



## Student Proposed Internships – Final Report

Late submission of documents will be subject to a penalty of 10% per day in line with Academic Regulation 9.4 "Penalty for Late Submission"; after a delay of 6 days students will receive a grade of "Non-Satisfactory".

### Method of Evaluation

You will be receiving three (3) academic units for your internship. Your performance during the internship will be graded on a qualitative basis, namely 'Satisfactory' or '**Non Satisfactory**' **based on the final documents** submitted for review by the specified deadline.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you meet all of the requirements of the course in order to receive a grade of "Satisfactory" on your transcript. Please note that your grade will only be released once all of the requirements for the internship have been met, including the timely submission of all of the required documents listed below.

- Final Self-Reflective Report (submitted in Virtual Campus)
- Supervisor Evaluation (signed by the student and the supervisor; submitted in Virtual Campus)
- Internship Time Sheet (signed by the student and the supervisor; submitted in Virtual Campus)
- Course Evaluation (submitted in Virtual Campus)
- Mental Health and Wellness in the Legal Profession (An online course offered through the Canadian Bar Association; submit certificate in Virtual Campus)
- Peer to Peer (P2P) Mentoring Network Survey (submitted in The Source)

If you do not complete your 115 hours of work in a satisfactory manner (determined by the faculty and onsite supervisor) or you do not submit your final documents or your documents are incomplete, you will receive a 'Non-Satisfactory' grade for your internship and this will appear on your transcript. "NS" means no units; therefore, you will have to make up those 3 units in another course.

### The Final Reflective Report

The final report is a self-reflective piece of writing and brief paper where you describe an experience and how it has changed you or helped you to grow. The report itself **should be 7 pages double spaced in length including the cover page.**

Self-reflective reports require students to reflect on their growth from specific experiences, projects or assignments, though others might require you to think about the impact of a specific event in your life. By describing your overall experience for readers, discussing your current strengths and weaknesses as they relate to the experience you wrote about and sharing your

future plans for using this new information, you can paint a vivid picture of how you have grown and changed.

According to the Canadian Bar Association (CBA), the best way to learn from your experiences is by: (1) reflecting on the experiences; (2) observing and analysing your experiences; (3) using your insights to understand your successes and setbacks; (4) and, using what you have observed and learned to retry the activity again (known as “experimenting”).<sup>1</sup>

Self-reflective reports challenge you to think critically about what you are doing well and what needs to be changed as a result of the experience you're writing about. You can begin by talking about skills, responses and actions that have been strengthened by the experience, then move into a discussion of areas that need work.

You might want to address a specific way an experience changed your attitudes or actions, a significant challenge you faced or things you would do differently if given a second chance. You might start by considered what your experience taught you and how it has changed you as a student or person. Specific details and anecdotes from the experience will help to demonstrate your areas of growth.

Throughout your reflection, you should make a case for how the experience has stimulated your personal growth. By the conclusion, your reader should have a clear, specific idea of how the experience affected you and particular ways you have made progress. In a reflective report, you can approach the conclusion by talking about how you plan to use what you learned from this experience in the future.

Overall, processes such as the self-reflective report are helpful to your professional development. By doing so, you will be able to learn from your observations and experimentations within the professional community. In turn, this sharpens your skills as a future lawyer, your ability to critically reflect, and your professional knowledge.

The CBA offers a helpful two-part guide on the importance of the reflective practice and how best to go about the process.<sup>2</sup> It also highlights the importance of building emotional awareness to protect your wellness when confronted with client issues that are demanding and potentially triggering.

**DO NOT INCLUDE** your evaluation form or your timesheet as being part of your final self-reflective report.

## **Final Reflective Report Formatting**

### ***Cover Page (1 Page)***

The cover page should include the following information:


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<sup>1</sup>The Canadian Bar Association, “Part 1: The Theory Behind Experiential Learning”, online: *The Canadian Bar Association*: <[www.cba.org/Publications-Resources/Practice-Tools/Experiential-Learning-Guide/Part-1](http://www.cba.org/Publications-Resources/Practice-Tools/Experiential-Learning-Guide/Part-1)>.

<sup>2</sup> The Canadian Bar Association, “Learning Law in Place”, online: *The Canadian Bar Association*: <[www.cba.org/Publications-Resources/Practice-Tools/Experiential-Learning-Guide](http://www.cba.org/Publications-Resources/Practice-Tools/Experiential-Learning-Guide)>.

- Your Name
- Your Student Number
- Location of the Internship
- Course Code
- Name of Individual who the Report is submitted to
- Date of the Start and End of the Internship
- Date of Submission

Table 1 – Example of a Title Page

<b>Walter White</b> <b>3520354</b>
<b>Internship Final Report</b> <b>CMLXXXX</b> Offices of Saul Goodman & Associates  <b>Saul Goodman</b>
 uOttawa
<b>September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020</b>

***Introduction***

The first paragraph of the Final Reflective Report is the Introduction. It should be no longer than one page.

