

Professional experience **opportunities for students**

in the University Library



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA





Introduction

The University Library plays a pivotal role supporting the learning, teaching and research needs of the University community; providing access to high quality information resources and information management services, tailored programs of student and researcher support, and a first-class learning environment.

The Library plays a significant role in supporting the development of “life-ready graduates, who are community-minded, resilient and ready for work” (**Looking Ahead Strategic Plan 2020-2025**, p23).

We do this by providing professional experience and employment opportunities for students in our Libraries, Galleries and Special Collections. We provide a range of opportunities for our students to develop the technical and transferrable skills, knowledge and experience necessary to become life and work-ready. Students can do this right here on campus, in an authentic and supportive professional work environment. This brochure brings together all the areas where professional experience and employment opportunities exist in the Library. This includes Work Integrated Learning (WIL) placement experience, paid internships, and other student jobs in the Library.

Who is this guide for?

To help staff and students understand the types of opportunities available.

To start staff and students thinking about future opportunities (whether that’s planning WIL placements, collaborating with the Library on projects, or looking for paid work on campus)

To spark a conversation... the opportunities listed in this brochure are just a beginning, and we are open to discussing and exploring further ideas.

Acknowledgement of country

The University of Newcastle acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which our campuses are located. The Worimi nation and the Pambalong clan of the Awabakal nation (Newcastle) Darkinjung people (Central Coast) and the Gadigal clan of the Eora nation (Sydney). We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging. We also acknowledge and pay respect to the other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nations from which our students, staff and community are drawn.

Artwork credit

The image used is an excerpt from a design by Anna Rolfe, University Galleries Intern, from artworks created by University of Newcastle staff and students in a collaborative art making workshop. The compass was created by Samara Jackson. The white feather featured in the images was created by Mark Dodson, John Patrick, Rebecca Hall and others.

The workshop was facilitated by the University Galleries with the Centre of Excellence for Equity in Higher Education (CEEHE) to celebrate Reconciliation Week 2021 and was proudly supported by the University of Newcastle Students’ Association (UNSA).

This brochure draws on and is informed by these documents:

- **Looking Ahead Strategic Plan 2020-2025**
- **Your Future Library Strategic Plan 2020-2025**
- **University Library Students as Partners Framework**
- **Program Management Procedure Manual – Coursework**



Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

Providing meaningful, hands-on workplace experience to enrich the theoretical learning of students and to enhance the employability of graduates is a key focus of our University.

In partnership with Colleges and Schools the Library provides a range of professional experience opportunities, some of which are credit based and assessed. They provide a great opportunity to develop on the job skills, knowledge and capabilities alongside their theoretical learning.

Staff within our library team, including Special Collections and the University Galleries, facilitate these activities and liaise with academics to ensure these are meaningful learning experiences for our students.

When can I undertake a WIL opportunity?

WIL opportunities are delivered at different times of the year, depending on your discipline and the course timetable. If you would like to know more about WIL in your program, the course handbook is a good place to gain valuable information before contacting your College, School or Program Convenor.

WIL in Special Collections

Special Collections is the home of the historical and cultural memory of the University and our regions. The GLAMx Lab is part of Special Collections located at the University's Auchmuty Library on level 3 (L329). The GLAMx Lab is a space of experimentation to make cultural heritage collections available in innovative, engaging, and unexpected ways and to find solutions to expand the discoverability and accessibility of sources. Working with digital cultural heritage, innovation, technology, and creativity we provide experiences that are mutually beneficial to students, the university and wider communities.

The GLAMx Lab supports WIL programs across a range of schools and disciplines. It offers the opportunity for students to learn invaluable digitization and other cultural sector skills designed to improve their employability.

The GLAMx Lab also encompasses an Audio-visual Digitization Lab housing the NBN Television archive and an Artefact Conservation Atelier for conservation and 3D digitisation of artefacts for virtual reality (VR) simulation.

WIL projects within the GLAMx lab also often involve collaboration and engagement with the wider community via the [Hunter Living Histories Initiative](#).

