



Participatory and Integrative Support for Agricultural Initiative

Module 4 (Internship)

Handbook

Erasmus+ KA2 Capacity Building in Higher Education

Project N. 586157-EPP-1-2017-1-TH-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

Preface

The significant purpose of educational goals is to prepare alumni with sufficient knowledge and skills to become competent human resource in different societies either as employees or entrepreneurs in their respective fields. It is a continuous challenge for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to design their curriculum in such a way that would give students the advantage of experiencing balance between theoretical knowledge in classroom and ever-changing practical skills and soft skills for them to actually be able to implement their learned knowledge. This is particularly hard for HEIs or universities in Asian countries, where resources and opportunities are limited.

In the area of agriculture and life sciences, internship is very important to make sure students have enough experience both in classroom and in the field to create successful impact in their communities. Agriculture is indeed one of the major sectors in Asian economy, and depending on the country, absorbed most of the worker population. Therefore, it is very important for agriculture students to be equipped with not only the knowledge, but also the experience to ensure productive outcomes.

To help equip Thai students in the future, PISAI project, with the primary aim to integrate practical approach for the learning experience at the master degree level, seeks to encourage cooperation of academic sector (HEIs) with professional sector in the area of sustainable agriculture. We believe that the graduates would have an enhanced employability. The project is hoping to provide more resources to universities with the following strategic steps:

1. Improving curriculum of study programs at master level at four key agricultural Thai universities by introducing internships into the learning process leading to more practical knowledge and better skill of the graduate. This is the first time that internship is introduced to the graduate level in agriculture. Module 4 is identified as an internship to follow the three agricultural field modules.
2. Enhancing soft skills of the students by being with the real work experiences.
3. Networking with the stakeholders in the agribusiness.

Objectives

The PISAI project organises internship in the Module 4 firstly for the benefit of students in order for quality improvement in terms of both contents and extent which students are able to handle the knowledge and experiences at work place. The indirect benefit will be for both the HEIs and stakeholders including companies and related organizations for present and future cooperation and innovation.

This handbook is for both students and teaching staff to understand the purposes and procedures so that the internship is carried out successfully with achieved goals in mind.

Table of Contents

Preface	i
Table of Contents	ii
Introduction	1
Overall Procedure of Internship	4
Internship (Practical Training) Instruction	5
Application Form for Practical Training (Internship)	7
Activity Report Form - Students under PISAI project	8
Evaluation on Internship Students under PISAI project (Module 4)	9
Evaluation form - Internship Student's Presentation	11
References	12



Introduction

Internship

Internship, which exists in a wide variety of settings, is very important for students at higher education levels. It is an opportunity for students to work at a firm or an organization for a fixed period of time. An internship gives practical skills, workplace experience and greater knowledge of industries or those related to students' future career, in exchange for the employer benefiting from students' inputs.

Many organizations may receive interns for a number of weeks or months to assist with the completion of a major project or event. Several organizations may have student interns to fill in the routine tasks as a support role. But they are a great opportunity for students to learn how the organization is operated, even if students are only carrying out basic activities.

The majority of interns will carry out a range of support tasks in a junior role. The specific duties of an internship will vary considerably depending on employers/offices, the industry and the type of internship. Unlike conventional employment, internships have an emphasis on training, rather than employment itself.

Students taking internship will in fact benefit from having developed evidence skills in project management, problem solving and colleague/client relationship management. Even if the internship is only for a short period, it can still equip students with a range of manageable skills and help initiating network and valuable connections for the future career. CVs showing internship experiences will always be the value added for the students (Wikijob, 2019).

For higher education institutions (HEIs), partnerships with firms mediated by students' curricular internships are very important that allow increased mutual benefits in the form of the exchange of knowledge and innovation. Franco *et al.* (2019) studied these relationships by testing various hypotheses to measure the influence of certain factors on the student's personal involvement in curricular internships organized through HEI–firm partnerships in Portugal. The obtained results show that students assess internships very positively in all aspects including organization of the internship, the HEI's orientation, the host institution (HI) and the HI's orientation. The authors concluded that the professional internships provided by HEI–firm partnerships play a crucial role in students' entry into a labor market which are highly competitive.



