

Student Manual

Faculty of Economics and Administration
Masaryk University

Support for Practical Training of Students
at ECON MUNI

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Practical Training... ?

Fresh graduates are increasingly facing the problem of insufficient work experience when looking for a job. Studying at a university will give them the education they need and ensure the development of their knowledge and skills. However, employers usually want more – practical training outside the classroom. Since graduates want to get a job that is as close to their expectations as possible, they are highly motivated to meet this demand from potential employers. By developing their human capital, they can improve their position in the labour market. The Faculty of Economics and Administration of MU has therefore decided to offer its students the opportunity to complete practical training while still studying.

What does practical training bring to our students? In addition to involving you, the students, in the real processes of entities in the customer sector, the possibility of profiling your careers opens up as early as during your studies. This is very important, because some of the fields of study at ECON MUNI are so broad, despite being divided into blocks, that some graduates of the Master's programme do not have an idea of the specific sector in which they would like to work.

However, establishing cooperation with a particular company or institution can have other important advantages, such as gaining data, information and contacts that you can later use in the preparation of your theses. As many of you will soon find out, in the preparation of final theses it is often not enough to have a good idea, theoretical knowledge and analytical thinking, but data from the world of economic practice are necessary too. Also, the possibility of thesis supervision or consultation by experts with practical knowledge can result in an appropriate combination of theoretical knowledge from the academic world with practical knowledge from the customer sector.

Not only students appreciate the involvement in the processes of real-life customer sector entities. For students, this is often a very welcome diversification of theoretical teaching: it's where they replace school desks and the library with the real-life environment of companies or institutions. The experience of your senior colleagues shows that this involvement can be not only fun and interesting, but also very important for the students' professional development. Another advantage, nowadays more and more valued by employers, is the development of soft skills.

A reward for good results in your practical training may also be being offered further work with the practical training provider. Whether this offer takes the form of a temporary job or a part-time job, as some of your senior colleagues have already done. Even if this offer does not come immediately after the practical training, the training can give you valuable positive points if you apply for a job here in the future.

How's it going?

Practical training has the status of a course at the Faculty of Economics and Administration at Masaryk University, although it differs in many ways from the classic ones oriented more on theory.

The practical training serves to bring students into closer contact with the economic reality of the fields they study. Students perform the work as necessary for a given company or office according to the instructions of the faculty supervisor and the person authorized by the company or office, i.e. the mentor.

Students in practical training do work that corresponds to their level of education and their previous professional experience. Students agree on the workload with the supervisor and the mentor before the start of their practical training. Students have the opportunity to outline their ideas and set the goals with which they come to the organisation (e.g. data collection for the final thesis as mentioned above, consultation with experts, or just the desire to get acquainted with the work at a given type of workplace).

The content of the practical training itself is extremely important. Employers nowadays do not consider it enough to see in your CV that you participated in this or that practical training: they are very likely to ask you about many details of your practical training at the job interview. It's not unusual to be asked more specific questions by potential employers, especially if you are applying for a job in a similar field to the one in which you did your practical training. If you can provide answers in a convincing and knowledgeable way, you are very likely to gain further positive points from your potential

System of practical training at ECON MUNI – definition of terms

The Faculty of Economics and Administration, as mentioned above, emphasizes practical education of its students. The basic elements of the system are:

Students

The ECON MUNI students who are either interested in completing their practical training, are currently in practical training in a provider's company, or have already completed their practical training and have fulfilled all conditions for the completion.

Supervisor

A person, usually an employee of the Department of the Faculty of Economics and Administration of MU, who guarantees the practical training from a professional point of view. He/She arranges practical training for students at MU, provides professional consultations for students regarding the choice of their practical training provider, performance of work at the provider and the final evaluation.

Mentor

The person who guarantees the course and quality of the practical training on the part of the training provider from the customer sector. During the practical training, the mentor holds the position of the direct supervisor of the ECON MUNI student.

Practical Training Organisation

The organisation entities shall be understood as private organizations, public administration bodies or non-profit organizations, i.e. all subjects of economic practice that are involved in the system of practical training of students at the Faculty of Economics and Administration at MU.

