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THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Updated: May 2024

The University of Hong Kong
Innovation and Technology Commission (“ITC”) – STEM Internship Scheme

Frequently Asked Questions (“FAQ”) for Employers

Internship Posting

1. Where should employers post their internship openings?

All the job postings should be posted on HKU job board, [NETjobs](#). The employers can also post the internship openings on their own company websites; however, it is necessary to use NETjobs to report offer to student and apply for the Scheme.

2. Are there any maximum of STEM Internship quotas per company?

A basket of factors will be considered when assigning quotas for each company, including but not limited to total available funding, company size and operations, the mix of industry and job nature, the overall profile mix of participating students in the Scheme (e.g. local and non-local students), etc. Allowance will be earmarked ONLY when CEDARS approves the application NETjobs. CEDARS reserves the final rights of decision.

3. Can overseas companies join the Scheme?

Yes, the Scheme welcomes participation from overseas companies, as long as they comply with all the guidelines stipulated for the Scheme and the relevant local labor legislation. Overseas employers are responsible for covering any additional costs associated with hiring students from Hong Kong, including support for work visa applications if applicable.

Internship Requirements and Period

4. What does I&T-related jobs mean?

The Scheme adopts a broad definition of I&T for the internship, e.g. technology-related intellectual property work, digital marketing, artificial intelligence, data analysis, biotechnology, engineering, and science are all considered as I&T for the Scheme.

5. What is the eligible internship period under the Scheme?

The minimum eligible internship period is four consecutive weeks (i.e. 28 consecutive calendar days). While the maximum amount of allowance received by a student intern under the Scheme is capped at three months (i.e. 90 calendar days) in one academic year (from 1 September to 31 August of the following year).



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6. Can the internship be undertaken during term time under the Scheme?

Yes, eligible students should seek prior approval from School/Department and apply for a “Leave of Absence” (LoA).

Both non-local undergraduate and postgraduate students should have obtained No Objection Letter before job commencement. Students should reserve adequate lead time (4 to 6 weeks) for the School/Department and Hong Kong Immigration Department (ImmD) to process required documents.

Click [ImmD](#) and [HKU website](#) for further information.

7. There is a policy change for full-time non-local postgraduate students of taking up part-time jobs. How does it work for the Scheme?

According to Hong Kong Immigration Department (ImmD) starting from 1 November 2023, full-time non-local postgraduate students would be temporarily exempted from the restrictions on taking up part-time jobs. The ImmD will issue to eligible students through the institution new NOLs setting out the relaxation. Eligible students are NOT required to submit such applications separately. Current Students should contact their Faculty Office to obtain the updated NOLs. Students approved of visas/entry permits on or after 1 November 2023 shall be issued with the updated NOLs.

8. Is internship placement with remote working allowed under the Scheme?

In general, remote working where the participating employer and the internship are in different territories are not allowed under the Scheme (i.e. work from home in Hong Kong as the principle nature of the internship while the company is in the Mainland/overseas, or vice versa).

Student interns are encouraged to work in offices to have direct interaction with supervisors/colleagues for at least part of their internship time, so as to gain diversified work experience and develop better communication skills. For internship placement with mostly remote working, participating employers should provide enough supervision to the student interns and ensure attendance of work is clearly recorded. Notwithstanding the above, work-from-home arrangement due to severe pandemic situation is allowed.

9. Are students undertaking internship to fulfil a compulsory graduation requirement be eligible to receive allowance under the Scheme?

In general, the Scheme does not cover an internship arranged to meet the compulsory requirement for graduation of a degree programme. However, if the subject internship period is longer than the duration of the compulsory requirement, the portion of period in excess could be covered by the Scheme, if the other requirements as stipulated in this Guidelines are met.

For the purpose of the Scheme, an internship is not considered compulsory requirement if it is an optional requirement of a course. Yet for courses with a mandatory internship component which is listed as an option for fulfilling a compulsory graduation requirement but not as an elective, such internship is considered compulsory.



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10. Are holidays within the internship period be eligible for allowance?

