as vouching invoices, performing basic reconciliations, and organising client data. While the work can be repetitive at times, it provides a strong foundation in understanding financial statements and how businesses operate.

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## Tax

### What is it?

The tax service line focuses on helping clients navigate the complexities of tax in various contexts. This includes corporate tax compliance, tax planning and strategy, transfer pricing, and indirect taxes such as GST.

### What will you be doing?

The kind of work will depend on the specific team you are working in. An important distinction is between compliance work and advisory services. Compliance work involves preparing and reviewing tax returns, while advisory focuses on aspects such as business restructures or general tax treatment advice. Teams like employment taxes can also be more data based.

As an intern, your main responsibilities will likely include assisting with tax return preparation and conducting research on specific tax issues. While the content of the work can be quite detailed and technical, it is structured to be manageable for students still learning.

# Service Lines:

## Consulting and Advisory

### What is it?

The consulting or advisory service line focuses on helping clients solve business problems and improve performance. This can include a wide range of areas such as strategy, operations, risk, and technology.

The type of work you do will vary significantly depending on the project. Unlike audit or tax, consulting is less structured and more project-based, often requiring problem-solving and critical thinking rather than following a set process.

### What will you be doing?

As an intern, you will likely be involved in research, data analysis, and preparing slides or reports for clients. You may also assist in identifying issues within a business and contributing to potential solutions. The work is generally less routine and can be more fast-paced, with a stronger focus on communication and presentation skills.

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## Deals

### What is it?

Deals and transaction services teams specialise in helping clients navigate mergers and acquisitions. They typically analyse the financial position of businesses involved in deals and perform due diligence, examine earnings quality, and identify risks or opportunities. This work combines financial analysis with broader commercial insight, ultimately to help companies make informed decisions that have lasting implications.

This work is project-based, often operating on tight deadlines. It suits intellectually curious people who enjoy problem solving and working in dynamic environments.

### What will you be doing?

For interns, deals offer exposure to diverse businesses, hands-on analytical work, and the opportunity to contribute to transactions that fundamentally transform companies and their operations. You may be asked to assist with due diligence to help buyers understand what they are acquiring, valuation using cash flow analysis, and preparing information memorandums. Outside of excel work, you may also be asked to investigate industry trends, gather market data, or analyse competitor performance.

# Application Process

Trying to land your first internship can seem very intimidating, especially if you've never applied before. While every company has their own processes, most applications have similar stages which can take up to months before you find out the outcome. Understanding the typical stages can help you prepare effectively.

## 1 Online application



Internship applications begin online with your resume, cover letter (sometimes), and answering a series of questions about your motivations for applying.

*Tip:* focus on why you are interested in the specific firm and division, and tailor your cover letter to that firm.

## 2 Psychometric testing



Many firms will require you to complete a psychometric assessment. This is an online test intended to measure your cognitive ability, personality traits, and situational judgment. This is typically limited by a 48 hour time frame.

*Example:* you are asked to click on a balloon. Each click pumps up the balloon and adds money. If you pump too much air, the balloon bursts and you lose all the money from that round. This measures your appetite for risk, decision making, and learning capabilities.

*Tip:* try and identify patterns — if the balloons are different colours this may signal a different probability of popping.

# Application Process

## 3 Digital Interview



You may also be invited to complete a digital interview after your application is reviewed. This consists of a series of questions which you will answer by recording yourself. The platform has an inbuilt timer, and you will generally be given two attempts for each question. These are preliminary questions designed to act as a screening.

*Tip: avoid reading off a script, try to sound authentic!*

## 4 Assessment Centre



After submitting your initial application, this is usually followed by a period of silence. The waiting period can span from a couple of days to weeks.

If you are successful, you may be invited to attend an in-person assessment centre. This will usually consist of a group case study or individual test, and an interview.

Notably, if you are overseas or require adjustments, most firms will be accommodating. For instance, you may be able to conduct your interview online.

To stand out against other applicants, it is helpful to ensure you have conducted thorough research on the firm and are able to clearly articulate your interest in the firm and what you can contribute. Demonstrate a clear connection between your personal interests, career aspirations, and the firm's specific service offerings.

**Keep reading for some tips on how to strengthen your application!**

# Resume tips



Writing a resume can be quite daunting, especially for those of us who feel we don't have enough experience. In reality, recruiters aren't solely looking for more; they're looking for clarity, relevance, and impact.

The goal? Make it easy for someone to understand the value you bring. Below are some tips with practical applications you can use to boost your resume and get you ready to impress any prospective recruiter!

