BSc (Information Systems) Internships

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What types of internships satisfy BSc (IS) internship requirements?

SMU SIS undergraduates undertake a minimum of 10-week continuous (full time) internship with a business organisation, typically during the vacation periods from mid-April to mid-August each year. Students usually go for multiple internships after Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3.

1.a. The following is a sample list of IS-related internships that can be pursued:

- Application development, deployment and testing
- Applications decommissioning and cut-over
- Business analysis
- Business development of disruptive technologies
- Business–IT planning and co-ordination
- Business process modelling leading to requirements modelling and application blue printing
- Computer simulation of business processes
- Data management related applications
- Data mining related applications
- Data science and analytics
- Functional or detailed design of enterprise applications
- Information security related application development
- IS project management
- IT audit, compliance (including information security), governance
- IT or management consulting
- IT strategy planning
- Maintenance of network, system, application
- Smart city projects solution design, development, deployment and project management
- Sustainable solutions design and implementation
- Technology-driven transformation and innovation
- Technology and data-driven Urban planning
- Technology infrastructure requirements gathering
- Technology infrastructure design, deployment and decommissioning
- Productivity improvement (using IT/IS) studies
- Web-based application development
- and many more…..
1.b. Should I align my internship with my IS first major?

Aligning the internship with your IS first major (IS track or SMT) has advantages since it helps you to gain in-depth real world experiences that are fully aligned with the concepts, techniques and tools that you have learnt while doing the major related courses. At the same time, exploring internships in other tracks or fields enables you to have a broader exposure of technology applications and job opportunities. In many instances, a real world project may overlap across multiple areas and an internship that is not aligned to your IS first major will open up new ideas and skills that will help you in your career.

2. What are examples of internships that SIS students have done in past years? In what industry sectors did they work? What job roles did they undertake?

To see actual examples of internships that SIS students did over the years, look at these pages on our SIS Website:

- Industry Sectors & Internship Roles
- Internships Host Organisations

SIS students do internships in various industries and government organisations. They also take on an amazingly wide variety of job roles. The strength of their skill base that fits the industry and good role flexibility is a strong advantage of the BSc (IS) degree.

Note that nearly all the internship roles listed on the website are IS-related. There are some examples of regular business and administrative roles that do not involve any aspect of IS. These roles are only acceptable when they are additional or supplementary internships that are not counted towards the IS internship requirement.

Contact DKHMCC if you need clarifications on IS-related internships.

3. Does a double degree student have to do an SIS internship?

Yes. For double degree students, an internship that covers both areas of study can satisfy the IS requirements. For example, a student with a double degree in BBM (e.g. Marketing major) can apply their data management or business analytics skills to help a company make better use of business intelligence and analytics in their marketing efforts. Another example would be a student doing a double degree in Accountancy and doing an internship with one of the Big Four Accounting Firms, working on an IT Audit or Quality Assurance related project.
4. Can SIS students work overseas for their internship?

Yes. In fact, we strongly encourage you to seek out overseas internships. Please carefully evaluate whether the internship meets the requirements for IS internship as discussed above.

5. I am building a website for my CCA. Can this be considered as an SIS internship?

No. Internship is a vehicle for you to get experience in an external business organisation. This goes beyond mere development of applications or websites. Building a website for your CCA will not give you experience of professional life though we certainly encourage you to use your SIS skills to help CCA groups and other non-profit organisations on a volunteer basis.

6. I am running my own company. Can I count this as an internship?

Starting in Summer 2018, a SMU student who has registered a start-up or business and desires to perform a 10-week (or more) internship in that start-up or business may do so. Named the ‘Student Entrepreneur Internship’ or SEI Programme, a participating student in the SEI may also credit the supervised time spent in his/her start-up or business towards the student’s mandatory degree fulfilment.

**Note that SIS students are required to meet the IS-related internship requirements (e.g. IS-related job scope, etc.).**

The SEI Programme is made possible via a joint tie-up between the Dato' Kho Hui Meng Career Centre, or DKHMCC, and SMU’s Institute of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, or IIE. More information about the SEI, including a FAQ, may be obtained at OASIS>Internships>SEI Programme.

Should you have further queries about the SEI Programme after reading the details provided, students may direct them to DKHMCC or IIE via SEIapplications@smu.edu.sg.

7. Why is it essential for me to create a LinkedIn profile before applying for internship?

At SIS we encourage all students to have their own LinkedIn profile to showcase the skills and competencies that they have acquired.

Having the LinkedIn profile will help you establish connections with other professionals, SIS Alumni and SMU Alumni. In your profile you can showcase the projects you have worked in the courses and also other skills or
competencies that you have acquired by learning on your own or through some enrichment courses or those gained through prior internship programmes taken.

During interviews for internship, if your employer says something like “you will be part of a software development team to build enterprise web applications” talk them through your LinkedIn profile, focusing on your experience to date in this area and have a frank discussion on your readiness. The same principle applies if they want to assign you to a complicated project management related task.

Your profile is an excellent vehicle for you to reveal to your employer your readiness for a particular type of assignment.

You can keep updating your LinkedIn profile as you progress through the years at SIS and SMU. The updated profile will come in handy when you start applying for jobs on completing the degree at SMU, and subsequently for your professional career.

8. Is there a way to make my LinkedIn profile available to employer while applying for internship?

You are required to link your LinkedIn account to OnTrac II.

Once the link is made all applications you make through OnTrac II will contain a link to your LinkedIn profile.

9. When should I do an internship?

The question is not “when” you should do an internship. The question is what type of partnership you should do at each stage of your development (e.g. after year 1, after year 2, after year 3).
We encourage you to get as many internship experiences as possible. If you seek an internship after year 1, just make sure it is something within your capability and expertise. Don’t take a project that is far beyond your skill level. Be realistic. Be totally honest about your skills and experience to date.