Practical training as a subject

When and how to enrol?

The practical training course is listed as an elective course. You can enrol in the course (just like in any other course) according to the current ECON MUNI schedule.

When does the practical training take place?

You can do your practical training at any time during the holidays, exam period or semester. However, it should be remembered that your practical training does not relieve you from the compulsory part of the courses you are enrolled in during the semester. Just as students are not automatically excused from compulsory attendance in one course by attending classes in another course.

How long is the practical training?

During the practical training, students stay in a particular company or institution for at least three weeks (15 working days or 120 working hours), but the time commitment varies by department. However, it is up to the agreement between the student and the practical training provider whether the practical training will be extended beyond the minimum. This flexibility allows the student to get familiar with the new environment in greater depth and to work on complex tasks that are more time-consuming to complete. A longer practical training of the student at the workplace can thus be more enriching for both the student and the customer sector entity.

What is the credit value of the practical training?

The credit value of the practical training course is different in each department (see IS for up-to-date information). The first successfully completed practical training will be rewarded with full credits. Each additional practical training will be rewarded with 0 credits.

Repeated enrolment of practical training and permeability to other departments

You can enrol in the Practical Training course repeatedly during the course of your studies; however, you will only receive credits in the semester in which you have completed your practical training for the first time. If you enrol in the course again, you will be awarded 0 credits for completing the practical training.

Before practical training

Where can I find all the latest information?

For up-to-date information, please visit the Faculty of Economics and Administration website (Practical Training section) and the course materials.

Who can I ask for help?

If you are unclear about course enrolment, choice of practical training provider or formalities, please contact the supervisor at your department (contact details are listed on the website in the Practical Training section).

On what legal basis do ECON MUNI students' practical training take place?

The practical training is carried out on the basis of a contract between ECON MUNI and a customer sector entity. The recommended text of the contract, which may be adapted according to the provider's practices, can be found on the website in the Practical Training section. If the contract between ECON MUNI and the organisation where the student is going for practical training is already concluded, a new contract does not have to be signed.

Which companies and institutions can I choose from?

Students find their own practical training providers according to their personal preference. However, the choice is, again, subject to approval by the supervisor.

I have selected a company or institution; how should I proceed?

Contact the supervisor at your department. You may be asked to provide a professional CV, a cover letter and to log in to the provider in the IS MU in the Topic Lists section.

You can also check with the supervisor whether a long-term contract has been signed or whether a one-off contract needs to be signed. If there is no contract and the supervisor agrees with the organisation selected by the student, the process is as follows:

The student downloads the contract listed in this handbook from the Practical Training website, completes the necessary information, has two copies signed by the practical training provider and delivers them to the faculty (either personally to the supervisor or via the secretary at the respective department, the ECON MUNI filing office or by post). ECON MUNI will then arrange for the Dean to sign. You will then be contacted about receiving the signed contract.

In any case, however, the contract between ECON MUNI and the organization where the student is going to work must be signed by both parties at the beginning of the student's practical training.

As a trainee, am I covered by Masaryk University's contractual accident insurance?

No. Whether you arrange accident insurance for the purposes of your practical training is entirely up to you. The faculty does not require this. However, it may sometimes be the practical training provider's requirement. There are also cases where you are directly covered by the practical training provider's insurance and do not have to arrange any insurance yourself. This needs to be checked with the practical training provider.

MUNI's insurance does not cover any damage liability. Specific insurance conditions may be set for practical training abroad.

I already have a job and want to have it recognised as practical training. How do I proceed?

Activities based on your employment can be recognised as practical training, provided that the employment corresponds to the graduate profile in your field of study. Contact the supervisor at your department.

Participation in practical training in a company or institution**Rights and obligations of the students**

Students are obliged to submit to the regime applied in the company or institution where they complete their practical training. They are also obliged to obey the orders of the person appointed by the provider and the provider's managers in connection with the practical training.