## Concise structure



Start with a clean and familiar structure so recruiters can find information quickly. A simple one-page layout such as Personal Statement, Education, Professional Experience, Volunteering, and Skills/Hobbies works well. Avoid overly creative designs; readability always comes first.

*Practical:* Rewrite your resume under these headings and check if each section can be understood at a glance

## Show impact, not responsibilities



Instead of listing what your role required, focus on what you changed or improved. Anyone can say they "assisted" or were "responsible for" something; what matters is the outcome. Strong bullet points highlight results and contributions.

*Practical:* After each bullet, ask "So what?" If it doesn't show value or impact, rewrite or remove it

## Quantify your achievements



Numbers make your experience more convincing and memorable. Whether it's time saved, deadlines met, accuracy rates, or customers served, metrics help show the scale of your work and set you apart from other applicants.

*Practical:* Try to tie every bullet point to a number or measurable result.

# Resume tips



## Keep it concise and relevant



Recruiters scan quickly, so less is often more. For most students, one page is enough. Prioritise the experiences most relevant to the role and keep descriptions short and direct. Extra detail usually weakens your message rather than strengthens it.

*Practical:* Remove the least relevant items until you reach one page, then ask yourself if anything you cut was truly necessary.

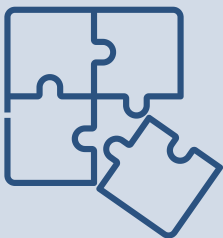
## Cut filler words, say only what matters



Generic phrases like “hard-working” or “team player” don’t add value without proof. Focus on clear, direct language and let your achievements speak for themselves. Every word should earn its place.

*Practical:* Condense each sentence as much as possible. If it doesn’t add meaning, delete it.

## Tailor for every role



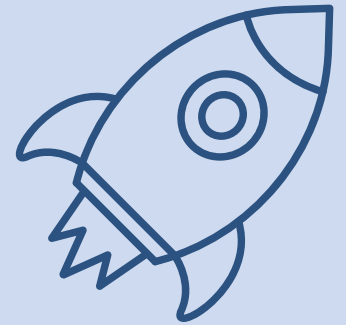
Different firms and service lines look for different strengths. Tailoring your resume shows genuine interest and helps highlight the experiences that matter most for that specific role. A small adjustment can make a big difference.

*Practical:* Compare your resume with the job description and adjust your wording and emphasis to match what the firm values.

Think of your resume as a snapshot of your impact, not a life story. Keep it structured, measurable, and concise. When every line shows clear value, you make it easy for recruiters to say yes.

# Resume boosters

During first and second year, employers are not expecting extensive professional experience. However, they do expect initiative, curiosity, and a demonstrated interest in the profession. The actions you take now will directly influence how competitive you are when internship recruitment begins. Building exposure, developing capability, and forming professional networks at this stage can significantly strengthen your future applications.



## Pre-penultimate programs

The Big 4 – Deloitte, EY, KPMG and PwC all run programs specifically designed for first and second year students.

For example, Deloitte's Insider Program is a short experience designed specifically for students to explore accounting and professional services pathways. They typically include firm presentations explaining different service lines, case workshops where students work through business scenarios, networking sessions, and early engagement with recruitment teams. Strategically, these programs serve two key purposes: building commercial awareness and establishing early visibility with graduate recruitment teams.



## Case competitions

Case competitions are one of the strongest resume boosters in the early years of university. They demonstrate a range of skills that employers actively seek, including problem solving, commercial thinking, presentation ability, and teamwork under pressure. Keep an eye out for inter-university and firm sponsored competitions. Even participation, not just winning, signals initiative and a willingness to challenge yourself beyond coursework.

## Leadership positions

Taking on leadership roles demonstrates initiative and commitment to growth. This might involve joining MASA as a committee member, serving as a faculty ambassador, or participating in peer mentoring programs. Recruiters consistently value responsibility, communication, and accountability, all of which are developed through leadership experiences. Early involvement in these roles not only enhances your resume but also builds the confidence and interpersonal skills that are essential for professional success.

# Networking Opportunities



Networking does not only happen during internships or formal recruitment programs. In fact, some of the most valuable connections are built through smaller, informal interactions throughout the year. Viewing networking as an ongoing habit rather than a single event can significantly strengthen both your confidence and your professional presence.



