



**BEST PRACTICES FOR INTERNSHIPS IN THE
MEETINGS, INCENTIVES, CONFERENCES &
EXHIBITIONS INDUSTRY**

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BEST PRACTICES FOR INTERNSHIPS IN THE MEETINGS, INCENTIVES, CONFERENCES & EXHIBITIONS INDUSTRY

The Singapore Association of Convention & Exhibition Organisers & Suppliers (SACEOS) has developed this guide with support from the Singapore Tourism Board, to provide best practices for interns and companies in the MICE industry to reference when designing or embarking on internship programmes. Companies may reference the information and customise their programme in order to suit the organisation’s needs and requirements.

1. Objectives of Internship

Students/Interns would be able to:

- a. Gain on-the-job training opportunities in line with their field of study, skill set and career interests
- b. Apply knowledge and skills learned in class, and apply their academic learning in their course of study to a relevant work environment
- c. Gain insight to job opportunities, employer expectations, and practices and culture of the industry
- d. Improve problem-solving, innovation, interpersonal and communication skills
- e. Reaffirm career interests

Companies would be able to:

- a. Tap on students’ academic skills and knowledge, and establish a means to identify prospective employees
- b. Gain access to young talent with fresh perspective to the business

2. Mentorship framework

- a. Companies should submit the detailed job scope to the education institution at the application stage, to best match the right students (based on specialisation) to the job requirements. When the internship offer is confirmed, companies and education institutions should determine a set of mutually agreed expected learning outcomes. Students must be briefed on the scope of work and learning outcomes prior to commencement of their internship programme.

Nature & scope of work/ description of projects to be assigned	Expected learning outcomes	Skills & knowledge expected from students

- b. Companies are encouraged to:
- i. Assign a mentor¹ to the intern to facilitate understanding of the industry & organisation, guide the intern on job prospects and career pathways, and share work experiences and industry insights.
 - ii. Expose the intern to different job functions to gain real-life experience in the different event sectors. Recommended roles for the intern include:
 - Event operations
 - Business development
 - Marketing
 - Scientific programme management (including abstracts handling)
 - Housing & Registration
 - Conference management
 - VIP management
 - iii. Provide opportunities for the intern to be involved in the company's daily operations including internal and external meetings, and attend industry events (where possible) to network and gain exposure to the industry.
 - iv. Provide opportunities for interns to identify potential productivity and innovation challenges in the company to be scoped as a potential innovation /capstone project and facilitate interns' data collection processes.
 - v. Scope assignments so as to ensure the intern is engaged and contributes to the internship. This would also help the company assess the intern's problem-solving and time management skills e.g. workscope should not be fully mundane, tedious or laborious like packing of goodie bags, filing/printing of documents etc. only.
 - vi. Each assignment should have clear instructions, guidelines, expectations and a realistic timeline for completion.

3. Working hours

- a. Interns are generally expected to follow the operating hours of the company to which they are attached.
- b. Under the Employment Act², an intern who enters into a contract of service should not be required to work for more than 8 hours in one day or more than 44 hours in a week. However, an intern may be required to work overtime if they consent to do so, subject to the limit of 12 working hours per day.
- c. Total overtime hours should not exceed 72 hours per month. Companies must pay the intern for the extra hours of work or for working on rest days or public holidays. The rate for overtime work should be no less than one and a half times his/her hourly basic rate of pay.
- d. Companies must grant the intern one rest day (which is not paid) in a week, which may be on a Sunday or any other day.

4. Leave benefits

- a. Companies are encouraged to grant personal leave benefits in accordance with their human resource policies for internship duration of at least 3 months.

¹ A mentor/work supervisor is mandatory for credit-bearing internships. His/her role will also include supervising, providing regular feedback and supporting student throughout the internship.

² <https://www.mom.gov.sg/employment-practices/employment-act> (as of 22 Dec 2022)

- b. Companies are encouraged to make allowance for students to return to campus according to academic requirements, where applicable. This can be in the form of annual leave, approved time-off, or any special arrangements as allowed in their human resource policies.
- c. Companies should also grant the below types of leave on a case-by-case basis:
 - i. Medical leave supported by original medical certificate.
 - ii. Compassionate leave for bereavement of parents, grandparents and siblings. The number of compassionate leave given should follow that of the company's human resource policy.
 - iii. Leave of absence for official obligations such as competitions representing nation, medical check-ups required by MINDEF. Students are advised to apply for in-camp training deferment, subject to approval by MINDEF.

5. Allowance

- a. The recommended minimum allowance for an intern is between S\$800 – S\$1,000 for ITE and polytechnic students, and S\$1,300 – S\$1,800 for university students. This is to be mutually agreed between the intern and company prior to the start of the internship and should be documented via an employment contract.
- b. Companies should reimburse transport and mobile costs where necessary.
- c. Companies in Singapore accepting full-time matriculated students for internship programme are exempted from CPF contributions.
- d. Companies in Singapore accepting full-time matriculated students for internship programme can also apply for government grants, subject to eligibility³.

