Practical Experience – Information for Companies

At Sydney University all students are required to complete 12 weeks Practical Experience as part of the requirements of the Bachelor of Engineering or Master of Professional Engineering degree. Thank you for showing interest in this program: we appreciate the involvement of industry in providing placements for students. It is also called Work Experience, Internship or Industrial Placement.

**What is it about?** Practical Experience helps graduates interpret their studies with a more professional attitude. Their experience of engineering in the real world provides a more mature and informed approach to final year design subjects. It is hoped they develop some idea of the way real engineering is done and how an engineering firm creates and sustains business.

**When is it done?** Normally students work for the 12 week period in their final summer holiday (Dec, Jan, Feb). Sometimes the 60 days can be completed during semester on a part-time basis or in available blocks at other times of the year.

**Do I have to pay the Student?** Payment is not obligatory.

**What are the company responsibilities?** The company should place the student in a position where he/she will have exposure to the work of a real engineering project, including design and business constraints. They student needs to have access to a qualified Engineer as a guide or mentor. The type of engineering must match the student’s degree (Civil, Mechanical, etc). Simple project management or cost-estimating is not sufficient without engineering design or considerations. They must provide safety induction as appropriate.

**Insurance:** Sydney University’s own policy covers students who are not employees or workers of the organisation they are placed with for the purposes of Workers’ Compensation legislation. The current certificate can be found by following the link below.

**Administration:** There are three forms which the student will provide (at different times) for you to complete:

1. **Proposal form** - when you decide to offer a position to a student you complete a section of this form which describes the work experience the student will have, and sign it. The student then seeks to have the placement approved by the university.
2. **Site induction and Safety procedures form** – to be completed whenever safety training is provided.
3. **Practical Experience Certificate** – When the student has completed the placement the employer will declare the number of days or weeks attended and make comment.

**What benefits are there for companies?** Companies often use Work Placement to gain access to some of the country’s most talented graduate engineers. While on placement the student will be able to contribute to the company’s business, making use of the student’s skills, provided in is in an engineering context.

**Suggested Activities:** Engineering design, transcription of plans, revision of proposals, data checking, site visits and fact gathering, client meetings, stakeholders meetings, customer contact, and any activity which engineers might experience in order to do their job, including non-engineering tasks.

**Can I offer a position?** Practical Experience often results in a favourable relationship leading to a permanent position. If you are considering this please negotiate a plan which will allow the student to complete their degree in a timely way while still gaining the results they are capable of.


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