If the employer believes you are capable, then it is fine to proceed, no matter how big the challenge of the internship is.

10. I am a Poly student. I have done several internships. Do I still need to do an IS internship?

Absolutely, YES. We have worked with a large number of poly students, and it all boils down to a different set of expectations that employers have of an undergrad. They expect a lot more and a wider range of abilities. You will operate more autonomously. There will be more of a sense of “peer-to-peer” professional relationships.

11. Can I do more than 1 internship?

Certainly. Many students do multiple internships. SMU has been extremely fortunate that so many employers partner with SMU.

SIS is constantly feeding internship leads to DKHMCC specifically for our students. Take advantage of the opportunities.

12. Can I fulfil my internship requirements through a series of short assignments?

To meet the IS internship requirement, the internship must be IS related and it must be of a minimum 10-week continuous duration.

The whole thrill of an internship is to go “end-to-end” on a project, and to see the effort to fruition. You can’t do this by doing short bursts of a week or two on a periodic basis.

However, there is a role for a series of short internship-like efforts after you fulfil your 10-week requirement. We have had a number of cases where students do a 12 to 15-week internship with a company. Even after this attachment both the company and the student want to keep the effort going, the students could then undertake the role on a part-time basis if his school schedule permits or they could return to the company during the breaks or vacation.
13. Can I do an internship longer than 10 weeks?

Yes. In fact, you are strongly encouraged to do so. You can do up to a 16-week internship if you minimize vacation time to only one week. Many students do 12 to 15-week internships.

Scenario 1.
If you are completing your internship within your summer vacation i.e. end-April to mid-August

Scenario 2. **
If you are doing an extended internship, i.e. part of the internship occurs during Term 1 or Term 2 and you are taking a leave of absence of one term. This happens when a company requires the internship to run for a full six or seven months. For example, the internship runs January through July or from June through December. A few companies insist on these extended schemes.

In some cases, the student starts off on a regular internship in end-April through mid-August time period and things go so well and the project is so important that the company firm wants the student to stretch the experience into an extended internship.

We are supportive of extended internships. At the same time, we insist that you do the proper planning and evaluate the trade-off of missing a school term/delaying your graduation. If you do decide on a leave of absence submit your application early.

If you apply for a leave of absence because of the extended internship, the SIS Dean’s Office will insist that you work out your full-plan for how and when you will complete all of your courses – including those required for your second major – to graduate.

If you request an extended internship, PLAN.

**Foreign students holding Student Pass need to refer to MOM Rules on Local Internship (for foreign students only) in OASIS > Careers & Comm Service > Internship > Internship for International Students for additional info. Please read up the LOA policy at OASIS > Finance & Admin > Absence & Withdrawal > Leave of Absence (LOA). Students need to initiate the application for LOA as this process is not automatic.

14. Will SMU and SIS make sure that I get an internship?

The whole point of the internship process, starting with identifying and securing the position, is to get you to take ownership of your own career development.
SIS and DKHMCC have put an infrastructure in place to help you with internships. Whenever SIS gets internship leads, we funnel them to DKHMCC. Many other companies also come to DKHMCC seeking SMU SIS students.

Ultimately, you are always the one responsible to achieve the outcome and successfully completing your internship.

Please refer to OASIS>Careers & Comm Service>Internship and DKHMCC FAQ on Internship for more information.

15. How much guidance can I expect from my internship sponsor?

Companies sponsor internships to tap on a pool of talents to complement their staff on projects and deliverables. While most companies will assign a supervisor for the internship project, it may be unlikely that the supervisor will hand-hold you on your internship. You will often be expected to take charge of your own learning and development. You should be self-reliant and self-motivated.

At the same time, do not be a loner and keep to yourself. Engage with the people around you. Talk to your supervisors and peers about your work on a regular basis. Through these interactions, you will figure out the style in which they want to supervise you. That can range from “Go get it done and only let me know when you are finished” to “Let’s talk every day and fine-tune on a regular basis”.

16. Internship Grading

Students’ Internship will be graded and considered complete only when submitted documents are assessed to be satisfactory and meeting the objectives of the internship programme, in which case the internship will be given an overall “pass” grade. For more information, visit ontrac.smu.edu.sg; alternatively you may refer to OASIS > Careers & Comm Service > Internship > Post-Internship Checklist

- Internship Report
  
  At the end of the internship, students must submit an internship report within one month from the last day of the internship stint. Graduating students are to note the cut-off date for graduation and work out the internship report submission deadline accordingly; bearing in mind a 2 week lead time is required for the evaluation of the internship report. Inside the internship report, please ensure that you have provided the following:

  - Your job scope, responsibilities and key assignments;
- Your *accomplishments*, e.g. projects you did, applications or systems you built; and
- *Lessons Learnt* (both hard and soft skills) and other take-away.

To complete the internship report, students are to access the report via [OASIS > Participation and Grading](#).

- **Performance Appraisal**
  A performance appraisal will also be required of the Supervisor / Reporting Officer, under whose supervision the student completed the internship to give feedback on the students' performance.

  Where a student scores below average in his/her "Overall Grading" in the Performance Appraisal, that internship placement will not be recognised towards the fulfilment of the required 10-week internship requirement.

17. Other issues

Pertaining to Course Requirements: [SIS](#)
Pertaining to Internship Requirements: [DKHMCC](#)
Please refer to [OASIS>Careers & Comm Service>Internship](#) and [DKHMCC FAQ on Internship](#) for more information.