



## **Internships and Placements Policy**

### **1. Context**

Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin, herein referred to as Trinity, provides an open environment where independence of thought is highly valued and where all students are encouraged to achieve their full potential. In order to support the application of a student's academic knowledge to the development of transferrable skills and to prepare them for their future careers, Trinity aims to create opportunities for students to engage in internships and placements during their time at Trinity, which may be for credit as part of their academic programme of study.

### **2. Purpose**

To create a Trinity-wide internship policy that sets out how internships and placements within the scope below are to be completed by registered Trinity students as part of their academic programme of study.

### **3. Scope**

This policy applies to

- (i) internships and placements for credit which form part of an academic programme of study at Trinity, at either undergraduate or postgraduate level
- (ii) internships for credit sourced by students themselves, e.g., summer electives
- (iii) internships that are not-for-credit but are approved by a School as complementing the student's programme of study and which are under Convention de Stage agreements (only relevant parts of this policy will apply).

Internships, placements and related co- and extra-curricular activities that are not approved by a School do not fall within the scope of this policy.

### **4. Definition**

For the purposes of this policy, an internship/placement, hereafter referred to as an internship, is defined as an approved and monitored work experience that meets specific learning goals consistent with programme learning outcomes and is within the scope of the policy.



## **5. Benefits**

This policy:

- provides a framework for good practice in internship provision at Trinity
- ensures the students' experience of internship is consistent across the University
- provides Schools with standards and guidelines on how to develop and manage existing and new internships
- supports the development of the graduate attributes
- supports the implementation of national policy objectives

## **6. Policy**

This policy sets out the minimum standards and guidelines to be applied to all internships at Trinity.

### **6.1 Rationale**

The inclusion of an internship within a programme should have a clearly stated academic and/or professional purpose. The internship should meet the specific learning goals consistent with the programme learning outcomes and advance the student's application of knowledge.

### **6.2 Module Design**

All internships must be defined within the context of a module or as part of a module and must be included in that module descriptor.

The duration and credit value of an internship is programme-specific and agreed by the School involved. It is recommended that to be considered a credit-bearing internship opportunity, the opportunity has a minimum credit weighting of 5 credits. The credit awarded should be based on the typical student workload in order to achieve the expected learning outcomes from the internship as determined by the School.

Learning outcomes for professional clinical practice placements will be as required by the School in accordance with relevant professional regulatory body guidelines.

The module descriptor will specify the academic requirements for the internship in terms of the number of credits to be awarded, eligibility requirements (if any), student workload, attendance requirements, duration of the internship, expected learning outcomes (including the achievement of specific competencies) and form of assessment to be used. Grounds for failure and opportunities for appeal of that failure should be clearly set out.



Depending on the nature of the programme, the module descriptor may be supplemented by a learning agreement, which indicates specific learning outcomes associated with that internship. This is usually agreed between the School, the student and the internship host site. Where a learning agreement is used, it should be agreed prior to commencing the internship.

Additional information such as regulatory information and guidelines, including requirements for Garda clearance, immunisation, insurance and health and safety, etc, should be available to students and referred to within the programme handbook.

### **6.3 Internship Identification**

Each internship offered must be able to provide the learning opportunities to enable students to meet the specified learning goals and will meet the required standard of support and supervision for the student. This will involve defining and using a methodology to assess the suitability of an internship host site to offer an internship. Travel advice notices from the Department of Foreign Affairs should be taken into consideration when assessing the suitability of international internship opportunities.

The School is responsible for making suitable internship opportunities available to students and for setting out the application and/or placement process. The Careers Service can support Schools in sourcing suitable internship opportunities.

Where an adequate number of suitable internships cannot be arranged, the School is responsible for making provision for comparable learning activities, such as project work, to demonstrate that the students has broadly met the learning outcomes for the module, provided that this is allowable within the requirements of the professional regulatory body where relevant.

