



3 February 2020

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## **Administrative instruction**

### **United Nations internship programme**

The Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, pursuant to section 4.2 of the Secretary-General's bulletin [ST/SGB/2009/4](#) and for the purpose of establishing conditions and procedures for the selection and engagement of interns at the United Nations, promulgates the following:

#### **Section 1**

##### **Purpose of the internship programme**

The purpose of the United Nations internship programme is twofold: (a) to provide a framework by which students from diverse academic backgrounds gain exposure to the United Nations through assignment to offices within the Secretariat in order to enhance their educational experience and gain experience in the work of the United Nations; and (b) to provide United Nations offices with the assistance of qualified students specialized in various professional fields.

#### **Section 2**

##### **Scope**

2.1 The provisions of the present instruction apply to the United Nations internship programme managed by the entities in the Secretariat. Specific arrangements at each duty station for the internship programme shall be announced through information circulars.

2.2 "Entity" means a department or office, including an office away from Headquarters; a special political or peacekeeping mission; a regional commission; the office of a resident or regional coordinator; or any other Secretariat unit charged with programmed activities.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Section 3**

##### **Eligibility**

3.1 The United Nations internship programme is intended to expose students or recent graduates to the United Nations in order to enhance their educational experience and to help them to gain experience in the work of the Organization. Therefore, applicants to the programme must at the time of application meet one of the following requirements:

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<sup>1</sup> See [ST/SGB/2019/2](#).



(a) Be enrolled in, or have completed, a graduate school programme (second university degree or equivalent, or higher); or,

(b) Be enrolled in, or have completed, the final academic year of a first university degree programme (minimum bachelor's level or equivalent).

3.2 Applicants who are children or siblings of a staff member shall not be eligible to apply for an internship at the United Nations. Applicants who are otherwise related to a staff member may be engaged as interns, provided that they are neither assigned to the same work unit as such staff member nor placed under the direct or indirect supervision of such staff member.

3.3 For purposes of this instruction, "child" means: (a) the child of a staff member; (b) the child of the spouse of a staff member (stepchild); or (c) the son- or daughter-in-law of a staff member. "Sibling" includes a half-sibling or stepsibling.

#### **Section 4**

##### **Terms of the internship programme**

4.1 The minimum duration of an internship is two months. This period can be extended up to a total period of six months.

4.2 Interns are expected to work on a full-time basis in the entity that has selected them, under the supervision of a staff member at an appropriate level.

4.3 Internships may be undertaken on the basis of flexible working arrangements if:

(a) The receiving entity agrees in writing to accept an intern on the basis of flexible working arrangements;

(b) Interns agree that they are required to work the equivalent of a minimum of at least two months on a full-time basis in order to receive recognition of service as an intern. An internship under such arrangements must be completed within a six-month period. A record of attendance shall be maintained by the receiving entity in order to ensure that the intern meets this requirement.

4.4 Interns serving in one entity do not have a right to transfer to another entity. Transfers between entities at the same duty station can be effected if all parties concerned are in agreement. In the case of a transfer from one entity to another, the duration of the internship shall be calculated as having started from the commencement of the original internship.

#### **Section 5**

##### **Status**

5.1 Interns are considered type I gratis personnel. They are not staff members.

5.2 Interns shall not be sought or accepted as substitutes for staff to be recruited against posts authorized for the implementation of mandated programmes and activities. Interns shall not represent the United Nations in any official capacity, shall not perform supervisory functions, shall not exercise certifying or approving authority and shall not be involved in selection processes for candidates for staff or non-staff positions at the United Nations.

5.3 Interns may not apply for or be appointed to any position in the Professional and higher categories or at the FS-6 and FS-7 levels in the Field Service category during the period of their internship and the six months immediately following the expiration date thereof.

## **Section 6**

### **Responsibilities and obligations**

#### *Supervisors in receiving entities*

6.1 In receiving entities, supervisors shall seek to create a working environment conducive to the substantive learning and professional development of interns. Receiving entities shall:

- (a) Seek to ensure that intern assignments are at the appropriate level of complexity and variety;
- (b) Prepare terms of reference describing the tasks of interns in that entity;
- (c) Provide constructive feedback regarding performance;
- (d) Ensure that interns do not undertake official travel on behalf of the United Nations in the performance of the internship. However, interns may be permitted to travel in a United Nations vehicle with a signed liability waiver.

#### *Interns*

6.2 Interns shall:

- (a) Observe all applicable rules, regulations, instructions, procedures and directives of the Organization, notwithstanding their status as described in section 5 of the present instruction;
- (b) Provide the receiving entity with a copy of all materials prepared by them during the internship. The United Nations shall be entitled to all property rights, including but not limited to patents, copyrights and trademarks, with regard to material that bears a direct relation to, or is made in consequence of, the services provided under the internship. At the request of the United Nations, the interns shall assist in securing such property rights and transferring them to the Organization in compliance with the requirements of the applicable law;
- (c) Respect the impartiality and independence required of the United Nations and the receiving entity and shall not seek or accept instructions regarding the services performed under the internship agreement from any Government or from any authority external to the Organization;
- (d) Unless otherwise authorized by the appropriate official in the receiving entity, interns shall not communicate at any time to the media or to any institution, person, Government or any other external party, any information that has become known to them by reason of their association with the United Nations or the entity, that they know or ought to have known has not been made public. This includes through the use of social media. They may not use any such information without the written authorization of the appropriate official, and such information may never be used for personal gain. These obligations also apply after the end of the internship with the United Nations;
- (e) Refrain from any conduct that would adversely reflect on the United Nations or on the receiving entity, and shall not engage in any activity that is incompatible with the aims and objectives of the United Nations;
- (f) Comply with local laws and customs.