Advantages and Academic Value of Internship

Advantages of doing an internship have been revealed by all parties in the educational societies and the stakeholders including students, HEIs and the employers. Agricultural educational systems require an understanding of how individual and collective capacities are strengthened and how these capabilities are applied to agriculture. Therefore, not only do students need to focus on the academic knowledge but also on systemic practices and behaviors that affect organizational learning and changes in the rapid world development. An important element for a successful graduate is the social processes when students have to interact with different groups in the working environments. They will be able to learn how to adapt, share interest and create a network. These networks are the means that allow entrance to new knowledge and opportunities for their future.

In relation to the above positive aspects of internship, Callanan and Benzing (2004) assessed the relationship between the completion of an internship assignment prior to graduation and subsequent employment in a career-oriented job after graduation in the mid-Atlantic region of the USA. Results showed that the completion of an internship assignment was linked with finding career-oriented employment, but was not related to a higher level of confidence over personal fit with the position that was selected. The article discusses practical issues related to the use of internships and other forms of anticipatory socialization in the career management activities of college students. Furthermore, Binders et al. (2015) conducted a study to ascertain academic value of internship by covering a wider aspect across students' background and disciplines as well as genders. They concluded that academic value of internship is an indirect path to career indicators important for higher education institutions and those who advising students on their career plans. Their findings which lead to important messages are 1) internships typically come with benefits and all students across all subject areas are likely to reap these benefits 2) there is, on the whole, surprisingly little variation between advantaged and disadvantaged student groups, encouraging weaker students to take up an internship is no waste effort 3) Institutions are well advised to consider course-level variability 4) academic benefits may be due to aspects of the non-academic environment in which internship happen 5) institutions should consider whether degree courses without internships carry specific disadvantages, and if so, how these could be addressed through specific study support. The key advantages of doing an internship could be summarized below.

1. Opportunity to develop knowledge and skills in a particular field or industry
2. Exploring different roles to see how students would want to pursue after graduation
3. Getting insight into workplaces and what challenges they face on a daily basis
4. The opportunity to create a network of contacts
5. Gaining valuable work experience to have added value for employment
6. Acquiring university credits
7. Applying the concepts and strategies of academic study in a live work environment
8. Improving soft skills and personality

On the HEIs' dimension, more cooperation between professional sectors and universities is the add-on positive impact. Platforms for cooperation with professional sector can be formed which consequently couples with improved teaching, curricular updating, research project and training for student benefit.

Witness

Internship was evaluated by Asian universities participating in the SIMPLE-E+ Project in 2018 revealed that regardless of differences in Internships performed at different universities in Thailand, Cambodia and Indonesia, the internships have the positive impacts on students' ability in the job market (Project SIMPLE, 2019) as depicted in the chart below.

