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Development of Liaison Offices between Academia and Industry in Cypriot Universities-Quality in placements-INENTER project results

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THE INENTER CONSORTIUM: 13 PARTNERS

1. University of Cyprus (CY) (coordinating organization),
2. Network of Universities of the Capitals of Europe-UNICA (BE),
3. Tallinn University of Technology (EE),
4. Vilnius University (LT),
5. Universite Libre de Bruxelles (BE),
6. Univ. Of Warsaw (PL),
7. University of Vienna (AT),
8. University of Latvia (LV),
9. European Association of Erasmus Coordinators-EAEC (CY),
10. Chambre de Commerce & d' Industrie du Paris (FR),
11. EUE-net / MAC Team (BE),
12. Université de Lausanne (CH),
13. University of Zagreb (HR).

WHAT ARE THE MAIN OUTCOMES?

1. Guide of Good Practices and Quality for Placements
2. Conference Proceedings
3. INENTER Manual : Current University Practices in the Management of Transnational Placements.
4. INENTER Training Course: INENTER (CY-2012-090-005): Successful Management of Quality Placements and Internships



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GUIDE

- **Chapter 1: Models and tools for managing internships;**
- **Chapter 2: Models and tools of cooperation with enterprises;**
- **Chapter 3: Methodology and tools for measuring the quality of placements**

(with appropriate indicators included in each chapter)

This Guide is published in 8 European Languages.

[Click here to read the guide](#)





CHAPTER 1: MODELS AND TOOLS FOR MANAGING INTERNSHIPS

What do we mean by “**management**” of placements?

All steps that lead to the organization of placements from the definition of an action plan and strategic activities to the practical implementation

Three levels in the management of internships:

1) POLICY AND STRATEGY: Should be placed at the top level of institutions, decision makers: Have a vision, Set regulations, Monitor quality

2) DEVELOPMENT/ACTION PLAN:

Regulations , Tasks , Competences of the staff involved, Criteria for the selection of a student, Academic involvement, Coordinators related to specific field of studies, System of recognition and quality assurance, Policy regarding non obligatory placements, Combination of studies and placements, Availability of statistics on the employability of students after a placement



3) ADMINISTRATION

Placed within a central administration office or at the faculty/department level

COMPETENCES OF STAFF Supporting placements	STAFF TRAINING needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project management • Human resources • Study counselling • Financial management • International and local networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placement management • Administration issues • Intercultural communication • International partnership relations with enterprises • Practical issues of preparing students for placements • Supervision of placements • Provision of academic advice • Quality assurance



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□ Criteria for the selection of a student for a placement grant

- the requirements of the study programme (compulsory or not) - Relevance
- student's academic records
- students' motivation to complete a placement abroad
- student's positive attitude
- student's communication skills
- recommendation by a professor or other relevant person



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□ Administration

Tools for facilitating the implementation of the action plan

- A document defining the tasks related to the regulations for managing and administrating placement mobility
- Task-distribution scheme
- Budget scheme
- Tools to facilitate the identification of suitable placements for students, such as Internal databases, the Intranet, Internet resources (examples: Leho, Moveon, Mobility Online)
- Specific database systems i.e. transnational placement information system
- Standard student placement handbooks and policies
- Promotional material
- Organization of information sessions



❑ **Organization of meetings to facilitate and support administration:**

- those who develop the action plan (central administration)
- those who will implement it (administrative staff) and/or
- between administrative staff and academics

-tools that can be used to facilitate the implementation of the action plan and the management of the placements.....(guide)

❑ **Distribution of placement funds and related guidelines**

-criteria listing.....(guide)

❑ **Student motivation and promotion of the placements**

-Tools that can be used for motivating and informing the students

Exchange experience sessions; Information days; Job fairs; Information videos; Social media; Presentations of placement opportunities by placement coordinators, during specific or regular lectures; Presentations of previous experiences; Publications of placement opportunities in different university media (brochures, posters, prospectus, website etc.); Meetings and events.



