



Local & Overseas Internships

Guidelines for Employers

1. Responsibilities of Host Organisations

- 1.1 The Employment Act covers every employee who is engaged under a contract of service, including interns. This means an employer is obliged to accord statutory benefits prescribed under the Act to an intern, as long as the intern performs work and has work arrangements similar to that of a regular employee with the host organisation.
- 1.2 Host organisations are expected to identify and schedule activities to be performed by the interns within the organisation's premises. They should not be made to work at home or at venues such as cafés. Organisations must also make sure that such activities are lawful, and the work environment should be safe and fostering.
- 1.3 While the objectives of internship are manifold, the fundamental objective is to provide an on-the-job training opportunity to the interns in line with their field(s) of study, skill set and career interests, so that they can apply the knowledge and skills learned in class, gain practical experience on the job, see practitioners in action, improve their problem-solving, interpersonal and communication skills, and hopefully confirm their career interests.
- 1.4 Interns may be attached to a business department as if they are new staff, or be assigned to take up specific projects. Under all circumstances, organisations should appoint experienced staff (e.g., manager) as internship supervisors to oversee, guide and mentor the interns. Orientation or induction should be provided at the start of internship. Upon completion of each internship, the host organisation must conduct a fair and objective appraisal of the intern's performance. The appraisal, in a form to be provided by the Dato' Kho Hui Meng Career Centre ("DKHMCC"), has to be completed and returned as soon as practicable after the completion of internship.
- 1.5 Once a host organisation has confirmed an intern's appointment, it must allow the intern to work throughout the internship period. The organisation cannot cancel or terminate the internship without first consulting DKHMCC.
- 1.6 If the organisation requires the intern to sign any contract, indemnity form, confidentiality agreement, etc., it should inform DKHMCC in advance. A copy of the duly signed contract or form or agreement should also be provided to DKHMCC for records.

- 1.7 Host organisations must provide necessary resources or equipment required for the interns to perform their tasks or execute the projects. Organisations that engage interns for IT/IS related works or projects should provide them with licensed software. Students are not to use their SMU email for business activities as part of the internship.
- 1.8 Internship periods must be clearly communicated to DKHMCC. All students must complete the internships before the start of each Academic Term and must return to class when the Term begins, unless the student is on a Leave of Absence. All changes to internship periods (extensions/shortening) MUST be communicated to DKHMCC in writing or email.
- 1.9 Prior approval by DKHMCC is required for internships (part-time/full-time) to extend into the Term. Please instruct the STUDENT to do the following:
 - Seek permission from the academic/course instructor for ALL classes he/she will miss due to the extension. The student MUST not appear to be simply informing the academic/course instructor; and
 - Produce documentary evidence from host organisation indicating HR/assigned supervisor's approval of the extension period and reasons for the extension.

2. Working Hours

- 2.1 In principle, interns will follow the normal office and working hours of the host organisations. They should be briefed on the organisation's working days and operating hours before they accept the internship offer.
- 2.2 Under the Employment Act, an employee (including an intern) should not be required to work for more than 8 hours in one day or more than 44 hours in a week. However, he may be required to work overtime if he consents to do so, subject to the limit of 12 hours per day and totalling 72 hours per month. Under the Act, the employer must pay the employee/intern for the extra hours of work or for working on his rest days or public holidays. The rate for overtime work should be no less than one and a half times his hourly basic rate of pay. An employer must grant the employee/intern one rest day (which is not paid) in a week, which may be on a Sunday or any other day.

Details of the Employment Act can be found at URL: <http://www.mom.gov.sg/employment-practices/employment-rights-conditions/hours-of-work-and-overtime/Pages/default.aspx#maximum>.
- 2.3 For overseas internships, host organisations are expected to comply with the employment regulations of the host countries. We request that organisations inform DKHMCC if relevant local legislation is significantly different from Singapore's.

