# Guide to Internships (10 mins read)

## Contents

## Introduction to Internships

Internships are short-term work experiences that allow students to get experiential learning in a professional work environment. The students will learn how to apply their classroom knowledge in a real-world setting. Internships are important because you will get to work on real projects to solve real problems and develop skills that will add to your value as an employee. They essentially give you a glimpse of working in that specific IT field and connect you to professionals, mentors, and peers who will contribute to your future job opportunities. With internships in your portfolio, it becomes easier to land a job post-graduation and leaves more room for errors.

## When to start applying

It's usually best to start preparing for an internship 6 to 12 months before the starting date. Start by identifying your current skillset, technical and soft, what you enjoy working on, and what you want to achieve in the future. You will have to set a career goal and use the internships as a pathway to arrive at that goal. Once the goal is set, you should have an idea of the job you want to have in the future. You can start preparing your resume/portfolio for that job position by learning the tech skills required for that role and building projects that mimic real-world situations. For example, if you want to be a web developer, you will have to learn the technology of web building such as HTML, CSS, JavaScript, front-end frameworks like React, Svelte, Django, etc., and make projects like a blog, or an e-commerce shop. Doing these projects gives you experience similar to practical learning, and you are often asked how you worked on your projects during interviews (if you didn't have any prior working experience). You can start by searching for 'career or job position' roadmap online and seeing the options/pathways you have to take.

## Internship Periods

Thailand has two major periods for internships every year. Let's call them summer internships and winter internships. The summer internship is usually from May to June or June to August. This is the optimal time for students to gain work experience on their holidays. The winter internship is usually from January to March/April. This internship is more used for the mandatory internship requirement in the curriculum by students as the duration overlaps with the second semester. Students often do a winter internship in their cooperative education/internship practicum before they graduate as part of the curriculum. Most students typically receive offers from the last company they did their internship and end up working there, so the last internship is very important.

The internship application process starts by sending in your resume and other requested information to the company via the application form or directly to their recruitment team. Having a 'referral' which is essentially having someone who works at the company refer you to the job, is especially helpful and will push you through the resume processing step at the minimum. Once you are through the first step, tech companies like to test your coding skills by giving you a coding exam. You will need to study data structures and algorithms and play around with Leetcode to prepare for this. After this step, you will do a face-to-face interview with the company where they will do a 'fit' check to see how you are and judge how likely you are to fit in with the team. If you pass through all the steps, you will receive an email with an internship offer. This is a very general example of the internship application process, there may be more steps and there may be fewer steps. It's all up to the company you are applying to. The duration of the application process takes at least a month or two depending on the company as well.

The internship applications for the summer internship begin as early as October the year before. This means that for an internship that starts in May 2024, the applications may already be out by October 2023. These applications are usually hosted by very large companies, bank companies, and consulting companies. The hot season for internship applications is a bit later, from December to January/ mid-February. This is the prime time to find an internship and apply to them. There will also be some internship applications in March and April, but they will be very competitive as these offers are considered last resort applications for those who forgot to apply previously or those who didn't get any offers. The summer internship is very good for university students as the duration perfectly fits with their summer holidays.

The winter internship applications begin as early as June the year before. This means that for an internship that begins in January 2024, the applications may be already out by June 2023. Again, the early applications are usually hosted by large companies, banks, and consulting companies. The hot season when most companies start to recruit is from August – October.  There are also 'off-season' internships that accept internships at any time (part of the summer/winter internship durations). Not a lot of companies offer these positions, but they are also worth applying to if you have a schedule that fits you or if you want to work and study at the same time. This was very popular at least during the COVID era where you could have 'work from home' but the in-person internships are returning, so it's less likely.

To summarize, a summer internship (May – Aug) starts application processes as early as October and the hot season is from December to February. The winter internship (Jan – April) starts application processes as early as June and the hot season is from August to October. Off-season internships are internships at any time.

## Internship Opportunities

Follow Mahidol university's official career development Facebook page for latest internship announcements from international companies: [Facebook](). You can find the internship announcements through social media, indeed.com and on LinkedIn. Most companies are based in Bangkok but a few of them are also located in Chaing Mai. The pay usually higher in Bangkok than Chiang Mai, so its good to aim for companies in Bangkok for a job post-graduation. You can start by getting an internship in Chaing Mai and do the final internship in Bangkok.

A few tech companies in Thailand: Exxon mobile, SCB Abacus, Agoda, Line, Lineman Wongnai, Thai Bev, Scb Tech X, 24solutions, Brainnest, Donuts, SS&C Technologies, TRUE, KPMG, Amazon, Microsoft, IBM, Manatal, Facebook.

There are a few tech companies in Chiang Mai, that you can get started before applying to companies in Bangkok: Buzz Woo, Manoo software, Movaci, IT Tech Pro, Lanna software and Aware Ltd.