6.3 The conditions regulating the internship shall be set out in an internship agreement, as attached in the annex to the present instruction.

6.4 Failure to comply with the requirements in section 6.2, as well as those contained in the internship agreement between the Organization and the intern, may

result in the immediate termination of the internship agreement by the United Nations without any compensation.

## **Section 7**

### **Remuneration, expenses, medical benefits and loss or damage to personal effects**

7.1 Interns are not financially remunerated by the United Nations. Costs and arrangements for travel, visas, accommodation and living expenses are the responsibility of interns or their sponsoring institutions, except that the United Nations will assist with arrangements for a G-4 visa for interns who are serving in the United States of America and require such a visa.

7.2 The United Nations accepts no responsibility for the medical insurance of the intern or costs arising from injury, illness or death that may occur during an internship. Applicants for internship must show proof of valid medical insurance coverage for the entire period of the internship at the duty station and provide a medical certificate of good health prior to the commencement of the internship.

7.3 The United Nations accepts no responsibility for loss or damage to personal effects that may occur during the internship.

## **Section 8**

### **Locations**

The internship programme shall not be offered at any duty station of the Secretariat designated as a “non-family” duty station.

## **Section 9**

### **Third-party claims**

The United Nations is not responsible for any claims by any parties where the loss of or damage to their property, death or personal injury was caused by the actions or omission of action by the interns during their internship.

## **Section 10**

### **Partnerships with academic institutions**

Entities shall not enter into formal partnerships or conclude memorandums of understanding or similar agreements with academic institutions with respect to interns unless it is with the explicit written approval of the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources.

## **Section 11**

### **Posting of internship opportunities, applications, evaluations and selection**

11.1 Openings for internships shall be published electronically.

11.2 Applications must be submitted in accordance with the instructions set out in the opening, including use of the electronic platform provided for this purpose.

11.3 Interns should be selected from as wide a geographical basis as possible and without distinction as to race, sex, religion or disability.

11.4 Once selected, interns must commence the internship on the date indicated on the acceptance letter.

**Section 12**  
**Final provisions**

12.1 The present administrative instruction shall enter into force on the date of its issuance. It supersedes administrative instruction [ST/AI/2014/1](#), entitled “United Nations internship programme”, which is hereby abolished.

*(Signed)* Catherine **Pollard**  
Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy,  
Policy and Compliance

**Annex****Internship agreement for the United Nations**

1. I accept the internship, which has been awarded to me by the United Nations, and understand the following:

(a) The United Nations will not pay me for my internship; all the expenses connected with it will be borne by me or my sponsoring Government or institution;

(b) The United Nations accepts no responsibility for costs arising from injury, illness or death that may occur during my internship; I will provide proof of my enrolment in a health insurance plan that covers the full period of the internship at the duty station and provide a medical certificate of good health prior to the commencement of the internship;

(c) I am not eligible to apply for or be appointed to any position in the Professional or higher categories or at the FS-6 and FS-7 levels in the Field Service category during the period of my internship and the six months immediately following the expiration date thereof;

(d) As an intern, I am personally responsible for obtaining necessary visas and arranging my travel to and from the duty station where the internship will be performed;

(e) If I have been selected to serve as an intern in the United States of America, I understand that if I am not a United States citizen or permanent resident, or if I am not currently in the United States with a non-immigrant visa status that allows me to undertake the internship, the United Nations will request a G-4 visa on my behalf. I further understand that, if I am granted a G-4 visa, my status remains that of an intern, and I continue to be considered type I gratis personnel, not a staff member, and that the granting of a G-4 visa will not confer the status of an official or an expert on mission for the purposes of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations. I also understand that if my G-4 visa is valid for a period extending beyond my internship with the United Nations, I am not eligible to remain in the United States and that, at my sole expense and responsibility, I must leave the country or seek an adjustment of status with United States authorities within 30 days after the last day of the internship. In addition, I understand that any unauthorized use of the G-4 visa issued for my internship with the United Nations may be a violation of United States law.

(f) The United Nations bears no responsibility for loss or damage to my personal property that may occur during my internship.

2. I undertake the following obligations with respect to the United Nations internship programme:

(a) To observe all applicable rules, regulations, instructions, procedures and directives of the Organization;

(b) To refrain from any conduct that would adversely reflect on the United Nations or on the receiving entity, and not to engage in any activity that is incompatible with the aims and objectives of the United Nations;

(c) To respect the impartiality and independence required of the United Nations and of the receiving entity, and not to seek or accept instructions regarding the services performed from any Government or from any authority external to the Organization;

(d) To keep confidential any and all unpublished information made known to me by the accepting entity during the course of my internship that I know or ought to have known has not been made public, and, except with the explicit authorization of the United Nations, not to publish any reports or papers on the basis of information obtained during the programme, both during and after the completion of my internship;

(e) To provide the receiving entity with a copy of all materials prepared during my internship;

(f) To provide immediate written notice in case of illness or other circumstances that might prevent me from completing the internship;

(g) To complete the internship evaluation questionnaire at the end of my internship and to submit it to the officer in charge of the internship programme at the duty station;

(h) To return my identification pass to the officer in charge of the internship programme at the duty station;

(i) To comply with local laws and customs.

3. I have read the attached terms of reference of my internship and I accept to abide by them.

_____	_____	_____
Date	Printed name of intern	Signature

_____	_____	_____
Date	Printed name of Officer in Charge, Internship	Signature

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