Here are some examples of project-based skills:

- Digitise, research and make available to a global community a collection or archive.
- Digital mapping of collections
- Oral histories and community stories
- Research collections for on-line curation
- Cultural themed Podcasts
- Research and curate archival film footage
- Develop professional industry networks
- Ethical workplace practice
- Stakeholder collaboration



“ *The GLAMx Lab has been a wonderful resource for BA students seeking an 80 hour placement. The special collections team worked to provide students with an experience which fit in with their prior skills and interests, and also extended them. Often there were challenges and constraints but the GLAMx staff were always accommodating while ensuring that the students completed their allotted hours and tasks at a high level. A very positive element of the placements was their project work, which ensured students not only left the collection better documented or more accessible, but had gained digital skills which they could include in their professional portfolios.* ”

Associate Prof Nancy Cushing,
School of Humanities, Creative Ind
and Social Sci (History)
College of Human and Social Futures

“ *During my first year of a Bachelor of Arts I did a WIL placement at the GLAMx Lab working on various projects – I digitised parts of the NBN archive so items could be uploaded to the living histories digital platform, I also explored ways to make the digitised videos more searchable. Seeing how audio visual materials are stored and getting a better idea of archiving has been very interesting, as well as working with more experienced colleagues who were generous in sharing their knowledge on ways to approach work. Being able to talk to the team was very enlightening and good to be surrounded by people who know more than me, I liked that about work at the GLAMx Lab.* ”

Kyle,
Bachelor of Arts

“ *On a WIL placement you are in the work environment, I liked collaborating with others who work in the field of history, archives and special collections, the experience allowed me to put into practice some of what I'd learnt in my degree. I was able to create and manage a small project, which was much different to other assessments. I learnt a lot about the history of the University, especially the Central Coast campus. The team helped me every step of the way, and I developed skills I can use in future projects that I work on. A WIL placement helped me build a network, something that has been important post degree because you never know what doors may open for future employment.* ”

Jeffrey,
Bachelor of Arts



WIL in the University Galleries

The 'University Galleries' encompasses the University Gallery, Watt Space Gallery and Senta Taft Hendry Museum. A core function of the Galleries is the support of student excellence by developing practical professional skills and industry opportunities. The Galleries offer students from all disciplines the chance to utilise creative thinking practices across real workplace scenarios. Engaging with the Galleries gives students the tools to challenge their existing perspectives and methodologies, approach problem-solving from new directions, allowing innovation and new ideas to flourish through engagement with curated and research exhibitions, and a broad range of industry experience.

After completing Open Foundation in 2018 and moving into full time study, Nicola undertook a WIL placement in the Galleries as part of her final year of study. Nicola's wealth of experience and passion for the community made her a valuable and in demand, member of the University Galleries team.

“ *I was thrilled to be offered an opportunity with the University Galleries this year... it's exciting to have the chance to work alongside and learn from such an experienced team and with the artists. This experience has given me the confidence to move forward next year into an arts administration career.* ”

Nicola,
BA Creative Industries (Visual Art)
Galleries WIL placement 2021



Other WIL Placements in the library

WIL opportunities in the Library aren't only for students wanting to pursue a career in the GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums) sector. Within our library operations, we have staff who work across areas as diverse as data, analysis and visualisation, user experience (UX), client service, project management, process mapping and improvement, digital systems and

tools, stakeholder engagement (community, academic and student), events, marketing, communications and social media, purchasing and supplier management, and copyright management (just to name a few). This breadth of operations and staff experience means that there can be opportunities for students from diverse and wide-ranging disciplines to undertake WIL with us.



Internship opportunities

The Library Student Internship Program is one of the ways in which the Library is actively increasing our student workforce. Our aim in running the Library Student Internship Program is to enhance the student experience and contribute to the life-readiness of our graduates by providing students a range of opportunities which support employability and future life skills.

We scaffold support around the internship projects themselves, providing training, onboarding, group and individual check-ins, and feedback sessions throughout the internship journey. We also ask our interns to complete a reflection exercise towards the end of their time with us, as well as to present to all of our Library staff on their projects and their experiences.