The Disability Service will act in accordance with the Disability Service Reasonable Accommodation Policy to support the school, the student, and the placement or internship host site to identify accommodations required. In accordance with the correct procedure of disclosure as presented in the policy, they will liaise with one another to deliver these accommodations in a timely manner. School staff responsible for the allocation of student placements/internships will be requested to engage in relevant training with the Disability Service. Staff will also be asked to share necessary placement/internship information in order to develop student awareness of the support available from the Disability Service and placement or internship related accommodations. Please refer to the [Reasonable Accommodation Policy](#) for the full process and format of disclosure of disability on placement or internship.



Where students source and negotiate their own internship, e.g. summer electives for credit, the conditions of this policy apply, and the School should ensure that the standards, learning opportunities and assessment of that internship are suitable for the student's needs and, where relevant, are in accordance with the requirements of the relevant professional regulatory body. The School must ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to have ongoing engagement with a student during an internship. In the case of international internships, specific arrangements must be put in place to monitor the internship and offer support to the student in cases of emergency.

#### **6.4 Responsibility of Trinity College Dublin**

It is the responsibility of the College to ensure that the following are in place:

- Support, expertise and guidance on legal and health and safety issues as they relate to internship, e.g. guidance on risk awareness/assessment, protected disclosures etc.
- Appropriate levels of insurance, and support, expertise and guidance on insurance issues in line with Trinity's responsibility in relation to internships
- Student support services are available to students while they are on an internship.
- Designation of appropriate signatories for the different categories of internship, e.g. internship agreements, including agreements such as the "Convention de Stage", Memoranda of Understanding and Framework Agreements.

Trinity reserves the right to refuse to sign an internship agreement. This decision is final.

#### **6.5 Responsibility of the School**

##### **6.5.1 To Students**

It is the responsibility of the School offering the internship to ensure that students:

- complete all the necessary documentation relating to the internship.
- are fully briefed on the purposes of their internship experience.
- are aware of the academic and/or professional requirements of the internship.
- are aware of their obligations under student codes of conduct, health and safety, insurance and any other requirements, e.g. immunisation, Garda clearance, which may be specified by the School and/or the relevant professional regulatory body.



The School must make students aware of the following prior to the start of their internship:

- The need for students to sign a learning agreement prior to commencing their internship where relevant (in the case of students on clinical placements, the School may have an overall code of conduct that students sign for each year of their clinical placements)
- The need for students on professional clinical practice placements to complete all documentation required by their School and the relevant professional regulatory body.
- The name of the person(s) within the internship host site who will be their direct internship supervisor(s) and to whom they will report.
- The name of the person(s) who will be responsible for assessing their achievement of the specified learning outcomes for their internship.
- Clear information about the type, timing and weighting of assessment components associated with the internship (e.g. reflective diary, presentation, technical report, etc.)
- Relevant codes of practice and/or regulations that are specific to the internship host site and their requirement to comply with these.
- Where a programme operates a practice tutor system (involving staff who monitor or visit students on internship or staff in internship host sites whose duties include the support of students on internship), the identity of the practice tutor(s) and the roles of the internship supervisor(s) and practice tutor(s) in relation to their internship
- The mechanisms for raising complaints or concerns about their internship experience.
- Clear guidance on issues such as attendance, dress code, timekeeping, travel arrangements and workplace policies and procedures
- General requirements to work and behave in a safe manner under the relevant health and safety legislation.
- For international internships, the requirement for students to have their own personal insurance in place that covers travel and participation in work experience, including health/medical etc. and does not have any exclusion clause that might impact upon cover during the period of the student's internship. The School is advised to seek advice on this from the Trinity Insurance Office if required.
- For international internships, the requirement for students to be aware of the risks they may face while on placement abroad.
- The requirement for students to maintain ongoing contact with their identified Trinity point of contact(s) for their internship and to respond in a timely manner to any communications from the university.
- Students should also obtain a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) where relevant and register with their home Department of Foreign Affairs prior to travel.



- The expectation that they will uphold the same standards of conduct during an internship as is required of them whilst in attendance at Trinity in accordance with student codes of conduct and Trinity's Dignity and Respect policy.

### **6.5.2 To Internship Host Sites**

All internships require a signed Internship Agreement between the designated Trinity representative and the internship host site, which should be signed prior to the commencement of the internship. This should include information on health and safety and insurance requirements. This may take the form of a Framework Agreement. For professional clinical practice placement sites, this can take the form of a signed Memorandum of Understanding and/or a signed collaborative agreement.

