



**TMO Graduate
Work Placement
Brochure 2019/2020**

#1 General Information

TMO, university of applied sciences, offers students a bachelor level education with a 3.5-year curriculum subdivided into 7 semesters. The program is designed for ambitious and enterprising young people who wish to become entrepreneurs and are willing to put in a consistent effort, and educate them for commercial management positions in the international fashion branche, graduating with a 'Bachelor of Business Administration in Fashion' degree.

The education's focus lies on the following subject areas:

- Fashion
- Strategic fashion marketing & research
- Management
- Product ranges & the fashion business environment
- Financial
- English
- Communication
- Research methodologies

Students graduate from TMO equipped with skills and competences essential to their career pathways. Throughout the curriculum, a great deal of attention is paid to the development of knowledge and personal skills, since leadership positions require a strong personality.

TMO differentiates itself from other types of fashion training institutes by placing the emphasis of its curriculum on the development of students' employability. Expert educators, skilled practitioners, and various career briefings ensure continued personal development.

In addition, students must gain 200 hours of

work experience in the fashion retail business during their foundation course.

Furthermore, industry presentations, factory tours (e.g. at fashion production companies), and practical assignments form an integral part of the 3.5-year TMO training.

#2 The graduate work placement: an integrated unit in the TMO curriculum

The graduate work placement is part of the 7th semester of the TMO curriculum. Students perform research for a minimum of 18 weeks (fulltime) on a relevant subject suggested by the company involved and approved by TMO. Apart from doing research, professional practice should familiarize students with every aspect of the operational environment in the (fashion) business, so that the student can apply the acquired theoretical knowledge and skills/competences at bachelor level. And, professional work placements enable TMO to stay up-to-date regarding the latest developments in the fashion industry. During the work placement and research project students can show if they master the following 5 TMO skill sets at bachelor level:

- **Skill set 1:** Formulating innovative and practical solutions
- **Skill set 2:** Multidisciplinary, (inter)national cooperation
- **Skill set 3:** Proactive, innovative business skills
- **Skill set 4:** Ethics and sustainability
- **Skill set 5:** Professional reflection

Working at bachelor level (applied sciences) means:

- Assuming responsibilities and being given the opportunity to make choices.
- Freedom to approach the work in a multidisciplinary manner.
- The student's involvement is not limited to operational activities, but also includes tactical and/or strategic aspects.
- Opportunity to share one's personal vision (to provide advice about positioning within the fashion industry).

Collaborating in the TMO graduate work placement program offers a variety of attractive opportunities for all parties involved.

Reasons for the student

- To obtain a broader picture of the operational environment in a fashion company.
- To apply theoretical knowledge and skills during the preparation, execution, and validation of the final research project.
- Being able to advise the company with obtained or existing information, completed with relevant models and theories.
- To take on (shared) responsibility.
- To devise new strategies by applying theoretical business models.
- To master additional communication skills.
- To create more insight into personal performance in a professional context.
- To explore career options.
- To provide evidence of bachelor level.

Reasons for TMO

- To thoroughly discuss the training program with the business community.
- To discuss topics of current interest in

the fashion business with companies involved.

Reasons for Industry Partners

- To collaborate in the training of future executives in middle and higher management positions.
- To become acquainted with potentially new staff members.
- To use the fresh and critical outlook of TMO students to good advantage.
- To have research conducted into relevant, current issues.

#3 Registration as a graduate work placement

Companies can register graduate work placements at TMO. TMO maintains an up-to-date database of companies offering work placements and we work with a private internship bank. Students can consult this database when looking for suitable graduate work placements.

To showcase a work placement on our TMO internship bank, an email can be send with the internship description as a PDF or Word attachment to Ava Anouk van der Meij: vandermeij@tmo.nl

A work placement company needs to meet the following requirements:

- The company is engaged in activities relating to fashion, lifestyle- and/or fashion-related business, or, when the company isn't engaged in fashion, the research subject has to be fashion- or lifestyle related.

