

# An Overview of the STEM Internship Scheme

## Background

In the 2020-21 Budget, the Financial Secretary has set aside \$40 million to subsidise undergraduates and postgraduates taking STEM<sup>1</sup> programmes in universities funded by the University Grants Committee (UGC) to enrol in short-term internships. The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) has set up under the Innovation and Technology Fund the **STEM Internship Scheme** (“the Scheme”) to encourage STEM students to gain innovation and technology (I&T)-related work experience during their studies and to foster their interest in pursuing a career in I&T after graduation, so as to enlarge the local I&T talent pool.

## Eligible Universities

Tertiary institutions in Hong Kong funded by UGC offering STEM programmes are eligible to receive funding under the Scheme. Individual universities may supplement further requirements and make specific arrangements to suit their own circumstances.

## Eligibility of Students

The Scheme is open to undergraduates and postgraduates who are –

1. local students in accordance with the classification by the Education Bureau for the purpose of admission to post-secondary programmes<sup>2</sup>; and

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<sup>1</sup> STEM refers to the academic disciplines of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

<sup>2</sup> According to the Education Bureau, holders of the following documents are classified as local students –

- Hong Kong Permanent Identity Card;
- Documents issued by the Hong Kong Immigration Department certifying the right of abode / right to land in Hong Kong;
- Document of Identity / One-way permit for entry to Hong Kong;
- Dependant visa / entry permit (for students who were below 18 years old when they were issued with such visa / entry permit by the Director of Immigration);
- Full-time employment visa / work permit (for part-time study);
- Visa / entry permit for Quality Migrant Admission Scheme;
- Visa / entry permit for Capital Investment Entrant Scheme;
- Visa / Entry permit for Admission Scheme for the Second Generation of Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Residents; or
- Visa label for unconditional stay.

2. enrolling in one of the full-time STEM programmes offered by the eligible Universities.

### **Eligibility of Employers**

All companies/ organisations are welcomed to offer I&T-related internship places for, and recruit interns benefited from the Scheme, subject to the arrangements of individual universities.

Participating employers may pay the student interns a monthly honorarium on top of the allowance under the Scheme with reference to their internal policies, industry benchmarks or market rates<sup>3</sup>.

### **Internship Placements**

Internship places can be newly created or belong to existing in-house internship programmes of the companies/organisations. They have to meet the following requirements –

1. local or non-local full-time placements with duration of at least four consecutive weeks; and
2. offer meaningful I&T-related work, subject to the vetting of the universities.

The Scheme has adopted a broad definition of I&T under which an internship place will be regarded as I&T-related as long as its actual work contains I&T elements (e.g. technology-related intellectual property work, digital marketing, data analysis for the manufacturing industry, etc.). Participating employers may pay a monthly honorarium during the internship period on top of the allowance under the Scheme. They have full discretion in determining the honorarium level with reference to their internal policies, industry benchmarks or market rates<sup>3</sup>.

### **Allowance and Funding**

The student interns will receive the allowance subject to the arrangements of individual universities. The allowance for each student intern under the Scheme will be

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<sup>3</sup> The employers in Hong Kong should also observe the relevant requirements under the Minimum Wages Ordinance (Cap. 608). Further information is available at the website of the Labour Department ([https://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/content2\\_smw.htm](https://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/content2_smw.htm)).

HK\$10,500 per month<sup>4</sup>, with a cap as prescribed by individual universities, but not more than three months in every academic year. ITC will disburse the funding to the universities on a reimbursement basis.

### **Application Procedures and Arrangements**

Individual universities have prescribed their respective application procedures and arrangements. Interested students and employers are welcomed to approach the following universities –

<b>University</b>	<b>Contact</b>
The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	Career Center Tel: (852) 2358 6688 Email: careercenter@ust.hk
The University of Hong Kong	The Centre of Development and Resources for Students Tel: (852) 3917 2317 Email: stem@cedars.hku.hk
The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Ms Zoe Fong Tel: (852) 3943 9639 Email: zoefong@cuhk.edu.hk
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	Mr KK Ng (Employer matters) Tel: (852) 2766 4651 Email: kk.ng@polyu.edu.hk  Miss Genette Cheung (Scheme details and application) Tel: (852) 3400 3121 Email: genette.cheung@polyu.edu.hk
City University of Hong Kong	Miss Cherry Chong Tel: (852) 3442 4481 Email: cherry.chong@cityu.edu.hk
Hong Kong Baptist University	Miss Penny Lo Career Centre Tel: (852) 3411 5278 Email: pennylo@hkbu.edu.hk
The Education University of Hong Kong	Career Development Service Tel: (852) 2948 6246 Email: careerservice@eduhk.hk

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<sup>4</sup> For the purpose of calculating allowance under the Scheme, one month has 30 days.