

## **Nina Vanhoutte (Ma in Historical Linguistics and Literature, 2019-2020) on her internship with DBBE**

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When I had to pick a Master after finishing my Bachelor degree, it was the possibility to do an internship that convinced me to choose the [Historical Linguistics and Literature Master](#). I was unsure at that point if I wanted to do a research internship or a professional internship, but I knew I wanted to experience what it is like to have a nine-to-five job. In the end, I decided to do a research internship at the [Database of Byzantine Book Epigrams](#) (DBBE), and it was by far one of the best aspects of my Master year.

A research internship is ideal if you have already decided to pursue an academic career, but even if you are still in doubt about your future plans, it has its advantages: on a practical level, the working environment of Ghent University is not so different from a 'regular' workplace, but the content is of course focused on research. That way, you have the best of both worlds, and you will be better informed when you have to choose a career after your graduation. Another advantage is that it is a little less 'intimidating' to do an internship at a place you are already familiar with. This, however, does not mean you won't discover new sides of the department (in my case the [Greek Department](#)) and the faculty you are working at! Additionally, you may already know some of the people you will be working with – through student activities, classes or just walking around the hallways – which will make you feel like part of the team a lot faster.

The research topics of the research groups and projects of the Greek department are very divers. This makes it easier as an intern to pick a place that suits you based on your interests, your thesis subject, or the field you want to make a career in. In my experience, everyone at the DBBE was very friendly: I was always allowed to ask for help and yet still work independently, it was encouraged to take initiatives and I was assigned a nice mix of tasks. During my internship I learned a lot. I now know what it is like to work as a part of a team and how to balance this with individual work, but also how I can apply knowledge and skills I learned in my classes on a more practical level, and what my strengths and weaknesses are as an employee.

All in all, the internship definitely was a big bonus for me, as a master student. If you are still in doubt, you should certainly go talk to the people working at research groups or [projects](#) that seem interesting to you, and have them convince you to go for it!