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S I N G A P O R E

Journey from Institutes of Higher Learning (IHL) to Industry

Guidebook to Attract New Talents into MICE

2025 Edition





Foreword

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In today's dynamic and ever-evolving landscape, talent is the cornerstone of a thriving and growing MICE industry. A skilled and passionate workforce is the driving force behind innovative events, seamless experiences, and lasting impressions. As the industry continues to grow, the need for a robust talent pipeline has never been more critical.

SACEOS recognises the pivotal role that internships play in nurturing the next generation of MICE professionals. By providing practical experience and mentorship, internships offer invaluable opportunities for aspiring individuals to develop their skills, expand their networks and importantly, provide a pathway towards embarking on an exciting career in the MICE industry.

This **Guidebook to Attract New Talents into MICE** is developed by **SACEOS** in collaboration and dialogue with **Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs), interns and industry players**. The partnership between the industry and IHLs is critical in fostering a healthy talent development journey by creating high-quality internship programs, promoting industry knowledge and skills, and providing opportunities for a seamless transition from IHLs to industry. By working together, we can ensure the industry's continued growth and success.

The guidebook outlines best practices for designing and implementing effective internship programs that empower interns to reach their full potential. By adhering to these guidelines, companies can create structured and meaningful experiences that contribute to the growth of both the individual and the organisation.

As we strive to attract and retain top talent, it is imperative to cultivate a positive and supportive internship culture. By offering competitive compensation, meaningful projects, and a conducive work environment, companies can position themselves as employers of choice. Furthermore, by providing regular feedback, mentorship, and opportunities for professional development, we can empower interns to thrive and become valuable assets to the industry.

In conclusion, this internship guideline serves as a valuable resource for MICE companies to elevate their internship programs and attract top talent. By embracing these best practices, we can collectively shape the future of the MICE industry and ensure its continued success!

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 The Purpose of this Internship Guidebook

This Guidebook is developed "by the industry and for the industry" to serve as a guide with shared understanding, commitments and responsibilities on areas in which Student-Interns, Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs) and Employers need to know while preparing for internship recruitment engagement, performance and experience, onboarding and career development.

The Guidebook is a three-way engagement aiming to translate idealism and aspirations into more concrete collaborations and partnerships between industry and IHLs and with Student-Interns.



While some companies and IHLs may already have their own internship programme and policies, this is still a very useful benchmarking tool in setting up and realising the purposes of an internship programme for real-work applications.

More importantly, this Guidebook aims to lay down the requirements and expectations of internship and the responsibilities of the parties involved and to bridge the 'attitude-behaviour' gap. It provides Students, IHLs and Employers with guidelines to facilitate a productive and effective internship experience. Ultimately, with this leading to students finding an enriching career and for the industry practitioners to recruit and cultivate talents.

1.2 Definition & Importance of Internship in Career Development

An internship is a professional learning experience offered by a company for a limited period of time, playing a crucial role in an individual's career development.



It should be a paid engagement when hiring student-interns. It provides students with learning opportunities and practical experiences in a specific industry-sector or field.



Internship serves as a vital bridge between academic knowledge and professional application. It offers a platform for students to apply theoretical knowledge to gain practical skills in real-world settings and explore their career interests.



Internship provides an opportunity for individuals to build professional networks, receive mentorship, and enhance their resumes, and hence making them more competitive in the job market.



1.3 Overview of the Guidebook's Contents

- ▲ This Guidebook is published to establish a set of guidelines for employers and IHLs in helping students and new MICE talents enter and stay in the MICE industry.
- ▲ It covers the benefits of internships, the roles and responsibilities of each party involved, challenges that may arise, and elements to ensure a positive and enriching internship experience.
- ▲ By addressing these key aspects, the Guidebook aims to facilitate a mutually beneficial, fulfilling and successful internship experience for all stakeholders.

