

Q1. What are the criteria for an internship to be recognized as a LSM4299 project?

An internship project must meet the following criteria:

- The internship must encompass a main project with defined aims/objectives and deliverables
- While it is ok for to take on other responsibilities, it is important that you discuss with the employer/supervisor to work out only one or two main projects that you will focus on during the intern program (>80% of time commitment). Evaluation by the university academic staff will be based on the main project(s).
- The projects must be in an applied context broadly related to Life Sciences
- A duration of full-time commitment of minimum 20–24 weeks (following university exam timelines, please see Q4 below)

Note that some projects look like research. So where to draw the line between research and internship project? All internship projects and workplans have to be approved by the internship committee, and we're generally quite flexible. The rule-of-thumb is: if it looks too much like an honours research project, then it probably should be one. Research-related projects hosted in NUS or in other academic/research bodies are in general not considered for LSM4299.

To qualify for LSM4299, a project must have relevance to life sciences. This is one fundamental difference between UPIP and LSM4299 projects.

Q2. For the job scope/objective of the internship, will NUS provide the students with an internship objective and/or plan out a suitable job scope for the students?

Life Sciences internships can cover a very broad spectrum, so we do not prescribe the specific job scope/objective(s). These are for the student to work out with the employer during interviews or follow-up discussions. The overarching guiding principles to keep in mind are that

- 1) the scope/objective(s) should be to do with work/applications rather than fundamental/pre-clinical research and
- 2) the projects should have tangible deliverables.

Q3. How do students find out about available projects?

Students can do their own search. On occasions, if a company/agency has internship opportunities that meet the criteria, they can send us a short blurb that captures the range of potential internship projects available, and we'll put it up on the student portal or send the info directly to potential students by email (i.e. third year students doing honours next year). Please note that projects posted on the UPIP portal may not be approved as LSM4299 projects.

Q4. What is the duration of (and when are) the internship periods?

Duration of LSM4299 project/internship is 20–24 weeks (minimum 20 weeks). At the moment, the module is offered/run in two periods/semesters:

- Semester 1 (~Jul to November)
- Semester 2 (~Dec to Apr)

Specific dates are updated every academic year following university calendars. There is some flexibility in the start/end dates which is subjected to approval on a case-by-case basis. Regardless of the exact start/end dates, final report submission and presentation dates can **NOT** be changed (see below).

Q5. Can the internship start/end earlier or later than the stipulated deadline for that semester?

Yes, as long as the following are met:

- Start of not more than 2 weeks later than the latest starting date
- If starting late, end date must be pushed back accordingly. i.e. min 20 weeks internship period.
- No change in assessment deadlines (FINAL report and presentation), submit report and make presentation and then go on to complete remainder of internship.
- Earlier start or extension of the internship duration can also be considered (on a case-by-case basis). It is important to note that the extension shall not compromise academic activities; any additional internship work beyond the stipulated 20-24 weeks will not be considered in university evaluation.

Q6. What is the general procedure for LSM4299 application?

- Step 1. Read LSM4299 guides, understand the timeline and project requirements.
- Step 2. Source for internship positions, go for interviews, discuss LSM4299 requirements and work out project details with potential employers/supervisors.
- Step 3. Obtain internship offer letter, and submit LSM4299 application form.
- Step 4. An approval/disapproval is emailed to you ~7-10 days after the application is received.
- Step 5. If the project is approved, continue to accept the offer, sign the contract etc. Another email will be sent to you later regarding LSM4299 registration and other module information.

At any time during this process, you could email the module co-ordinators to enquire project suitability for LSM4299. In your email, please provide information on project title, work place, project aims, work plan and deliverables. You typically get an answer within 2 work days.

Q7. Does employer have to pay allowance/salary?

This is up to the employer and the student's negotiation with the employer. While we will capture this information in the LSM4299 application form. Pay or no pay, has no bearing on the LSM4299 programme, which is only to provide a framework to formalise the internship as a module that is graded/has credits.

Q8. Is student expected to attend classes during the internship period?

NO. Student is assumed to be working full-time during the internship period. So any time off for student to attend classes, etc., is at the company's discretion, and for the student and company to negotiate. (NOTE: For Semester 2 internship to meet 20 week period, the internship has to start in November before Sem 1 exams (In this case, student will need to request/negotiate with employer for time off to attend their Semester 1 exams). Alternatively, student may negotiate with their prospective employers for internship to start a bit later (after Sem 1 exams), and correspondingly ending later such that the minimum 20 week duration is still met, and as long as the report and presentation deadlines are met, i.e., submission of the report and presentation in NUS is still by Week 12 of Sem 2, after which, student goes back to complete the remaining weeks of internship.)

Q9. How will the students be graded?

The students are graded by both the internship supervisor (on performance in the workplace; 40% of overall mark) as well as by academic assessors in NUS (on monthly logs, presentation, and final report; 60% of overall mark).

Q10. What are the roles of the academic assessor at NUS?

1. Each student is attached to one academic assessor. The student is informed of his/her academic assessor at the beginning of the new semester.
2. The academic assessor is the first-point-of-contact should the student have questions or issues coming up during the internship. Feel free to contact us (Charlene: dbsnsmcm@nus.edu.sg; Cynthia: dbshyc@nus.edu.sg) if it is an urgent matter that requires immediate actions.
3. The academic assessor will evaluate the monthly log, the presentation and the final report.
4. The academic assessors are NOT advisers. In general, they will NOT feedback on project progress or workplace operation issues. The academic staff can, however, advice on presentation and report writing requirements.

Q11. How to get the most of my internship?

Below are some links containing articles on internship advice.

<https://hbr.org/2016/07/6-ways-to-make-the-most-of-your-internship>

<https://money.usnews.com/careers/articles/2018-01-10/health-care-jobs-around-heres-how-to-tap-into-the-hot-job-market?int=careers-rec>

<https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/289673>

<https://internsdc.com/internship-advice/how-to-be-the-best-intern-ever/>

<http://time.com/money/4361391/10-ways-to-get-the-most-from-your-summer-internship/>