

4.1 Information guideline for student

4.1.1 Practical placement objectives

The main objectives of student practical placement are the acquisition of practical knowledge in the areas in which the student is engaged in during his studies and application of acquired theoretical knowledge, the possibility of becoming familiarized with the business culture in enterprises and the acquisition of communication skills, enabling better understanding of the business environment where he needs to develop problem solving skills through team work and his own initiative and analysis. In addition to this, practical placement should help the student to start developing his own career, which requires additional knowledge and skills, education or trainings apart from formal university education. It is also the opportunity to find topics for his graduation exam and orientation towards the future occupation.

4.1.2 Practical placement types

Depending on the academic curriculum of studies and level of studies (BSc or MSc), each faculty as a member of university has a defined mandatory practical placement of different duration and implementation dynamics. In the WBC region, where the project is implemented, four types of student practical placement have been identified:

- Student practical placement during the final semesters of BSc and MSc studies, as a mandatory subject (6ECTS), lasting 75 hours; it is usually realized through student attendance in an enterprise once a week (8 hours)
- Summer practical placement that is realized during summer vacation (after the final semesters of BSc and MSc studies), lasting 1 month (a minimum of 20 days), the student spends 8 hours a day in the enterprise on work days
- The practical placement abroad, in companies or research centres, in coordination with the offices for international cooperation at universities, or within dedicated donor programs; it is often realized during school breaks without disturbing the current semester and study commitments.
- Practical placement of graduate students (graduates) who want to acquire necessary practical knowledge and skills that can improve their employability within "paid" or "unpaid" practical placements in some enterprises, lasting from 6 months to a year

This guide does not specify any of the ways of realization of student practical placements, but the student is obliged to enquire in the faculty services about the possible and permissible ways of realization, defined by the curriculum and studying regulation act. In the case of realization of the third type of practical placement, it is necessary to follow the rules of donor program and coordination of relevant office/centre for international cooperation.

4.1.3 Benefits for students

- Acquisition of practical knowledge and skills in the field of studies, often connected with solving real problems at workplace
- The student can see how the teaching material covered within subjects of studies is applied and how relevant it is to the real situations in the business, which increases learning motivation
- Making business contacts and increasing chances for future employment through gathering additional references in CV, by working at real jobs
- Developing business communication skills and team work

- Access to career development opportunities and proper decision making as regards the choice of future occupation
- Broader understanding of domestic and international business environments and communications required for career development and business development
- Sometimes practical placement can be a source of additional revenue, if the company that provides practical placement wishes and is able to finance part of the student's realized activities; it is defined by the contract

4.1.4 Student responsibilities

The successful realization of practical placement depends on meeting certain obligations by all actors (students, universities/faculties, enterprises). This annex lists some of the most important student responsibilities and obligations as regards the realization of practical placement in an enterprise:

- Understanding specific obligations and Work programme of practical placement that were agreed upon with academic and industrial mentor
- Defining and respecting additional responsibilities with industrial mentor (if needed)
- Hardworking and responsible approach to work and readiness to take the initiative
- Respecting work ethics and codes of conduct defined by the enterprise that enables the practical placement,
- Compliance with working time, agreed upon with academic and industrial mentor
- Respecting confidentiality and keeping trade secrets
- Adherence to established dress code (if applicable)
- Knowingly refer to the property of enterprise and carefully handle the equipment and software
- Self-care for the safety and health care at workplace dedicated to realization of practical placement, with compliance with the rules of that enterprise, defined by the Health and safety protection act; at the beginning of practical placement student must be made aware of the provisions of Regulation act
- Controlled usage of the Internet and e-mails solely for purposes of work and realization of practical placement, in accordance with the rules of the enterprise
- Student needs to show a high level of initiative and interest which may greatly affect the quality of acquired practical experience and skills development, and thus the achieved learning outcomes
- Fulfilling all obligations defined by the curriculum of the faculty/university, which refer to keeping the Diary of practical placement (Annex 4.14), making of Final report (Annex 4.13), and regular communication with academic and industrial mentor
- Student should present his academic institution the best he can, and to be its "ambassador", which would contribute to raising the prestige and visibility in the business environment, and also enable permanent faculty and enterprise cooperation in the future
- In the case of overseas practical placement, additional rules and obligations that are defined by contract with the donor and/or in agreement with the competent centre of university/faculty (Office for international cooperation of universities, Career development centre, or Collaborative Training Centre) are applied.

4.1.5 Preparation of student and the procedure of practical placement realization

a) Selection of enterprise / institution for the practical placement realization

The student should be familiarized with the possibilities of practical placement realization in domestic environment and possibly abroad. In addition to practices that are realized in enterprises,
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which is the most common case, and most recommended, the student is left the opportunity to realize practical placement in research units of universities or institutes as well, if the student is planning to pursue scientific career. In the case of realization of practical placement in the enterprise, student will use all available resources for searching information about available enterprises/institutions for the realization of practical placement, as listed below:

- Using Enterprise Database on the web site of the University and / or its units (Faculties, Departments), that is the relevant university centres (Centre for Career Development, Cooperative Training Centre), a contract is concluded with the enterprise that defines rights and obligations of both parties; possible model and structure of the enterprise database are shown in Chapter 3.2 of this PPP
- Recommendation of professor in charge of practical placement coordination (academic mentor)
- Personal contacts made earlier during visits to enterprises through the realization of seminar papers activities and practical exercises on regular classes of subjects of studies
- Individual enterprise search, interviews, meetings; in this case the student prepares CV
- Watching for open competitions of practical placement realizations in enterprises ("paid" and "unpaid")

b) Communication and contracting practical placement

After searching possibilities for the realization of practical placement, recommendations and discussions with representatives of the relevant centres of the university/faculty or coordinators of practical placement, the student fills out the [Application Form](#) (see Annex 4.4), where he defines his wishes. The final choice of enterprise/institution student makes by consultation with academic mentor or coordinators of practical placement at colleges or authorized centres of universities/faculties, on one hand, and the representative of the enterprise responsible for the coordination of practical placement - the industrial mentor, on the other hand. Faculties are required to provide the student with information about academic mentors and their contacts (in student services and on the web site). Student schedules a meeting with academic mentor.

If the practice is realized during the semester, prior activities (a and b) are carried out before the start of the semester, so that realization can begin in the first week of the semester. In the case of so-called vacation practice, communication and contracting are to be finished by the end of the semester.

Academic mentor verifies [Referral/Confirmation form](#) (see annex 4.5) and send it to contact person of host institution/company. Responsible contact person will include the contact information of company and Industrial mentor who is responsible for coordination and monitoring of practical placement realization, in the table, and to confirm with signature that the student is accepted to undergo student practical placement in their institution/company. Thus, the process of communication and contracting practical placement is completed.

c) Preparation of practical placement Work programme

In consultation with academic and industrial mentor, the student prepares a proposal of the [Practical Placement Work programme](#) that is finally approved by academic and industrial mentor. When doing this, the area in which the student plans to develop his career, the skills and knowledge he is missing, and the needs of the enterprises for new young staff are taken into consideration. In this way, via practical placement programme, the supply and demand can be harmonized and the employability of youth can be increased. Recommended areas of Practical Placement Work programme, apart from professional ones pertaining to the field of study and student profile would be:

- Introduction to the organization of enterprises and business trends
- Resource management
- Business documents' management

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- Introduction to production and/or services' programme of the enterprise and the processes of creating added value
- Application of ICT in business
- Business Communication (written, electronic, verbal and nonverbal)
- Activities on developing links between theory and practice in specific area the student is engaged in
- Organization of team work and development of presentation skills

The final Practical Placement Work programme is signed by both mentors and student.

d) Practical placement realization

In accordance with the established practical placement work programme, student conscientiously carries out all planned activities and assigned tasks under the supervision of industrial mentor and possibly the person who is in charge of his training and progress monitoring. Student fills out practical placement Diary regularly every day, as the basis for monitoring progress and making of Final Report.

Apart from developing practical knowledge of the profession, student is expected to develop time management skills through making daily and/or weekly action plans, with a set of different activities on different locations and business sectors, under the supervision of industrial mentor. Self-initiative and self-organization are also skills that need to be developed at this point.

Depending on the affinity and previous knowledge, student can be involved in the ongoing activities of the enterprise by being included in the team and the realization of smaller tasks, thereby increasing student motivation for further professional development and commitment to a particular occupation. At the same time, industrial mentor can evaluate the student in different situations, his ability to solve concrete problems, and propose his scholarship and/or employment in the following period. Also, the enterprise can determine the financial compensation for the work of the student during practical placement.

During the realization of practical placement, the student is required to maintain regular communication with academic mentor, who is also required to monitor practical placement, student progress and the level of expected learning outcomes and practical skills acquisition.

4.1.6 Reporting and Monitoring

During practical placement implementation, the student is obliged to keep the Diary of practical placement up to date and give access to it to mentors who monitor the implementation of PPP. Besides the so-called field monitoring, which is realized by academic mentor's visits of students in the enterprise (minimum 2 visits), and continual monitoring of student progress and realization of activities defined by industry mentor in Practical placement programme, the realization of practical placement will be additionally monitored by e-mail communication and student reporting. Records and monitoring results are an integral part of the Monitoring reports (see annexes 4.8 and 4.9), which is filled out by mentors.

The student is required to do reporting on the practical placement realization, and in the following ways:

- Regular e-mail communication with academic mentor and occasional meetings
- Oral communication with industry mentor
- Presentation of the outcomes of activities carried out during the practical placement within monitoring visits of academic mentor
- Keeping the Diary of practical placement, with a brief description of realized daily activities
- Making a written Final report, which is reviewed and approved by academic mentor

- Presentation (PPT) of contents of the Final report to mentors and colleagues at the university, in order to disseminate and advertise the results of practical placement (those that are non-confidential)

With the Final report, the student also submits the Industrial mentor's monitoring form (annex 4.8, which is signed (and stamped) by industrial mentor or person in charge of practical placement coordination in the enterprise. With this monitoring form, industrial mentor confirms and assesses student's practical placement.

After the Presentation and Final report submitting, academic mentor evaluates the student taking into consideration not only the quality of the Final report and evaluation of the achieved objectives of practical placement and learning outcomes, but the content of Monitoring reports by both mentors as well.