6. Workplace safety and wellbeing

- a. Companies are responsible for ensuring safe workplaces for all employees, including student interns. Any behaviour (physical, verbal and/or written) carried out by managers, colleagues, or other people encountered at the workplace (e.g. customers, contractors, other interns and volunteers), whether in or outside of the workplace, that causes or is likely to cause harm, harassment, alarm or distress to interns should not be tolerated.
- b. Companies should brief the intern thoroughly on safety guidelines and equip them with appropriate protective equipment where applicable (e.g. event/exhibition set-up).
- c. Companies should also include interns under their organisation's insurance schemes, such as Work Injury Compensation or other medical insurance.

7. Overseas Work Travel

- a. Companies should arrange and bear the cost of the interns' relevant visas, travel insurance coverage, air tickets, lodging, transport, and other essentials where necessary.
- b. The intern should only be allowed to travel after seeking official approval from the respective education institution via the Liaison Officer. If the intern is below 21 years of age, he/she must obtain parental or guardian consent as well.
- c. An intern should not travel unaccompanied to a foreign country.

³ <https://www.enterprisesg.gov.sg/non-financial-assistance/for-singapore-companies/talent-attraction-and-development/talent-attraction/global-ready-talent-programme-for-companies/overview> (as of 22 Dec 2022)

8. Onboarding

- a. Onboarding is a comprehensive programme designed to help new hires engage and integrate into the company, to transit into their roles in the department assigned, and to understand the culture of the company.
- b. A good onboarding programme enables the intern to feel connected to the company, as they form a favourable impression of the company.
- c. The onboarding should cover the following:
 - i. Orientation – to familiarise the intern with the company’s culture, mission, vision, values.
 - ii. Training programme
 - i. Self-introduction and introduction of the team members
 - ii. Discuss a set of achievable goals for the internship programme
 - iii. Review the Internship Career Development Plan to align on responsibilities of the intern and the assigned projects
 - iii. Networking session involving recent hires to share their work experience and aspirations (where feasible).

9. Work Pass for International Students

- a. Companies are exempted from applying for a work pass when hiring an international student for internship, if the student meets both of the following criteria:
 - i. holds a Student Pass issued by the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA)
 - ii. is a full-time matriculated or registered student in one of the approved institutions as listed by Ministry of Manpower⁴

10. Regular Feedback

- a. The supervisor/mentor should provide the intern with opportunities for regular and proactive feedback during the period of internship programme. The meeting could cover:
 - i. Providing feedback on the intern’s performance to date
 - ii. Sharing on the areas for improvement
 - iii. Showing recognition for the intern’s efforts, highlighting the achievements and positive qualities demonstrated
 - iv. Seeking feedback on the internship experience and whether the experience has met the intern’s expectations
 - v. Discussion on career aspirations and potential post-graduation opportunities

11. Early Job Offer

- a. Companies are encouraged to give early job offers to interns who performed very well during the internship period, who are believed to have a good fit for the organization and would fulfil the job requirements of any open vacancies.

⁴ <https://www.mom.gov.sg/passes-and-permits/training-employment-pass/list-of-acceptable-institutions#/>

Internship Career Development Plan

Recommended for internships of at least 3 months

Main Duties and Responsibilities of Intern	
1.	E.g. Development and execution of logistical plans for in-person, hybrid or virtual conferences
2.	
3.	

Training and Development Plan	Timeframe
E.g. Written and verbal communication skills	Month 1 – 2

Assigned Projects		
Name of Project	Dates	Task*/ Duties and Responsibilities
e.g. Congress A	Jun 2023	Onsite operations and exhibition fulfilment

*Task assigned should value-add to the intern’s learning and/or demonstrate application of skills and knowledge learnt

Intern’s Mentor	Mentor’s Position	Years of Experience

Career Development/ Progression Plan	Timeframe
E.g. Scientific Programme Management, Housing & Registration, Sponsorship & Exhibition	2 months each

Interns' Feedback Form

To be submitted to mentor/supervisor at the end of internship

1. Desired Learning Outcome (to be completed before internship)

Desired Learning Outcome	
1.	
2.	
3.	

2. Evaluation of work done (to be completed after internship)

Main Duties and Responsibilities	Learning Outcome

3. Review of internship experience

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
This experience gave me a realistic preview of the MICE industry as a career.					
As a result of my internship, I have a better understanding of concepts, theories, and skills learnt in my course of study.					
I was given adequate training or explanation of the projects assigned.					
I was provided levels of responsibility suited to my level of ability.					
There were ample opportunities for learning.					
I was assigned challenging and stimulating work.					
My supervisor was available and accessible when I had questions and/or concerns.					
The internship met my expectations and I have I gained professional experience that makes me prepared to enter the working world.					

4. Has this internship stimulated your interest in MICE? Why or why not?

5. What recommendations would you give to the employer for future internships?

Working with Intern's "Do's and Don'ts"

1. Do give them a well thought introduction to your industry and company
2. Do give them clear guidelines of the role and expectations
3. Do give them interesting and stimulating work
4. Do give both formal and informal feedback regularly
5. Do provide interns with contracts, insurance and expenses claims like all full-time staff
6. Do respect working hours and explain overtime policies at the beginning of the internship
7. Do try and make the assignment cover more than one role or project
8. Do solicit feedback and ideas from interns so that they feel part of the team/company
9. Don't get them to run personal errands such as coffee and laundry collection
10. Don't give them mundane or repetitive tasks for the duration of the internship
11. Do try to make sure the intern has fun – ***our industry is fun, rewarding and purposeful!***