Subject to the terms and conditions of employment, in general, the student interns are eligible to receive allowance for the intervening non-working Saturdays, General Holidays and Statutory Holidays fallen within the internship period. The start and end days of the contract of internship should be working days. If the start/end days fall on Saturday, General Holiday or Statutory Holiday, they will be regarded as unpaid leave unless there is a deliberate agreement between the employer and the student intern.

11. Are unpaid leaves allowed during the internship?

Student interns may take unpaid leaves during the internship. For instance, students may take unpaid leaves to handle other university commitments. Unpaid leaves will not be taken into consideration in the calculation of allowance under the Scheme. CEDARS will follow up on any unreasonable and excessive unpaid leaves taken as necessary.

Students who take 14 unpaid leave days or more in the whole internship period shall NOT be accepted.

12. If a student intern fails to complete an internship, is the student intern still eligible to receive allowance under the Scheme?

In general, a student intern should complete the internship satisfactorily to receive the allowance under the Scheme. If an internship is terminated prematurely due to unforeseeable circumstances, the student may receive allowance under the Scheme if the completed period is 28 consecutive days or more and other conditions as stipulated in the Guidelines are met. On the other hand, any honorarium owed to the student intern by the employer will be bound by the employment contract between the employer and student intern, and the requirements of the relevant laws and regulations. The university will not reimburse the employer any allowance which does not meet the requirements of the Scheme.

13. Can a student do more than one internship under the Scheme in the same academic year?

In general, a student intern may receive the allowance under the Scheme for more than one internship place in the same academic year, **provided that the participating employers are not the same, with the internship periods do not overlap and not exceeding 90 calendar days.** There is no restriction if the student intern has separate internships with the same participating employer over two academic years.



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Contract and Terms

14. Can the actual allowance received by a student intern be less or higher than the current allowance rate under the Scheme?

The monthly allowance received by the student intern during the eligible internship period must be at least HK\$11,190 (for 30 calendar days). If the employer offers a higher monthly allowance more than HK\$11,190 (for 30 calendar days), any extra amount and related expenses will be absorbed by the employer. Internships offering a monthly allowance lower than HK\$11,190 would NOT be accepted.

15. Is the allowance cover the contributions to Mandatory Provident Fund (“MPF”)?

The allowance under the Scheme should cover both the actual allowance paid to the student intern and, if any, the students’ contributions to MPF during the eligible internship period. The participating employers’ contributions to MPF should NOT be deducted from the allowance under the Scheme.

16. How will the Scheme count the student intern’s salary if the intern takes unpaid leave(s) during the internship?

Unpaid leave(s) taken by the student during the internship period are NOT covered by the Scheme, and the employer should deduct the pro-rata amount from the monthly rate divided by 30 days (at minimum 0.5-day intervals).

17. What should employers do if the intern terminates the employment contract earlier?

If the internship period is terminated earlier than as agreed due to any reason, the employer shall report the situation to the university immediately. The employer shall provide the pro-rata payment to the student based on the actual period worked to comply with local Employment Ordinance. However, if the actual period worked is less than 28 calendar days after deduction of all unpaid leaves taken by the student (if any), the Employer will NOT be reimbursed at all regardless of whom initiated the early termination.

18. Once the student confirms the offer, does it mean that the company will receive the funding?

No. Subject to availability of the funding, the allowance will be set aside ONLY when CEDARS approves the application via NETjobs, provided that the supporting documents are submitted by employers and confirmed by CEDARS upon completion of the internship according to the guideline stipulated for the Scheme. The employer and student should receive an approval email from CEDARS as a confirmation.

If employers and students started the internship without receiving CEDARS’s official approval email, employers may not be eligible for reimbursement at all.



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19. What is the mechanism of allowance calculation under the Scheme? There are 31 days in July and August, how much should students be paid in July and August?

According to [ITC's website](#), the purpose of calculating allowance under the Scheme, every 30 consecutive calendar days constitute a month (i.e. \$11,190/30 days; \$373/day).

Formula for allowance calculation under the Scheme:

$$\text{Allowance} = (\text{Internship period} - \text{Unpaid leave}) \text{ in days} \times \$373/\text{day}$$

Example 1: The employer pays daily salary.