The first half of the Introduction should briefly describe the firm in question.

- What is the name of the firm or organization?
- Where is it located?
- What is the firm or organization's mandate?

- What are the areas of law that the firm or organization specializes in?
- How large is the firm or organization?

The second part of the introduction should focus on describing your reasoning for seeking an internship with the firm or organization in question.

- Why did you decide to complete an internship there?
- How did you discover this opportunity?
- What did you hope to gain from the experience?

Table 2 – Example of an Introduction

**Introduction**

The Offices of Saul Goodman & Associates is a small boutique law firm that specializes in the practice of criminal law, specifically drug related offenses and money laundering, in the heart of downtown Albuquerque. The firm was founded in April 2009 by Saul Goodman (formerly James McGill). He was originally an associate at Hamlin, Hamlin & McGill LLP until he left to start his own practice. His mandate is to always have a contingency plan for the worst-case scenario.

As a second-year student of the Faculty of Law at the University of Ottawa, the opportunity to participate in an internship at the Offices of Saul Goodman & Associates was particularly appealing to me. Having completed a bachelor’s degree with a minor in criminology, I have always been attracted to the prospect of a legal career in the criminal law field. This internship represented the perfect opportunity to gain experience in my desired field of work with an accomplished practitioner. Furthermore, I was eager to complete an internship with Saul Goodman to refine my litigation and research skills under the guidance of Mr. Goodman, a well-regarded litigator with many years of experience.

**Tasks**

The Tasks section is the second part of the Final Reflective Report. In this section, you must summarize the tasks that were assigned to you during your SPI. This can include administrative work, legal research assignments, appearances in court, reviewing legal documents, drafting memorandum and more.

This section should be no longer than one and a half pages of your Final Reflective Report.

Students tend to focus too much on the Tasks section of the Final Reflective Report.

**Do not separate the *Tasks* section into subcategories.**

***Self-assessment (Pages 3-6)***

The Self-Assessment is the centerpiece of the Final Reflective Report. If the Final Reflective Report were a Four-Course Meal, this would be the main course. It is important to focus on the skills and lessons acquired during the internship in this section. Do not repeat the actual tasks you completed, but explain what they taught you. Below are a few examples of what to include in this section. They are only examples, and are not an exhaustive list.

Table 3 – Self-assessment examples

**Self-assessment example**

*Professionalism and time-management*

“I learned essential lessons throughout my internship with The Offices of Saul Goodman & Associates that I may not have otherwise gotten in law school. Working in a real-life professional setting has helped hone skills I already possessed. This includes: punctuality, organizational skills, attitude, attire, and respectfulness. Throughout my time there, I was expected to treat all members of the team with a level of politeness and kindness. That being said, while professionalism is undoubtedly an important quality, it did come as a shock to also see that the law firm was not as rigid as I had feared. The people in the workspace still provided a welcoming and likeable environment.

Likewise, due to the time-sensitive nature of the subject matter, I was expected to often hand in legal memos and draft factums within a time-frame. This meant respecting the time of the clients and the senior lawyers. Having been in school for so long, I am used to being assigned assignments far in advance and knowing their strict deadlines. However, at the firm, I needed to adjust this perspective to become more open to receiving tasks from multiple senior lawyers which all needed to be completed under tight deadlines. This required me to learn how to balance the tasks required of me, and how to better manage my time. I could not afford to waste any time, and as such, I became more efficient. This skill will certainly be an added bonus once I return to school and can complete a required assignment in a fraction of the time allocated.”

*Shortcomings in the Justice System*

“Overall, the most important lesson I learned from my experience was the necessity of Legal Aid for many families. Many of the firm’s clients were dependent on Legal Aid to access representation as many people of low-income are unable to afford legal services. This complicates their capacity to understand the legal procedure and their rights. I have come to appreciate the amount of hard work that lawyers do without full compensation to bridge the gap between those who are advantaged and those who are disadvantaged in our justice system. This is a social issue that needs to be addressed.

Another important lesson I learned, was the issues within criminal law itself. It is striking to notice how the criminal justice system disproportionately affects people of colour. This problem is exasperated when it comes to those facing charges for drug possession and the selling of narcotics. Unfortunately, it was sad to see this imbalance within the system. However, being exposed to it early on in my law career only makes me more sensitive and aware of an ongoing issue. It will be my duty and obligation to find a way to ensure a truly just legal system at all levels.”

