

# THE EEG - PART 7

# 'WORK PLACEMENT (WP) HANDBOOK'

-Master's-



31 August 2023

## CONTENTS

|       |   |    |
|-------|---|----|
| 1     | Introduction .....  | 3  |
| 2     | The Work Placement (WP) process .....                       | 4  |
| 2.1   | Goals .....   | 6  |
| 2.2   | Criteria for establishing a proper work placement .....     | 7  |
| 2.3   | Finding a work placement.....                               | 7  |
| 2.4   | Work placement abroad .....                                 | 8  |
| 2.5   | Implementation.....   | 8  |
| 2.5.1 | Internship plan .....                                       | 8  |
| 2.5.2 | Supervision .....   | 8  |
| 2.5.3 | Work placement supervisor.....                              | 8  |
| 2.5.4 | WP Coordinator .....  | 9  |
| 2.5.5 | Interim evaluation.....                                     | 9  |
| 2.5.6 | Final assessment.....                                       | 9  |
| 3     | Content of The Work Placement .....                         | 9  |
| 3.1   | General Requirements.....                                   | 9  |
| 3.2   | General Information Regarding Work Placement .....          | 9  |
| 3.2.1 | Understand the NeedS of the Companies .....                 | 10 |
| 3.2.2 | Understand and Adapt to the companies culture .....         | 10 |
| 3.2.3 | Assertiveness and Initiative.....                           | 10 |
| 3.2.4 | The Company's Role .....                                    | 11 |
| 3.3   | Competencies to be Acquired During the Work Placement ..... | 12 |
| 4     | Appendixes .....  | 13 |
| 4.1   | Appendix 1 – Necessary forms .....                          | 13 |

