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FAQs on the First & Second International Experience for Master degree courses as of winter semester 2016/17

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Brief overview of the International Experiences (the same for all Master degrees):

The primary learning objective of both modules within the framework “International Experience” is the students’ international qualification. Students either obtain language, cultural, or professional skills of international relevance at an overseas university, preferably from a range of courses that fit into the areas of competence of the home university in a meaningful way, allowing the knowledge that is gained to be broadened and applied.

Alternatively, students get qualified in international company training programs (internships, working student positions, or international research projects) on topics of international relevance as on-the-job training. It is not required to carry out the activity abroad, as long as the international relevance of the project is ensured after the assessment by a supervisor. The company training programs must have a clear project-like character (i.e. one or more tasks with quality, deadlines and, if applicable, cost objectives) and correspond to the chosen major. The aim is to enable the student to align the theoretical knowledge gained in the Master degree course with the practical experience, to allow them to carry out critical analysis, and thus to prepare for the Master thesis.

The students face challenges which are relevant in an international context within the framework of the first and second International Experience by choosing two of the following 5 ECTS events:

- International Summer School (at least 5 ECTS or equivalent at the host university)
- International Winter School (at least 5 ECTS or equivalent at the host university)
- International Company Training (at least 6 weeks)
- International Research Project (at least 6 weeks)

Alternatively, the students can choose one 10 ECTS event that counts for both International Experience modules at the same time:

- Study Abroad Semester (at least 10 ECTS or equivalent at the host university)
- International Company Training (at least 12 weeks)
- International Research Project (at least 12 weeks)
- Student Working Position (at least 12 weeks equivalent to full-time work)

The registration procedure is made electronically via students’ online campus. Information will be provided in the info session during the first semester.

The following FAQs provide information on typical questions in connection with the international qualification phases. The examination regulations are valid in the event of doubt or ambiguity.

FAQ

Q: Which Master courses does this apply to?

A: All locations, all business / marketing full-time Master programs in German or English with the exception of the CM part-time program.

Q: What does 'international character' mean for company training programs?

A: The activity carried out by students must be relevant for their Master course beyond a purely national significance and thus can also be found abroad. It is not necessary to show that the office language is English. Evidence could be, for example, the work with an internationally active company (international management, English as the office language) or international topics (fundamentally the subject of the studies). The supervisor will decide if the program can be recognized.

Q: What should be considered during the registration?

A: The registration is made via the online campus (CNet). Students sign up via selection fields for a specific option of the International Experience (5 or 10 ECTS) in a specific form (summer school, internship, etc.) in a given semester. An exact click instruction will be provided to students after the information event at the beginning of their first semester.

Q: When and how do students have to make the decision about the International Experience?

A: Students have basically free choice regarding the registration dates. In order to apply for the Master Thesis, all International Experiences must be graded (i.e. completed) or at least initiated. This includes supporting documents signed by the supervisor and a working contract (with a company or a partner university). The corresponding examinations (e.g. company training report) may still be pending. Students are responsible for registrations, meeting deadlines and compliance with their course of studies. Registrations for the International Experience are made via the online campus.

Q: Who is the supervisor at the university?

A: The vice dean or the program leader who may involve another full-time professor of the university with academic reference to the project.

Q: What is a Research Project?

A: It is possible to choose a research facilities instead of doing an internship at an office, e.g. a university research institute, Max-Planck institute, Leibniz institute, Fraunhofer institute, facilities belonging to the Helmholtz Association, or organizations promoted by the DFG German research association.

Q: Can internships exceed the minimum duration?

A: Yes.

Q: How long must the company training programs be?

A: The minimum duration for a 5 ECTS module is 6 weeks working time at the company (at least 150 hours) and 12 weeks (at least 300 hours) for the alternative 10 ECTS module. If more than 6 or 12 calendar weeks of work are necessary at the company in order to achieve these hours, then the criteria of 'calendar weeks' is subordinate to the completion of the minimum number of hours.

Q: What needs to be taken into account regarding the distribution of hours in student working positions?

A: The students must observe legal regulations concerning working hours for student working positions when it comes to the distribution of hours at the company. It is not necessary to work the same number of hours at the company every week.

