UNIVERSUM CAREER OFFICE MANUAL

Universum International College

Prishtinë, 2024

INTRODUCTION

Universum International College takes Career Guidance and Counselling as a very important dimension of experiential education and work-based learning opportunity. Career Office within UIC acts as an essential organizational unit to helping prepare students to make a smooth transition from studying students to working employees. The Career Office provides resources and support crucial to the career development of both the undergraduate and graduating students at Universum International College. Hence this unit is one of the main resource centers that interconnects the professional world.

MISSION

The mission of the Career Office at Universum International College is to assisting students and alumni in their effort to develop career and life planning skills acquire practical experience, master job search strategies, and explore pre and post-graduation opportunities. Especially, the Career Office works on improving the employability skills of students and linking them with the labor market (potential employers).

GET TO KNOW CAREER OFFICE

For Universum International College it is very important that Career Office is well organized and involves experiential education or work-based learning practices which may include student employment and/or cooperative education (co-ops), apprenticeships, internships, volunteer jobs, service learning, and shadowing experiences. For the purpose of this manual, the opportunities offered by the Universum Career Office include:

Internships

Internships are typical only a one-time work or service. However, it is possible for a student to have multiple internships for the same organization. The internship plan generally involves a student working in a professional setting under the supervision and monitoring of practicing professionals. Internships can be paid or unpaid, and the student should receive academic credit for performing the internship. All UIC students are obliged to complete at least one internship and obtain 4 ECTS. Moreover, UIC students are also obliged to complete Career Orientation (a mandatory course) to obtain 4 ECTS. Upon the completion of the course and internship students gain 8 ECTS in total which is required for their graduation.

Co-ops

Co-ops provide students with multiple periods of work related to students' major career goal. Typical program plan is for a student to alternate terms of full-time classroom study with terms of full-time, discipline-related employment. Since program participation involves multiple work terms, the typical participant will work three or four work terms, thus gaining a year or more of career-related workv experience before graduation. Co-ops positions are paid, and the vast majority involves some form of academic credit,

Practicum

A practicum is generally a one-time work or service experience done by a student as part of an academic class. Some practicums can be paid but majority are not. Almost all are performed for academic credit.

Externship

An externship or job shadowing experience allows a student to spend between a day and several weeks observing a professional on the job. Such experiences are unpaid; however, some employers pick up travel and/or living expenses. Externships and job shadowing experiences are generally not done for academic credit.

Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship is a combination of on-the-job training (OJT) and related classroom instruction under the supervision of a journey-level craft person or trade professional in which workers learn the practical and theoretical aspects of a highly skilled occupation. After completing an apprenticeship program, the worker's journey level status provides an additional benefit of nationwide mobility at journey level scale,

Volunteering

Volunteering is generally considered altruistic activity where an individual or group provides services for no financial gain "to benefit another person, group or organization". Volunteering is also renowned for skill development and is often intended to promote goodness or to improve human quality of life. Volunteering may have positive benefits for the volunteer as well as for the person or community served. It is also intended to make contacts for possible employment. No academic credits are given for this activity.

CAREER CENTER AS AN UNIT AT UNIVERSUM INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE

Career office is an enshrined unit to Universum International College organization body and organogram. The main purpose of the office is to enhance and support experiential (practical) education, learning and work program opportunities. The objectives of the Career office are but not limited to include:

- Eligibility and application requirements, (defined in the job description)
- Submission deadlines,
- Length of work assignments,
- Guidelines for quality assignments and student performance appraisals,
- Employment status (e.g., temporary/full-time, exempt/nonexempt),
- Workplace requirements, such as information on health and safety, dress code, working hours, background/security checks, insurance, and so forth, and
- Roles and responsibilities for company leaders, work assignment supervisors, mentors, and experiential education students.

CAREER OFFICE FACILITIES

Career Office at Universum International College provides adequate, accessible, and suitably located spaces. These facilities face constant improvement and aim to support the general mission and goals of both the office and the Universum International College. Spaces utilized by the career office are well equipped, adequate in size, and designed to support the staff work and duties. Details of spaces are described below:

For advising, counseling, or other confidential work, the Career office staff has a private space/office equipped with a lock and private blinds that is appropriately furnished and proximate; work space for support and student staff;

The office is equipped as follows:

- A sufficient storage space;
- Facilities and technology for students and employers to interact and conduct private interviews consistent with the mission;
- UIC private rooms for interview and exercise simulations
- Internet connectivity and access to conference rooms and large-group meeting rooms that have an appropriate level of technology to support service delivery;
- Information technology specific to enhancing awareness of employment opportunities and networking must be available for students and staff to support career services functions;
- Office at Ulpiana campus is exclusively accessible to persons with disabilities;
- Career services provided throughout the office hours at times appropriate for its constituencies;
- The career office is located conveniently on campus and project a welcoming, professional atmosphere for students, employers, alumni, faculty staff, parents and families, and the community.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Universum International College is a learning organization. As education institution the learning is a vital part of the culture. Therefore, Universum International College continuously invests in, both personal and professional development of Career Office Staff. Towards these twin aims, UIC offers opportunities to the Career Center staff to actively participate in agreement as well l as to pursue professional and personal goals.

Office Hours

The Career Office facility is highly visible and open for students and employers visitations from early morning until late in the workday. The regular schedule of working day is from 8:00- 17:00, time to time, the full time staff is expected to work overtime depending on the scope and scheduling of the activities, and this is regulated by an internal procedure (approval and compensation of over time).

