

Guidelines for the Internship of the Master in Science (MSc) in Psychology

Preamble : As mentioned in the art. 6 of the Law on the University of Lausanne (LUL), the function and title names in the present document apply indifferently to women and to men.

1. Guidelines for Interns

1.1 Objectives

The purpose of an internship is to offer a supervised work experience as a psychologist to psychology students in the framework of their university education for a Master's degree.

An internship should enable student interns to assimilate the knowledge acquired in academic studies by confronting them with field practice.

It should also serve to develop awareness in students of the professional environment in which – supervised by a seasoned professional in charge of the internship – they will have the opportunity to:

- further their understanding of a psychologist's role and its specificity
- discover the specific environment and operation of the institution/department/unit
- reflect on the relationships between theory and practice.

1.2 Two Types of Internships

Students are offered two types of internships: intervention internships and research internships.

Practical intervention internships should serve to acquire instruments and know-how linked to the practice of psychology with individuals, groups or organisations, such as e.g.:

- psychological evaluation/assessment
- interviewing techniques
- patient follow-up and care
- drawing up reports/records and administrative tasks
- cooperation within a multidisciplinary team
- participation in conferences, team meetings, syntheses, networks.

Practical research internships should serve to acquire instruments and know-how linked to:

- developing a research methodology and a data collection scheme
- administering tests/questionnaires, (semi-)structured interviews, observations
- data processing and analysis
- bibliographical research

- drawing up scientific papers
- teamwork
- research transfer (congresses, etc.).

Drawing up an MSc dissertation related to a research internship may be considered. In that case, subject to approval by the President of the Internship Committee, an internship may exceptionally be allowed in the first year of the MSc curriculum, upon submission of a project developed in consultation with an internship supervisor. In that case, it shall nevertheless be ascertained that :

- the internship terms of reference are not limited to tasks related to developing the dissertation work;
- internship supervision and dissertation supervision tasks are performed by two different people.

1.3 Internship Procedures

Internships are available to students registered in the Psychology MSc programme of the SSP Faculty as regular students. The internship is completed in 2nd MSc year, i.e. in the 3rd or 4th term. In case of part-time studies, the internship can be done later. Students must state their intention to complete an internship as part of their curriculum as from the 1st term of the 1st year. They should then plan their study programme taking into account the internship, the courses and their MSc dissertation work.

For reasons of organisation and coordination of internship positions, students starting their MSc in the spring are subject to the same rule and will be informed of the internship opportunities offered by the Committee during their 2nd MSc term. In principle, they will be able to complete their internship only in the 4th MSc term, unless they decide to extend their studies by one term in order to benefit from an internship offered for the spring term (which means his 5th term of studies in the Master's degree).

Students are encouraged to complete the basic courses for their MSc study option before embarking on an internship. In fact, some courses must be followed in the 1st MSc year and can constitute prerequisites for some internships.

1.4 Duration

For all MSc study options, the internships are foreseen in principle over a period of 6 months at 50% (15 ECTS)¹ :

- either from 01.08 to 31.01
- or from 01.02 to 31.07.

¹ For the students who began the Master's degree before the academic year 2018-2019 with the "Counselling and Vocational Psychology" study option, the internship is foreseen over a period of 5 months at 40% (12 ECTS). It takes place either from 01.09 to 31.01, or from 01.02 to 30.06.

Some exceptions may be granted by the Internship Committee regardless of the chosen MSc study option.

1.5 Recruitment

Partner institutions are in charge of hiring interns. The hiring process takes place in five stages :

1. at the end of the autumn term of their 1st MSc year, students receive a list of available internships, specifying the institutions concerned, the nature of internships, prerequisites and available periods for completion;
2. based on this list, students provide the internship coordinator with a first choice by order of preference, together with a general letter in support of their application (cover letter);
3. as far as possible the internship coordinator draws up a shortlist of three internships for each student, based on their wishes and on availabilities. Institutions offering an internship are likewise informed of students who may apply for an internship with them (in principle 3 per internship position);
4. the institution makes a selection based on an application (cover letter and application file), according to its own procedures;
5. internship agreements are drawn up and signed. The internship manager notifies the coordinator of the name of the intern with whom the agreement has been signed, marking the end of the hiring process.

For the "Counselling and Vocational Psychology" study option, students do not go through steps 2 and 3 mentioned above. They apply freely (cover letter and application file) to the institutions of their choice.