Q: What is required of the internship company?

A: As currently stated in the regulations.

Q: What needs to be included in the company training report (internship, student working position, research project) for 5 ECTS?

A:

- It needs to have 18,000 characters (including blanks, plus cover sheet and tables). Illustrations are not included except if these are original and personal presentations (personal material contributions or sample of work);
- Elements: presentation of the company and the activity (approx. 2 pages), relevance of the project / tasks (approx. 1 page), allocation into a scientific context (approx. 2 pages, use citation styles), justification of the international character of the project / tasks (approx. 2 pages), comparison and transfer of theory and practice as found (approx. 2 pages), personal resume, recommendations for action for the company as applicable (approx. 3 pages).
- Recognized quotation guidelines must be used coherently.

Q: What needs to be included in the company training report (internship, student working position, research project) for 10 ECTS?

A:

- It needs to have 30,000 characters (including blanks, plus cover sheet and tables). Illustrations are not included except if these are original and personal presentations (personal material contributions or sample of work);
- Elements: presentation of the company and the activity (approx. 2 pages), relevance of the project / tasks (approx. 1 page), allocation into a scientific context (approx. 4 pages, use citation styles), justification of the international character of the project / tasks (approx. 4 pages), comparison and transfer of theory and practice as found (approx. 4 pages), personal resume, recommendations for action for the company as applicable (approx. 3 pages).
- Recognized quotation guidelines must be used coherently.

Q: Which language standards must be taken into account for the company training report?

A: The report must meet the formal and linguistic standards of an academic work. Therefore, it must be ensured that, for example, the use of the first person is limited to a necessary minimum (e.g. in the evaluation section). Students are free to choose the language of the report.

Q: Which margins, line spacing, etc. must be used for the report?

A: The university provides a style sheet (Word document) for the company training report, including cover sheet and index, in which the formal settings are included: OnlineCampus → Download/06 Prorektorat Lehre – Vice-Recorate Academics as “Template Report Int Experience EN.docx”. The title of the report must be the project name, not ‘Internship Report’ or similar.

Q: Is it possible to revalidate internships that were completed before the start of the Master degree? If so, how much time can be revalidated?

A: No, this is not possible for Master degrees.

Q: What formalities must be considered when submitting the company training report?

A: After completing the internship, students upload the internship report as well as the company certificate (= proof of internship) as a scan in their personal online campus area. The proof of internship contains: a) the period of the activity, b) the hours and c) the project reference. As soon as the deadline for uploading the documents (30th April and 31st October) has passed, no further upload for the respective semester is possible. The documents are forwarded to the supervisors and evaluated. If students have missed this deadline, the documents must be uploaded during the next uploading period.

Attention: company training reports need to be submitted during the standard period of study. Otherwise, students will face additional costs (compare fee schedule, examination after regular study period).

Q: How is an internship evaluated that is neither exactly 6 nor 12 weeks in length, e.g. 2 months or 10 weeks? If the minimum duration is exceeded or else not quite achieved: will more ECTS points be awarded or just 5?

A: Either 5 or 10 ECTS are awarded, i.e. additional time is not awarded any ECTS points. Students select an International Experience in their online campus, either as a first or second International Experience (5 ECTS each) or a combined performance if the minimum length is completed (10 ECTS). The internship can be longer but only 5 or 10 ECTS will be awarded.

Q: What is the certified duration of the mandatory internship?

A: The duration is either 6 weeks (5 ECTS) or 12 weeks (10 ECTS). The university is of the opinion that mandatory internships in accordance with § 22 (1) no. 1 MiLoG do not need to be remunerated at minimum wage. However, according to § 22 (1) no. 3 MiLoG (voluntary) internships within a degree course also need not be remunerated at minimum wage for a duration of up to three months if there was no such internship relationship with the student beforehand. This means that an internship within the degree course of no more than three months without minimum wage can be undertaken directly after the mandatory internship in order to achieve a longer lasting internship without minimum wage. This implies that the student has not been employed by the company as an intern before the mandatory internship. You can find a detailed statement (in German only) on this subject prepared by a lawyer assigned by UE here:


Stellungnahme
Fischer.pdf

Q: Who evaluates the company training report?