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-Assessment of student motivation

Criteria.....(guide)

□ Finding and preparing a transnational placement

-Preparation and training of students before the transnational placement

Special training sessions may include.....(guide)

-Content of the student individual work plan prior to placement

- aims and objectives of the placement,
- duration of the placement,
- placement tasks,
- the planned outcomes of the placement (competences, etc.),
- stages and deadlines for implementation of placement tasks
- working hours per day (per week)
- language of communication
- a quality commitment
- mentoring and monitoring
- recognition

INENTER: Improving the Placements and Internships from Academia to ENTERprises

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□ **Planning and supervision during placement**

Actual tasks clarified before the publishing of the position– better matching to the job offer

During placement:

Correct implementation of the student's individual work plan, Interim report, Evaluation, Questionnaire to the student and the host organisation to find out whether the placement is suitable for the student and whether the host organisation is satisfied with the student

□ **Validation of the learning outcomes of the placement**

During and after the completion of the placement the host institution should evaluate: professional competences, language competences, personal development, social competences, organisational competences, intercultural competences, computer skills, and technical competences.

□ **Dissemination seminars for the student's placement experiences**

Most commonly used tools for internal dissemination.....(guide)



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CHAPTER 2: COOPERATION BETWEEN UNIVERSITIES AND ENTERPRISES

- No one single picture or one-model-fits-all example
- Make it a win win situation
- Many good practices in place in various universities
- Models and tools will be different depending on whether the HEIs cooperate with an international enterprise or with an SME.
- Relations with international enterprises are usually done through their HR department whereas finding suitable SMEs is not always easy.



COOPERATION BETWEEN UNIVERSITIES AND ENTERPRISES

- Using a network of enterprises, establishing links through research, chambers of commerce and/or partner universities can be a way of identifying relevant partner enterprises.
- Integrate “work placement windows” into the study programmes.

This will not only develop students’ learning outcomes, but it will also improve their employability skills.

- Turn the study programmes into more learner-centered systems.



□ POLICY AND STRATEGY

– CREATING AN INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF ENTERPRISES

- Putting in place some standards for developing a portfolio of partnerships with foreign enterprises is very helpful. These standards will assure quality and transparency in the process when the network is created and modified.
- The set of standards should include:
 - Objectives of the network in accordance with the strategic priorities of the HEI
 - Network management
 - Criteria used to select the enterprises
 - Functions, roles and responsibilities of the enterprises
- Recommendation to HEIs and enterprises: embed this set of standards into your mission and institutional plan so that there is a clear commitment from top management and high level administration.



POLICY AND STRATEGY

-METHODS OF ENGAGING COOPERATION WITH PARTNER ENTERPRISES

- The ideal partnership between HEIs and enterprises should be a win-win situation for both parties.
- In general European HEIs have different methods of engaging with partner enterprises such as:
 - Networks (Chambers of commerce, associations of enterprises,...)
 - Existing partnerships with foreign HEIs
 - Using European databases or national databases
 - By means of direct contact with enterprises (via academics, researchers or student driven initiative)
 - Recommendations of the students who took part in transnational placement mobility and of the supervisors of the students
 - Recommendations of the supervisors at the HEI
 - Recommendations of other HEIs
 - Through partnerships in European funded projects
 - Network of Alumni



□ ORGANISATION OF THE RELATIONS WITH ENTERPRISES

- In the majority of European HEIs, the IRO office and/or the career centre are involved in these cooperations at administrative level, together with faculties and/or academic departments.
- Recommendation to closely work with the career centers as they have the necessary experience and the contacts with the enterprises.
- Information about contacts with the enterprises could be gathered at one place, so that everyone benefits from this data, either at central or faculty level.



ORGANISATION OF THE RELATIONS WITH ENTERPRISES

- HOW PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN HEIS AND ENTERPRISES ARE FORMALIZED?

- Two major documents are used to formalize and validate the partnership relations with enterprises and with organisations/associations of enterprises (such as chambers of commerce):
 - signed bilateral agreements and/or
 - signed letters of intent.
- Usually the following aspects are covered in the general agreement of cooperation:
 - The desired number of students to be received for transnational mobility placements during each academic year, presented according to their study fields and programmes
 - The roles of the sending organization and the hosting organization before, during and after transnational mobility placements
 - Budgetary matters



□ HOW TO ENCOURAGE ENTERPRISES TO COOPERATE WITH UNIVERSITIES?