*Seizing Opportunities as they come along*

“I felt that I had to be more interactive in order to assist other lawyers in their files. Once I received my supervisor’s permission, I went around the office, introducing myself. I was pleasantly surprised by how open the other people in the office were to speak with me. This is also how I met another lawyer, who

asked me about my background and spoke to me about his experience in law school. Once he heard about my background, he quickly asked me whether I would be interested in helping him with some related work. By interacting with them and presenting yourself and your background, there is a chance that a lawyer will recognize a relatable experience, which could lead to them asking for your help on a particular file.”

### *Receiving Feedback*

“Another invaluable thing I have learned was the importance of feedback. If I was confronted with foreign legal concepts, I was able to quickly research and inform myself. While I was initially nervous to submit my work to my superior—who was familiar with this area of the law—I was privileged to be able to gain feedback and ask questions. This feedback was constructive and thorough. Having my work critiqued sharpened my research skills, and gave me a better awareness of the caliber of product expected in a criminal law firm. It was through this process and experience that I was able to strengthen and acquire new knowledge. I now feel better equipped to provide legal research and analysis for firms in the future.”

### *Legal Research and Writing*

“One area of work that needed to be improved when I started the internship was my legal research and writing ability, most of which was acquired during my “Legal Foundations” class. I would often have to state a case’s facts for factum of a client. This meant that I had to find all the relevant information to our arguments and piece them together to present to the court. This practice has certainly made me better at legal writing. It has made me think more critically about what information is necessary while also helping me become more precise in my writing. This goes hand-in-hand with the memos and settlements briefs I have had the privilege of preparing. Overall, every legal piece I had to write allowed me to grasp the concept of point-

first writing. While I certainly have room for improvement, I have come a long way. When I first started, I was prone to long run-on sentences with unnecessary vocabulary. Upon not only writing legal documents, but more importantly reading the facts sections in the briefs and factums previously prepared, I was able to grasp that sometimes short, sweet, and to the point is the most effective form of writing. I wish I could take my first year “Legal Foundations” course with the knowledge I currently have.”

### **Conclusion**

The last paragraph to include in the Final Reflective Report is the **Conclusion**. This paragraph should be no longer than half a page.

In this section, you should briefly describe your overall thoughts on your internship. Here are some of the questions you can ask yourself when drafting the Conclusion:

- Did you enjoy your internship?
- How would you improve your experience?
- Has the internship had an impact on your career path? If so, how?
- Do you see yourself working at a similar firm?
- If you had to complete another SPI, would you complete the internship at a similar firm or a different type of firm altogether? Why?
- If you could change anything from your experience, what would it be? Why?
- What would you recommend to other students who want to complete an internship with this firm?

Do not include your signature or your supervisor’s signature in the conclusion.

#### Table 4 – Example of a Conclusion



## **Conclusion**

“My experience with the Offices of Saul Goodman & Associates was very positive. Mr. Goodman is a skilled litigator with extensive knowledge of the ways to take advantage of the criminal justice system. He genuinely wants to help students develop into competent attorneys. This is evident by the variety of challenging and interesting assignments that I was able to work on during my internship. He was always available whenever I had questions regarding my work. That being said, I do wish I had gained more exposure to his high-profile methamphetamine related cases.

On the subject of professional development, this internship was particularly useful as I developed an idea of my ideal career path. For example, I like the idea of a workday being equal parts litigation and research. The prospect of working on a variety of different criminal infractions every day is also very appealing to me. At the same time, this positive work experience makes me want to continue to seek out similar opportunities in other areas of law, such as constitutional law. It also made me want to continue developing my knowledge and understanding of both sides of the judicial system by gaining experiences with governmental departments such as the Public Prosecution Service of Canada.

I recommend this internship to any student who has an interest in pursuing a career in criminal law. It requires a considerable amount of work, but it’s an experience that rewards you for the extra effort you are willing to put into it.”

## **Disclaimer:**

Please keep in mind that your SPI Final Report is a personal document. Everything in this guide is a suggestion and not a requirement. There are some accepted formats and standards to which most final reports tend to conform, but you should not feel compelled to abide by the style presented in the examples. The important part is to develop your evaluation based on your personal experience, and to include the major sections. Above all, what you develop should be something that you’re comfortable with. Whatever you do, do not copy the language in these examples word for word! You must make your final report your own and copying these examples will be considered plagiarism and will not be accepted.

In terms of writing style, it is important to write your final report in complete sentences. This means no bullet points. Furthermore, make sure to include only truthful facts. Inventing or exaggerating facts in your report will be treated as academic fraud.

Should you ever face any issues or have any concerns regarding your legal professional development, do not hesitate to make an appointment with the Career and Professional Development Centre through [The Source](#).