Internship period: 3 June to 11 July 2024	
No. of calendar days	39 days
Unpaid leave taken	Nil
Monthly salary	\$11,190
Student's contribution to MPF	Nil
Total salary paid by the employer	\$14,547
Eligible no. of days included	39 calendar days
Allowance disbursed to the employer	\$373 x 39 days = \$14,547

Example 2: The student intern has taken unpaid leave. Student's contribution to MPF is included.

Internship period: 5 June to 30 August 2024	
No. of calendar days	87 days
Unpaid leave taken	3 day in July
Monthly salary (Net salary received by student)	June: HK\$9,698 (HK\$373 x 26 days) July: HK\$10,444 (HK\$373 x 28 days, deducted 3 unpaid leave days) August: HK\$10,630.50 (HK\$373 x 30 days, deducted MPF contribution)
Student's contribution to MPF (included in the allowance)	\$559.50 for August
Total salary paid by the employer (including student's contribution to MPF)	\$31,332
Eligible no. of days included	84 calendar days (87 days – 3 unpaid leave)
Allowance disbursed to the employer	\$373 x 84 days = \$31,332



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Allowance Payment to Interns and Reimbursement Claims

20. Can employer use personal bank account for reimbursements?

No. Reimbursement will NOT be made to any personal bank accounts. Employers shall get the company's local physical bank account ready by the time when submitting the online reimbursement claim after internship completion.

21. What information is required in the submitted payment proof to CEDARS?

Employers are required to submit proper proofs during the internship period with details showing which pay period each payment refers to. The payment proof should contain the following elements for reimbursement and audit purposes:

- Company name
- Student's full name
- Pay date
- Internship period covered
- Monthly salary
- No. of unpaid leaves, if any
- MPF (Employee's contribution), if applicable
- Total salary paid for respective months/days (with breakdown)

Employers can pay the student intern through different means such as bank transfer and company paycheques. Cash must not be used for any payment in case CEDARS requires additional proof.

*Remarks: If the total amount paid to the students deviates from what the student's contract stipulated and what was outlined in the confirmation email from CEDARS, clear explanation and breakdown of the various parts need to be provided. Employers who only provide copies of the pay cheque(s) to the student intern(s), screen captures of payment records and/or bank statement(s) without ALL the required elements above would NOT be reimbursed.



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The University of Hong Kong
Innovation and Technology Commission (“ITC”) – STEM Internship Scheme

Frequently Asked Questions (“FAQ”) for HKU Students

Job Applications

1. Where can students apply for the STEM Internship job postings?

Eligible HKU students can search for STEM internship opportunities on the HKU job board, NETjobs. Students can apply directly to the employer according to the application method stated in the job postings.

Students are strongly advised to check their eligibility according to the Scheme guideline and the [eligible STEM programmes list](#) before applying.

2. What is the process of STEM Internship application?

Students will go through standard recruitment processes as normal job application, like interviews by employer(s), wait for feedback and receive a job offer. Once a candidate is selected, the employer will report intended offer with your details to CEDARS for eligibility verification. Students will be required to provide a copy of HKU student card, completed Annex A, and other applicable documents to the employer for reporting offer. CEDARS will contact student or employer directly if necessary details are needed.

If you are eligible for the internship, CEDARS will approve the application and there will be an approval email sent to employer and student.

Interview Preparation and Support

3. How can I prepare for my interviews? Any support from CEDARS?

Students are welcome to join the training and coaching sessions offered by CEDARS. [Training workshops](#) are held before start of summer and winter internship periods, while [individual coaching sessions](#) are available for booking throughout the entire academic year.

Student’s Eligibility

4. Can Year 1 undergraduates apply for the Scheme?

Current full-time Year 1 undergraduates from [eligible STEM programmes list](#) can apply for summer internship under the Scheme.

Please note that certain programmes require students to declare major to be eligible, Year 1 students under those programmes are not eligible.¹

¹ Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Social Sciences, Bachelor of Education and Bachelor of Social Sciences (Only Geography major students are eligible to apply).



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5. Can non-local students join the Scheme? What are the requirements?

