

INTERNSHIP POLICY AND PROCEDURE GUIDELINES

Vision

The Commonwealth Secretariat to be known as a provider of an excellent Internship Programme for young Commonwealth citizens.

Definition of Internship

Commitment to provide short-term supervised work experience usually related to a student's specific field of study or career aspirations.

The programme will combine practical work experience with a structured learning experience through specific briefs aimed to achieve identified Secretariat objectives.

Key Objectives

- Promote the work of the Commonwealth Secretariat within the youth community and create advocates for the Commonwealth from a wide cross-section of the membership after they have completed their internships.
- Promote a wider and better public understanding of the challenges confronting Commonwealth member states, including an insight for Interns into how the Secretariat works with its members to overcome these challenges.
- Attract and develop a future talent pool.
- Provide Interns with the opportunity to participate in areas of the Commonwealth Secretariat's activities in order to gain work experience.
- Create an opportunity for professional development for students and recent graduates of the Commonwealth and to empower young people to gain experience and prepare themselves for the labour market.
- Create a network of advocates of the Commonwealth.
- Commonwealth Secretariat recognised as a provider of an excellent Internship Programme for young Commonwealth citizens.
- Aspire towards a Commonwealth Internship programme recognised internationally and co-ordinated internally that would serve as a flagship for the organisation.

Risks

- Resource intensive to manage and ensure excellence.
- Failure to measure the benefits and continuously evaluate the added value.

- Reputation management/negative public relations if poor project management results in negative experiences for interns.
- Immigration compliance risks and impact on the Secretariat's privileges.

POLICY

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to enhance the existing framework to continue to guide and give direction to the management of all internship placements within the Commonwealth Secretariat.

2. Scope of application

This policy is applicable to all interns in the Secretariat. The Internship Programme should not be confused with other forms of short term attachments to the Secretariat, e.g: secondments and recruitment to temporary positions.

3. Policy Statement

Through this policy the Commonwealth Secretariat will be committed to providing interns with a quality experience that involves meaningful activities and the opportunity to learn and gain practical work experience in their chosen field of study and work. Interns will be provided with a clear defined framework of participation and learning, and will be supervised by a suitable division staff member, who will monitor progress to ensure effective contribution and resolve any concerns of the intern. Interns will not be considered as a substitute for staff, and would not normally represent the Secretariat in any official capacity, but through their work would bring value added to the Secretariat. Internship placements will be recruited through a transparent and competitive application and selection process.

4. Eligibility criteria

Under the Internship Programme applicants will be considered based on the following:

4.1 All interns must:

- Be citizens of a Commonwealth member state or dependent territory thereof.
- Be between the ages of 20 and 30 years of age.

- Be enrolled in a university, or equivalent tertiary institution, or be a university graduate.
 - Have the right to reside and work in the UK for the full duration of the Internship. The Secretariat will not assist in applying for visas or altering the visa status of applications but will provide, where necessary, documentary evidence required for students under UK Immigration rules.
- 4.2 Students enrolled on first degree programmes should have completed two years of full time study. Students pursuing post-graduate studies should be in the process of completing their degrees and wish to gain experience at the Secretariat in the field in which they are enrolled.
- 4.3 The overall geographical representation offered by the Interns collectively. Priority may be given to interns who are from member countries underrepresented at the Commonwealth Secretariat.

5. Application Procedure

- 5.1 All Secretariat Internship Placements to be advertised and each Division will be restricted to a maximum of two interns per year to enable efficient and effective management of the programme.
- 5.2 All enquiries from prospective interns are directed to and advised to examine the Commonwealth Secretariat website where internship opportunities will be posted.
- 5.3 Applicants must complete an Internship Placement Application Form. The completed form and, where applicable, a letter from the sponsoring institution (official stamp must be on letter) must be forwarded to Human Resource prior to the closing date.
- 5.4 Applications will only be considered for advertised internship programmes and will not be considered speculatively.
- 5.5 Unless specified, applicants should not forward copies of their diplomas and other important documents.
- 5.6 Prospective Interns submitting applications must state clearly and precisely on the application form their particular internship programme brief of interest, what skills and experience they expect to gain or develop during the period of Internship and the contributions they will make to the work of the Secretariat.
- 5.7 Only successful applications will be acknowledged.
- 5.8 An Internship selection panel modelled on the competency based interview selection panel will be formed to shortlist and select suitable interns.