Chapter 2: Benefits of Internship

2.1 People Development Opportunities

Practical Application of Skills

Internships provide individuals with:

- ▲ Opportunities to apply knowledge and skills in a professional setting.
- ▲ Practical knowledge and work experience, boosting self-confidence.
- ▲ Improved professional skills, including:
 - Communication
 - Problem-solving
 - Time management
 - Networking and relationship management

These skills are essential for achieving success in career pathways.



Development of Workplace Skills

Through hands-on experience in a real work environment, interns can:

- ▲ Develop essential skills such as:
 - Communication
 - Time management
 - Problem-solving
 - Teamwork
- ▲ Gain exposure to industry-specific practices and standards.
- ▲ Enhance their overall professional growth and readiness for future career pathways.



Support for Employers

- ▲ Provide a platform for hands-on internships.
- ▲ Ease workloads by assigning essential tasks to interns.
- ▲ Support project organisation and execution through intern contributions.



Fresh Perspectives and Innovation

- ▲ Bring fresh ideas and perspectives.
- ▲ Challenge the status quo.
- ▲ Spark innovation for new project launches.
- ▲ Refresh the implementation of existing projects.



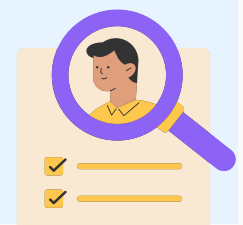
Efficiency During Busy Periods

- ▲ Free up employees to focus on strategic tasks.
- ▲ Provide support during busy periods.
- ▲ Assist during staffing shortages with proper planning.



Talent Pipeline Development

- ▲ Offers a powerful recruitment opportunity.
- ▲ Enables hiring of top-performing interns as full-time employees.
- ▲ Provides a cost-effective employment strategy.
- ▲ Helps retain talent and build a strong pipeline of future leaders.



2.2 Networking and Mentorship



Networking Opportunities Through Internships

▲ Internships offer a unique platform for individuals to build professional networks and seek mentorship from experienced professionals. By interacting with colleagues, supervisors, and industry experts, interns can establish meaningful connections that may lead to future career opportunities.

Bridging the Mentorship Gap

▲ In mentorship, we see a gap in guiding interns as well as new employees to perform the role of mentor-mentee relationship. To bridge this gap, it is important that seasoned industry practitioners are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to guide, train and mentor their interns including the full-time staff.

▲ SACEOS, in strategic partnership with Singapore Institute Technology (SIT), has designed a [Mentorship workshop](#) to provide guidance, advice, and insights into the industry, contributing to the professional and personal development of both interns and new employees.

2.3 Skill Enhancement and Practical Experience



▲ One of the primary benefits of internships is the opportunity to enhance and apply existing skills in a practical setting. Interns have the chance to put theoretical knowledge into practice, gaining hands-on experience that complements their academic learning. This practical experience not only strengthens their skill set but also provides a deeper understanding of industry dynamics, processes, and best practices.

▲ Internships play a pivotal role in preparing individuals for their future careers and equipping them with the necessary tools to succeed in the professional world.

Chapter 3: Roles/Responsibilities of Employers

3.1 Providing a Structured Learning Environment

- Employers have a responsibility to create a structured learning environment for interns. This includes familiarising interns with the companies' policies, procedures, and culture.
- By outlining clear expectations and providing an overview of the internship programme, employers can help interns know what are expected of them in terms of work, behaviour, communication and understand their roles within the companies or projects and the learning opportunities available to them.

Example: Intern Engagement in Channel Marketing



An intern in Channel Marketing (Hosted Buyer Programme) function receives a task to build a database from identified target markets.



The intern wonders about the significance of the task and its importance.



A full-time employee explains how the intern's contributions are vital to the success of the event.



The intern gains a better understanding and appreciation of their role, feeling more engaged and motivated.

3.2 Assigning Meaningful Tasks and Projects

Align Tasks with Career Goals

- ▲ Employers should assign interns with meaningful tasks and projects that are aligned with their educational background and career interests. These assignments should provide interns with opportunities to apply their skills, contribute to the organisation, and gain valuable experience.
- ▲ By involving interns in substantive work, employers can ensure that the internship is a valuable learning experience.



