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III.16.2 Interns and Volunteers

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Introduction

10 WHO is committed to building future leaders in public health and WHO's Internship Programme provides a wide range of opportunities for graduate and post-graduate students to gain insight into the work of WHO. Each year, a limited number of places for internships are available.

20 Students can offer their services to WHO on a voluntary basis. Such an arrangement is known as an **internship**. Internships are not intended for work of a continuing and/or operational nature, nor for work generally performed by a **staff member**.¹ Internships are accepted by WHO on a non-remunerated basis only.

Objectives

30 The **internship** programme has three objectives:

- to provide a framework for assigning students from diverse academic backgrounds to WHO programmes, where their educational experience can be enhanced through practical assignments;
- to expose students to the work of WHO; and
- to provide WHO programmes with input from students specializing in various fields. Most students are placed in health-related programmes, although other disciplines can be considered as appropriate.

Definitions

40 An intern is a student who is enrolled in a course of study at a university or equivalent institution leading to a formal qualification (graduate or post-graduate); who has completed three years of full-time studies at a university or equivalent institution; and who provides his/her services to the World Health Organization without remuneration. Interns do not have the status of WHO **staff members** and cannot represent the Organization in any official capacity.

50 An internship is an arrangement between the World Health Organization and an **intern** whereby an individual's educational experience is enhanced on a non-remunerated basis through practical assignments and exposure to the work of the Organization.

Eligibility

60 WHO may accept applicants who meet all of the following conditions as **interns**:

- Applicants who are at least twenty years of age on the date of application;
- Applicants who are enrolled in a course of study at a university or equivalent institution leading to a formal qualification (graduate or post-graduate). Applicants who apply for an **internship** within six months of completion of their formal qualification may also qualify for consideration;
- Applicants who have completed three years of full-time studies at a university or equivalent institution prior to commencing the assignment;
- Applicants who are fluent in at least one of the working languages of the office of assignment;
- Applicants who are not related to a **staff member** as defined in Staff Rule 410.3 (e.g., son/daughter, brother/sister or mother/father); and
- Applicants who have not previously participated in WHO's internship programme.

¹ A "staff member" is a person employed by WHO on a continuing, fixed-term or temporary appointment under Staff Rule 420, or persons employed by WHO as conference and other short-term service staff on temporary appointments of 60 days or less under Staff Rule 1320.

70 Programme managers shall extend due consideration where possible to applicants who meet the above conditions from under-developed and developing countries, in support of WHO's commitment to strengthen capacity and to promote diversity.

Duration

80 The normal duration of an **internship** is a minimum of six weeks and a maximum of six months.

Internship periods

90 There are two **internship** periods each year. The summer internship period runs from 1 May to 31 October and applications are accepted between 1 December and 31 January of each year. The winter internship period runs from 1 November to 30 April and applications are accepted between 1 September and 31 October of each year.

Application process

100 **Internship** applications are accepted through WHO's e-Recruitment system or directly by any Regional Office that offers internship opportunities. (All candidates shall be requested to apply through WHO's e-Recruitment system prior to commencing any internship assignment.) Applications remain active for a period of six months. Applications should include an up-to-date curriculum vitae providing details on education, current studies, language and computer skills, and should also indicate dates of availability and areas of interest.

Administrative processes²

110 Upon closure of each **internship period**, **intern** applications are distributed to receiving programmes for review. The intern's supervisor prepares a **Request for an Intern (WHO 76.1)**, and attaches a description of the assignment to be undertaken, specifying objectives and tasks. Based on this information, the approving Director/Coordinator signs a **Letter for Interns (WHO 76.2)**. A copy of the signed **WHO 76.2**, together with each of its three attachments, which include: Attachment 1 Conditions for Internships/Voluntary Assignment with the World Health Organization; Attachment 2 Confidentiality Undertaking (Intern or Volunteer); and Attachment 3 Designation, Change or Revocation of Beneficiary (Intern or Volunteer) is provided to **INS** by the technical unit. Any extensions of an internship and any amendments to any of the attachments must also be provided by the technical unit to **INS**. The technical unit is further responsible for ensuring that interns' contact details are available and kept up to date and for ensuring that the active and inactive dates of their WHO email address do not extend greater than two weeks prior to and following the internship period. Regional Offices should follow a similar protocol.

120 WHO does not agree to execute any agreements proposed or required by a sponsor, university or equivalent institution. By signing form **WHO 76.2**, **interns** confirm that they or their sponsor (university, institute, etc.) will meet all expenses for travel and subsistence and that they have adequate health insurance coverage which includes coverage for the country of the assignment.

130 When offering an **internship**, the receiving programme agrees to:

- ensure that an **intern's** assignment is related to his/her field of study, meaningful for both the programme and the intern, and at the appropriate level of complexity and variety.
- review progress regularly and provide adequate feedback and coaching/mentoring during the internship.
- provide office accommodation and related support facilities to enable the intern to undertake the assignment.

- at the end of the internship, prepare a written evaluation of the intern's performance and provide the intern with feedback.

140 When accepting an **internship**, **interns** agree to:

- conduct themselves at all times in accordance with the standards of conduct expected of a person working in an international environment in a specialized agency of the United Nations system.
- refrain from any conduct that would adversely reflect on WHO or on the receiving department and not engage in any activity which is incompatible with the aims and objectives of the Organization.
- provide the receiving programme with a copy of all materials prepared during the internship. Interns may not disclose or make use of any unpublished or confidential information that comes to their knowledge in the course of their internship. The provisions relating to texts prepared for publication apply also to interns.
- submit a written report at the end of the internship to be reviewed by the supervisor and other interested parties.

