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## Student's Guide

The Student Placement Programme (SPP) is an annual, mutually beneficial programme for ICT and ICT-related students and employers of all sectors. The programme aims to reduce the mismatch between supply and demand for ICT skills in the Maltese labour market.

Students eligible to participate 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 gives you the opportunity to apply your academic and vocational knowledge on the job in a workplace scenario. You are encouraged to bring your energy, enthusiasm and creativity to the workplace.

Government co-sponsors 50% of the students' salaries for private sector employers and 100% of the students' salaries 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 is to be paid by yourself as a student since you 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 actual rate will be established by the Student Maintenance Grants Board at a later stage. You are entitled to pro-rata Vacation Leave and Sick Leave. You are also entitled to the pro-rata Government bonus.

The employers have been given room for flexibility for 2020, to start as early or late as their business requires. The employer is expected to discuss with you regarding your availability to start and the

number of hours expected per week. If you agree to the propositions by the employer, you will arrive to a mutual agreement. Your employer is to inform MITA on this agreement.

## **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. The Employer's Responsibilities**

- Your employer will offer you support and guidance by pairing you with a Workplace Mentor, who will guide you during all stages of the placement;
- Your employer will organise a workspace for you and any necessary equipment, such as a computer, installation of software etc.;
- Your employer will ensure that your work area is prepared and that you have tasks and projects to work on when you arrive;
- Your Workplace Mentor will assist you in completing the 'Competences Evaluation Form';
- Your Workplace Mentor will ensure that you understand the work performance and conduct standards expected of you as well as the business outcomes and performance measures that you should achieve.

## **C. Your responsibilities**

- Dress for success;
- Be punctual in your working hours and with work deadlines;

- Stay focused on the task at hand and be able to multi-task when necessary;
- Be detail-oriented and diligent in your work;
- Meet regularly with your Workplace Mentor to discuss your progress;
- Use your Placement Plan as a guide to help you improve your technical competences and soft skills;
- Complete the Competences Evaluation Form, acquire signature of your Workplace Mentor and submit it to MITA as outlined in later sections of these Guidelines;
- Set short-term and long-term goals for the placement and for your academic career;
- Escalate any issues with your Mentor and MITA.

## D. Placement Plans and Evaluation Procedures

### i. Placement Plans

The Placement Plans outline technical and transversal skills to guide you and your employer through the placement. The Plans are used to guide and intensify your 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

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

- **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 your Workplace Mentors, you 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.

Your 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 you. The Mentor shall point out primarily positive achievements and opportunities for improvement for you. You will have to complete and sign the form with 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.

You are expected in collaboration with the Workplace Mentor/s 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.

The Exit Interview is mandatory.

## E. Tips for a Successful Placement

- Have a positive attitude – Approach life and goals with enthusiasm and learn to accept yourself and others;
- Use a Creative Problem Solving Approach – The answer is not always black or white;

- Confidence – Develop your self-confidence and interpersonal skills through team work, problem solving in group, sharing your ideas and opinions and public-speaking;
- Discovery – Be open-minded to new ideas and challenges and think outside the box;
- Solve, Resolve, and Evolve – Identify the root of the problem, hone your problem-solving skills and focus on the resolution - not the problem. Try to implement solutions and make appropriate changes to ensure success and build your confidence;
- Awareness – Be aware of your environment, be intuitive, be problem-sensitive, and ready to make the most of opportunities;
- Risk-taking – Take risks and be an active participant, not a spectator;
- Flexibility – Be flexible and adaptable in your attitudes and actions. Look for alternatives and view situations and people from different perspectives;
- Share your vision – Create a vision statement for yourself and share it with your Workplace Mentor.

## **F. Additional Support is Available if Required – MITA Mentors**

If throughout the placement you feel that you need additional support and wish to speak to somebody who can help you through any particular challenges, then refer back to MITA. A MITA Mentor will be assigned to you for this support and encouragement.

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

## **G. Troubleshooting**

Kindly consult with your Workplace Mentor to resolve any issues that may arise during the placement. If you cannot find a resolution contact the Digital Outreach office at MITA on 2599 2474 and we can discuss the appointment of a MITA Mentor.

# student placement programme

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🌐 [mita.gov.mt/spp](http://mita.gov.mt/spp)

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*We truly hope that your placement experience is both valuable and fun. Good luck!*