What do we mean by internship?

Within the University Library, we use the term internship to refer to a paid, project-based employment opportunity, which is designed to be valuable learning opportunities, which exposes students to a variety of professional experiences and provides opportunities to develop both their employability skills and their professional identities, but which is not embedded in or linked to curriculum (and therefore is not a WIL placement).

Internships can vary in length (they could run for a semester, a year, or for the lifetime of a project) and number of total hours, but are always structured as part time, casual opportunities which students can undertake at the same time as their studies.

Project-based Internships

Project-based internships are offered within the Library each Semester. Internship projects are proposed by staff and teams across the Library, where we identify an area where students can make a valuable contribution to the University Library.

For example, we have had student interns working in our Student Engagement and Partnerships, Client Services, Academic Engagement and Special Collections teams on projects focusing on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs, digital capabilities, space redesign evaluation, social media content creation, and video production and editing, to name a few.

Vera Deacon Internship

The Vera Deacon Internship in Special Collections is offered yearly, with applications opening in February/March each year.

The Vera Deacon Internship provides a student with the opportunity to engage in a one year internship focused on making our region's cultural heritage accessible to students, researchers, academics, and the community. The Internship will offer the opportunity to develop a broad range of GLAM industry skills and contribute to the accession, digitisation, discoverability and promotion of a range of special collections.

Galleries Internships

These internships are year-long opportunities and are recruited at the beginning of each academic year. We value multi-disciplinary learning and encourage students from all disciplines to apply.

The Galleries Internship role gives students the opportunity to gain experience in gallery and museum environments. Our interns acquire hands on experience across the preparation of exhibitions and the installation of works of art, assisting at gallery and museum events, gallery administration and marketing, and liaising with artists and visitors.

Interns are given the opportunity to get involved in individual and team projects, where they can explore their areas of interest, apply existing skills and develop new ones.





Anna undertook her Galleries Internship in 2021, while in her honours year. Anna is a talented illustrator and designer, and her creative skills were a huge asset to the University Galleries team, helping us to bring our exhibition calendar and art collection to life.

“ In my internship experience with the University Galleries I was given so much knowledge and many opportunities to gain experience in new areas and improve my employability. In 2021 I was able to lead mural design projects which were put up around the campus, as well as learn about running a gallery and the exhibit installation process. I had so much fun during this internship, meeting both local and internationally known artists, and able to not only use my existing skill set, but expand upon it. ”

Anna,
2021, BA Visual Communication Design (Hons)



Dylan worked with the Client Services team on an evaluation of the newly refurbished learning spaces in the Auchmuty Library. Dylan researched, designed and proposed a suitable evaluation methodology based on User Experience (UX) principles, and then executed the evaluation and analysed the results. Dylan also helped produce a UX data gathering framework (the first of its kind for the Library), formalising a methodology which can be utilised in future to assess the interactions between the Library’s users and its spaces.”

“ This internship was an experience I wholeheartedly enjoyed. My work has been highly rewarding. I was given an opportunity to make a positive difference to the library and the students who rely upon it, and I am proud to have delivered a project which has the capacity to serve the library well into the future. The skills I learned during this internship will be of utmost usefulness in my career journey. In this role, I have had invaluable experience in project management and project evaluation. This project has exposed me to the world of user experience (UX) and has led me to consider possible career options with a focus on user experience and/or the customer journey. This internship may assist in me in working in a field which I had never previously considered! ”

Dylan,
B Business/B Commerce,
Semester 1, 2021

Student jobs in the library

Student employment opportunities within the Library provide students with valuable work experience in professional roles through which they can develop and enhance important ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ skills which will help contribute to their employability and career-readiness upon graduation, while also providing a valuable source of income and a supportive work environment.

All student employment roles are filled through a competitive recruitment process. While ensuring that access to these roles is transparent and equitable, the recruitment process is also designed to be a learning experience for all student applicants. The recruitment process provides students with firsthand knowledge and experience of job application processes and expectations in a professional environment (including practice undertaking key tasks such as writing applications/cover letters/responses to criteria and participating in interviews).