6 Internship conditions

- 6.1 Interns may begin their internships only after they have agreed to the terms of reference and terms and conditions of the Internship Programme.
- 6.2 Internships will be for a period of not less than one month but not more than six months.
- 6.3 Interns will be insured under the terms and conditions of the Secretariat Employee Liability scheme.
- 6.4 An intern is not eligible to apply for a temporary or permanent position at the Secretariat during the internship or for six months following the end of the internship placement.
- 6.5 An Intern is not eligible to enter into a consultancy or employment agreement with the Secretariat during the period of Internship, or for six months following the internship.
- 6.6 An Intern is not considered to be a member of staff of the Secretariat and therefore any privileges agreed on between the Secretariat and the Government of the United Kingdom do not apply to Interns.
- 6.7 No reports or papers may be published on the basis of information obtained during the Internship period without the written consent of the Commonwealth Secretariat.

7 Benefits

- 7.1 Interns will be offered an honorarium of £411.84 per week, subject to the National Minimum Wage reviews as published from time to time.

During the period of internship the interns will be allowed rest periods of one day a month which can be accrued but must be utilized before the end of the internship period. Any unused accrued rest days will be not be compensable financially.

8 Obligations of the Intern

- 8.1 The intern shall demonstrate willingness to fully and actively participate in the learning experience by planning their programme of work with the line manager.
- 8.2 The intern shall participate in the introduction and orientation programme of the Secretariat.
- 8.3 An Intern is required to conduct him/herself at all times in a manner that will not be detrimental to the image and standing of the Secretariat.
- 8.4 The Secretariat reserves the right to terminate an Internship without notice if the required standards of behaviour and code of conduct are not met.

8.5 An Intern is required to keep confidential all information including unpublished information made known to him/her during the period of Internship and must sign a confidentiality agreement prior to commencing work.

8.6 At the end of the Internship programme, with the assistance of his/her line manager, the Intern will complete an evaluation and a report on his/her assignment which would feed into the final internship evaluation report.

8.7 An Intern will complete an end of Internship procedures form. The form should be endorsed by his/her Supervisor and will cover the settlement of all outstanding financial obligations, the surrender of the Secretariat security and access pass, and any Secretariat properties in his/her custody. The Intern's line manager will forward the completed form to the Human Resources Adviser responsible for the Division/Unit.

8.8 The Intern is required to work within the regulations and rules as outlined in the Human Resources Handbook.

9. Obligations of the Secretariat

9.1 The Secretariat shall provide the intern with a conducive working environment and working space.

9.2 The Secretariat shall provide requisite equipment for the term of the internship.

9.3 The Secretariat shall pay the intern monthly for the duration of the internship.

9.4 The Division/Unit will review progress on performance and learning regularly, record such meeting and feed findings into the final internship evaluation report. The line manager will forward the completed form to the Human Resources officer responsible for the Division/Unit.

9.5 Given below are some specific learning outcomes that are to be achieved by the Interns and criteria to evaluate whether or not these outcomes were achieved. The assessment will be undertaken periodically by the line manager during the placement.

Specific Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
Explain the purpose of the organisation in relation to the area of research	Description in the placement report of the context and purpose of the organisation in relation to the area of research

Explain the changes (opportunities/challenges) taking place at an organisational level in relation to the area of research	Description and analysis of organisational change, identification of opportunities and challenges within the organisation, use of examples to support views
Critically analyse what constitutes best practice at organisational level and draw implications for the organisation	Critical assessment of what constitutes good practice for sustainable development within the sector, use of examples of good practice, analysis of such practice, links between practice and theory
Explain and reflect upon the role of leadership within the organisation in relation to the area of research	Evidence of observation of leadership in organisations, reflection upon own leadership qualities
Communicate the experience of the placement succinctly and clearly to a variety of audiences	Evidence in writing of accuracy and fluency in Internship reports
Reflect upon personal experiences during placement	Articulation of personal reflection, values and feelings about the ComSec