- The daily activities are at bachelor level. (as mentioned in #2)
- The company employs at least 3 people (ex. the owner) to provide '360 degrees feedback' (based on the 5 TMO skill sets) in the beginning and at the end of the work placement, of which 1 employee is assigned as a business mentor.
- No more than 1 TMO student can be placed with a company that has less than 10 employees.
- The company has the capacity (sufficient mentoring time) and expertise (mentor educated at bachelor level or with bachelor level of thinking) to guide a graduating student.
- The company allows the student time and space to work on the research project agreed to within the company.
- The student is not working for the company already, unless a graduate work placement is possible at the head office of the business the student is working for.
- Friendship or family relationships between the business mentor and student are not acceptable
- If the company is a competitor of another business in the students' family, the student will discuss this openly.
- Participation in productive work
- Execution of a research project

In the initial stage of the graduate placement, students assist company employees working in possible future career positions. For instance, a student may assist a sales manager, a product developer, or a purchaser. This allows students to gain further insight into various positions and their relevance to the company.

Within the first 4 weeks, the student will have a clear concept of the organizational structure of the company and its lines of communication, which will be formulated as the 'company scan'.

The student can then work independently, meaning that productive activities may be expected. The student learns how to function in a business environment, take on responsibility, and maintain a working routine. The student demonstrates a result-driven attitude.

In addition, the student conducts research on a topic provided by the company and approved by 2 TMO coaches. The goal of the research project is twofold: the student must demonstrate attainment of graduate bachelor level, and their detailed research report should provide the company with relevant information and contribute.

A graduate work placement consists of 18 fulltime working weeks. In these 5 days the student will contribute to the daily operational activities and reserves around 150 hours for the research project within these 18 weeks. This is about 20% of the total work placement time.

#4 What does the TMO graduate work placement entail?

The activities carried out during the graduate work placement challenge the student and are primarily aimed at achieving learning outcomes. A graduate placement comprises the following components:

- Orientation in the business environment

A direct link between the student's daily operational activities and the subject of the research project is highly desirable. It is important that prior to the initial stage of the graduate work placement the student, the business mentor, and the trainee's supervising tutor have come to an agreement about the work placement duration, the allocation of time and the bachelor level activities. All agreements reached among the three parties are recorded in writing in the TMO graduate work placement contract.

The graduate placement numbers 18 weeks consisting of 5 working days. Any deviation in working hours must be compensated for, by mutual agreement between the business mentor and the student.

A graduate placement can run in two periods per year:

- end of January until the end of June
- beginning of August until the end of December

There are five weeks planned when the student can start after finding an internship. If desirable, a student is allowed to start before the official starting date provided, when requirements have been met for the student's promotion from semester 6 to semester 7.

How to start

The initial contact between the company and the student is made by the student. Students have a couple of months to apply for a graduate work placement with the company of their choice. TMO coordinates and authorizes these student initiatives.

When the company is interested, a meeting will take place to get acquainted with the student. This meeting is like a job interview, to see if you both want to proceed or not. When the meeting is successful the student will have a clear view of the work placement and the company knows what it entails to work with a TMO student. Before starting the work placement a threepoint meeting will take place with the student, the business mentor that will guide the student and the TMO tutor, to go through the TMO graduate work placement contract and write down agreements.

#5 Research Report

The student will write a research report about a current problem or question in the company and reserves a maximum of 20% of work hours. The research project will provide practical results and leads to added value. The outcomes of the project may remain exclusively with the company if so desired. The company can even decide to place an embargo on (parts of) the research report. Examples of research project topics:

Structure of sales/purchasing

- Sales staff: quality and quantity.
- Commercial policy including pricing policy and HRM policy.
- Use of company sales area and further company floor area.
- Employment of staff in combination with sales peaks.
- Combatting shrinkage.
- Consumer target groups and consumer approach.
- Structure of sales and purchasing department.

Competition

- Competition in catchment area (possibly nationwide)
- Lack of competition (so-called 'white spot' research)
- Various types of competitors and their developments
- Overlap in target group areas and/or target groups
- Strengths-weaknesses analysis with regard to competing firms
- Effects of entering (or having entered) into collaboration

Assortment policy

- Breadth and/or depth of assortment structure.
- Assortment suitability for the selected target group.
- Price structure.
- Missing or overlapping assortment areas.
- Expansion opportunities bearing in mind the available space.
- Profitability of one or more ranges.
- Purchasing planning and punctual delivery (stock management).
- Research into positioning (what is on offer for which target group).

