



## ***UVA in Ghent:***

# **Global Internships in Education, Society, and Human Services**

Summer 2020

**Internship position:** Immersion in the concept of Quality of Life

**Organization/unit/research project:** E-QUAL

E-QUAL is a center of expertise on Quality of Life, situated within the Faculty of Education, Health and Social Work of the University College Ghent. Over the years, the concept of Quality of Life (QoL) has been applied in different contexts and has shown to be a useful theoretical framework for supporting people in divergent socially vulnerable situations (e.g. persons with intellectual disabilities, persons with substance-related problems or other chronic diseases). Instead of treating a disease or disorder, supporting persons to pursue personal goals in life, and by doing so improving their QoL, is considered as one of the most important objectives and outcome indicators of today's practices in health, special education and other fields. E-QUAL focuses on generating, developing and disseminating theoretical knowledge and practical applications related to the concept of Quality of Life starting from a cross- and interdisciplinary perspective. Central research topics are: community-based support, recovery, quality of life, peer work, assessment, mental health and addiction, human rights, etc.

### **Description of position:**

- This position will provide opportunities to strengthen your research capacities and global engagement in the context of an applied international and interdisciplinary research project. The student(s) will be supervised by one lecturer/researcher but exchange frequently with the entire research team as well as organizations in the field. Moreover, the research project is embedded within the Centre of Expertise on Quality of Life (E-QUAL), which will also offer plenty of opportunities for learning on related topics.
- Possible responsibilities may include:
  - Carrying out literature reviews: e.g. on evidence-based interventions that support Quality of Life of people living in vulnerable situations (disabilities, mental health, children, addiction, etc.)
  - Support in the development of instruments to measure QoL in vulnerable situations
  - Support the valorization of a current practice-based research project on peer work. Examples of "valorization" include: setting up an art exposition, photo book, video, developing a workshop, etc.
  - Writing project proposals: e.g. on the topic of Quality of Life to investigate QoL in the general population in Belgium and to develop indicators at policy level to do so.



- Further develop an attractive website for the center and PR methods (e.g. app)
- Develop training materials on the implementation of Quality of Life by use of innovative methods
- Being involved as a team member in a practice-based research project “Community development through participatory action research: towards interventions that facilitate living with HIV/AIDS in the (school) community in Uganda” - possible tasks: literature review on stigma, data analysis (qualitative interviews).
- Data analysis on subjective wellbeing of children + develop valorization methods
- Setting up a knowledge library on evidence-based interventions to improve QoL
- Practical support in the organization of a summer school and/or conference
- Presenting own research and getting feedback
- Sharing research skills (both qualitative and quantitative)
- The research intern can expect to develop/learn the following:
  - Strong teamwork
  - Data analysis
  - Critical insights in research methodologies
  - Presentation skills
  - Working in an interdisciplinary team
- Supervisor: Sofie Vindevogel

### Preferred qualifications:

*\*\*UVA requirement: All candidates must be in good academic and disciplinary standing.\*\**

- Given the interdisciplinary nature of E-QUAL and the concept of QoL, students from different schools and programmes in health, education, humanities, and social sciences are welcomed.
- Given that experience with academic research is required, we prefer advanced undergraduate or graduate students.
- Other relevant qualifications/qualities include (among other things): knowledge of interpretative research methodologies, excellent writing skills, communication skills, ability to analyse critically, ability to think innovatively and design-oriented, planning and time management, independent worker and team player.

### Language:

- Dutch is the language of the workplace but English is spoken and widely understood by E-QUAL staff. Selected students will be offered the opportunity to commence self-study of Dutch prior to their arrival in Belgium (during the Spring 2020) semester, as having even a basic knowledge of the language would be beneficial for daily life in Ghent.

### More details:

- Working hours: M-F, likely 9am-5pm with lunch break but can be discussed with supervisor at beginning of internship period



- Dress code: Business casual (please be aware that many Europeans- both students and professionals- tend to dress more formally than their counterparts in the U.S.)
- Location: HoGent's Schoonmeersen campus

### Pre-internship preparation requirements:

- Will be discussed with the selected student before their arrival in Belgium. Background research and/or technical skills development may be required in advance of arrival.

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## Previous interns' reflections:

### What was it like to do a global internship?

Interning in Belgium was an awesome experience! I was there as a research intern and was able to gain valuable work experience such as the ability to conduct in-depth interviews, compiling literary sources and presenting my findings in one thorough report. Outside of work I was able to travel to London, Lille and Paris as well as many other Belgian cities like Bruges, Ostende and Brussels. Getting the opportunity to intern abroad was valuable because I got to combine work and play which was great. I would totally recommend an abroad internship to everyone, especially those who find it difficult to spend an entire semester abroad.

~KENZA LO (Summer 2019)