Clear Job Descriptions

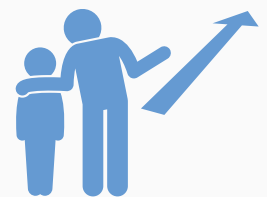
- ▲ Ensuring that the job scope written on the Job Description Form (during interview) should not be very different from the actual work done during internship, i.e., usually job scope given was too vague with the learning curve being too steep. Interns may become overwhelmed and form a negative impression of the industry.

Recommendation:

For Human Resource/Project Head to align on the job scope assigned to the interns.

3.3 Offering Guidance and Feedback

- ▲ Employers are responsible for offering guidance and feedback to interns throughout the duration of the internship. This includes providing clear instructions, answering questions, and offering support as interns navigate their responsibilities.



- ▲ Regular feedback sessions allow interns to understand their strengths and areas for improvement, contributing to their professional development.
- ▲ Feedback should be specific and constructive.
- ▲ Employers should make the interns feel valuable.

3.4 Ensuring a Safe and Inclusive Workplace

1

Safe and Inclusive Workplace

Employers must ensure the workplace is free from discrimination, harassment, and any form of bias, creating a conducive environment for learning.

2

Promote Diversity and Inclusion

Employers should actively promote diversity, respect interns' perspectives, and foster an inclusive culture.

3

Provide Support Resources

Employers need to provide resources for interns to address any concerns related to their well-being or safety.

4

Create a Positive Learning Environment

By meeting these responsibilities, employers can create a supportive environment where interns can learn, grow, and contribute effectively to the organisation.



Chapter 4: Roles/Responsibilities of Interns

4.1 Demonstrating Professionalism and Commitment

- ▲ Interns are expected to demonstrate professionalism and commitment throughout their internship. This includes adhering to the organisation's dress code, punctuality, and work ethic.
- ▲ By maintaining a professional demeanor and showing dedication to their responsibilities, interns can make a positive impression and contribute to a productive work environment.

4.2 Actively Seeking Learning Opportunities



- ▲ Interns should proactively seek learning opportunities within the organisation. This may involve expressing interest in specific projects, volunteering for additional tasks, or shadowing experienced employees to gain insights into different aspects of the business.
- ▲ By actively engaging in the learning process, interns can maximise their exposure and broaden their skill set.



4.3 Seeking Feedback and Guidance

- ▲ Interns are encouraged to seek feedback and guidance from their supervisors and colleagues.
- ▲ By actively soliciting input on their work, interns can gain valuable insights into their performance, identify areas for improvement, and refine their skills. Open communication with mentors and supervisors can also provide interns with guidance on navigating challenges and maximising their learning experience.



4.4 Adhering to Workplace Policies and Ethics

- ▲ Interns should be responsible for adhering to workplace policies, procedures, and ethical standards. This includes respecting confidentiality, following company guidelines, and upholding professional conduct.
- ▲ By demonstrating integrity and ethical behavior, interns contribute to a positive work culture and build trust with their colleagues and supervisors.
- ▲ By embracing these responsibilities, interns can make the most of their internship experience, demonstrate their potential as future professionals, and contribute positively to the organisation.

Chapter 5: Roles/Responsibilities of Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs)

5.1 Facilitating Internship Placements

- ▲ IHLs play a crucial role in facilitating internship placements for their students. This involves establishing partnerships with organisations, identifying suitable internship opportunities, and coordinating the placement process.
- ▲ By connecting students with relevant industry partners, IHLs contribute to the practical application of academic learning and the overall professional development of their students.

5.2 Providing Support and Guidance to Interns

- ▲ IHLs should provide ongoing support and guidance to interns throughout their internship experience, which includes conducting mock interview sessions, offering orientation, supplying resources for professional development, and being a point of contact for assistance with any challenges.
- ▲ By offering this support, IHLs can help interns navigate their roles effectively and maximise their learning experience.

