



Microsoft Student Accelerator

Microsoft Student Accelerator 2021

Employer Handbook



WELCOME

Microsoft New Zealand has been working with students over the last 10 years, helping them realise their potential through opportunities such as the Microsoft Imagine Cup and the Microsoft Student Partners.

The Microsoft Student Accelerator was created after students and employers told us about the difficulties they face in the IT industry – particularly the lack of work experience. Students lacked important hands-on experience and the soft skills to collaborate and innovate - employers were looking for just that.

MSA bridges this gap by training tertiary students across New Zealand on key technologies and providing them opportunities to get voluntary work placement with organisations over the summer. Students are placed as a team of three and the focus is on them working on creative, innovative projects for the company over a maximum of 10 weeks over their summer break.

Following the great success over previous years from both students and organisations, we're expanding the programme and encourage your company to join and help us create a thriving innovative IT sector in New Zealand.

Some of the companies that have taken part in MSA



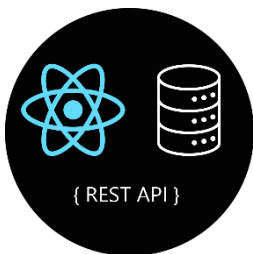
THE MSA SKILLS

MSA Students are trained on the latest technology and have developed the mindset to help organisations achieve more. Here's some of the key skills that Microsoft have taught students across New Zealand:



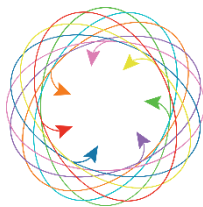
Azure

Students are trained on the latest features in Azure as well as the fundamental basics. This includes Azure Web Apps, Table Storage, SQL Databases, and innovative tools such as Cognitive Services.



Web app, Database & API

Students will build a web app in React with TypeScript, connected to a Database via RESTful API. They will learn the basics of creating a fully functional website.



Data Science

Students will learn about the fundamental ideas behind data science and understand what it's like to apply data science to everyday problem. This includes data preprocessing, visualisation, analysis and modelling using Jupyter Labs and Python libraries.



Innovation

Students develop a growth mindset through the programme and learn how to work in efficient, agile teams that think outside the box to get great things happening. These students can provide fresh thinking and innovation to your organisation.



Teamwork

Placed in teams of three with complementary skills, the students are team players that work together to solve problems and organisational objectives. They have worked with other students and Microsoft staff, and are ready to put their inter-personal skills to use in the real world.

MSA TESTIMONIALS

DATACOM

Datacom have been proud supporters of the Microsoft Imagine Cup and the Microsoft Student Accelerator. As a founding employer, Datacom has taken part in MSA since 2013. Past interns include current Datacom employees and multiple winners of the Microsoft Imagine Cup. Datacom is once again taking part in the Microsoft Student Accelerator to find great student talent.



“Through the Microsoft Student Accelerator Program students have the potential to gain first-hand experience working at Datacom and to participate and contribute to real-world projects and solutions - all the time being mentored and guided by our best technicians, consultants and leaders.

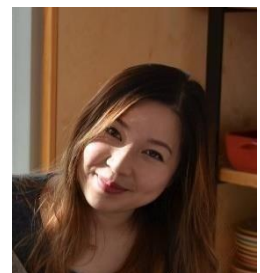
I thoroughly recommend the Microsoft Student Accelerator Programme to students and prospective employers alike.”

- Kerry Topp, Associate Director for Transformation and Innovation, Datacom

“Through the MSA programme I had the privilege of interning at Datacom during the summer. During the internship, I engaged with new technologies in a ‘real’ project alongside the Mobile Innovation team.

MSA has helped me develop the technical skills and soft skills needed in the IT industry. I am currently working as a software developer at Datacom and absolutely love the job, the culture and the people. ”

- Samantha Le, Datacom Employee and ex MSA Student



GENESIS ENERGY

Genesis Energy has taken part in MSA for the last three years. Over this time, MSA students have worked across the business on innovative projects that drive Genesis Energy's vision. Students have been involved with innovation Hackathons and have contributed to Genesis's technology toolkit. The success of the programme for Genesis Energy is reflected with them taking on all six students they worked with in 2016/17.