## Realistic internship requirements

You need to show 'experience' in your resume to improve the chances of acceptance. This includes 'internship experience' and 'research experience'. If you don't have either, the second-best thing is through projects. You can list the projects you have worked on and the skills you employed in them. This is why projects are important to have as they are the closest thing to practical experience. Extracurricular activities are also very important as they help you build your story on how you got to where you are and are very helpful for networking opportunities. Follow the Asean Foundation page on Facebook to get international experiences (Facebook). This website is used by Harvard to help their students prepare their resumes: undergrad_resumes_and_cover_letters.pdf (harvard.edu) . You will have to look at a job position you are aiming for and see what a working person's resume is. You can mimic their projects or timelines and slowly build your portfolio. Start by going 'job position' sample resume and see what kind of skills and experiences are listed. Specifically view the entry level resume, mid-tier resume and completed resume levels to get better understanding.

## Practical internship timeline for students

Take either study plan 2 or 3 because it has internship for final year 2nd semester as a course the study plan. You want to have at least one internship before the practicum in the fourth year to optimize your chances of landing a job at your ideal company. Figure 1 shows the ideal internship timeline you want to have. Do your first internship at a local company or a small one to get experience, do the second one somewhere in Bangkok at a bigger/better company and apply for internship at your ideal company as the last part. This is because most companies will offer you a return offer when you complete your internship and even if you didn't get an offer, having connections with people from your ideal company will be very helpful. Start preparing your skillset by studying online courses in year 1, do projects outside the university curriculum in year 2 and build your resume in time for an internship during the 2nd year summer holiday.

| Year | Semester 1 | | Semester 2 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | GE XXX LANGUAGE 1 | 3 (3-0-6) | GE XXX LANGUAGE 2 | 3 (3-0-6) |
| | GE 181 TRUTH AND SERVICE | 3 (3-0-6) | GE 192 HOLISTIC THINKING | 3 (3-0-6) |
| | GE 182 CITIZENSHIP GOOD GOVERNANCE AND PEACE | 3 (3-0-6) | GE 191 NEW NORMAL HEALTHINESS | 3 (3-0-6) |
| | IT 101 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FUNDAMENTALS | 3 (2-2-5) | IT 110 PROGRAMMING FUNDAMENTALS | 3 (2-2-5) |
| | IT 103 ALGEBRA | 3 (3-0-6) | IT 130 COMPUTER ARCHITECTURE | 3 (2-2-5) |
| | SUBTOTAL | 15 Credits | SUBTOTAL | 15 Credits |
| Year | Semester 1 | | Semester 2 | |
| 2 | GE XXX LANGUAGE 3 | 3 (3-0-6) | GE 137 WRITING SKILLS AND ACADEMIC PRESENTATION | 3 (3-0-6) |
| | GE 144 GREEN TECHNOLOGY | 3 (3-0-6) | GE 193 ANALYSIS AND DECISION MAKING | 3 (3-0-6) |
| | IT 211 OBJECT-ORIENTED PROGRAMMING | 3 (2-2-5) | IT 205 STATISTICS FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY | 3 (3-0-6) |
| | IT 221 DISCRETE MATHEMATICS | 3 (3-0-6) | IT 212 DATA STRUCTURES | 3 (2-2-5) |
| | IT 231 OPERATING SYSTEMS | 3 (2-2-5) | IT 222 INFORMATION MANAGEMENT | 3 (2-2-5) |
| | SUBTOTAL | 15 Credits | SUBTOTAL | 15 Credits |
| Year | Semester 1 | | Semester 2 | |
| 3 | IT 313 ALGORITHMS AND PROBLEM SOLVING | 3 (2-2-5) | IT 315 MOBILE APPLICATION DEVELOPMENT | 3 (2-2-5) |
| | IT 340 SYSTEMS ANALYSIS AND DESIGN | 3 (3-0-6) | IT 325 WEB SYSTEMS AND TECHNOLOGIES | 3 (2-2-5) |
| | IT 360 COMPUTER NETWORKING | 3 (2-2-5) | IT 362 INFORMATION ASSURANCE AND SECURITY | 3 (3-0-6) |
| | MAJOR ELECTIVE 1 | 3 (x-x-x) | MAJOR ELECTIVE 3 | 3 (x-x-x) |
| | MAJOR ELECTIVE 2 | 3 (x-x-x) | MAJOR ELECTIVE 4 | 3 (x-x-x) |
| | FREE ELECTIVE 1 | 3 (x-x-x) | IT 424 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND PROFESSIONAL ETHICS | 3 (3-0-6) |
| | SUBTOTAL | 18 Credits | SUBTOTAL | 18 Credits |
| Year | Semester 1 | | Semester 2 | |
| 4 | IT 443 HUMAN-COMPUTER INTERACTION | 3 (3-0-6) | IT 495 PRACTICUMS IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY | 6 (0-18-9) |
| | IT 423 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROJECT MANAGEMENT | 3 (3-0-6) | | |
| | IT 480 ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE | 3 (3-0-6) | | |
| | IT 499 SENIOR PROJECT IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY | 3 (0-6-3) | | |
| | MAJOR ELECTIVE 5 | 3 (x-x-x) | | |
| | FREE ELECTIVE 2 | 3 (x-x-x) | | |
| | SUBTOTAL | 13 Credits | SUBTOTAL | 6 Credits |

1st Internship or research

2nd Internship

3rd/final Internship

Figure 1. Ideal internship timeline