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Internships - Quality guidelines for host organizations

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Internships — Quality guidelines for host organizations

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ISO/DIS 29997:2024(en)**Foreword**

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This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 232, Joint Working Group 9 "*Joint ISO/TC 232-ISO/TC 260: Internship*".

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

ISO/DIS 29997:2024(en)**Introduction**

Internship programmes provide opportunities for employers and individuals to meet the challenge of employability and competency development.

Continuous adaptation is required in this environment and the development of new skills is crucial for preparing individuals for successful and adaptive careers. Internships in host organizations, linked to training, play a key role in this context. Internships can assist all learners to gain practical work experience, acquire essential competences, and facilitate their initial and continued access to the labor market. Internships are subject to different legal or regulatory frameworks in different countries.

This standard aims to establish an international framework for internships in host organizations, promoting effective and relevant professional integration. It seeks to harmonize practices, ensure a quality experience for interns, and promote equity and equal opportunities, regardless of their geographic location or career stage.

This standard provides guidelines to host organization to offer good quality internships programmes, in particular regarding learning and training content and working conditions, with the aim of easing the transition from education to the labour market.

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Internships — Quality guidelines for host organizations

1 Scope

This document outlines guidance for the management of internships to enable host organizations to consistently offer and enhance internship experiences aligned with intended learning outcomes.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 30405:2023, *Human resource management — Guidelines on recruitment*

ISO 30422:2022, *Human resource management — Learning and development*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>

— IEC Electropedia: available at <https://www.electropedia.org/>

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3.1 Internship

guided, time-limited work-based learning experience

Note 1 to entry: Internships can:

- be part of curricula;
- have different durations;
- be paid.

3.2

Intern

an individual who is carrying out assigned tasks and responsibilities to gain practical experience in line with expected learning outcomes

3.3

Tutor

person linked to/or appointed by the host organization to guide interns within the organization, possessing professional experience and significant background knowledge, allowing for an effective tutoring process

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Note 1 to entry: This person can be an employee, personnel, staff or another person with a fully integrated role in the organization. Different terminology might be used in different environments, such as supervisor, mentor etc. Any term can be used as long as what is meant by these terms corresponds exactly to the definition of tutor as described in this document.

3.4

Host organization

a legal entity, which can be private, semi-public or public, for-profit or not- for-profit, acting as the place of carrying out the tasks and responsibilities of the interns, and responsible for providing practical work-based learning experience

3.5

Educational organization

[ISO 21001:2018^{\[1\]}](#) organization whose core business is the provision of educational products and educational services

Note 1 to entry: This can include an educational organization within a larger organization whose core business is not education, such as a professional training department.

3.6

Work environment

physical, social, and cultural setting in which interns carry out their assigned tasks and responsibilities within the host organization

4 Creating effective internship programmes

4.1 General

The host organization should have a clear and comprehensive framework for establishing and managing effective internship programmes that meet the needs of all parties involved. The internship should not be used as a job replacement.

This standard has been built around the following guiding principles, so that host organizations may propose positive and constructive internships: decent work environment, equal opportunity, fairness and transparency.

NOTE Examples are provided in [Annex A](#).

4.2 Analyzing context for internships

The organizational context should guide the development and implementation of an effective internship programme, ensuring alignment with broader business strategies and objectives. This includes understanding the industry-specific challenges, organizational culture, and available resources to support internships.

A successful internship programme requires an understanding of the needs, expectations, and objectives of interns and other stakeholders, such as educational organizations, regulatory bodies, and future employers.

This understanding should inform the design of the internship, ensuring it provides relevant and meaningful experiences that benefit both the interns and the host organization, while also adhering to any external requirements or standards.