DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTING WORK PLACEMENT MANUAL

STUDENT NAME: _____

STUDENT ID NUMBER: _____

WORK SUPERVISOR: _____

Introduction

This document serves as a guide to the content, purpose and procedures for undertaking the work placement and it applies to all of the parties involved - the Student, the Work Supervisor (employer) and Cork Institute of Technology. For the success of the work placement it is important that there is a partnership between the employer, the student and the Institute. This partnership approach ensures that the placement is properly supervised, evaluated and is academically relevant for the student.

General Information Regarding Placement

Context

The placement is considered an integral part of the course programme and as such is a continuing learning process in which the student learns to apply the knowledge gained over the previous three stages of the programme, in the workplace.

Students are encouraged to avail of all opportunities in their work placement to explore and develop a better insight into all the relevant areas in Business, Computer Science, organisational procedures and work practices in general.

Furthermore, the placement facilitates the development of practical and communication skills/competencies required to make a meaningful contribution in the workplace. In this context the placement will facilitate this learning/development.

Aims and Structure of the Work Placement

The aim of the work placement is to introduce the student to a structured work environment and to develop an understanding of the organisation, procedures, and practices current in the organisation and the area of activity in which it is involved.

It is important, therefore, that the student be provided with adequate opportunities within the work placement to experience a range of the activities carried out by the host organisation and to contribute in a positive way to those activities.

The essential elements of the work placements will include:

- Appointment of a Work Supervisor.

- A formal introduction/induction to the workplace by the work supervisor.

- Keeping monthly records

- A formal assessment by the Institute, towards the end of the placement.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the work placement the student will be expected to: (Learning Outcomes)

1. Critically analyse the enterprise, its culture, and its organisation.
2. Communicate in a professional manner within the workplace.
3. Demonstrate initiative and leadership skills whilst working alone and in teams.
4. Apply knowledge, skills and competencies acquired during the programme of study to the analysis and solution of workplace problems.
5. Reflect on and analyse the learning experience resulting from the work placement.

The student will be expected to reflect on these outcomes during the course of the work placement and to produce a report which is required for assessment at the end of the placement.

Placement Assessment

The following are guidelines regarding the various elements of the assessment:

– *Monthly reports*

This should record the activities undertaken in summary form.

It is the student's responsibility to prepare the monthly reports. It will also contribute to the student's work-placement report at the end of the placement. Monthly reports should be submitted at the end of the placement along with the student's placement report.

– *Employer Assessment*

This will be an assessment by the employer of the quality of work, attitude and commitment of the student. The employer will be provided with an evaluation report form by the academic supervisor for each student. This will be returned to the placement coordinator who together with the employer will assign the appropriate grade.

– *Student Summary Report*

This will include an assessment of the placement in the context of the learning outcomes outlined above. The report guidelines will be furnished to the students by the placement coordinator and should be structured, as would any report by an employee of an organisation.

The assessment of the final report will include the assessment of its structure and its content, the clarity with which it deals with relevant issues and the manner in which it links the placement to the learning outcomes expected.

After your work placement this report will be held in CIT and may be used as reference.

For the successful operation of each student placement, it will be necessary to have a Work Supervisor.

Work Supervisor

The *role* of the Work Supervisor is to ensure that the placement process is carried out as planned.

The work supervisor's *Responsibilities* include the following:

- To meet the student in the first instance
- To ensure that the student undergoes the appropriate induction process
- To ensure the student understands the health and safety and quality policy of the organisation
- To assign work to the student and oversee the performance of the assigned work
- To act as a first reference point for the student in times of difficulty
- To complete an End of Placement Assessment for the student.
- To contribute to the assessment process as defined

It is hoped that these would be implemented in the context of regular meetings with the student and meeting with personnel within the company/organisation as appropriate.

- Induction into the Workplace

Each student should be presented with an introduction/induction into the workplace.

Where a formal induction programme is in place within the host organisation it is expected that the student will undertake this.

Role of Student

Each student must demonstrate the highest standards of personal and professional conduct at all times during placement with the host organisation while at the same time carrying out assigned duties to the highest quality.

The student's *responsibilities* include the following:

- To make him/herself familiar with and comply with the host organisation's policies and procedures.
- To agree a work plan/assignment with the work supervisor
- To take responsibility for achieving optimum results from the placement.
- To strive to achieve the general learning outcomes for the placement programme.
- To complete a Monthly Report.
- To complete a Placement Summary Report.
  Suggested format detailed in the appendix of this document.