## Firm presentations

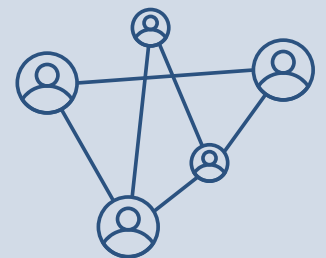
Firm presentations and campus information sessions are one of the easiest starting points. These events are designed for students at all stages, including first years still exploring their options. Attending regularly helps you become familiar with different firms, service lines, and recruitment processes. Repeated attendance signals genuine interest and initiative.

## Networking events

Networking evenings and industry panels also provide exposure to professionals at different career stages, from graduates through to directors. Approach these conversations with genuine curiosity. Asking about someone's career pathway, what they enjoy about their role, or advice they would give to their younger self often leads to meaningful discussions which can not only build connections but also clarify your own interests.

## Using LinkedIn effectively

LinkedIn is a powerful networking tool when used thoughtfully. Connecting with speakers after events or reaching out for a brief coffee chat can expand your network beyond campus. Keep messages concise and genuine – interest in learning about someone's experience is often well received. Networking is not about asking for opportunities immediately, it is about building familiarity and maintaining relationships over time.



## Your Peers

Finally, remember that networking includes your peers. The students you meet at MASA events, case competitions, and classes may become future colleagues, collaborators, or industry contacts. Building strong relationships within your cohort creates a supportive professional community that can grow alongside you throughout your career.

# Interviews 101



Interviews provide a platform to demonstrate both your professional capabilities and personality. It is essential to prepare in advance by conducting research on the firm, preparing questions to ask to the interviewer, anticipating common behavioural and technical questions, and practicing responses using the STAR framework (Situation, Task, Action, Result).

During the interview, it is important to be dressed appropriately, even in a virtual setting, maintain confident body language and consistent eye contact, and finally, express genuine interest in the firm.

The **S.T.A.R.** method is a clear framework for responding to behavioural questions to ensure you stay on track.

**Situation** involves setting the scene by briefly explaining the context of your example for your interviewer to understand.

**Task** outlines the responsibility you had, or the goal you were working toward.

**Action** is the most critical part, where you detail the specific steps you personally took, emphasising the skills, initiative, and qualities that relate directly to the question.

**Result** highlights the outcome, supported by measurable achievements. It may also include key insights or lessons gained from the experience.

**Keep reading for some sample questions and responses!**

# STAR Examples

## **Tell me about yourself and your motivations for applying:**

*'I'm currently in my penultimate year studying Commerce, with a strong interest in consulting. Outside of academics, I'm involved in a student society in the sponsorship team, which has strengthened my communication skills and teamwork. I'm applying to this firm because of its strong reputation in consulting and its exposure to a diverse range of clients. I'm particularly interested in gaining hands-on experience working on real engagements and learning from professionals across different service lines.'*

## **When was a time you received harsh feedback? How did you respond?**

*'In a group research project at university, I was responsible for proofreading the final essay. My role was to ensure the final draft was accurate and clearly presented. After I finished for my teammates to proofread, they found errors I had missed and new information that I failed to add. Initially, I felt disappointed, but I scheduled time to review the essay more carefully and refined it, as well as communicating with my group members as to what I could have done better. Our revised submission received an excellent mark, and I learned the importance of communication and attention to detail.'*

## **Has there been a time you have had a conflict? How did you resolve it?**

*'During a group project at university, one team member wasn't contributing their share, which put our deadline at risk. I wanted to address this issue without damaging our working relationship or causing further disengagement. I had a private conversation with them, approaching it with curiosity rather than accusation. They revealed they were overwhelmed by multiple commitments, so I worked with them to break their tasks into smaller, manageable pieces, set realistic checkpoints, and offered regular support. They were able to complete their portion on time, and we successfully submitted the project. This taught me that addressing conflicts early with empathy often uncovers root issues and strengthens team dynamics.'*

## **Tell me about a time you were in a leadership role:**

*'Being the leader of a university association executive team, I was in charge of delegating tasks to my colleagues in order to obtain sponsorship opportunities with multiple firms. My responsibility was to liaise with sponsors and ensure my team achieved multiple sponsorship contracts for our university association. I delegated responsibilities clearly, and created a positive team environment where my colleagues were encouraged and aided by each other. The result was a successful round of networking and sponsorship contracts.'*