5.3 Ensuring Alignment of Internship with Academic Curriculum

Aligning Internships with Academic Goals



- ▲ IHLs must ensure that the internship experience aligns with the academic curriculum and learning objectives of the students by establishing clear connections between the practical experiences gained during the internship and the theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom.
- ▲ By aligning the internship with academic goals, IHLs can enhance the overall educational experience and help students integrate their learning into real-world contexts.

Salary Insights and Career Expectations



- ▲ Sharing starting salary range benchmarked by industry (as recommended in Chapter 6; 6.1) and career progression can also be beneficial for the student-interns, as it manages expectations and provide them with a realistic picture of the industry and the potential growth and advancement.
- ▲ This will enable students to make informed decisions about their career path and increase their motivation and engagement during internship.

5.4 Monitoring and Evaluating Intern Performance

IHLs are responsible for monitoring and evaluating the performance of interns during their internships. This may involve collecting feedback from supervisors, conducting assessments, and evaluating the learning outcomes achieved by the interns.

By monitoring intern performance, IHLs can assess the effectiveness of the internship programme, identify areas for improvement, and provide valuable insights for future internship placements.

By fulfilling these responsibilities, IHLs can ensure that their students receive meaningful and impactful internship experiences that complement their academic learning and prepare them for successful careers in their chosen fields.

Chapter 6: Challenges Faced by the Employers, Interns, and IHLs

6.1 Salary Expectation

- ▲ The reality is that it is getting competitive. Hence, it is recommended that companies benchmark interns' salary in the range between S\$750 per month and S\$1,450 per month.
- ▲ This will help mitigate companies being unable to recruit interns due to competitive salary offering.
- ▲ Students do appreciate internships that offer a fair stipend or compensation for their work engagement. This will drive enthusiasm and drive positivity in joining the industry.



6.2 Communication and Expectation Management

- ▲ Challenges related to communication and expectation management can arise for all parties involved in the internship process.
- ▲ Employers, interns, and IHLs may face difficulties in effectively communicating roles, responsibilities, and expectations. Clear and transparent communication channels need to be established to ensure that all stakeholders are aligned on the objectives of the internship, the scope of work, and the learning outcomes.

6.3 Balancing Workload and Learning Objectives

- ▲ Finding the right balance between the workload assigned to interns and their learning objectives can be a challenge.
- ▲ Employers may need to ensure that interns are given tasks that are both meaningful and manageable within the internship duration.
- ▲ Interns, on the other hand, may need to communicate their learning goals and seek opportunities to engage in projects that are aligned with their educational and career aspirations.

6.4 Varying Levels of Competency vis-à-vis Duration

Bridging Competency Gaps in Digital Tools

One common challenge faced by interns is the varying levels of competency with essential digital knowledge and tools to perform their tasks. While some students may have a strong grasp of these tools, others may require additional training and support to effectively utilise them in a professional setting. Bridging this skills gap can be crucial for interns to contribute meaningfully to their roles.

Balancing Education with Practical Experience

Balancing the pursuit of further education with gaining practical work experience can be a significant challenge for interns. Many students may be considering or committed to further studies, and finding the right timing and balance between academic pursuits and gaining real-world experience can be a complex decision. Reskilling, upskilling and cross skilling are essential in today's workplace.

Aligning Internship Duration Expectations

A significant challenge arises from the mismatch in preferred internship durations between students and companies. While students (especially universities' undergraduates) may typically seek internships lasting 3 months, companies often require longer durations, such as 6 months, to provide comprehensive training and meaningful project involvement. Aligning these differing expectations presents a notable challenge for both parties.

Recommendation: Expand from that point where 3 months internship may be too short. Employers should try to offer the students to come back as part time employees to execute the actual events where timing fits. This should also be an option for interns who have completed 6 months of internships but would like to experience the actual event. This gives the sense of completion and fulfilment.

