

Information on an internship of YMCA - University students

(Integrative Bachelor study programme Social Work/Religious Education)

– for churches and Christian organisations

Preliminary note

The practical term in our integrative Bachelor study programme must have a particular focus on the field of social work/community work because it underlies the regulations of the German government for study programmes leading to a degree in Social Work. In order to make an international internship possible hosted by a church or a Christian organisation, we kindly ask you to observe the following information about standards and requirements.

1. Scope of activities

The range of activities has to include sufficient and appropriate activities/tasks within the working areas of community work and/or youth work. The primary focus of these activities should be to support and empower disadvantaged and marginalized people, which should have an impact on the living conditions and the social life of the target group. The activities should address social problems, challenge social injustice, respect the dignity and value of each person in any target group, and recognize the central importance of human relationships. The students shall gain practical experience in their field of study and develop and enhance their competencies and their professional expertise.

The internship assignments can be fulfilled in the context of a church or Christian organisation which provides youth and community ministries. In addition to the tasks mentioned above the intern can also be involved in pastoral care and mission activities. Besides this the student should have the opportunity to design and carry out a “practical project”. For example: to lead a training event for volunteer leaders, to design / manage part of a major event, to hold a seminar, to run a programme in children / youth ministries. This specific task should offer the student the possibility to plan, organize, conduct and reflect a project/activity on his/her own.

2. Duration

The length of the internship should ideally be between four and six months. The minimum duration, however, is three months. A total of 640 working hours should be done during the internship. On the basis of an eight-hour day and a five-day week with 40 hours, these 640 hours can be covered in a period of four months. However, the number of working hours per day or week is flexible and can be agreed upon individually. The minimum duration of three months for the internship corresponds to a minimum of 480 working hours.

3. Provision of accommodation and food

The hosting organisation is requested to provide board and lodging. A possible accommodation in a host family must be individually agreed upon with the student. If it is possible for the church, it can pay the intern an allowance. This is not a requirement though. The student can apply for a partial scholarship at the YMCA University.

4. Supervisor

Every student needs a supervisor for the internship. A professional qualification of the supervisor is required (academic degree in Social Work/Social Pedagogy) or he/she should be recognised by the General Social Care Council (GSCC). In exceptional cases similar qualifications can be accepted; but please take note that a person with a theological degree only cannot act as a supervisor. Please contact the International Office of YMCA-University if you do not have a staff person with the required qualification for the supervision so that the alternative possibilities can be investigated, e.g. sharing out the supervisory tasks between two persons. The supervisor should be a member of staff of the hosting organisation. Again, exceptions can be applied for if the designated supervisor is an employee of a partner organisation or even a volunteer. It is important that the supervisor takes time to regularly meet with the student and plans the internship together with him/her.

If you have any doubts or questions, please contact the staff at the International Office of the YMCA University (CVJM-Hochschule):

internationaloffice@cvjm-hochschule.de.