EPFL Engineering Internships - General Conditions

I – INTRODUCTION
Participation in practical internships nowadays constitutes a fundamental part of student education and the vocational guidance and professional integration of young graduates. Indeed, the internship provides an opportunity for the implementation of theoretical knowledge within a professional framework, enabling the student to acquire experience of the company environment and its different professions and facilitating his entry into the working world.
With these aims in mind, all students enrolled on EPFL master programmes leading to the title of engineer must do an engineering internship outside the academic sphere, in a host company or body. It must be remembered that these internships have a pedagogic purpose, which means that it is not possible to do an internship outside of an educational programme. An internship cannot under any circumstances be considered as a job. It is therefore intended for Master students only and not graduates. Furthermore, since it involves work carried out by the student in the professional world, he must be remunerated in accordance with the practices applicable in the particular field of activity. The aim of these general conditions is to safeguard the practice of internships, whilst at the same time encouraging their development for the benefit of students and companies alike.

II – SPHERE OF APPLICATION, DEFINITION
1 – Sphere of application of the general conditions
The sphere of application of the general conditions concerns all engineering internships, without prejudice to the specific regulations that apply to the regulated professions. The masculine form is used in this agreement to designate persons of either gender.

2 – Definitions
The EPFL representative is the person within EPFL who ensures that internships go smoothly and maintains contact with the internship student and the host company.
The activity report is a non-technical report that describes the activities in which the student participated during his internship.
The short internship is an internship lasting a minimum of 8 weeks that is done on an independent basis or combined with a Master project.
The long internship is an internship lasting one semester (4 to 6 months).
The Master project done within a company constitutes the end of studies project.

3 – The internship
The purpose of the internship forms part of an educational programme and as such has meaning only within the context of this programme. The objectives concern both the quality of the work and the student’s ability to fit into his environment. Thus the internship must:
- provide the student with his first opportunity to become totally involved in the working world and implement his hard skills (know-how);
- allow him to put his knowledge into practice in a professional environment and develop the soft skills (interpersonal skills) necessary for the practice of his future profession;
- enable him to understand the organisation, functioning and management of the company;
- facilitate his transition from the world of higher education to that of the company.

III – SUPERVISION OF INTERNSHIP
1 – Formalisation of the internship project
The internship project forms the subject of a discussion between an EPFL representative, a member of the company and the student.
The company proposes a topic for the internship that is validated by an EPFL representative.
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This internship project is formalised in the internship agreement signed by EPFL, the company and the internship student.

2 – The internship agreement
The internship agreement specifies the commitments and responsibilities of EPFL, the company and the internship student. This agreement must be signed for all engineering internships, even if it is not officially recognised in the country in which the internship is done. It is obligatory only for engineering internships for which ECTS credits are obtained.

3 – Duration and time period of internship
The duration of the internship and time period during which it will be done must be specified between EPFL and the company or between the student and the company right from the start. The duration of the internship is specifically stated in the internship agreement. The company will remain as flexible as possible regarding the time period during which the internship is done to allow students to chose dates that do not disrupt their study programme.

4 – Those responsible for supervision
The internship is supervised by a member of the company (internship supervisor). During the internship, an EPFL representative remains in contact with the company and the internship student and ensures that the internship goes smoothly. The EPFL representative and the internship supervisor keep themselves informed regarding the state of progress of the internship and any difficulties that may arise.
Their respective institutions recognise the necessity of their investment, especially in terms of time, in the smooth progress of the internship.

5 – Evaluation

a - Evaluation of internship student
The activity of the internship student forms the subject of an evaluation that is based on the two assessments made by those responsible for the internship. Each EPFL Section decides how the internship student should be evaluated and the number of credits allocated to internships planned as part of the educational programme.
The evaluation is based on the internship evaluation report provided by the internship supervisor and the student’s activity report, plus possibly a discussion with the student on the occasion of a presentation or the defence of his internship.
Specific details concerning evaluation are given in the internship regulations of the Sections.

b - Evaluation of internship
The signatories to the agreement are invited to assess the quality of the internship.

IV – COMMITMENTS OF PARTIES INVOLVED

1 – The student towards the company
The student undertakes to:
- fulfil his obligation to complete the internship and be available for the tasks assigned to him;
- respect the regulations of the company and its codes and culture;
- respect the company’s requirements regarding confidentiality;
- write the internship activity report within the stipulated deadlines; if necessary, this activity report can, at the company’s request, remain confidential.

2 – The company towards the student
The company undertakes to:
- propose high-quality internships adapted to students’ abilities;
- make the student welcome and provide him with the means, work environment and infrastructure necessary for the successful completion of his internship;
- appoint a person responsible for the internship (internship supervisor) whose tasks will be to:
  o guide and advise the student;
  o inform him regarding company regulations, codes and culture;
  o facilitate his integration into the company and access to necessary information;
  o help him to acquire the necessary skills;
  o ensure that his work is regularly monitored;
  o evaluate the quality of his work;
  o advise him with regard to his career plan;
- write an internship attestation describing the activities carried out, which could be used to supplement the student’s future curriculum vitae.

3 – The student towards EPFL
The student undertakes to use the information concerning internships proposed on the EPFL internship site solely for the purpose of doing his engineering internship. He will not divulge any of this information - and particularly not the list of internships and companies - to persons not concerned by these internships.
If any problems arise regarding the internship, it is the student’s duty to immediately inform the EPFL representative.
He undertakes to subsequently provide the activity report and evaluation of the quality of his internship to EPFL.

4 – EPFL towards the student
EPFL undertakes to:
  - define the objectives of the internship and ensure that the proposed internship is appropriate;
  - provide the student with information, and assist him if necessary, regarding his search for an internship and his application and acceptance for the internship;
  - maintain contact with the student and the company during the internship to ensure that all goes smoothly; provide the student with the tools and information, subject to confidentiality, necessary for the successful completion of his internship;
  - guide the student and advise him concerning the writing of his activity report and organise the evaluation of the internship, allowing a representative of the company to participate.

5 – The company and EPFL
The company and EPFL ensure that they exchange the necessary information before, during and after the internship.
Furthermore they abide by their respective rules regarding confidentiality and deontology.
The company undertakes to use the information concerning internships proposed on the EPFL internship site solely for the purpose of arranging engineering internships and not with a view to recruiting students.