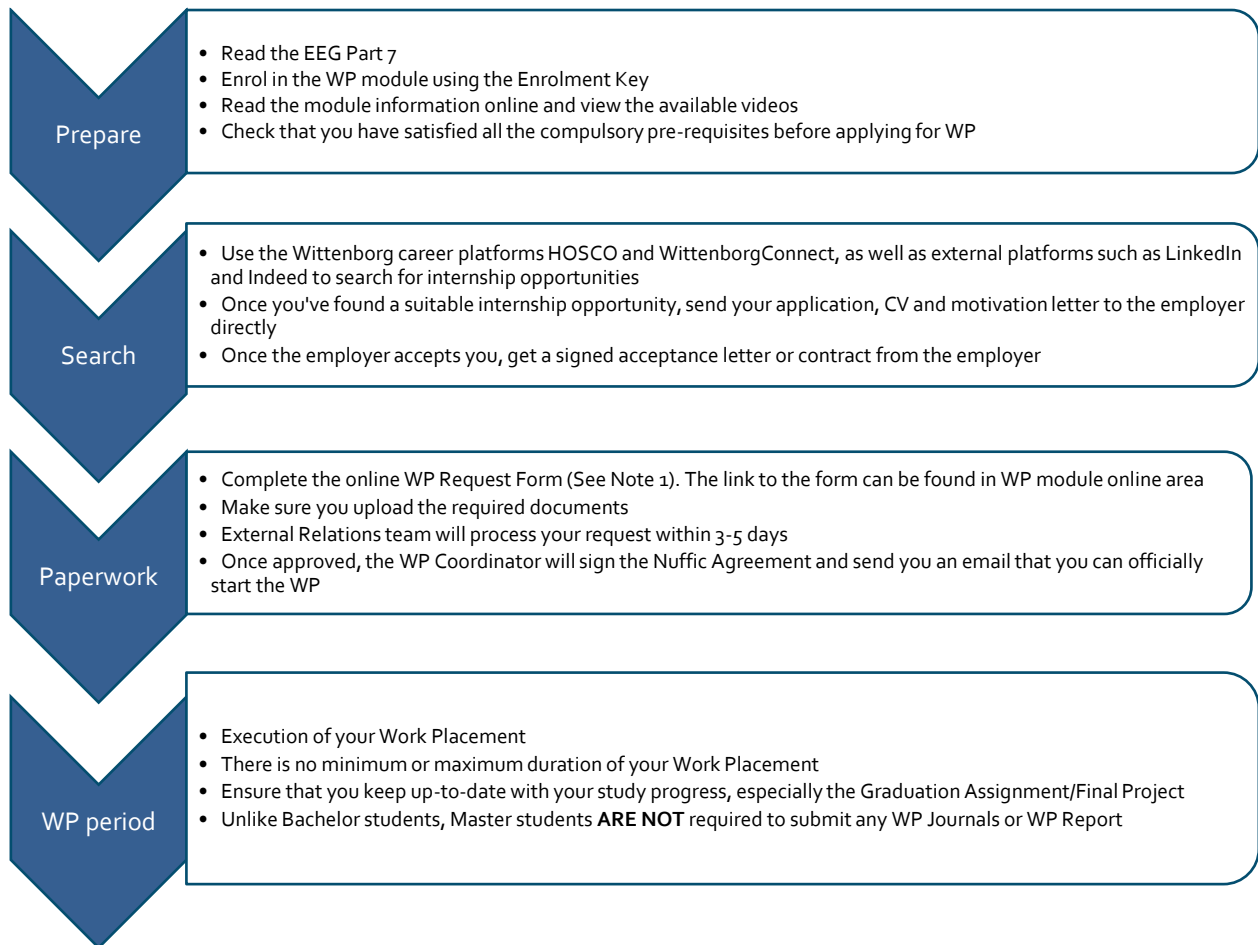
## 1 INTRODUCTION

Work experience provides students with an opportunity for career development and skills which are invaluable for their future employment. In today's competitive labour market, employers are looking for more than a good qualification. They want graduates with the requisite skills, experiences and dynamism to succeed in the workplace. These skills, experience and attributes can largely be developed by undertaking work placement. In order for the student to make the most of these opportunities, they need to play an active role in planning their taking charge of their own personal development.

However, Work placement (WP) is an optional learning opportunity for you as students to prepare for life after university. This is meant to provide a student with the knowledge and understanding of how a western organization operates and to improve their skills and competencies while gaining work experience. Students bring along their academic knowledge into practice. Work Placement is not mandatory for Master (MBA/MSc) students. It is not part of the study curriculum; thus no European Credits (ECs) are allocated for it.

**2 THE WORK PLACEMENT (WP) PROCESS**

Students need to have given some thought to the different types of work experience available and think about which is most appropriate for them considering the level of studies. It takes time to get a work placement and students are requested to ensure they start the search process early. It is considered part of their learning experience to find their own placement. The Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences career centre assists students in identifying a suitable company. Below is an outline of the work placement process.



Note: You are not allowed to start your WP without a tri-party contract.

**Notes:**

When submitting the online WP Request Form, you need to also upload the following documents:

- A confirmation letter or contract from your work placement / internship employer;
- Your most recent transcript from OSIRIS;
- Tri Party Agreement, currently based on the so-called 'Nuffic format' (print the PDF form, complete it and request your work placement / internship employer to sign it);
- Chamber of Commerce Registration – in Dutch: 'Inschrijving Kamer van Koophandel'. (only for students who wish to do their WP within their own company)

## 2.1 GOALS

In addition to gaining work experience, work placement is also a way of building your CV and a start in creating your professional network. The goals of the Work placement are as follows:

- Gaining insight into your strengths and limitations in professional situations.
- Learning to function independently and responsibly within an organisation (professional attitude).
- Become aware of the culture and structure within a work environment.
- Integrating knowledge and skills with practice (research and other), in a realistic work situation.
- Provide an opportunity for you to enhance your learning experience and career prospects by applying your academic knowledge and capabilities in the workplace.
- Strengthen your links with industry and commerce.
- Develop new capabilities and skills.
- Operate within a structured and routinely supervised environment.
- After appropriate initial training, be able to use required methods, procedures and standards applicable to tasks set.
- Be able to function effectively across tasks set using available tools, methodologies and/or equipment without frequent reference to others
- Demonstrate a rational and organized approach to set task(s)
- Demonstrate oral and written communication skills for effective dialogue with colleagues and supervisors, or project instigators
- Show the ability to rapidly absorb fresh (technical) information when it is systematically presented and to apply it effectively
- Describe and evaluate the structure, major activities and responsibilities of the organization
- Evaluate your performance and abilities critically

## 2.2 CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING A PROPER WORK PLACEMENT

To ensure a meaningful work placement, it is necessary for the internship assignment to meet the following criteria:

- The internship provides sufficient in-house operations and ownership.
- The work is at a sufficient level, or matches the level of the study (MBA/MSc/Pre-Master)
- Creativity and intelligence levels of the student should be tested; it is intended that the student's knowledge, understanding and skills gained during the study is put into practice as part of a completed task, providing ample opportunity for direct action, ownership and responsibility.
- Performing simple facilitating, clerical / administrative work is not permitted.
- The assignment should be challenging, that is;
  - Students should be held accountable for their analytical and problem-solving skills.
  - Students should use their skills related to searching, finding and processing information.
  - Students should use their communication skills, both written and oral.
  - Students should be given the opportunity to work independently.
- Students must do work that matches their level of training. Where possible, student should be rotated throughout the organization.
- The contents of the training needs to meet the objectives of the work placement program. In relation to this, it needs to be linked to the students' general programme of study and the students' specialization in particular.
- The host organization is responsible for supervising the student and a supervisor within the organization should be assigned to this task. This is to facilitate the introduction of the student to the internship organization as well as creating a process whereby the student can be mentored, trained and evaluated within the organization.
- Understanding and skills that students have acquired, can be applied and expanded
- The company and student's role within the company have a substantial international component.