We look forward to the new teams every year and pick projects that enable the students to apply their technical skills to solve real life business problems. This year we took in two teams who applied their software development skills to prototype new applications for our Solar Monitoring and Bottled Gas products. The teams also took part in our inaugural Hackathon innovation event where they successfully used the Machine Learning, Artificial Intelligence and Bot technologies to provide innovative solutions."

- John Perez, Digital Development Manager, Genesis Energy

"The 10 week experience at Genesis Energy was fantastic. I could put what I learnt in MSA to practice and I learned a lot of new skills during my time there. Everyone at Genesis Energy including our mentor was friendly and supportive to us and that made the programme very enjoyable. At the end of the 10 weeks, our team delivered several projects, which I'm immensely proud of. It's awesome to know that we could make a difference to the company."

- Junhyuk Lim, Genesis Energy Employee and ex MSA Student



WESTPAC

Westpac were very excited to be able to be involved in the 2016/2017 MSA programme. They “adopted” five student teams that delivered real solutions to the business that ranged from small line of business applications using LightSwitch and .NET to some sophisticated SharePoint-based solutions.



The students came on board with great energy, incredible desire to learn and eager to deliver real value to their Westpac business users. They all had a fantastic “can do attitude”. Everything was possible, they showed great initiative and they were eager to do what it took to meet the high expectations we had for their work. They were treated as part of the team and they reciprocated with excellent work.

- Paul Rocha, Principal Enterprise Architect, Westpac

Work placement at Westpac was an absolutely amazing experience. I got to work alongside the product owners to develop their project from idea to reality. This work placement really helped me get a sense of what it is like working in the IT industry, and it helped me further develop my professional skills. Having the application I was working on deployed to all Westpac staff topped it all off.”

- Andrew Lyall, MSA Student @ Westpac



TIMELINE



Microsoft Certification (Phase 1) | March - June

Students will be given resources and vouchers to earn their first Microsoft Certificate!

Students will also attend introduction workshops to get practical knowledge on their desired stream.



ADVANCED TRAINING (Phase 2) August - September

Students will have the basic understanding of software development/data science.

This phase aims to take students' technical skills to the next level and prepare them for work placement. Students will also get soft skills training and a project-based assessment where students can show off creativity and skill.



Employer's Evening | Oct - Nov

Students are placed in groups of three to do speed interview with potential employers.



WORK PLACEMENT | DEC - MAR

Groups of three students will work on an innovative project at our partner company.

STUDENTS

Students taking part in the Microsoft Student Accelerator come from a variety of backgrounds and have diverse skills. MSA students have been learning C# and Microsoft technologies through the Microsoft Learn, in-person workshops and online training provided by our Student Partners.



Students are expected to:

- Actively learn new technologies and develop their skills
- Complete the MSA training programme to a good standard
- Commit to their employer over the summer break
- Work with their team to reach positive outcomes on their project over summer

EMPLOYER EXPECTATIONS

To ensure all participants gain value in the MSA programme, we have worked with past employers to set expectations for employers to ensure you get the best opportunities.



Organisations taking part in MSA will:

- Provide a group of 3 students with an innovative project to work on as a team over the 10-week period
- Involve students in company activities where possible, and help them gain insight on how your business works
- Assign them a dedicated mentor
- Offer them professional development opportunities
- Provide an opportunity for them to work in-house or remotely where possible, with regular check-ins.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Are there any fees to take part in this programme?

No. Microsoft does not charge employers or students any fees to take part in this programme. However, employers must appropriately compensate their students. We encourage all employers to pay a full wage over the summer. We encourage employers seek independent advice on the best way to help students with their living costs over the summer placement.

What is the time expectation from employers on mentors?

Employers should aim to provide a mentor that manages the students 2-4 hours a week.

How many students are companies expected to take?

A team of three students – so they can work together and learn from each other.

Who owns the intellectual property of the projects?

The company/employer retains all IP for work students do for the employer over the 10-week placement.



Ready to take on your group of MSA students?

Register your interest by contacting us at

nzmsa@microsoft.com

If you have any questions, please email us at nzmsa@microsoft.com