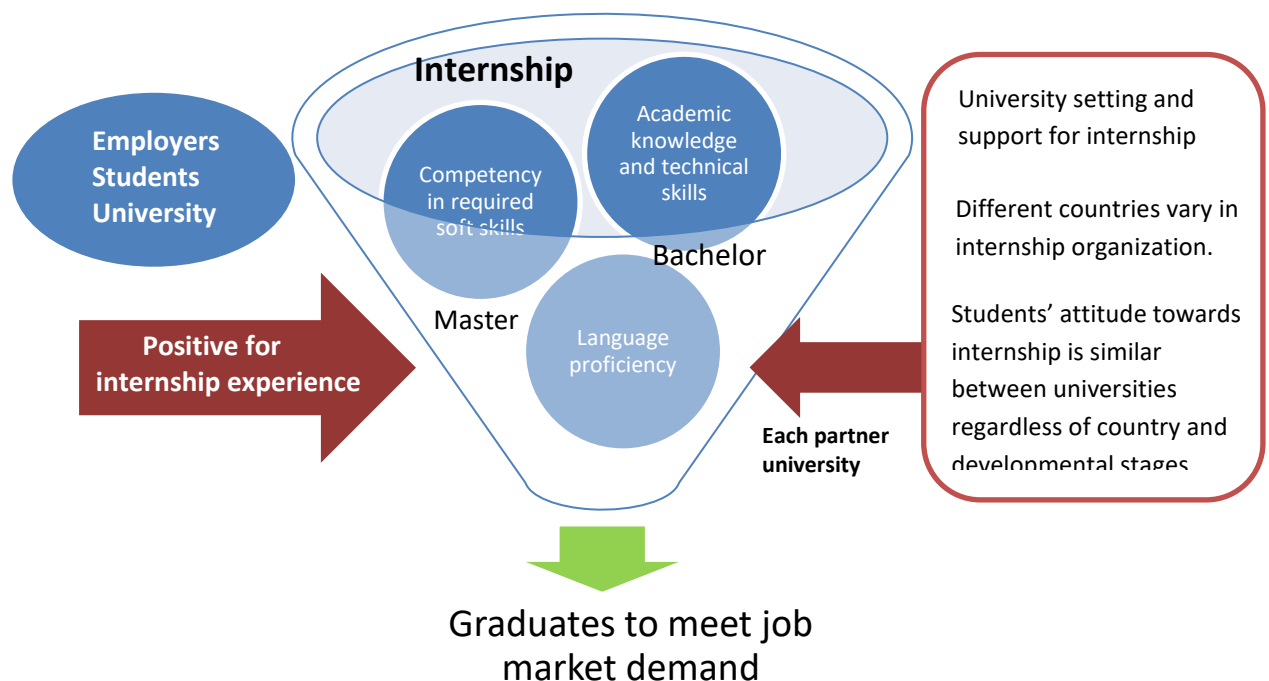
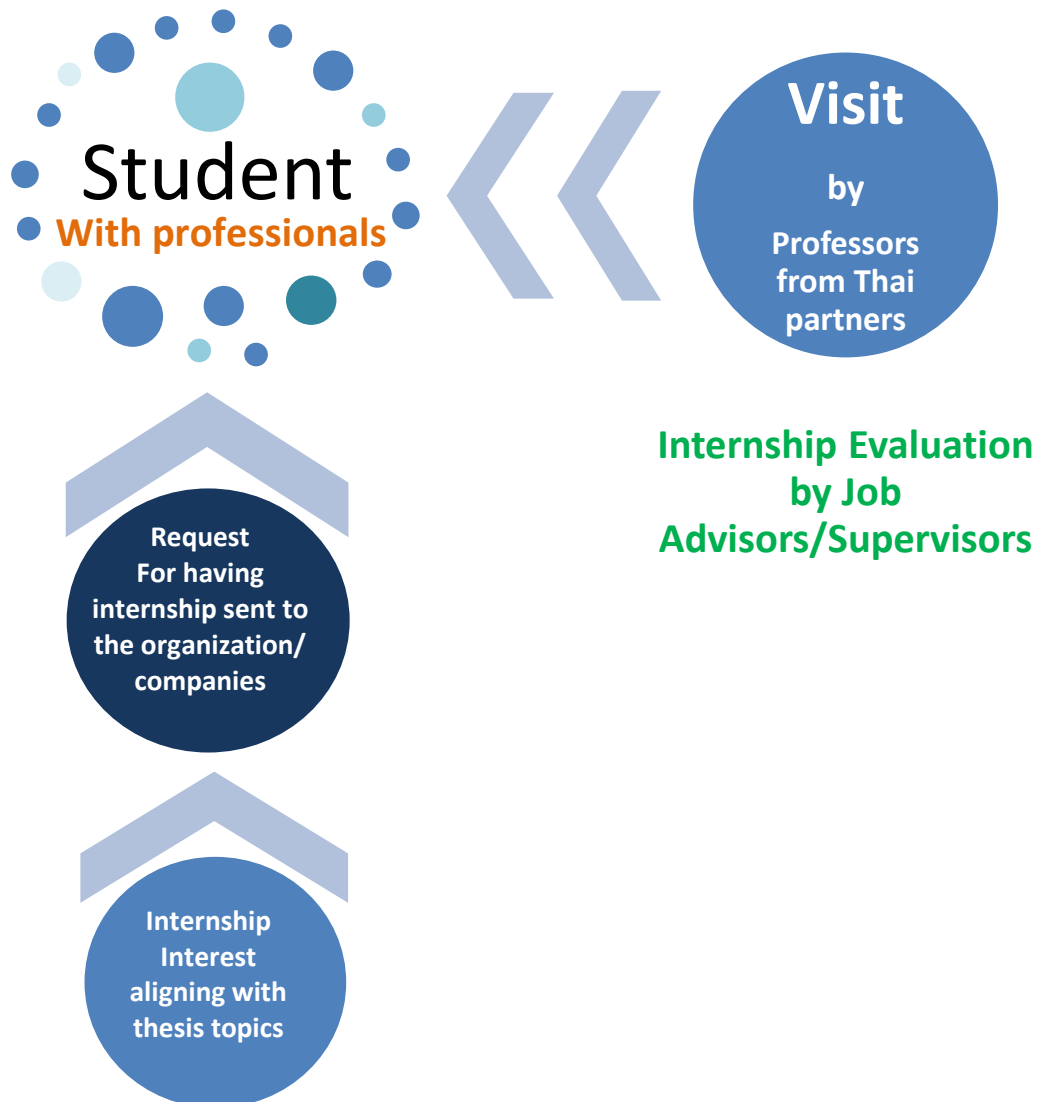