In the case of an international internship where there is no internship host site or where the host site does not have relevant insurance cover, Schools must make students aware of the need to have appropriate personal insurance in place that covers travel and participation in work experience, including health/medical etc. and does not have any exclusion clauses that might impact upon cover during the period of the student's internship.

In addition, it is the responsibility of the School offering the internship to ensure that:

- The internship host site is fully briefed on Trinity's requirements and regulations that apply to the internship.
- There is a clear articulation of the role of the internship supervisor(s), which includes information about their role in monitoring, managing and assessing students during an internship.
- Internship supervisors are supported by the School to facilitate them in effectively carrying out their role, which may include the provision of training.
- Internship supervisors have a clearly identified point of contact in Trinity for the programme. Any conditions regarding the dissemination of the student's work outside the Host institution must be clearly articulated.
- Issues relating to intellectual property and non-disclosure agreements are addressed in the Internship Agreement where relevant.
- Before the start of an internship, where relevant, the internship host site must clearly outline the health and safety procedures in place at the host site, should specify the health and safety training and equipment that will be given to the student and confirm that all necessary insurances are in place.



## **6.6 Responsibility of the Academic Supervisor**

The role of the Trinity academic supervisor during an internship is to:

- Design the Learning Agreement in collaboration with the host site and the student.
- Oversee the assessment of the internship.
- Meet the student and/or internship host supervisor as required.
- Support the student to meet the requirements of the Learning Agreement
- Advise on actions to be taken if the requirements of the Learning Agreement cannot be met.
- Act as the point of the contact for the student for any concerns, health and safety or psychosocial issues such as bullying, harassment or stress.

## **6.7 Payment**

An internship may be paid or unpaid and must be in line with worker directives. For paid internships, students may need to become employees of the host organisation to facilitate payment. In such cases, the School should be satisfied that any employment contract offered to students does not impact on the conditions set out in the internship agreement.

## **6.8 Internship Assessment**

The module descriptor must clearly specify the type of assessment to be used and the type of award to be given, i.e. a pass/fail or a specific grade. Where internship supervisors are involved in the assessment of students, assessors and students should be made aware of the rubrics and criteria for assessment.

Grounds for the failure of an internship must be made clear. Arrangements must be put in place to allow for reasonable appropriate measures to be taken to address any identified deficits arising during an internship. The School will have in place alternative arrangements to deal with students who cannot complete their internship.

There should be information available on opportunities for the student to repeat the internship, or to remediate a failure, where that is possible. Programme regulations will apply in all cases of repeat and appeal.



## **6.9 Review and Monitoring of Internships**

Review meetings between the student, their academic supervisor and/or their internship supervisor(s) should take place during the internship, the purpose of which should be clearly set out. The number of meetings is subject to the duration and type of internship.

For all internships, there should be appropriate written evidence of a student's attendance and of satisfactory completion of the internship, which can be verified by the School.

Where an issue arises with a specific internship host site, that site should not be used again until all relevant issues are resolved.

All aspects of an internship programme should be kept under ongoing review by the School and such programmes are subject to revision. Records must be maintained by the School as required by the College Records Management Policy.

## **7 Responsibility**

The responsibility for this policy lies with the Vice Provost/Chief Academic Officer.

## **8 Related Documents**

- 8.1 Sample Internship Agreement (between Trinity and the internship host site)
- 8.2 Sample Learning Agreement (between the School, the student and the internship host site)
- 8.3 TEP Guidelines on Student Workload and Assessment
- 8.4 [Universities Safety and Health Organisation \(USHA\) Guidance on Health and Safety of Placements](#)
- 8.5 [ASET Good Practice Guide for Managing the Health, Safety and Welfare for Student Placements](#)

## **9 Document Control for Revised Policies**

- 9.1 Date of initial approval: 2 October 2019
- 9.2 Date revised policy approved: 16 October 2024
- 9.3 Date policy effective from: 16 October 2024
- 9.4 Date of next review: Academic Year 2029/2030