Employer's Guide

MITA's Student Placement Programme (SPP) is an annual, mutually beneficial programme for ICT students and employers from all sectors.

Government co-sponsors 50% of the salary for students temporarily employed in the private sector and 100% of the salary for students temporarily employed in the public sector and NGOs. Government has established a maximum threshold of working hours that will be re-imbursed through the scheme, based on 11 weeks, 30 hours per week and therefore a maximum of 330 hours. Employers pay the National Insurance contributions in addition to statutory bonus, whilst no tax to be paid by the student since they do not exceed the threshold stipulated by the Government.

The rate of remuneration for 2020 is an hourly rate in the region of ~ €6.82. The official rate will be confirmed at a later date once it is established by the Students Maintenance Grants Board. The students will work a 30-hour week and are entitled to pro-rata Vacation Leave and Sick Leave. They are also entitled to the pro-rata Government bonus.

A Fact Sheet is available on the MITA website with the terms and conditions.

The Programme aims to reduce the mismatch between supply and demand for ICT skills in the Maltese labour market. Through this Programme, employers are given direct access to an extensive pool of students who need to be studying ICT or related subjects. The minimum entry level is for student that have completed 2nd year 6th Form (and awaiting examination results), as well as those students who have completed their 2nd year Diploma (and awaiting examination results). In both cases, students are requested to obtain written confirmation of this from their respective Educational Institutions. In addition, students studying at the University of Malta, MCAST, and various private institutions are also eligible subject to studying ICT or related subjects.

This is a Government-led initiative, and students from both public and private educational institutions are invited to take part in placements. The programme will give students the opportunity to apply their academic and vocational knowledge on the job. As an employer, you will benefit from the fresh influx of energy, enthusiasm and creativity in your organisation.

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A. MITA's responsibilities

- Facilitate access to a pool of talented students who wish to apply their learning in an industry setting, and hone their competences in an area of ICT relevant to your business needs;

- Provide Placement Plans that highlight competency areas and objectives for focus throughout the placement;

- Through supervision, ensure that high levels of quality service and learning are maintained throughout the placement;

- Support employers, students, workplace mentors in the effective execution of their commitments.

B. Your responsibilities

- As an employer you are responsible for abiding by the conditions stated in the signed 'Letter of Intent';

- Before the Placement, you should discuss the Programme with your organisation's management and staff and inform them of the student/s name/s, role/s, and placement start date/s;

- Additionally, you should brief the members of staff who will be working closely with student/s, make them aware of the student/s' areas of study, what can be expected from the student/s, and what the student/s hope to gain from the placement;

- Prepare some informational materials about your business, services, products and industry for the student/s to have a good idea of what your organisation is all about and where she/he/they can fit in and contribute;

- Organise the student/s' workspace and prepare any necessary equipment and required tools such as: computer workstation, software, stationery, telephone, filing space;

- Identify projects and tasks that the student/s can work on prior to arrival;

- During the placement period you are to offer support and guidance to the student by providing a suitable 'Workplace Mentor', who will guide, monitor and evaluate the performance of students at all stages of placement, as well as communicate with MITA if required;

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- The Workplace Mentor will assist the student and complete the 'Competences Evaluation Form' and any other documentation required;

- Ensure the student understands the work performance, and standards of conduct expected of them, as well as the business outcomes and performance measures they should achieve.

C. Recruitment and Selection Process

- Kindly indicate to MITA the preferred qualifications of your potential student/s by submitting the e-Form;

- Students apply for the programme, indicate the course they are currently attending also through an appropriate e-Form;

- MITA will match students with employers according to your stated requirements;

- MITA will then send you a list of proposed candidates;

- Review the CVs, then contact the students directly to set up and conduct an interview;

- Provide MITA with a list of your selected students and inform the students accordingly;

- Complete the ETC's engagement forms and submit to ETC.

D. Placement Plans and Evaluation Procedures

i.   Placement Plans

The Placement Plans outline technical and transversal skills to guide you and the students through the placement. The Plans are used to guide and intensify the students' focus throughout the placement period. Use them well!

The three Role Profiles that are being provided for SPP 2020 for guidance are:

- Business Analyst

- Networks Practitioner

- Software/Applications Developer

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The above Role Profiles correspond with one of two tiers, based on the education and experience level of the student:

- Role Profile 1 – Students following a course at Level 6 or 7 (Business Analyst, Networks or Software/Applications)
- Role Profile 2 – Students following a course at Level 4 or 5 (Networks, Software/Applications only)

ii. Competences Evaluation Form

Throughout the placement, in conjunction with their Workplace Mentors, students will complete a self-evaluation form providing information on their newly acquired skills. Areas where improved proficiency is noted during the placement will also be documented.

Workplace Mentors are expected to add relevant and comprehensive feedback to the form, bearing in mind that this feedback is to be discussed and decided upon with the student. The Mentor shall point out primarily positive achievements and opportunities for improvement for the students. The form will be completed and signed by the student and the Mentor.

It is important to note that the Competences Evaluation Form shall provide the background and contextual information required in order for MITA to form a reliable picture of the situation and provide you with necessary support and guidance.

The Workplace Mentor/s are expected to in collaboration with the student to complete the Form and submit to MITA three (3) completed versions of this Competences Evaluation Form - at the start (May-July), half-way (August) and prior to the conclusion of the Placement (September).

iii. Exit Interviews

As part of the evaluation process, both employers and students are to complete an exit interview at the end of the Placement. The Interviews will be linked to the objectives set out in the Placement Profile and Competences Evaluation Form. MITA will use this feedback to gauge the efficacy of the programme and to make future improvements.

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The Exit Interview is mandatory.

E. Additional Support is Available if Required – MITA Mentors

If throughout the placement you feel that your student/s require additional support and wish to speak to somebody external to the organisation on potentially personal or social circumstances or particular challenges, then refer back to MITA. A MITA Mentor will be assigned to the student for this support and encouragement.

The MITA Mentor will work in collaboration with the student and the Workplace Mentor, in order to enhance the overall experience, add value and help ensure a positive set of outcomes. The MITA Coach will conduct pre-arranged on-site visits to your organisation or meet with the student at MITA.

This service will be offered on a case-by-case basis.

F. Troubleshooting

Problem	Solution
The student cannot complete the work required.	• Check that the student understands the task and has the skills to execute it • Ensure the students has all the information and equipment necessary to complete to task • Check that the student is working on tasks in order of priority • Assess timeframes according to the student's capabilities
The student is unwilling to complete the work assigned to them.	• Determine the reason the student is unable to complete the work • Assess whether the student is being challenged enough • Take care not to confuse inhibition with lack of motivation • Ask the student if they are experiencing any other difficulties in relation to and extraneous from the placement

The student is late or absent. The student's behavior is otherwise inappropriate.	• Explain to the student that his/her behavior/lateness is unprofessional and that s/he will have to conform to your expectations in future

Any student-related issues that cannot be resolved in a timely and satisfactory manner within the organisation can be escalated to MITA. Contact the Digital Outreach office at MITA on 2599 2474.

G. Re-Imbursement Process

The re-imbursement process of the salaries is governed by the 'Letter of Intent' that you have duly filed with MITA.

At the timeframe indicated by MITA (October) you have to submit the necessary evidence for the re-imbursement process to be initiated. You also need to participate in the Exit Interview. At the end of the placement you need to file the Termination Form with ETC.

We hope that the SPP provides an overall positive experience for both you and the student. We sincerely hope that your organisation will reap the benefits of this programme.

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