Marketing policy

- Communication formula.
- Presentation of range in sales area and/or window display.
- Alignment of advertising to presentation and range.
- Suitability of mode of advertising for the selected emotional atmosphere.
- Advertising value compared to the competition.
- Suitability of advertising mode selected for the group of buyers (advertising for groups of buyers).
- Setting up a customer database (CRM).

- Budgeting.
- Devising an advertising campaign for articles and/or activities.

Customer research

Customer experience with:

- Range
- Price level
- Service
- Point of sale
- Shop layout
- Sales personnel
- Advertising, house-style image.
- The extent to which the company and its customers are currently attuned and could be in the future.
- The company's target group policy in a growing or shrinking market.

#6 Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to manage their own graduate placement, meaning that throughout the graduate placement students are expected to take initiative with respect to the research that needs to be conducted and the operational activities to which they have been assigned. Should problems arise, students are expected to identify the issue and contact their business mentor and their supervising tutor.

#7 TMO Responsibilities

Students are overseen by a TMO graduate tutor and a second supervisor. When a company is prepared to accept a student for a graduate work placement, the graduate tutor pays the company a visit together with the student to discuss further details, particularly with regard to the subject of the research project and the daily operational activities during the graduate work placement.

The graduate tutor will pay the company two visits: one visit prior to the start of the graduate work placement and one visit at the end of the graduate work placement. The TMO graduate tutor serves as a sounding board for the student and oversees the research project. He or she assesses and decides the Go/No-Go moments for the research project together with the second supervisor. They will assess the research project proposal and at the end of the internship the skill sets of the students.

The overall coordinator for graduate placements, Mrs. Arnoldy, may be contacted in case of issues or questions of a general nature, or at such times when the graduate tutor is not available.

#8 The Company's Responsibilities

The company is expected to appoint one of its employees as a guide to the student: the business mentor, someone with a bachelor level degree or bachelor level of thinking. In the early preparatory stages, the business mentor puts forward suggestions with regard to the activities to be undertaken during the graduate placement, in particular with respect to the subject of the research project.

During the graduate work placement the business mentor sees to it that the student is introduced to the company and acts as a sounding board for the student. It means that the business mentor needs to be in-company at regular times to answer possible questions on the part of the student.

In the 8th week of the work placement and

when the graduate placement has come to an end, the business mentor and 2 other employees are asked to assess the student's performance in the 5 skill sets on the assessment forms provided by TMO (360° feedback form). It is highly advisable to come to a clear understanding who will assess and mentor the student, prior to the graduate work placement.

#9 Student Code of Conduct

If the student is unable to appear for work, he or she shall immediately notify the business mentor as well as the TMO graduate tutor before 9:00 a.m. on the morning in question.

In case of a prolonged illness, the business mentor, the student, and TMO need to confer. The student is not entitled to any leave of absence, apart from the usual public holidays. It goes without saying that the student adheres to the company regulations and the provisions specified in the contract.

#10 Graduate work placement contract

The graduate placement contract is between the company, the student and TMO. All agreements reached among the three parties are recorded in writing in a standard TMO graduate work placement contract, including information about the period of the graduate placement and the operational activities to be undertaken by the student.

When the company has their own graduate placement contract, the student can sign this additionally, provided that it does not contain any conflicting articles with the contract provided by TMO.

#11 Compensation and insurance

The student is not a company employee and does not receive a salary, therefore a TMO student is not insured through employee insurances during the work placement. But a compensation for the student can be negotiated.

For the duration of the work placement period, the employer shall provide the student with a liability insurance against financial liability for any injury or damages that the student may cause to persons or goods at the work environment or elsewhere, while carrying out activities in connection with his/her work placement, with the exception of malicious intent on the part of the student. The company will also insure the trainee against the financial risk of legal liability for damages caused to the trainee by the company and/or its employees. In the case of malicious intent by the trainee, the trainee will be held responsible.

While the student is working for the training company during the period mentioned in the contract, the student is beyond the observation, influence, and control of TMO. At no time can TMO be held liable for the student's actions or negligence during his/her work placement period.

#12 Contact Coordination graduate work placements

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