Students must not damage the reputation of the faculty or the practical training provider in any way. In particular, they shall be obliged to maintain secrecy with regard to confidential facts, should they get the knowledge of any such facts.

Any breach of these obligations is considered a particularly gross violation of the MU Study and Examination Regulations and may be submitted to the Faculty Disciplinary Committee for resolution.

Students have the right to a suitable job matching their level of education and previous professional experience.

Is it possible for me to be excused from attending other courses I am enrolled in during the term due to the practical training?

The course of the practical training cannot be a reason for missing your attendance in other courses you are enrolled in that term, unless the Head of the Department stipulates otherwise.

Who will look after me in the company or institution?

The customer sector entity where the students perform their practical training appoints a person who shall be responsible for the course of the practical training in the provider company or institution. This person is the mentor. The mentor will be present in the company or institution, prepare your workload, provide you with consultations, etc.

What form does the practical training take?

The practical training does not have a uniform form, you can work independently or in a team. You can spend your practical training in one department or in several departments. Your practical training may be observation or "executive" training.

Who can I contact if I experience problems in my practical training?

You can contact your supervisor at ECON MUNI and on the mentor in the company or institution where you are completing your practical training. For a more detailed description of these features, see the introduction to this Manual.

I was unable to agree on a job assignment with my mentor. (For example, I was tasked to scan the entire archive.) What should I do?

Contact your mentor and talk to him/her about whether or not the job assignment is appropriate. Another option is to consult your department supervisor.

Am I entitled to any remuneration for my practical training?

The student's position in the practical training is the same as in any other forms of study. The student may or may not be paid a wage or receive any other remuneration by the provider for the work performed.

Details regarding the student's status with the provider (in addition to wages and remuneration, for example, receiving meals, accommodation, etc.) are part of the contractual arrangements for the practical training.

The manner and amount of any exchange value to be given to the Faculty for the contribution of students and know-how is the subject of a separate contract entered into under the authority of the Vice-Dean for External Relations.

I have incurred additional costs from my practical training. Can I get financial support for my practical training?

You may be awarded a scholarship to cover the costs of your practical training. For conditions, see a special internal ECON MUNI standard.

Formalities of practical training

How should the practical training be documented?

To complete your practical training successfully, you will need to submit the following certificate:

- Protocol of student's admission to the practical training (to be filled in by the student upon entering the practical training) – available on-line
- Confirmation of the practical training completion and student evaluation (to be filled in by the mentor upon the practical training completion) – available on-line

What else is needed to complete the practical training successfully?

You need to submit a Final Report on the progress of your practical training. You can find instructions on how to proceed below; a Report template can be downloaded from the Practical Training website. In order to successfully complete the course, your Final Report will need to be approved by your supervisor. Simply submitting your Final Report will not be enough!

Guidelines for the preparation of the Final Report and most common mistakes to avoid

The Final Report should, of course, include an introduction to the institution at which the student worked, but it is not acceptable for this "introduction" to take up 80–90% of the Report. Particularly in a form that reveals significant "inspiration" on a practical training provider's website or in their Annual Report.

That would strongly resemble plagiarism (the Final Report is supposed to be the student's work, and any use of external sources must be consistently stated/cited). It is far more useful and interesting to focus on what the particular department you worked in deals with and, more importantly, what you specifically dealt with in your practical training.

Recommended outline scope for the Report:

20 % – introduction of the institution where the student worked

30 % – presentation of the specific workplace (position) where the student worked

50% – description of what the student specifically did in the practical training, how it benefited / did not benefit the student, what academic knowledge was used / not used, what was learned / not learned in the practical training, what it did / did not do for the student, who the student worked with, who supervised the student, any recommendations for the institution, etc.

Of course, proper graphic, formal and stylistic editing and no spelling mistakes are taken for granted.

Annex 1 Sample Form **General Practical Training Provider Description:**

Name of entity			
Sphere of activity			
Head office			
Place of work of the student			
Free description of the entity*			
Practical training provider	yes	no	
Practical training provider	yes	no	
Possibility perform practical training in the following departments:			
Possibility of department rotation	yes	no	
Offer I**			
Offer II			
Contact person:***			

* Free description of the entity – e.g. history, present time, number of employees, structure, etc.

