

All About Externships

What is an externship?

An externship is a chance to continue your learning in a hands-on environment. It is an important step toward becoming a professional in your chosen field and will allow you to put into practice all that you have learned in the classroom. **BUT YOU ARE STILL CONSIDERED A BOSTON REED COLLEGE STUDENT.** You will be working under the guidance of a preceptor to gain actual hands-on experience. Your preceptor will provide you with an orientation to the policies and workflow of the company. This is your chance to move from the role of a student into the role of a professional.

Externship Guidelines

- Pre-Requisites: Students are required to submit the following pre-requisites by the 10th week of the program: resume, proof of computer literacy, proof of CPR for *healthcare provider* training, a completed physical exam and a screening for tuberculosis. Students are responsible for obtaining CPR training, resume, proof of computer proficiency, physical and a screening for tuberculosis on their own. The above items are required *prior* to the start of the externship. If you do not get your materials turned in by the 10th week, **DO NOT** call Boston Reed. Simply turn them as soon as possible.
- Eligibility: An eligible student is one who has
 - turned in the required pre-requisites
 - met all financial obligations
 - complied with all policies and procedures including attendance and conduct guidelines

NOTE: Do not contact Boston Reed regarding the status of your externship. You will be called when the Externship Coordinator is ready to begin placement in your area. If however, you have not heard from someone by 60 days past the end date of class, then you can make a call to determine the status.

- Externship Dates: All eligible students available full time for an externship will be placed within 90 days of the end date of the classroom portion of the program *or* 90 days following receipt of the required pre-requisites, whichever is first. Eligible students who are available part time (2-4 business days per week) will be placed within 180 days of the end date of the classroom portion of the program or 180 days following receipt of the required pre-requisites, whichever is first. All externships must be completed within 12 months of the start date of the program.
- Process: Before a student is placed in a site, the externship coordinator will call the student to confirm availability. Students with off-hours externship requests or those that have not turned in the required documentation in a timely fashion may be delayed in externship placement. We do not guarantee placement for students who are not available at least two business days (8:30am - 5:00pm, Monday-Friday) a week. Date of externship placement is based on the needs and availability of the externship host sites.
- Please note the following when going to your externship:
 - You should treat your externship like a job - be dependable and punctual, respectful and helpful, remembering that we are guests in the facility.
 - You should be in uniform (see the dress code in this Student Handbook)
 - Take with you the externship resource booklet and have your preceptor log hours and have skills signed off each day you are there. Do not leave your booklet at the site but keep it with you at all times.

- You must give advance notice to Boston Reed AND your externship department manager for any absence or late arrival.
- If you experience any difficulty at your externship, you must contact the externship coordinator immediately.
- Externship host sites have the right to dismiss students for any reason without recourse. Boston Reed will request an evaluation from the host site and determine if the student is eligible to continue in the program.
- If you are assigned an externship and you do not follow through with the arrangements, you will be responsible for locating your next externship.
- If you are asked to discontinue your externship and are deemed eligible to continue, you will be responsible for locating your own next externship.
- **Externship Completion:** The externship is graded on a pass/fail basis and is based on the evaluation given by the externship preceptor. Have the preceptor complete the evaluation on your last day at the externship. Make a copy of the booklet for yourself and mail or fax the original to Boston Reed.

Pre-Requisite Helpful Hints

Physical Examination with Tuberculosis (TB) Screening: You can use your existing medical coverage to obtain this. Take the form provided in the Student Handbook to your physician or community clinic. Return completed form to Boston Reed College via mail or fax (any physical and/or TB screening completed in the last year will qualify).

Resume: Your resume will be used to fax to sites interested in hosting you for your externship. A suggested format is listed below.

- Keep it to **one page. Potential externship hosts or employers will typically not read more than the first page of your resume.**
- Use large print for your name, address and telephone number.
- Include sections for education, work experience, special skills. Include the training you are gaining with Boston Reed College.
- Send us an original copy. Because we fax your resume to the externship site, your resume should be a clear original and not faxed or photocopied. **Preferred method** is to submit your resume to: **resumes@bostonreed.com**

Some sources for help:

- Take the resume course at www.coursesonline.com.
- Check your computer word processing program for a resume template.
- If you don't have a computer, try your local library or copy shop.
- Check the yellow pages or want ads for resume services.
- Check with your local Employment Development Department.
- Consult your local library.
- Ask a friend or family member for help.
- Ask for help at your local adult school.