3. Remuneration & Fringe Benefits

- 3.1 DKHMCC does not stipulate or fix the monthly allowance or stipend for the interns, but host organisations are encouraged to offer the interns an allowance or a stipend that benchmarks the market rates.
- 3.2 For overseas internships, the same principle applies. Host organisations should make sure that the stipend/internship allowance complies with the minimum wage legislations in their countries (where applicable).
- 3.3 Although it is not a requirement, host organisations for overseas internships are encouraged to provide stipend/internship allowance that is commensurate with the cost of living expenses in the host country, and to assist the interns in such areas as lodging, air tickets, etc.
- 3.4 In order to graduate from SMU, students are required to complete a minimum of 10 weeks of internship.
- 3.5 Leave entitlement for students during internship should be in accordance to that stipulated in the Employment Act.

Details of the Employment Act can be found at URL: <http://www.mom.gov.sg/employment-practices/leave-and-holidays/Pages/annual-leave.aspx>

- 3.6 Internship that is of a Pro Bono service nature must have been clearly declared to and approved by DKHMCC prior to commencement of the internship.

4. Central Provident Fund (CPF) Exemption

- 4.1 Host organisations in Singapore accepting full-time matriculated or registered students of SMU as interns are exempted from CPF contributions.

5. Training Employment Pass Exemption for International Students

- 5.1 Host organisations accepting international students who are full-time matriculated or registered students for internships in Singapore during vacation period (e.g. summer vacation, term break in December) are not required to obtain a training employment pass for the internship.
- 5.2 If their (international students only) internship periods fall within term time, the following MOM and University rules apply:
 - a) the students must have not previously completed the 10-week (minimum) internship requirement
 - b) the students must have sought approval from DKHMCC before they commence the internships, and

c) the students must have applied for and be granted Leave of Absence by the respective School before they commence the internships.

5.3 Pertaining to a) above, if an international student has already completed the minimum required period of internship but still wants to pursue another internship during term time, he or she will have to give up his or her student pass, and the host organisation will have to apply for a training employment pass for the student. Note that the granting of a work pass and subsequent re-instatement of a student pass is at the sole discretion of ICA.

6. Insurance

6.1 All SMU students are covered under a Group Personal Accident Insurance policy (24-hour worldwide). In addition to this insurance coverage, host organisations may wish to cover the interns under their organisation's insurance schemes. Details of the SMU's insurance policy can be found at URL: http://www.smu.edu.sg/students/student_life/services/index.asp.

6.2 If host organisations require interns to travel overseas for business trips or training purposes during the internship stint, host organisations must inform DKHMCC of the trip in advance. Interns are required to have adequate travel insurance to cover the entire duration of the overseas internship stint.

7. Safety at Work

7.1 Safety at work is paramount. SMU seeks the host organisation's co-operation to brief interns on any safety guidelines, and to equip them with the appropriate protective equipment (where applicable).

7.2 To prevent accidents, the interns should be supervised by trained staff of the organisations, and should be placed in a safe environment.

7.3 All accidents, whether major or minor, must be reported to DKHMCC immediately by calling (65) 6828 0177.

7.4 During vacation period, DKHMCC will activate a 24-hour Emergency Hotline at (65) 9008 7274 so that immediate follow-up actions can be taken by SMU. If necessary, the host organisation will be asked to conduct investigations and submit the accident reports to DKHMCC.

8. Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Special Arrangements

8.1 The host organisations may need to make reasonable special arrangements for the interns whenever necessary, for reasons including racial and cultural differences, religion, gender and/or disability (E.g. An intern with mobility challenges on wheelchair would need more space for movement and access).

8.2 In case of any complaint of discrimination or harassment, DKHMCC will investigate and/or resolve it in accordance with our internal policies and procedures.

9. Travel (Business Trips)

9.1 Where interns are required to travel (i.e., business trips), host organisations must inform DKHMCC in advance, and arrange for the interns' relevant visas, travel insurance coverage (see Insurance above), and reimburse the costs of air tickets, lodging, transport, and other essentials. We do not encourage interns to travel unaccompanied to a foreign country.

10. Visas for Overseas Internships

10.1 Overseas internships will be approved only if proper visas are obtained (e.g., training visa for India, F-visa for China, J-visa for the USA, FM3-visa for Mexico, etc).

11. Miscellaneous

11.1 Host organisations are to inform DKHMCC if a prospective intern has an immediate family member who will act as his/her supervisor or belongs to the host organisation's management team. DKHMCC shall review the matter and decide whether to approve the internship.

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