Yes. The ratio of non-local students to total number of HKU student interns is capped at 40%. Both non-local undergraduate and postgraduate students should have obtained No Objection Letter (NOL) before job commencement. Students should reserve adequate lead time (4 to 6 weeks) for the School/Department and Hong Kong Immigration Department (ImmD) to process required documents.

Click [ImmD](#) and [HKU website](#) for further information.

6. There is a policy change for full-time non-local postgraduate students of taking up part-time jobs. How does it work for the Scheme?

According to Hong Kong Immigration Department (ImmD) starting from 1 November 2023, full-time non-local postgraduate students would be temporarily exempted from the restrictions on taking up part-time jobs. The ImmD will issue to eligible students through the institution new NOLs setting out the relaxation. Eligible students are NOT required to submit such applications separately. Current Students should contact their Faculty Office to obtain the updated NOLs. Students approved of visas/entry permits on or after 1 November 2023 shall be issued with the updated NOLs.

7. Can final year students participate in the Scheme?

Final year local students can join the Scheme only if the start work day of the internship is before their graduation date and students should have valid student status.

For final year non-local students, the study/curriculum-related internship cannot take place when the student concerned has already fulfilled all the course/credit requirements for graduation (e.g. a student who has just finished his/her final year of study).

8. Can the internship be undertaken during term break under the Scheme?

Yes. For internship period during term break, eligible students should seek prior approval from School/Department and apply for a "Leave of Absence" (LoA), unless the internship period falls within the winter break. Non-local students should also seek endorsement from School/Department and apply for separate NOL via the Immigration Department before job commencement. Students should reserve adequate lead time (4 to 6 weeks) for the School/Department and Hong Kong Immigration Department (ImmD) to process required documents.

Click [ImmD](#) and [HKU website](#) for further information.

9. Can a student do more than one internship under the scheme in the same academic year?

In general, a student intern may receive the allowance under the Scheme for more than one internship place in the same academic year if the total internship period does not exceed 3 months (i.e. 90 calendar days), provided that the participating employers are not the same and the internship periods do not overlap. There is no restriction if the student intern has separate internships with the same participating employer over two academic years.



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10. Are students undertaking internship to fulfil a compulsory graduation requirement be eligible to receive allowance under the Scheme?

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For the purpose of the Scheme, an internship is not considered compulsory requirement if it is an optional requirement of a course. Yet for courses with a mandatory internship component which is listed as an option for fulfilling a compulsory graduation requirement but not as an elective, such internship is considered compulsory.

Contract and Allowance Disbursement

11. Who will pay the allowance to students? From the employer or HKU?

Employers should pay the allowance to students monthly. Students would NOT get paid from HKU.

12. What is the eligible internship period under the Scheme?

The minimum eligible internship period is four consecutive weeks (i.e. 28 consecutive calendar days). While the maximum amount of allowance received by a student intern under the Scheme is capped at three months (i.e. 90 days) in one academic year (from 1 September to 31 August of the following year).

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15. Are unpaid leaves allowed during the internship?

Student interns may take unpaid leaves during the internship. For instance, students may take unpaid leaves to handle other university commitments. Unpaid leaves will not be taken into consideration in the calculation of allowance under the Scheme. The relevant university should exercise due diligence to follow up on any unreasonable and excessive unpaid leaves taken and follow up as necessary.

However, students who take 14 unpaid leave days or more in the whole internship period shall NOT be accepted. The duration of internships less than 28 calendar days after deduction of all unpaid leave days (if any) shall NOT be reimbursed.

16. If a student intern fails to complete an internship, is the student intern still eligible to receive allowance under the Scheme?

In general, a student intern should complete the internship satisfactorily to receive the allowance under the Scheme. If an internship is terminated prematurely due to unforeseeable circumstances, the student shall report the situation immediately to CEDARS. The student may receive allowance under the Scheme if the completed period is 28 consecutive days or more and other conditions as stipulated in the Guidelines are met. On the other hand, any honorarium owed to the student intern by the employer will be bound by the employment contract between the employer and student intern, and the requirements of the relevant laws and regulations. ITC will not reimburse the university any allowance which does not meet the requirements of the Scheme.