You should discuss these criteria with the host company to ensure that the company knows what is expected from the University's perspective.

## 2.3 FINDING A WORK PLACEMENT

Students are expected to find an internship position themselves. It is not always easy to find a suitable internship position, which is why you should start considering early on what kind of work environment you want for your internship. In principle you should start applying for positions a few months before the start of your internship. Once you have done everything required of you with regards to applying for the work placement you may register on the following platforms used by Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences designed to assist students in finding work placement opportunities.

- Hosco.com
- Wittenborgconnect.com

Wittenborg University of Applied sciences offers internships in multinational companies in The Netherlands and abroad. Once you have found a suitable internship, you can easily apply by sending your CV and a Cover letter directly to the company. The person to turn to for help is the WP Coordinator.

## 2.4 WORK PLACEMENT ABROAD

It is possible to follow a practical internship abroad. The requirements for work placement in the Netherlands also apply to work placements abroad, with a few additional supplementary requirements. For example, the company mentor must have a sufficient command of the English language (both orally and in writing). Work placements from your country of origin are not allowed. If you have found an internship position abroad, the WP Coordinator will first check whether your proposed internship position meets the minimum requirement set by the University. In addition, your internship position will be assessed and registered by the international office here at Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences. Once your internship position has been approved, you will have to determine in consultation with your process tutor what form your internship supervision will take.

## 2.5 IMPLEMENTATION

### 2.5.1 INTERNSHIP PLAN

Once you have found a work placement position, you can start formulating your internship plan. The purpose of the internship plan is to translate the general learning objectives of the work placement component to your own personal learning objectives. For each objective, list the relevant activities you will be performing at your work placement organisation. The work placement plan should be formulated by the student in consultation with the company work placement supervisor. This should happen in the first weeks of the work placement. The work placement plan is a working document; it provides direction for the work placement assignment. The content of the internship plan depends on the type of internship you are following.

### 2.5.2 SUPERVISION

During your work placement you will receive supervision from the work placement company while the University will provide a supportive role in this regard from your WP Coordinator

### 2.5.3 WORK PLACEMENT SUPERVISOR

The work placement supervisor is your daily supervisor within the organisation/institution where you are doing your work placement. They serve as a facilitator within the organization enabling you to acquire practical experience within the institution. They are also responsible for making sure that you have access to all the facilities required for you to perform the tasks assigned to you. In addition, the



work placement supervisor offers advice to your process tutor regarding your interim evaluation and final assessment. Precise agreements regarding supervision at your place of work are made prior to the start of the internship and recorded in the internship contract as described in Appendix 2

#### **2.5.4 WP COORDINATOR**

The supervision from the University will be by the WP Coordinator. This also applies to students who are involved in a research internship. This supervision consists of individual interviews and/or a number of group sessions. The WP Coordinator will ask you to reflect critically on your learning process. Your WP Coordinator will also check whether your internship plan has sufficient depth and they will assess your internship evaluation report at the end of your internship. The interim evaluation and final evaluation takes place with your WP Coordinator and where applicable also with your external work placement supervisor.

#### **2.5.5 INTERIM EVALUATION**

An interim evaluation will take place half-way through your work placement. The purpose of the interim evaluation is to determine as to what degree you are meeting your personal learning objectives and to establish whether any adjustments are required in the activities you perform. Potential bottlenecks can be discussed and solutions sought, and the next step in your learning process can be discussed.

#### **2.5.6 FINAL ASSESSMENT**

At the end of your work placement period, WP Coordinator will receive the final evaluation from your company supervisor and review your career development. No grades nor credits are awarded in this process. The review meeting by the WP Coordinator with the student will be based on the interim and final company supervisor's evaluation (refer to the online form), the assessment advice of your work placement supervisor, the quality of the assignments and your participation in work placement meetings. The review will be discussed with the student in the course of the final interview.

### **3 CONTENT OF THE WORK PLACEMENT**

#### **3.1 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

Students should have at least one task that provides them with insight into how a company or organisation works (at the international level). This can include acquisition, relationship management, product development and organisational management.