**\*Please note that these are not to be used as a script, but as a guide on how to structure your responses.**

# Spotlight on: NAB



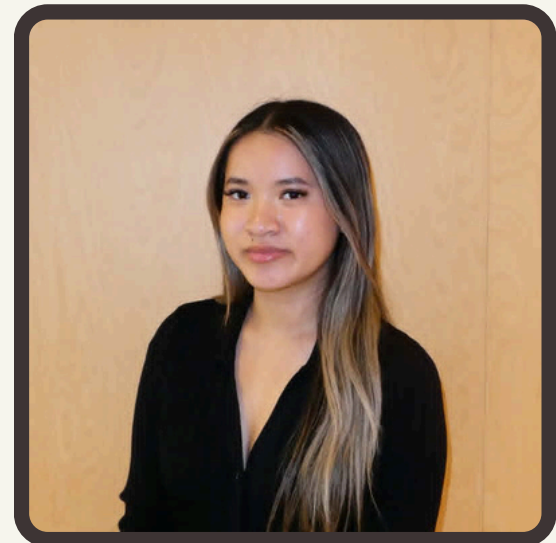
Helen Le

*Vice President*

“During my internship at NAB, I worked within the Home Ownership domain as part of the Strategic Growth and Digital team, contributing to projects and products that directly impacted both everyday customers and internal colleagues. The work varied from smaller internal initiatives aimed at simplifying workflows to nationally scaled projects involving a wide range of stakeholders.

Being involved in work with tangible outcomes made the experience highly rewarding and offered valuable insight into how large organisations drive change and innovation.

One of the most important lessons I took away was the value of maintaining a positive attitude and approaching the internship with genuine curiosity. Rather than limiting myself to my assigned team, I was able to develop meaningful relationships across six different teams over the program. Rather than focusing solely on career outcomes, I built authentic connections and engaged in natural, personal conversations. This approach significantly broadened my understanding of NAB and how various areas collaborate.



The cohort experience was also invaluable. Leaning on peers provided empathy, encouragement, and practical support. It is a unique environment where fellow interns truly understand the challenges, expectations and learning curve involved. I also found it beneficial to connect with interns from other service lines to gain insight into different parts of the business and identify potential opportunities to shadow other teams.

While internships can feel competitive and overwhelming at times, taking the time to enjoy the experience and viewing it as a privilege can make a meaningful difference. Finding small but genuine ways to contribute, while remaining open to learning, can help maximise both personal growth and the overall internship experience.”

# Spotlight on: EY

Jin Yang Tay

*Treasurer*

“I recently completed an internship at EY over the summer in the Corporate Tax (Global Compliance and Reporting) team. It was a relatively short internship, only running for four weeks, but I was able to gain many valuable insights and experiences into the accounting and corporate world.

Most of the work that I was involved in was with client tax returns, advisory and reporting. During my time there, I was given lots of support whilst also being given the freedom to apply my own knowledge that I had accumulated throughout my studies at university (yes, your coursework will be useful in real life so don't forget it).

As it was my first ever experience into the corporate world and in the accounting industry, my biggest takeaways from the experience are the connections that I had built, and the eagerness to learn more about how I would be able to grow into this career in the future. The program revealed many avenues to be explored even beyond just tax.

If I were to provide some advice for someone about to commence an internship, it would be to always ask questions (basic, I know) and take notes on the knowledge you gain as it can help you later to call your own shots and show initiative. Even if it you make a mistake there is nothing wrong with seeking for accountability and help, as it is a safe learning environment.



I loved working with all types of people and having the other interns help each other out. It was also a valuable opportunity to learn more about how other people at EY developed their careers throughout the years.”

# Make the most of your internship



Securing an internship is an achievement in itself, but how you approach it determines its long-term value. While technical skills matter, firms assess your attitude, adaptability, and willingness to grow just as closely. Approaching your internship with intention can significantly influence both your development and your future opportunities.



## Keep a clear record of your work

Tasks feel routine in the moment, but recalling specific projects, tools, and responsibilities becomes difficult later. To combat this, maintain a document noting tasks completed, systems used, people you worked with, and measurable outcomes. This becomes invaluable for future resumes and interviews.

## Engage meaningfully with feedback

Internships accelerate learning through feedback – focus on what you can improve on. Taking notes and implementing changes demonstrates self awareness. Managers seek interns who listen, reflect, and improve. Showing visible progress leaves a stronger impression than delivering perfect work from the outset.



## Speak to as many people as possible

Your internship gives you direct access to graduates, managers, directors, and recruiters. Take initiative to introduce yourself, ask about career journeys, and learn about different service lines. These conversations aren't about asking for jobs; they're about learning and building familiarity through genuine curiosity.