Figure 1. Impacts of internship of students ability and job market

Overall Procedure of Internship

The procedure for taking internship is shown below. Firstly, students express their interest in doing internship to respective thesis advisor and PISAI coordinator. Advisor or PISAI coordinator subsequently discusses with potential organizations for the students' interest and possibility to accept the student for internship with specified tasks, responsibilities and duration. After agreeing to accept the student, a formal request is sent to the organization specifying the scope of work and period of the internship. The students will then be attached to the workplace for the agreed duration. During the course of the internship, a site visit by professors from Thai partners is arranged. The students will be evaluated by job advisors at the end of the internship and submit the internship report to PISAI coordinator. A presentation of the gained experiences may be done to share with friends, teaching staff and related personnel.



Internship (Practical Training) Instruction

Scope of training:

Student is required to complete practical training in duration of at least 100 hours in total. In order for students to gain the formal credits the practical hours can be equivalent. The *Practical Training* is credited in Thai education system as follows:

- 100 hours is equivalent to 1 credit
- 200 hours is equivalent to 2 credits
- 300 hours is equivalent to 3 credits

Content of training:

Practical training and its content must be related with the chosen study programme, study specialization or master's thesis. Students are recommended to attend training in organizations engaged in agriculture including economic and environmental development in agricultural enterprises. It is possible to accept the active participation in research project. During practical training, students should apply knowledge and skills acquired while studying at university. Practical training includes a training for student's soft skill such as interpersonal, leadership, adaptability and management ability through involving in various activities of real agricultural experience aspects.

Documents for training:

1. Students inform of their interest for practical training in their field which approved by the supervisor.
2. After completion of the practical training, student submit the **evaluation form** from the company/organization and **report form** to the supervisor and PISAI coordinator (no later than 30 days after completion of practical training).
3. Student is responsible to **present the results of his/her practical training** to other students during the agreed lecture/workshop/meeting.

Practical training report:

Report on completion of practical training according to the form - see prescribed structure below:

- a. Name, home ad host university, title of thesis project
- b. Activities carried out
- c. Indicators of achievement and or/performance
- d. Knowledge gained from being involved in internship

Warning:

Practical training will not be recognized in the following cases:

- a. Student will break any of conditions in pursuance of practical training.
- b. Student will require recognition of training retrospectively, i.e. he fails to submit required documents within 30 days after the end of training.
- c. Report is not in required extent.

Examples of the work place for internship

Organization	Type of operation	Location
Agricultural Production Farm and Organic Farms	Production of crops eg. vegetables, fruits, livestock and aquaculture, greenhouse operation and management	Songkhla, Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Khon Kaen provinces
Agricultural Extension Offices	Facilitation for farmer in compilation with government regulations, building up farmer network, community enterprise preparation, data collection for farmer database,	Songkhla, Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Khon Kaen and central area provinces such as Nakorn Ratchasima
Royal Projects	Sustainable agricultural system, farm standard for chemical free practices, cropping system for highland and drought areas	Songkhla, Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Khon Kaen provinces
Community Enterprises	Farmer group and network for different agricultural products including the processing products such as preserved products and handicrafts made of agricultural by-products	Songkhla, Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Khon Kaen and central area provinces such as Nakorn Ratchasima
Agri-business	Farm management including planning and producing agricultural commodity, market research and survey, contract farming, farmer market operation including whole sale and retails	Songkhla, Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Khon Kaen provinces