- Exchanging information and trust building is essential and the key for successful cooperation with companies.
- Mutual benefits should be emphasized: in general, for enterprises, placements are an “easy” way to identify future employees.
- Another example of a win-win situation: point out that offering a transnational placement position is one of the tools for SMEs to further develop its internationalisation.



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HOW TO ENCOURAGE ENTERPRISES TO COOPERATE WITH UNIVERSITIES?

The majority of European HEIs suggest various tools for attracting enterprises:

- Events and meetings with participation of enterprises, local and regional authorities
- Providing information about study programmes and descriptions of requirements for transnational placements, with special emphasis on student competences (e.g. via leaflets, website, e-mails)
- inviting enterprise managers to offer lectures
- appoint a visible single contact person at the HEI
- combine placement and study mobility
- considering the needs of an enterprise

.....More in the guide

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CHAPTER 3: QUALITY IN PLACEMENTS

Several issues must be clarified such as:

What is the product/service in placements?

A sub-set of competencies

- Must be clearly formulated in the Course Units: “syllabus”
- Optional or compulsory part of the curriculum

Who is the customer?

- The users of the competences: the student and future employer = the enterprise

Who is delivering it?

- Practical placement cannot be organized by the HEIs only
- by HEI in cooperation with an Enterprise (and the student of course !)
- Joint plan of quality: student, HEI and the enterprise



-Who is responsible for Quality of student placement?

- Joint quality planning of the placement
- Joint monitoring of the placement
- Mutual acceptance of the placement results

-Monitoring and Placement

- Triple monitoring → by each “player”: ***the placement book(P-book)***
 - Student → reports by the students
 - HEI → learning objectives and evaluation
 - Enterprise → evaluation and reports

Training agreement signed by University-Enterprise-Student is part of the P-book, which provides full transparency of a student’s placement activity

- Other tools:
.....(guide)



-Main tools for monitoring the quality of transnational placements:

- Reports by the students and transcripts of work
- Use of questionnaires/electronic survey
- Reports by the organizations involved
- Reports to National Agency
- Visits by the academic staff
- Annual analysis at board meetings within the consortium
- Final meetings with incoming students
- Contact with the host enterprise
- Individual interviews

-Monitoring by the student

.....(guide)



-Monitoring by the Enterprise

A wide range of competences is being assessed:

- professional competences,
- language competences,
- personal development,
- social competences,
- organizational competences,
- intercultural competences,
- computer skills,
- technical competences.

Validation of the competences acquired during the placement:

- Training Certificate,
- Letter of Reference or EUROPASS mobility document.



-Monitoring by the HEI

Who?

- the student's academic supervisor at the HEI,
- core academic unit coordinator for transnational placements,
- a person on the decentralized level such as: head of the study programme, work placement manager, commissioner gathered for placement validation, dean of studies Examination office at HEI, the faculty council.

How?

- an official document issued by the host organization (certifying the student competencies acquired during the placement),
- a report on placement results, including personal experience and growth,

Most important → site visit at the enterprise



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□ Quality Management Unit

Within the University

- Usually → a dedicated procedure
- embodies the quality requirements and expectations of the University
- Some procedures make reference to the study programme documents (for example, the learning objectives etc)
- the procedure foresees provisions for all necessary steps and activities
- Quality requirements for each enterprise are considered and embodied within the procedure.

Within the enterprise.....(guide)



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-Quality Indicators for Managing the Mobility

Fundamental quality indicator → the duration of the placement

Other QI:

- the placement is part of the LO of the degree programme
- student supervision during the placement period abroad,
- preparation of the student's individual placement work plan,
- motivating students,
- application for transnational placement mobility grant
- recognition and validation of competences by the HEI,
- evaluation and validation of competences by the company
- allocation of transnational placement mobility grant,
- training of students.



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Question? How could these be applied in an effective way by Universities, Enterprises, Students

PRAXIS Network is adapting these in order to be considered in the Centre of Excellence for Project Internships, www.praxisnetwork.eu

A Virtual Market for both students and enterprises

Students of high quality, screened by the PRAXIS system will appear on the VM data base

A source for enterprises that guarantees quality!