

Guidelines for internship or project work activity

Motivation

The curricular internship is an integral part of the Master's teaching path, and is aimed at consolidating the theoretical-practical training provided by lectures, exercises, and individual study, through the application of the learned notions in a real professional context.

Planned workload

The workload is officially quantified at 20 ECTS credits in the training project, which corresponds to 500 hours of activity.

The activity cannot likely start at the same time as the lessons, both to allow time to learn the basic notions to be applied in the activity itself, and to favor the presentation of collaboration proposals by companies and the subsequent phase of matchmaking between companies and students.

Considering an average effective duration of 20 weeks (e.g. March-July) the weekly commitment can be estimated at about 25 hours.

Internship

The estimated workload is structurally compatible with the status of full-time student, completing the 60 ECTS credits that define the standard effort for one academic year.

The Master undertakes to find, among the partner or otherwise available companies, offers of internship positions that are compatible with the educational objectives of the study path. Since this is a curricular internship, companies are not required to pay emoluments or refunds to trainees. They have nonetheless complete freedom to offer any kind of compensation package to students as part of their human resources management policy.

The topic of the internship must be clearly detailed in a training project signed by the company, by the trainee, and approved by the Master's Director.

The activity must be documented by keeping a timesheet that summarizes the time and activities carried out for each day of presence, or of autonomous study approved by the company.

The activities can be carried out either at the company's premises, or using distance working arrangements, pending company approval, in observance of security protocols, and adopting means to certify the completion of the planned amount of working hours.

Project Work

Due to the estimated workload, as well as to likely logistical and contractual constraints, carrying out an internship at a third-party company can be difficult for a working student.

Students finding themselves in this condition are offered the possibility to replace the internship with a project work, only if they work in a sector closely related to that of the Master, either as independent professionals, or as employees of a company.

This opportunity is not to be understood as an obligation: working students, who wish to organize themselves in such a way as to be able to carry out the internship in a company other than the one in which they are employed, have the right to do so.

The project work is by definition an individual activity proposed by the student and approved by the Master's Director. Formal agreements with third parties are not required. However, it is strongly recommended to students who choose this path to discuss synergies with their employer. It is advisable to try to integrate the training elements of the Master in one or more projects of interest of the company the student works for, both to optimize the workload (since the estimated commitment for project work must still justify the attribution of the 20 ECTS credits = 500 hours), and to have a real and stimulating application context driving the project.

Process and timing

(months make reference to the start of teaching activities, usually mid-November)

Phase 1 - Position Illustration - M1

Within the first month of the teaching activities, the Master organizes a meeting in which companies can present their activities and internship proposals to students, providing the contacts of the reference people to turn to for further information.

At the same time, the CVs of students are made available to companies.

Companies wishing to propose an internship position shall subscribe a formal agreement with the University, if not already active, as modeled in Annex C.

Phase 2 - Matchmaking - M2

For internships, students and companies are invited to be proactive in making contacts aimed at verifying their mutual interest. The Master's Director remains available to facilitate the process and assist in any overlapping of requests. A placement is globally guaranteed to each candidate, but it is not always possible to satisfy every single preference, e.g. by forcing a company which proposed a popular subject to accept an arbitrary number of interns.

At the same time, students who intend to opt for project work shall verify if and how they can integrate the topics covered in the Master in their work activities, or make feasible plans on how to carry out totally individual activities. The Master's Director remains available to give preliminary indications and opinions on the contents of the projects.

Phase 3 - Start of activities - M3

The training plans of the internships and the work programs of the projects are submitted to the approval of the Master's Director, who evaluates them with the help of the Scientific Committee.

For internships, the training plan is detailed on the form provided as Annex A and signed by the three parties (Company, Trainee, Master's Director).

For project works, the work plan that contextualizes and quantifies the planned activities is detailed on the form provided as Annex B and signed by the student and the Master's Director.

Phase 4 - Progress Check - M4/M5/M6

No less than once (halfway during the development period of the activities), but possibly more frequently (e.g. monthly), students send a detailed report of the progress of the internship or project to the Scientific Committee of the Master, through the Director.

With reference to what was agreed in the plan of activities, the report must state the respect of forecasted timeline, briefly but effectively document the obtained results up to that point, and make it possible to assess whether corrective actions are necessary.

Phase 5 - Conclusion of activities - M7

At the end of the activities, students send to the Scientific Committee of the Master, through the Director, a detailed report of the completion status of the internship or project.

For internships, this is accompanied by the complete timesheet, countersigned by the company representative.

Phase 6 - Final report - M9

Approximately one month before the final exam, students send the final report on their activities to the Scientific Committee of the Master.

The final report is a detailed technical document, similar to a university degree thesis, covering:

- an introduction of the basic concepts and tools exploited during the activities
- an illustration of the link between the activities carried out and the contents of the Master
- a description of the operating environment in which the activities took place
- a description of the activities carried out, highlighting the student's original contribution, and of the obtained results
- conclusions analyzing the effectiveness of the experience in terms of learning outcomes

There are no formal length limits. Empirically, a size around 8,000-10,000 words should be appropriate.

Phase 7 - Presentation

The final exam of the Master consists in the presentation of the project/internship activity, in front of the Scientific Committee of the Master, possibly supplemented by representatives of the partner companies, and subsequent discussion.

The presentation usually takes place with the help of slides and has an indicative duration of 15 minutes.