6.5 Addressing Diversity and Inclusion Issues

- ▲ Diversity and inclusion issues can present challenges within the internship environment.
- ▲ Employers and IHLs need to create inclusive spaces that respect and value individual differences.
- ▲ Interns should feel supported and included regardless of their background, and efforts should be made to provide equal opportunities for all interns to contribute and learn within the organisation.



6.6 Managing Conflicts and Misunderstandings

Potential for Conflicts

Conflicts and misunderstandings may arise between employers, interns, and IHLs during the internship process. It is important to address these issues promptly and constructively.



Proactive Conflict Resolution

Open lines of communication, conflict resolution mechanisms, and a proactive approach to addressing misunderstandings can help mitigate these challenges and maintain a positive and productive internship experience for all parties involved.

Collaborative Approach

By acknowledging and proactively addressing these challenges, employers, interns, and IHLs can work together to create a supportive and enriching internship environment that maximises the learning and professional development opportunities for the interns.

Chapter 7: Elements to Ensure a Positive and Enriching Internship Experience



7.1 Clear Learning Objectives and Expectations

- ▲ Establishing of clear learning objectives and expectations is essential for creating a positive internship experience.
- ▲ Employers and IHLs should collaborate to define specific learning goals that align with the intern's academic curriculum and career aspirations.
- ▲ Clear expectations help interns understand what is expected of them and provide a roadmap for their professional development during the internship.

7.2 Regular Feedback and Evaluation



- ▲ Regular feedback and evaluation mechanisms are crucial for the continuous growth and development of interns.
- ▲ Employers and supervisors should provide constructive feedback to interns on their performance, projects, and professional conduct.
- ▲ This feedback loop allows interns to understand their strengths, areas for improvement, and progress, contributing to their overall learning experience and skill enhancement.

7.3 Networking and Exposure to Different Aspects of the Industry

- ▲ Interns should be provided with opportunities to network and gain exposure to various aspects of the industry. This may include participation in industry events, meetings with professionals from different departments, and exposure to diverse projects and initiatives within the organisation.
- ▲ Networking opportunities enable interns to build professional connections and gain a holistic understanding of the industry landscape.



7.4 Opportunities for Skill Development and Growth

- ▲ Interns should be given opportunities for skill development and growth during their internship. This may involve participation in training sessions, workshops, and mentorship programs aimed at enhancing their technical, interpersonal, and leadership skills.
- ▲ Providing interns with opportunities to develop and apply new skills contribute to their professional growth and prepare them for future career endeavors.
- ▲ By incorporating these elements into the internship experience, employers and IHLs can ensure that interns receive a well-rounded and enriching experience that aligns with their educational and career development goals.



Chapter 8: Conclusion

This Guidebook aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the internship experience for employers, interns, and IHLs, and to ensure a mutually beneficial and enriching experience for all parties involved.

In conclusion, a successful internship experience relies on the collaborative efforts of employers, interns, and IHLs to create a supportive and enriching environment. Clear communication, well-defined learning objectives, and regular feedback are essential elements that contribute to the positive development of interns. Additionally, providing networking opportunities, exposure to diverse industry aspects, and avenues for skill development fosters a comprehensive learning experience.

By addressing challenges such as communication, workload balance, diversity, and conflict management, all stakeholders can work towards creating an inclusive and productive internship environment. Ultimately, the commitment to fulfilling roles and responsibilities, coupled with the implementation of key elements, ensures that interns gain valuable practical experience, professional growth, and a strong foundation for their future careers.

Singapore Association of Convention and Exhibition Organisers and Suppliers (SACEOS) too can play a pivotal role by participating in career fairs and talks as well as providing networking opportunities to connect students with industry practitioners. These opportunities provide students with information about the industry and the various career opportunities available to help them make informed decisions.

Chapter 9: Acknowledgements / Credits

This Internship Guidebook 2025 Edition is published by:

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Credits

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