CPR for Healthcare Provider Card: You need CPR for the healthcare professional (Community CPR is not enough). This includes: one and two-person adult, child and infant CPR, choking and AED. Please see attached CPR Information Sheet. When arranging for a class, find out how and when you will receive your card. In some cases there may be a delay and this can

hold up your externship. We recommend that you request a receipt when you attend the class. Here are some places to look for a class:

- Local adult school or community college
- The American Red Cross
- The American Heart Association (local chapter)
- Local fire department, hospitals and nursing homes

Proof of Computer Literacy: Some suggestions for obtaining proof of computer literacy are:

- Consult your local Adult High School (by taking a course or asking them to test you and provide a statement)
- Employment and temporary agencies may test you and provide a statement.
- Take the Internet program at coursesonline.com
- Ask your employer for a letter stating you have basic computer operation skills

Externship Placement Information

Externships are held at a variety of settings. If you are not available during regular business hours, it may take longer to find placement for you and you may be required to travel outside your area. We do not guarantee placement for students who are not available at least two business days a week. Many of our host sites prefer students to be available full-time. Others allow short hours but prefer you be there at least three days a week. It is a good idea to start planning now for how you will fit your externship into your schedule. It can help to save up some vacation time, arrange for childcare, and secure transportation ahead of time.

Boston Reed College will arrange an externship site for you unless you have a site in mind. We cannot guarantee that you will be placed at a particular site. We match the needs of the site with each student's availability, grades, attendance records and location. Once we have made arrangements for your externship you are expected to complete the hours at the assigned site without schedule changes.

If you have a request for a particular site or if you plan to do your externship with your employer, you must gain prior approval from Boston Reed College. To gain approval, call or fax Boston Reed College with the name of the facility, the address, full name of your preceptor, the telephone number, the fax number, your projected start date and your schedule. Any hours you complete prior to obtaining approval from Boston Reed College will not be covered under our liability or malpractice insurance and will not count toward the required hours.

Please do not contact Kaiser facilities directly. All Kaiser placements must go directly through Boston Reed College.

The Interview

Some of the sites prefer to interview students prior to the externship. This gives them a chance to see if you will be a good fit for their particular facility. We recommend that you go to the interview in your uniform following the Boston Reed College dress code, and wear your Boston Reed College nametag. Hair should be tied back. Take your externship resource booklet and a small note pad with a pen. This shows them that you are serious about learning the role of the pharmacy technician. During the interview confirm your start date, work hours and the name of your preceptor. Be prepared to ask a few questions about the type of practice they have and what their expectations are. Show enthusiasm for learning. Be prepared to answer questions about

what you have learned. After your interview, call Boston Reed College to confirm your start date and schedule.

Successful Externing

Treat the externship like a job. Show up on time and in uniform. Review the dress code. Take your externship resource booklet with you as well as a pen and small pad of paper. Anytime you either observe or perform a skill, have that skill signed off on the skills checklist in your booklet. Have your hours signed off regularly. When you are nearing completion of the required hours, ask your preceptor to fill out the evaluation form in the back of your booklet. Remember that students are often judged more strictly than employees. Even if you see employees wasting time or dressed casually, do not follow their lead. Instead, ask if there is anything you can do to help. It is OK to help with cleaning or filing if the work site is slow.

Many of our students are hired either by their externship site or by word of mouth from a preceptor who felt the student did an exceptional job. This is your chance to make a good impression on your fellow professionals. Ask for a letter of recommendation upon completion.

Sometimes students are asked to discontinue an externship. The most common reasons are: not being on time, not showing up on scheduled days, lack of initiative, or failure to follow procedures after repeated instructions. Students are also dismissed for poor attitude or for developing inappropriate relationships with coworkers or supervisors. *Remember you are a professional—your behavior should reflect this!* If a site manager calls us about a student, we often ask the student to leave the site immediately. If you are having a problem at your externship site, you must notify Boston Reed College immediately.

Please remember that we are guests in the facility. Make a good impression so that they will be happy to take Boston Reed College students in the future. Just think, one day soon, perhaps you will be working and arranging for a Boston Reed College student to do an externship with you!

Confidentiality: You are required to maintain confidentiality of patient information in accordance with state and federal law. No student will have access to or have the right to review any medical record, except where necessary in the regular course of the externship. The discussion, transmission or narration in any form by students of any patient information obtained in the regular course of the externship is forbidden except as permitted by law. Do not open or read a profile you are not directly responsible for. Do not discuss patients with anyone but the appropriate staff.