** Offer – corresponds to a job advertisement – number of students accepted, location in the department/rotation, job description, possible start date, etc.

*** Contact person – practical training supervisor at the Faculty Department

Annex 2 Practice Provider Satisfaction Questionnaire (Rating on a scale of 1 to 5; 5 being the best)

Work of the student					
The student approached the tasks assigned to him/her in a responsible way and actively devoted himself to them.	1	2	3	4	5
The student performed the tasks assigned to him/her well.	1	2	3	4	5
The student was interested in getting familiar with the issues addressed at the workplace.	1	2	3	4	5
The student was very well prepared for the practical training.	1	2	3	4	5
Communication with the Faculty					
The cooperation with the Faculty in recruiting the student for the practical training was very good.	1	2	3	4	5
Proposals for changes, recommendations:					

Annex 3 Questionnaire of students' satisfaction with the completed practical training

1. I have completed my practical training

- a) For the first time
- b) For the second time
- c) For the third time

2. You are studying the following field

- a) Business Management and Finance
- b) Economics and Public Policy
- c) Business Management
- d) Finance
- e) Economics
- f) Public Finance and Economics
- g) Regional Development and Tourism
- h) Public Administration
(Administration publique)

Year of study: a) First b) Second c) Third d) Other

3. I have completed this practical training at the Department of

- a) Public Economics
- b) Business Management
- c) Regional Economics
- d) Economics
- e) Finance

4. Why did you enrol in the practical training course?

4.1 I wanted to improve my qualifications.

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Rather agree
- c) Rather disagree
- d) Strongly disagree

4.2 I needed to collect data for my Bachelor/Master thesis.

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Rather agree
- c) Rather disagree
- d) Strongly disagree

4.3 I wanted to earn credits.

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Rather agree
- c) Rather disagree
- d) Strongly disagree

4.4 I wanted to test the knowledge acquired during my studies in practice.

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Rather agree
- c) Rather disagree
- d) Strongly disagree

- 5. Was the information about your practical training sufficiently accessible and understandable for you?**
- a) Strongly agree
 - b) Rather agree
 - c) Rather disagree
 - d) Strongly disagree
 - e) I don't know, I can't tell
- 6. In your opinion, did the course supervisor provide you with sufficient assistance in arranging your practical training?**
- a) Strongly agree
 - b) Rather agree
 - c) Rather disagree
 - d) Strongly disagree
 - e) I don't know, I can't tell
- 7. After taking on the practical training, you were assigned a person responsible or mentor.**
- a) Yes
 - b) No
- 8. The mentor has prepared a job assignment and introduced you to your job.**
- a) Strongly agree
 - b) Rather agree
 - c) Rather disagree
 - d) Strongly disagree
- 9. The mentor was there for you for the entire duration of your practical training.**
- a) Yes
 - b) No
- 10. Was the work you did adequate for your field of study?**
- a) Strongly agree
 - b) Rather agree
 - c) Rather disagree
 - d) Strongly disagree
 - e) I don't know, I can't tell
- 11. Was the work you did adequate to your previous work experience?**
- a) Strongly agree
 - b) Rather agree
 - c) Rather disagree
 - d) Strongly disagree
 - e) I don't know, I can't tell
- 12. The staff of the organisation where you completed your practical training behaved towards you as:**
- a) Friendly
 - b) Correct
 - c) Reserved
 - d) Hostile
- 13. Would you recommend the organisation to other students for practical training?**
- a) Strongly agree
 - b) Rather agree
 - c) Rather disagree
 - d) Strongly disagree

Comments: _____

14. What was your overall satisfaction with the practical training?

- a) Very satisfied
- b) Satisfied
- c) Satisfied with certain parts
- d) Totally dissatisfied

15. If you wish, please add any additional comments, reservations, wishes or recommendations regarding your practical training.

(web presentation of the practical training, communication with the supervisor, communication with the organisation, job description, etc.)