

STUDENT GUIDE

Developed by Mrs L K Nghipandulwa (2017)

University of Namibia

What is Cooperative Work Integrated Education (CWIE)?

- CWIE is an academic activity through which students develop knowledge, skills, and values from direct experiences outside a traditional academic setting. It may take a variety of approaches ranging from internships, service learning, project based learning, study abroad, and other creative and professional work experiences.
- Well-planned, supervised and assessed CWIE modules can stimulate academic inquiry by promoting interdisciplinary learning, civic engagement, career development, cultural awareness, leadership, and other professional and intellectual skills.
- This may be a compulsory component of your curriculum to enable you integrate theoretical knowledge into practice.
- In some cases you may also look for an internship/industrial attachment, even if it is not a curriculum requirement to enhance your knowledge and increase your chances of employment after graduating through networking with key players in the Industry.
- Doing voluntary work in any organization will equally add value to your CV, and can contribute to your CWIE experiences.

Benefits of undertaking a placement

Attachment in the field will not only add value to your CV, but it will help you enhance and develop other soft and generic skills that you would not typically learn in a lecture room setting. Amongst others, you will:

- Develop soft skills such as growth in maturity, self-awareness and confidence, teamwork, problem solving, interpersonal communication, time management, ability to listen to others etc.
- Affirm your career choice
- Build confidence and gain new insights in your field
- Learn the expectations of the industries as far as organizational culture and personal attributes are concerned
- Build a network of possible contacts for future and further engagements
- High employability chances
- High motivation to explore a culture of entrepreneurship
- Learn about the latest trends in your field of study and labour market

Difference between Soft and Hard Skills?

- Hard skills are job specific skills and knowledge you need to perform a job, these are usually acquired from the classroom/academics.
- Soft skills, on the other hand, are interpersonal (people) skills which determine how you interact and relate to others in any given context. Examples include communication skills, empathy, teamwork, time management, decision making abilities, flexibility and conflict resolution.
- Remember: developing your soft skills is equally important as your academic skills. Some of these skills can be enhanced /developed through CWIE and work readiness programme. Employers will look for both when hiring anyone.

Student Roles

- Adhere to relevant Professional ethics and codes of conducts
- Complete all applicable paperwork, including your logbook, confidentiality agreement, placement agreement etc.

- Represent UNAM in the most responsible manner at all times
- Adhere to the Host organizations rules and regulations
- Maintain communication with your industry based and academic supervisor at all times
- Complete your attachment as arranged

Optimizing your placement experience

There are many factors that will influence your success during your attachment

- Learn as quickly as possible and adapt to the organizations culture
- Punctuality is a must
- Dress and conduct yourself in a professional manner
- Do not involve yourself in office politics
- Always be considerate of others and show courtesy as far as possible
- Be loyal to your Host organization, and respect the organizations properties and space
- Ask for help when needed, do not pretend you know it all
- Neatness is a bonus; keep yourself and your desk tidy.

Finding a placement

- The University is striving through the provided structures to secure partnership agreements with industry partners in every field that requires CWIE
- However, it is also your responsibility to be on the lookout for opportunities and share those with your academic supervisor, so that you can be assisted and ensure an official placement
- Do not attempt to engage and get yourself placed without notifying your immediate field supervisor or Lecturer, as there are procedures that need to be followed to protect both you , the institution and the industry partner

Preparation

- It is important that you attend the Pre-CWIE orientation workshop/lectures/careers seminars/work readiness sessions regularly conducted at the University Attending these sessions will help you with: Professional etiquette, Corporate Culture, tips on how to make the most out of your attachment opportunity as well as job hunting skills.

Best of luck with your CWIE placement/activity