－ *Difficulties while on Work Placement*

If the student is experiencing any concerns with his/her placement, it is their responsibility to contact firstly the Work Supervisor to discuss how the particular situation may be dealt with. If the Work Supervisor is of the opinion that a visit from the Placement Coordinator at this point is necessary, it will be arranged. However, only if the student is unable to satisfactorily solve a problem, will the Placement Coordinator intervene.

Students should keep in mind that open communication between all parties is crucial to solving problems that may arise. Often simple resolutions are made by talking through a problem, whether it is with the Work Supervisor or the Placement Coordinator.

－ *Failure to Complete a Placement*

It is the student's responsibility to advise the Placement Coordinator of any change of circumstances during Work Placement.

Students who do not fulfil the conditions of the Work Placement Programme to the satisfaction of the Host Organisation and/or CIT may fail the relevant Work Placement Module of their course of study. In the event of this occurring, the student must source and complete an additional work placement.

Holiday Leave

Total number of days depends on the particular organisation employing the student. Please check the organisation's annual leave policy with your supervisor. However, holidays during the placement are completely at the discretion of the host company.

Sick Leave

Again, this may depend on the organisation. Please check the organisation's sick leave policy with your supervisor. In the event of a student being absent from work due to illness, s/he must contact the company first thing on the morning in question.

Insurance

Cork Institute of Technology's Insurance Policy indemnifies Employers involved in the Work Placements on behalf of the Institute. The policy only operates to indemnify the Employer in the event of personal injury to the student. The Indemnity to Employer operates on the basis that the Employer is subject to the terms, conditions and exceptions of the policy. One of the conditions the Employer must meet is to take all reasonable precautions to prevent accidents to students.

Monthly Report   **(For completion by Student)**

Student Name: _____

Organisation:_____ **Month Commencing:** _____

1. **Evaluation of workplace progress**
- Briefly outline the progress and structure of the placement work plan.

2. **Critical Learning Experiences**
– Knowledge (theory/information e.g. learning from conferences, policy documents etc…)
– Skills (administration, communication, technical, research and facilitation etc…)
– Attitudes/Values (your views on…)

3. **Reflection**
- How can the above experiences be applied to learning outcomes?

Student Signature: _____Date: _____

Guidelines and Suggested Structure for Work Placement Summary Report

- The following is a suggested template for the report that you will submit on completion of your work experience.
- The purpose of this template is to assist you in writing an informative, relevant and analytical and reflective report.
- The report should be the student's own work and any information obtained from company or organisation documents should be acknowledged using the conventional referencing system.
- If there are any headings that are not relevant to you, you are encouraged to amend them according to your own needs and the context of your particular work experience.
- If there are relevant issues that you feel should be included and are not referred to in this suggested format, then you are also encouraged to introduce additional headings to accommodate your specific report writing needs.
- Students will be expected to write their reports using formal report style layout, complete with title, appropriate numbering and formatting of subsections etc…
- The report structure can also be adopted by students as a structure for their optional post-placement presentation to the class but should be appropriately amended to suit the presentation medium.

Advice

It is highly recommended that you continually reflect on your work experience as it progresses and that you build up a daily/weekly profile of significant learning points that will inform the writing of the final report. Some sections of the report can be completed before the completion of the work experience. By looking at the suggested report structure now, you will be in a better position to document the relevant information for the final report as you proceed through the coming weeks.

Suggested Report Structure

Introduction
- Setting the context: BSc in Software Development - Work Experience component, what you see as the purpose of work experience, why you think it's a component of the programme?
- Name/nature of the Organisation (voluntary, state sector, private, other.)
- Length of placement (start and finish dates)
- Nature of the placement – your working title
- Name of workplace supervisor

1. Organisational Profile
- Role and function of the organisation/mission
- Brief history of the organisation
- Organisational structure (hierarchy/flat structures/organisational chart/communication flows/decision making strategies
- Human resource issues (numbers employed/age profiles/gender balance/recruitment policies)
- Relevance of the organisation to any aspect of degree programme

2. Description of your Duties
- Main functions you had during placement

3. Account of actual Work Experience
- Your initial expectations, the outcomes expected and the outcomes achieved.
- Critical assessment of achievement of placement learning outcomes.
- Difficulties experienced (try to classify them and then describe…task related, skills related, knowledge related, personnel related, other)
- Lessons learned (about the organisation, about myself, about other aspects of the working environment.