Erasmus+ KA2 Capacity Building in Higher Education
Project N. 586157-EPP-1-2017-1-TH-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

Application Form for Practical Training (Internship)

Name and surname:	
Date of birth:	Address:
Phone number:	Email:
Faculty:	Year of study:
Study programme:	

Brief structure of the application:

- Name of organization/institution/project:
- Term of practical training:
- Planned activities and expected contribution to the students' skill and knowledge:
- Preliminary workload/timetable of practical training:

Date:

Student's signature:

Statement of the supervisor:

Date and signature:

--	--



Erasmus+ KA2 Capacity Building in Higher Education
Project N. 586157-EPP-1-2017-1-TH-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

Activity Report Form - Students under PISAI project

For Internship students

Student's Name	
Title of Thesis	
Home University	
Host University	

Indicators of achievement and or/performance

1.
2.
3.
4.

Activities carried out

Activity N°	Activity Title	Start date	End date	Place	Description of the activity carried out
1					

Knowledge gained from being involved in internship

Signature

Home University Advisor.....

Host University Advisor.....



Erasmus+ KA2 Capacity Building in Higher Education
Project N. 586157-EPP-1-2017-1-TH-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

Evaluation on Internship Students under PISAI project (Module 4)

<u>Student's Name</u>	
<u>Home University</u>	

<u>Placement (Type of agriculture)</u>	

<u>Indicators of achievement and or/performance</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student's responsibility - Learning achievement - Adaptation to assignment - Personal adaptation to the host/farmers' family/company - Communication skill - Willingness to volunteer for tasks apart from assignment

Activities carried out

N°	Activity Title	Start date	End date	Evaluation				
				1	2	3	4	5

Overall Performance Evaluation

Criteria	1	2	3	4	5
1. Student's responsibility ความรับผิดชอบ					
2. Adaptation to assignment การปรับตัวต่องานที่ได้รับมอบหมาย					
3. Learning achievement ผลสัมฤทธิ์การเรียนรู้					
4. Personal adaptation to the host/farmers' family/company/work environment การปรับตัวของนักศึกษาให้เข้ากับสภาพแวดล้อมและการอยู่ร่วมกับเกษตรกร/การทำงาน					
5. Communication skill ความสามารถและทักษะในการสื่อสารกับเกษตรกรและผู้ร่วมงาน					
6. Willingness to volunteer for tasks apart from assignment การมีจิตสาธารณะในการช่วยเหลือนอกเหนืองานที่ได้รับมอบหมาย					

Remark: 1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Very good, 5= Excellent

หมายเหตุ: 1 = ควรปรับปรุง 2 = พอใช้ 3 = ดี 4 = ดีมาก 5 = ยอดเยี่ยม

Comments and suggestion

Signature

Evaluator.....

(.....)

Position and Affiliation



Erasmus+ KA2 Capacity Building in Higher Education
Project N. 586157-EPP-1-2017-1-TH-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

Evaluation Form - Internship Student's Presentation

Student name: _____

Department/Program: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Category	Full score	Earned score
1. Content and conclusion	40	
2. Presentation ability and multimedia usage ability	20	
3. Discussion and answering questions	20	
4. Time management	10	
5. Personality	10	
Total	100	

Comments:

Evaluator Name and Signature: _____



References

Binders, J.F., Baguley, T., Crook, C. and Miller, F. 2015. The academic value of internships: Benefits across disciplines and student backgrounds. *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 41, 73-82

Callanan, G. and Benzing, C. 2004. Assessing the role of internships in the career-oriented employment of graduating college students. *Education and Training* 46 (2), 82-89

Franco, M., Silva, R. and Rodrigues, M. 2019. Partnerships between higher education institutions and firms: The role of students' curricular internships. *Industry and Higher Education* 33 (3), 172-185

SIMPLE Project, 2019. Internship Evaluation Report – Project SIMPLE Study. Report submitted to Erasmus+ Programme: Capacity-Building projects in the field of Higher Education (E+CBHE), project number: 574019-EPP-1-2016-1-CZ-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP ISBN (print version): 978-80-213-2979-9

Wikijob. 2019. What is an Internship?

<https://www.wikijob.co.uk/content/internships/advice/what-internship> accessed on 15 August 2019