Students should be aware of how their academic skills are applied in practice and develop the ability to deploy their competences in a work environment.

#### **3.2 GENERAL INFORMATION REGARDING WORK PLACEMENT**

The goals of work placement, as stated previously, can be translated into the following subjects for you to consider when doing your work placement.

### **3.2.1 UNDERSTAND THE NEEDS OF THE COMPANIES**

Let relevant mentors in the company to know whether you understand your tasks and being proactive to ask questions if you need clarification as appropriate!

Managers are always very busy. Be aware that they accepted you as a work placement student because it would be beneficial to the company as well. They want to be sure that you understand what is required of you. The manager should reserve time for you, normally at least once per week on a regular basis. Demonstrate your ability to work independently or with little supervision. They have limited time and therefore are not available all the time to help. As a Master student, expectations by the employer/internship company anticipation that you will be able to take some level of responsibility on your own, by demonstrating a reasonably good learning aptitude, proactive initiative, methodical and systematic approach your tasks. Therefore, challenge yourself by being effective and efficient as much as possible and demonstrate to your company supervisor your potential. Wittenborg's Work Placement Coordinator is available to assist you as well whenever necessary. The section on competencies to be acquired during the work placement below, describes which competences you should display and develop during your work placement.

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### **3.2.2 UNDERSTAND AND ADAPT TO THE COMPANIES CULTURE**

Be part of the social system of the company. At work, people have moments of relaxation and moments when they work hard.. In the west, we communicate directly. People will interpret your words in a western way. Therefore, they take everything very literal:

say 'yes' if you mean 'yes' and say 'no' if you mean 'no'. Thus, get an understanding of the western culture and enjoy being part of the company's staff.

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### **3.2.3 ASSERTIVENESS AND INITIATIVE**

You are being educated for a future role as a management. Act as an assistant-manager, make plans, come with the right proposals, ask for approval and get the job done!

Do not bother your host company with questions about your insurance, ID or IND card or similar issues. If you have questions related to this, you should first contact your process tutor to direct you to the right department where your respective questions can be addressed. You can also contact the international office here at Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences with regards to resident permit related questions. If you can and know how to solve any of the questions or issues which may arise, do not hesitate to take responsibility get it done!

### **3.2.4 THE COMPANY'S ROLE**

It is important that students observe professionals at work, in their chosen career field. This will enable them to gain an understanding of the type of work relevant to their chosen occupation. When appropriate, we encourage employers to enable interns to participate in staff meetings, attend presentations and sit in on meetings with clients. Additionally, interns should have the ability to speak and interact with professionals inside, as well as outside, of their own department to learn about different occupations and career paths.

### 3.3 COMPETENCIES TO BE ACQUIRED DURING THE WORK PLACEMENT

At the end of the work placement, a student will be able to:

- Demonstrate the attainment of advanced competency levels in specified core areas
- Demonstrate that they has operated within a structured and routinely supervised environment
- Use required methods, procedures and standards applicable to tasks set, after appropriate initial training
- Function effectively across tasks set using available tools, methodologies and/or equipment without frequent reference to others.
- Demonstrate a rational and organised approach to set task(s)
- Demonstrate oral and written communication skills for effective dialogue with colleagues and supervisors, or project instigators
- Show an ability to rapidly absorb fresh technical information when it is systematically presented and apply it effectively
- Describe and evaluate the structure, major activities and responsibilities of the organisation;
- Evaluate critically their performance and abilities

Also, the student needs to demonstrate the ability to work effectively with computer software used in business (office packages), including web-based software (databases and web mail), internet and intranets, email and other popular information and online communication management tools and to show that they can communicate fluently in English at a level equivalent to IELTS 6.5.

At the end of the work placement, students should have developed new skills or made improvements in existing skills. We encourage work placements that concentrate on the following areas:

- negotiating skills
- customer relationship management skills
- networking skills
- team working skills
- organisation skills
- managerial skills
- ability to deal with stress
- accurate working practices
- commercial thinking
- entrepreneurial skills
- pro-active & independent working methods

Work placement for master students is not part of the curriculum and students are not required to deliver any assignment and will not be assessed, however they need to write an evaluation report. They can share their impressions and feedback of their in-company supervisors with their process tutor in their regular meetings.

## 4 APPENDIXES

### 4.1 APPENDIX 1 – NECESSARY FORMS

All the required forms can be found in the WP Module online area.

- [Work placement request form](#)
- [Company supervisor evaluation form \(optional\)](#)
- [Tri-partite Contract \(Nuffic Agreement\)](#)