A: The supervisor. The report does not need to be signed by the company for the purpose of evaluation at UE. If internal company guidelines require a signature (f.ex. of the superior), students must meet this requirement. UE reserves itself the right to confer with the company and compare the report with contents of the employer's reference letter. In addition, the UE reserve itself the right to ask students to defend their report (lecture, presentation, Q&A). In order to complete the International Experience, the report as well as the (optional) defense must be passed. The supervisor receives the documents for evaluation after students have uploaded them in their online campus and the deadline for uploading documents is expired.

Q: When does the company training report need to be submitted?

A: The report can be submitted at the earliest after the second semester as the necessary theory-practice transfer can only be compiled substantially by the student from then on with regard to content and evaluation. The activity itself could have been completed before.

Q: What are the criteria used by the supervisor to decide on the suitability of a summer/winter school?

A: External offers are qualified if they meet the following criteria: Master / postgraduate level, content that is complementary to the course, required credits or equivalents, Anabin status of the host university: H+, documented examination performance. Furthermore, at least one of these criteria must be fulfilled: teaching language: not German or executed outside Germany. The decision is made by the supervisor in an informal, written confirmation to the student and the International Office for information.

Q: What needs to be taken into account for an application for a summer/winter school or a semester abroad?

A: The decision whether a UE Master student is accepted at the host university is made by that institution. Students might be rejected.

Q: How is the payment handled?

A: Payments will be made directly to the host university.

Q: What needs to be taken into account for a semester abroad?

A: The UE recognizes a semester abroad if it is approved by the responsible vice-dean or program leader. The approval is given in an informal email of the supervisor to the International Office. The evaluation criteria are equal to those for the summer or winter schools (compare above). A minimum of 10 ECTS must be achieved. Students must keep an eye on their own study progress plan. It is not permitted to take a semester of leave in order to spend a semester abroad. If students miss courses at UE due to their semester abroad, no claim can be made. Courses that not have been taken by students can be visited without paying study fees when offered again.

Q: How much time is needed to plan a semester abroad?

A: Students should start planning their semester abroad one year in advance, i.e. by the 1st February for the summer semester of the following year, or by 1st August for the winter semester of the following year. Students inform the International Office informally about the host university, the program and the period. The IO advises on the general options.

Q: In which semester does the semester abroad take place?

A: Because of the necessary planning time, we recommend taking the semester abroad after the 3rd semester. Please note that it is not possible to write exams during a semester of leave (apart from retake exams).

Q: Does the optional semester abroad at Real Madrid Graduate School within the ISEM Master count as International Experience?

A: Yes. During their semester abroad, students gain 36 ECTS at Real Madrid Graduate School, which are enough for the recognition of the second semester at UE (25 ECTS) as well as the International Experience (10 ECTS).

Q: Which assessments are planned?

A:

- Research Project, internship, student working position: company training report;
- Summer school, winter school, semester abroad: exams at the guest university

Q: What are the regulations to pass?

A: A “pass” must be achieved. At least 50 GP must be achieved, after conversion into the UE grading system, if necessary. See the examination regulations for details.

Q: When may students start their international company training?

A: Trainings that started from the first semester of the respective Master course onward can be taken into account. Activities that fulfill this criterion can also be registered at a later date. If an International Experience does not meet the requirements, students are not entitled to demand a recognition. It must always be ensured that the activity meets the following criteria: internationality, course on Master level and professional suitability (in relation to the relevant Master degree). This is decided by the supervisor.

signed by. Prof. Dr. Daniel Kaltofen
(Vice-Rector Academics)

Change Log

- **Version 2018-02-13:** Change of ECTS credits when choosing the Real Madrid Graduate School // Adaptation of the registration process to the paperless version through the online campus // Clarification of the circle of possible supervisors // Adaptation of the criteria for selecting a summer or winter school
- **Version 2016-12-19:** Initial document
- **Version 2017-12-08:** Layout and Wording adopted to UE // Reference for download of the template for the company report updated