

**Career and Leadership Centre  
Student Development Services  
City University of Hong Kong**

**FAQ of STEM Internship Scheme (“the Scheme”)**

**Eligibility**

**1. How do we know if the internship placement is STEM related?**

As according to the guidelines provided by Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC), participating employers need not be I&T companies, so long as the internship places are I&T-related and full-time. The Scheme has adopted a broad definition of I&T. An internship place is regarded as I&T-related if its actual work contains I&T elements (e.g. technology-related intellectual property work, digital marketing, data analysis for the manufacturing industry, etc.).

**Disbursement of Allowance**

**2. How is the disbursement of allowance to students calculated?**

Total disbursement of allowance to students is calculated by using the following formula:  
 $\$10,500 \times \text{total number of man-days (in calendar days)} \div 30$

Allowance = (Internship period – Unpaid leave) in days  $\times$  \$350/day

**3. Are holidays within the internship period be eligible for allowance?**

Subject to the terms and conditions of employment, in general, the student interns are eligible to receive allowance for the intervening non-working Saturdays, General Holidays and Statutory Holidays fallen within the internship period. The start and end days of the contract of internship should be working days. If the start/end days fall on Saturday, General Holiday or Statutory Holiday, they will be regarded as unpaid leave unless there is a deliberate agreement between the employer and the student intern.

**4. Are unpaid leaves allowed during the internship?**

Student interns may take unpaid leaves during the internship. For instance, students may take unpaid leaves to handle other university commitments. Unpaid leaves will not be taken into consideration in the calculation of allowance under the Scheme.

**5. When can students receive the disbursement?**

CLC will collect all the required documents from Colleges/Schools and send the “reimbursement request” to ITC for approval in due course. It is estimated that the students will receive the disbursement by November 2021. The disbursement process might take longer time in case additional supporting documents are requested by ITC.

**6. Are participating students guaranteed to receive the allowance?**

Eligible students who can complete the tasks required of the Scheme are entitled to receive the allowance.

**7. Will the employers be involved in the disbursement process?**

Participating employers should complete an ITC Assessment/Evaluation form and have them returned to respective College/School. Since the allowance will be disbursed to students directly, employers will not be involved in the disbursement process other than completing the assessment.

**8. Should Minimum Wage Ordinance be observed under the STEM Internship Scheme?**

According to ITC Guidelines, the employers in Hong Kong should also observe the relevant requirements under the Minimum Wages Ordinance (Cap. 608). Further information is available at the website of the Labour Department ([https://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/content2\\_smw.htm](https://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/content2_smw.htm)).

If the STEM internship is a compulsory or elective component of the requirements of the full-time degree programme, it is classified under “Student Intern” and in this case, Statutory Minimum Wage (SMW) would not apply.

If the STEM Internship is **not** a compulsory or elective component of the requirements of the full-time degree programme, it is classified under “Work Experience” and in this case, the exemption period of SMW is only applicable up to 59th day of the internship period. From 60th day onwards, the employer will need to fulfil the minimum wage requirement under existing legislation.

**9. Will employers be responsible for MPF contribution during the internship period?**

According to MPFA Guidelines, if summer interns are employed for a continuous period of 60 days or more and they are over 18, employers must enrol them in an MPF scheme whether they work full-time or part-time.

Reference (please refer to FAQ 4 on p.24 of the booklet):

[https://www1.mpfa.org.hk/eng/information\\_centre/publications/booklets\\_publications/mpf\\_system/files/ER\\_Handbook\\_Eng.pdf](https://www1.mpfa.org.hk/eng/information_centre/publications/booklets_publications/mpf_system/files/ER_Handbook_Eng.pdf)

**Internship Placement and Period**

**10. Some internship placements have already started, can those employers and students enrol in the Scheme?**

Yes. As long as respective Colleges/Schools can identify the internship placement and students are eligible to enrol in the Scheme. Respective Colleges/Schools should invite employers to provide job descriptions and confirm both students and employers that the internship that they are committing are under the Scheme.

**11. Can the internship period be less than 4 weeks?**

No, the minimum duration for each internship is 4 consecutive weeks.

**12. Can the internship period be over 3 months?**

Yes, the internship/placement duration can be over three months. However, since the allowance for each student intern is capped at 3 months, the maximum allowance will remain at 3 months only.

**13. The internship period is from June to August according to the timeline, can the internship placement end after August?**

Since CLC will submit reimbursement request to ITC by end of Summer 2021, it is advised that all internships in Summer 2021 should be completed by mid-September the latest to ensure sufficient time for reimbursement. For internships to be conducted in Semester A/Winter Break/Semester B in 2021/22, the implementation timeline will be announced in due course.

**14. Does the internship need to be credit-bearing?**

There is no restriction on whether the internship needs to be credit-bearing or not. However, the internship should not be a compulsory requirement of the academic programme to which the student is admitted to.

**15. Is internship placement with remote working allowed under the Scheme?**

Student interns are encouraged to work in offices to have direct interaction with supervisors/colleagues for at least part of their internship time, so as to gain diversified work experience and develop better communication skills. Nevertheless, remote working in certain business sectors such as information technology has become more common. For internship placement with mostly remote working, the university has to put in place measures to ensure that the participating employers provide enough supervision to the student interns. In general, remote working where the participating employer and the internship are in different territories are not allowed under the Scheme. Notwithstanding the above, work-from-home arrangement due to severe pandemic situation is allowed.

**16. Can a student have more than one internship under the Scheme in the same academic year?**

In general, subject to the arrangements of individual universities, a student intern may receive the allowance under the Scheme for more than one internship place in the same academic year, provided that the participating employers are not the same and the internship periods do not overlap. Please note that only one period of internship in the same calendar year can be exempted from the minimum wage requirement as “exempt student employment” under the Minimum Wage Ordinance. Details can be found at the website of Labour Department ([https://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/erb/smw\\_esi\\_wes.htm](https://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/erb/smw_esi_wes.htm)).