4. Student profile and relevance to the organisation
- What dimension did I bring to the work placement that might relate to the fact that I'm studying Software Development?
- What were the benefits for me of working in this organisation? Why?
- Could this placement assist my future career planning? Why?

5. Conclusion
- Any individual thoughts on the overall experience and any recommendations about future placement with this organisation

Cork Institute of Technology Computing Department
(For completion by the work placement supervisor)

INDUSTRIAL PLACEMENT REPORT

Student:

Course:

Company:

Supervisor(s):

Visiting Lecturer:

Date:

1. Interest in Work

5. High interest in job, very enthusiastic

4. More than average amount of interest in the job

3. Satisfactory interest and enthusiasm in the job

2. Interest spasmodic, occasionally enthusiastic

1 Little interest or enthusiasm for the job

2. Enterprise

5. Self-starter, asks for new jobs, looks for work to do

4. Acts voluntarily in most matters

3. Acts voluntarily in routine matters

2. Relies on others, must be told often what to do

1. Usually waits to be told what to do next

3. Organisation and Planning

5. Does an excellent job of organising and planning work

4. Usually organises work well

3. Does normal amount of planning and organising

2. More often than not fails to organise and plan work effectively

1. More often than not fails to organise and plan work effectively

4. Ability to Learn

5. Exceptionally quick
4. Quick to learn
3. Average
2. Slow to learn
1. Very slow to learn

5. Quality of Work

5. Very thorough in performing work, very few errors if any
4. Usually thorough, good work, few errors
3. Work usually passes review, has normal amount of errors
2. More than average amount of errors for a trainee
1. Work usually done in careless manner, makes errors often

6. Quantity of Work

5. Highly productive in relation to other students
4. More than expected in comparison with other students
3. Expected amount of productivity for students
2. Less than expected in comparison with other students
1. Very low in comparison with other students

7. Judgment

5. Exceptionally good, decisions based on thorough analysis of problem
4. Uses good common sense, usually makes good decisions
3. Judgment usually good in routine situations
2. Judgment often undependable
1. Poor judgment, jumps to conclusions without sufficient knowledge

8. Dependability

5. Can always be depended upon in any situation
4. Can usually be depended upon in most situations
3. Can be depended upon in routine situations
2. Somewhat unreliable, needs checking
1. Unreliable

9. Relations with Others

5. Always works in harmony with others, an excellent team worker
4. Congenial and helpful, works well with associates
3. Most relations with others are harmonious under normal circumstances
2. Difficult to work with at times, sometimes antagonises others
1. Frequently quarrelsome and causes friction

10. Creativity

5. Continually seeks new and better ways of doing things, is extremely innovative
4. Frequently suggests new ways of doing things, is very imaginative
3. Has average amount of imagination, has reasonable amount of new ideas
2. Occasionally comes up with a new idea
1. Rarely has a new idea, is not very imaginative

11. Communication Skills - Written Expression

5. Very Good
4. Good
3. Satisfactory
2. Needs Improvement
1. Poor

12. Communication Skills - Oral Expression

5. Very Good
4. Good
3. Satisfactory
2. Needs Improvement
1. Poor

13. Acceptance of criticism

5. Overtly welcomes critique and advice on his/her performance
4. Accepts criticism willingly
3. Passive acceptance of criticism
2. Does not take criticism well
1. Becomes argumentative on criticism

14. Punctuality

5. Always early for appointments
4. Always on time
3. Occasionally late for appointments
2. Frequently late for appointments
1. Disregards appointment times

15. Attendance

5. Full attendance

4. Very good attendance

3. Missed a number of days

2. Missed a lot of days

1. Very poor attendance

16.

Observations, comments and recommendations on the knowledge and skills displayed by the student at the start of the placement and how s/he progressed through the placement:

(Rank out of 10 with 10 being the highest)

17. Supervisor's comments on the student's performance: (Rank out of 10 with 10 being the highest)

18. Would the supervisor recommend the student and to what degree?

(Rank out of 5 with 5 being the highest)