Students not selected for any internship may contact the internship coordinator to find a possible solution. Any remaining internships are offered a second time to those students who have not yet found a position. As internships are optional in the framework of the MSc, students not hired by an institution will be invited to replace the internship with a choice of theoretical courses (personal project).

Institutions set their own procedures for hiring interns. However, in order to harmonise the timing, the whole process (first and second round) must be completed before summer, for internships in both the forthcoming autumn and spring terms, except for the "Counselling and Vocational Psychology" study option which follows a specific procedure.

1.6 Internship Supervision

Internship supervision is subject to precise guidelines which internship supervisors must observe (see Guidelines for Internship Supervisors). In particular, the internship supervisor is in charge of ensuring that :

- the student has access to actual professional practice as a psychologist;

- the internship is subject to terms of reference specifying 1) the objectives and precise content of the internship (activities foreseen); 2) the mutual commitments by the intern, the internship manager and the institution; 3) evaluation procedures.

For clinical internships, the internship supervisor has at least four years of service; for research internships, the internship supervisor has a PhD in psychology.

In case no psychologist is available in the internship environment, a psychologist must be selected from outside the institution to provide professional supervision as internship supervisor.

1.7 Ethics

Interns are subject to the code of ethics of the profession and to the specific administrative and legal framework in force at the place of internship (professional secrecy, data protection, ethical rules, directives on the sharing or disclosure of information).

1.8 Evaluation & Validation

Internships are subject to a dual evaluation :

- by the internship supervisor regarding aspects of involvement in professional practice, using the "Internship Quality Assessment Grid", to be sent to the university by the internship manager at the end of the internship. The evaluation is based on criteria previously defined by the Internship Committee in line with initial objectives. Additionally, students will be given an internship certificate by the employer.
- by the university, based on the internship report describing the main activities performed, to be transmitted by the student.

This dual evaluation determines whether the internship (and related credits) is validated by the SSP Faculty.

A mid-term review is made by the internship supervisor. This should serve to review the objectives and, if necessary, to take corrective measures or suggest improvements for the smooth completion of the internship. The internship coordinators are available in case of problem.

Students must register for the "internship" course in their academic file for the term in which they perform the internship, in compliance with the general online course registration procedure. Only based on such registration will the SSP Faculty be able to validate the internship.

1.9. Appeals Procedure

In case of dispute or conflict, the intern and/or the internship manager may submit the case to the Internship Committee. If the dispute cannot be solved, the file is referred to

the SSP Faculty Dean's Office, which issues a ruling which may be appealed according to the procedures and deadlines foreseen in the Faculty Regulations.

In case an internship is discontinued by the employer or the intern, the matter is referred to the Internship Committee which reviews the student's curriculum.

2. Guidelines for Internship Supervisors

2.1 Internship Offer

The offer of an internship is accompanied by a description of activities proposed by the psychologist in charge. Based on this, the Committee validates the internship offer and adds it to the list put forward to the students.

2.2 Objective

The internship supervisor supervises and trains the interns – psychology students in their last MSc year. The internship should enable interns to assimilate the knowledge acquired in academic studies by confronting them with field practice.

2.3 Missions

Le maître de stage :

The internship supervisor shall :

- draw up the intern's terms of reference ;
- welcome interns and allow them to become familiar with the operation and various activities of the place of internship ;
- see to it that interns have activities related to the psychologist profession and that their terms of reference are adhered to ;
- draw up a periodic work plan enabling interns to organise their schedule ;
- devote appropriate time to supervising the intern's activities ;
- provide interns with the professional code of ethics ;
- gradually develop interns' autonomy in a supervised fashion ;
- foster cooperation between interns and other psychologist colleagues ;
- provide a mid-term review of interns ;
- draw up a final evaluation (internship report) of the interns' work.

2.4 Procedures

In principle, internship supervisors are psychologists with an MSc in psychology or equivalent qualification. For clinical internships, the internship manager has at least four years of service; for research internships, the internship supervisor has a PhD in psychology.

Document approved by the Internship Committee on April 2018.

Contact :

For students with the study option in :

- Counselling and Vocational Psychology

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For students with the study option in :

- Clinical Psychology and Psychopathology
- Health Psychology : Cultural-Historical Approach
- Child and Adolescent Psychology
- Social and Intercultural Psychology

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