150 **Interns** are expected to devote themselves full-time to the assignments of the receiving unit for the period of the **internship**.

160 Either the Organization or the **intern** may end the **internship** before its completion, normally with one week's notice.

Status of Interns

170 **Interns** do not have the status of WHO **staff members** and shall not represent the Organization in any official capacity.

Employment following internship

180 The purpose of the internship programme is to complement an intern's studies. **Interns** shall not take up any form of contractual arrangement with the Organization as a **staff member** or non-staff member for a period of three months following the end of the **internship**. Any employment with WHO shall be subject to established recruitment and selection procedures.

Official travel

190 While official travel is not encouraged, interns may exceptionally be required to travel to accompany a **staff member** on official travel to locations with a security rating no higher than Phase I. In such cases, the technical programme must ensure that appropriate administrative action is taken to facilitate the official travel of the **intern** for the period concerned. The technical programme must also ensure that the health insurance of the intern provides adequate coverage, including coverage for the country of destination.

Accident Insurance

200 Persons participating in WHO activities, including those providing voluntary services without remuneration, who are not covered under other insurance policies used by WHO, are covered by a group accident insurance policy (see **Annex 16.B**) which provides compensation for accidental disablement or death and coverage of medical expenses resulting from accidents which occur within the period of assignment. The period of assignment begins upon reporting to duty on the first day in service and ends at the close of business on the last day in service prior to departure from the duty station. Coverage does not apply to accidents which occur outside the period of assignment. Accidents which are not eligible for coverage include, for example, accidents occurring during travel to and from the duty station of assignment.

Contributions

210 The premium for accident insurance is based on the fixed lump sum ("basic amount") of US \$ 61 200 and is paid in its entirety by the Organization, the amount being charged to a PTAE0 indicated on the **Letter for Interns (WHO 76.2)**. The premium per day of coverage is US \$1.30 per day.)³

220 This insurance can be obtained only if a copy of the **WHO 76.2** reaches **INS** prior to commencement of the assignment. The **WHO 76.2** must indicate the name of the person, date of birth, and exact period of assignment. Extensions of originally agreed internship periods require a revised form **WHO 76.2** to be issued and provided to **INS** in advance of the expiration date.

Benefits

230 Compensation due from the insurance for medical expenses related to an accident may be advanced by the Organization on presentation of receipted bills pending settlement by the insurance company.

240 In case of death, the benefit is paid to the beneficiary designated by the insured person.⁴

Claims procedure

250 If an accident occurs that is likely to lead to a claim, and particularly if death or disablement results from an accident, the insurance company must be notified as soon as possible by **INS** at headquarters, but in any case within three calendar months of the date of an accident resulting in death or disablement. The accidental death of an insured person must be reported immediately to **SEC** and **INS**.

260 Such accidents as are likely to result in a claim must be reported by supervisors and/or the insured person to **INS** and **SEC** at headquarters, by completing form **WHO 417**. Where accidents may involve third party liability, form **WHO 800** must also be completed and submitted to **INS** and **SEC**. Form **WHO 418** shall be completed in all cases by the attending physician and returned to the Director, **HMS**.⁵

270 Claims for the reimbursement of medical expenses should be made in writing and sent at the end of the treatment to **INS** at headquarters. Claims from the regions must have the approval of the **RSP** and be sent to **INS** at headquarters through the regional **BFO**. Supporting bills must be attached accompanied by proof of payment. The full name and address of the claimant's bank and the bank account number must be given. Claims for medical expenses must be received within three months of the end of treatment.

Limitation of risk

280 The insurance company's liability under all items of the schedules of the policies combined for persons travelling by air as passengers is limited to US \$ 15 000 000⁶ per aircraft, regardless of the number of insured persons traveling thereon. If the sums otherwise payable to the insured persons total more than this limit, the amount is paid to WHO, which will divide it among the insured as it deems suitable.

290 The limitation of liability to US \$ 15 000 000 per aircraft may be amended for any particular flight when the written consent of the insurance company is sought and granted before commencement of the flight in question (see **Insurance Cover During Air Travel** [insert hyperlink to manual II.7.640 until corresponding HR e-guide paragraph to manual II.7.640 is incorporated into e-guide by INS] for the procedure for taking out additional insurance).

Volunteers

300 It is not WHO policy to engage people to carry out work without compensation. There may, however, be occasions when an individual, whose experience and professional background would allow them to make a contribution to the work of a technical programme, could be authorized to carry out specific activities on a voluntary basis on WHO premises under the supervision of a **staff member**. Volunteers could be on sabbatical leave from either their government or their employing institution and be available for a clearly defined period.

310 Any offer from a volunteer should be evaluated by the technical programme with a view to ensuring that the experience and professional background of the individual would contribute to the work of the technical programme.

320 The administrative provisions concerning **internships**, as detailed above, apply also to volunteers, with the exception of the following:

- The learning element of the assignment is not essential, as volunteers are expected to bring their experience and knowledge to the work of the programme.
- It is expected that volunteers will have finished their studies and have relevant work experience.