## Take ownership of every task

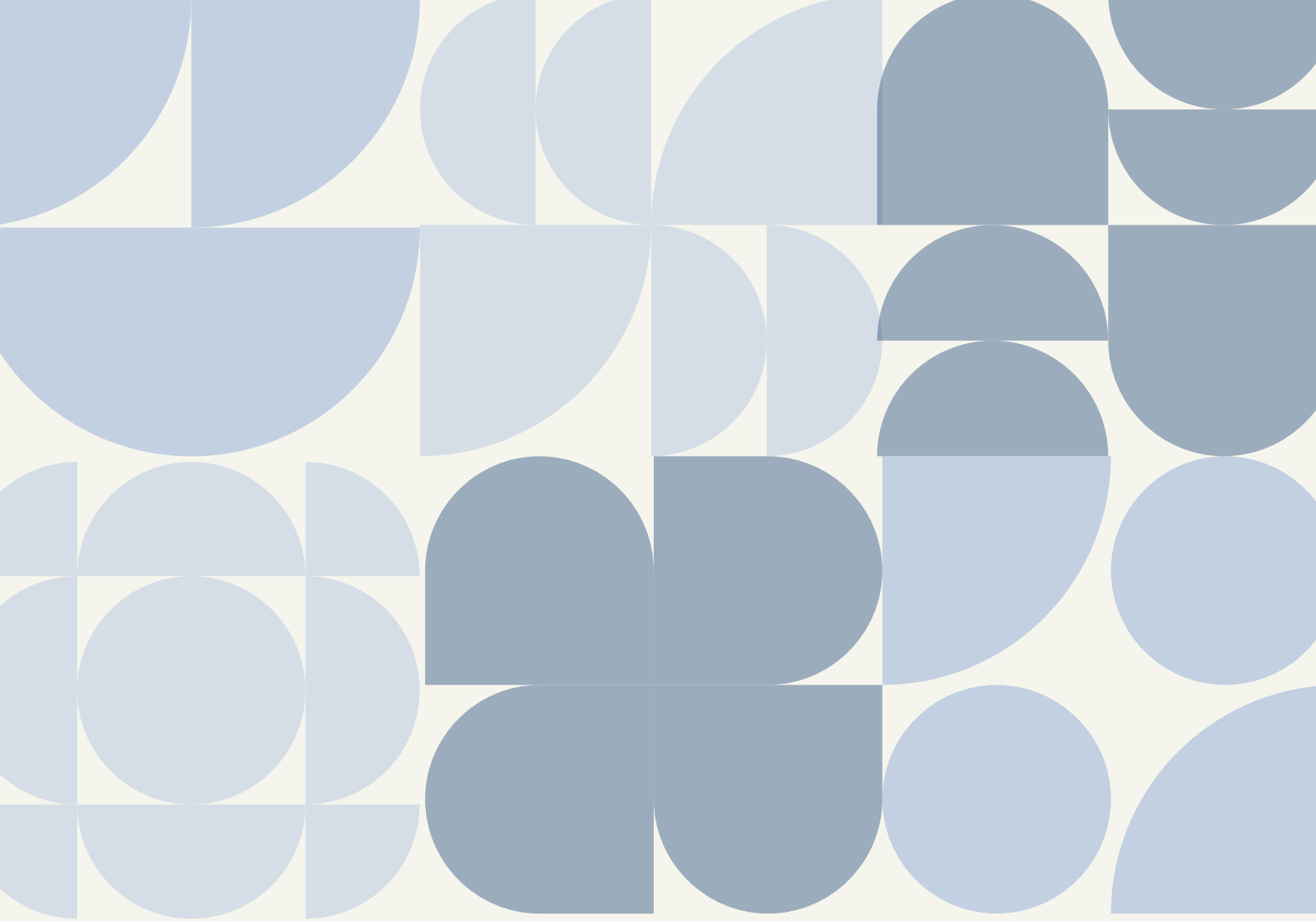
Even small tasks build trust. Completing work carefully, meeting deadlines, and asking thoughtful questions demonstrate reliability – one of the most valued professional traits. When managers trust your work, they provide additional responsibility and advocate for return offers.



## End professionally

As your internship concludes, professionalism matters just as much as performance. Thank team members, express appreciation for mentorship, and maintain connections through LinkedIn. Courtesy and gratitude are remembered long after specific tasks are forgotten.

Ultimately, an internship isn't about proving you're already a finished professional – it's about demonstrating curiosity, consistency, openness to growth, and respect. Approached with intention, an internship becomes a foundation for your long-term career.



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