Feedback is also made available to all applicants who request it, so that regardless of the outcome, the process itself provides a valuable learning opportunity for every student applicant. This amplifies the impact on student employability and widens the reach/benefit of the Library offering these employment opportunities, beyond just the successful applicant(s). Key to this approach to recruitment is the partnership and support provided by the Careers Service.





Student Peer Support Assistants (SPSAS)

The Library Student Peer Support Assistants contributes to the delivery of high quality, client focused services and engagement activities across Library locations. In this role student employees, deliver peer to peer support which guides our student-clients to connect to vital services and resources; contribute to the smooth running of Library service; and assist in the development, organisation and delivery of student engagement activities and programs (such as our Orientation, Open Days and Stress Less activities, for example).

The Library also employs specialist Makerspace Student Peer Support Assistants, whose role includes delivery of workshops that encourage digital dexterity and creativity; in-person support for the use of Makerspace technologies and equipment; and promotion of the Ourimbah Library Makerspace service to the student community. Makerspace Student Peer Support Assistants help run workshops teaching a variety of skills such as playing chess, sewing, 3D imaging and 3D printing, and electronics.

“ The library is the perfect learning environment and has been the most valuable job I have ever had. I always have support from the people who I work with... Being an SPSA has not only given me a place at the university, but it has also allowed me to use the skills I have gained as a student to give back to new students. ”

Claudia, Bachelor of Arts, Student Peer Support Assistant (Ourimbah)

“ I absolutely love my role as a library SPSA! As part of this job, I am able to assist students and meet new people. I have also learnt so much about the services that the library offers which help me with my own studies. This role has allowed me to develop my confidence while learning new skills such as communication, teamwork and technical skills navigating the library systems and databases. ”

Kirsty, PhD (Psychology), Student Peer Support Assistant (Newcastle)



Casual Project Officers and Project Assistants

Students who are recruited through the Careers Services’ Jobs on Campus channels join Library staff on specific projects. These projects often involve large-scale time-critical activities where the students learn new skills and gain valuable professional experience while helping the Library meet significant deadlines. These projects can involve working in any number of teams across the Library (such as in business administration, internal communication, collection management, digital library systems etc.).

Process mapping project

This project involved process mapping to document tasks relating to Library business processes and systems. Amanda conducted interviews, workshops and meetings with staff from teams across the Library, evaluating the information gathered to produce process design documentation and develop process maps of relevant functions.

“ I have found working with the library was such a memorable experience on growing my relationship and collaboration with others, empowering my analytical thinking and efficiency, and build a stronger professionalism and work ethic, whether be face-to-face or online due to COVID lockdown. ”

Amanda Viray, Casual Library Officer, Digital Experience

Wollong station project

The ‘Hunter Valley Climate Data: Wollong Station Project’ provided paid work and experience for two students to be part of a project of international significance in assisting scientists to understand our climate and the implications of ongoing human practices that influence it. The students involved in this project contributed to the digitisation, for distribution to climate scientists, of a significant set of historical climate data from regional NSW.

“ The Wollong Station Project offered a great opportunity to gain hands on experience working with archival material. The main task was to apply a range of digital editing techniques to clarify hand-written data records which had deteriorated over time. This work enabled me to further develop my digital editing skills while learning from the experienced and knowledgeable Special Collections team. I am very grateful to have had this experience as it has helped to equip me with the skills to secure ongoing employment opportunities within the University. ”

Kathirine (Katy) Sentas, Library Project Assistant, PhD in the Natural History Illustration program



What next?

We advertise all of our paid student employment opportunities through [CareerHub](#). To stay up to date with the latest on-campus opportunities, join the [Jobs on Campus Facebook](#) group or keep an eye on CareerHub.

For queries about WIL, internship or employment opportunities in the Library, contact the Library’s Coordinator Student Employment and Partnerships imogen.harris-mcneill@newcastle.edu.au.



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