Staff Development

Universum International College is committed to the professional development of all employees at the Career Office. The staff continuously attends training courses; workshops or other activities that Management believes will enhance their ability to perform better their job or assist them in their current and future career goals.

Each staff member is expected to pursue a relevant training in foreign country at least once a year. The expenses are covered by Universum International College. In the pursuance of trainings staff can opt to attend the following:

- An Erasmus + training in a parter EU country
- A Western Balkan Training in a partnering regional University:
- Local training offered by an organization/isnitution in Kosovo
- Internal Training offered by a qualified academic member of the Universum International College

Performance Appraisals

Universum International College dedicates a special fund to support the professional development of Career Centre staff. All staff members should undergo the performance appraisal annually, conducted by their supervisor. In all cases, the staff and their supervisors should meet and discuss the appraisal,

with copies of assessment kept in archives. If staff members disagree with their appraisal, they may always attach a letter explaining their positions.

Staff Meetings

For coordination, purposes the management of the UIC and Career Office employees schedule regular staff meetings. The meetings take place on weekly basis throughout the working schedule. Additional staff meetings are scheduled as needed.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY - ICT

ICT is an important component of Career Office at Universum International College. ICT systems is integrated with all the departments. Following are introduced some relevant components of ICT at Career Office:

- Valid, and reliable online resources that help students pursue their career goals.
- Regularly updated online and hardcopy resources samples, and guidance manuals, available for students so as to offer students and designated clients appropriate and accessible online and distance resources.
- Career Office regularly reviews and benchmarks online career resources to determine what to maintain, what to add, and what to discard, ensuring up-to-date resources for students.
- Career Office provides online and/or distance career services to students who are not able to access Performance Appraisals Staff meetings services traditionally provided on campus.
- Career Office staff is well informed about current trends and uses of technology and is able to anticipate emerging technologies for use in career services.
- Career Office implements appropriate technology (non-hardware) relevant to institutional and unit mission and goals for career services and ensures that appropriate technology is used to deliver services.
- Career Office ensures that technology within career services, including websites, is consistent with and integrated within the college technology infrastructure In light of the rapidity of change associated with technology, career office develops a strategic technology plan for the selection, replacement, updating, and/or integration of new technically based or supported career programs or services.

Specific technologies for career services that include:

- Career services information in UIC website that provide up-to-date information regarding mission, location, staffing, contact information, programs, and services available to students and other designated clients.
- Computer-based assessment and computer-assisted career guidance systems that support the mission of career services and compliant.
- Computer-based and/or online recruiting and employment systems that support the career services mission for part-time, full-time, and internship employment, and, as relevant, for co-op and/or other forms of experiential learning opportunities. These systems include online opportunity listings and student resume databases.
- Career Office makes informed choices regarding the use of available technology, including systems developed internally by the college/university, systems available through professional associations, or private vendor –based Systems. Examples include student registration systems; student contact, record, and tracking systems; career portfolios; graduating student surveys; career fair and program management systems; office intranet sites; e-mail-based career advising/ counseling; and online/distance learning support.
- Technology used ensures student confidentiality and is consistent with legal and ethical standards. Data security and privacy of student records adheres to the institutional legal and technology privacy policies.

Adequate funds is available and/or cultivated through various means (grants, university funding, partnerships, consortiums, and so forth) to support the hardware and software associated with the use of any technology for career services at Career Office at Universum International College.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIP OF CAREER OFFICE

One of the key objectives of the Career Office is to create the positive relationship with the partners and beneficiaries: academic staff, students and potential employers.

Internal Relations

The Career Office pays close attention to internal communication as a very important for the success of the Office's mission. The internal communications includes the use of internal communication channels of the Universum International College in announcing job and internship opportunities at the bulletin boards, and other procedures for inter-staff communications.

The Office promotes cooperative relationships with the academic staff of the College so that they could have active support in delivery of their career services. Information that needs to be shared with them should is sent to the Career Office distribution list on a permanent basis.

External Relations

During its work the Career Office thrives to create a positive image about the Office and the College in general. This influences not only the current students but also perspective students thinking of pursuing academic career. It is important that Career Office combines various ways, strategies and methods such as: speaking with members of the electronic and print media, the submission of public announcements about services and programs, bulletin boards maintained on-campus for informing students about services, professional articles for journal publication and professional presentations, and achievements.

SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE CAREER OFFICE

In accordance with the Mission Statement of the Career Office, the activities of career guidance and counselling can be classified in six categories:

1. Career information is all information necessary for planning, achieving, and maintaining employment and volunteering. It also includes information on occupations, skills, career pathways, trends, and situation at the labour market, educational programmes and options, educational institutions, government and nongovernmental programmes and services, job perspectives. This information is regarded as the foundation of career guidance;
2. Career education received in educational context such as by professors, pedagogues, and psychologists. Unlike career counselling, career education promotes understanding of the world of work through school curricula. This is realized in different forms within the teaching process, and helps students understand their motives, values, and the way in which they can contribute to the society they live in. It gives them the knowledge of the labour market, skills that enable them to make choices in the field of education, work and life, and it also teaches them how to plan their career and prepare for work. One of the courses that is exemplary in delivering this is Internship and Career Orientation course mandatory for all the students of Universum Collge.
3. Career guidance (as a specialized expert activity) helps students understand their own goals and aspirations, their own identity, helps them make informed decisions, commit to activities, and manage changes in their career whether they are planned or not. The forms of career guidance are often themselves conditioned by the need for employment, as well as the number and types of barriers that need to be overcome in order to find the right employment or develop career. Three levels of activity within career management are commonly distinguished, and these are:

- initial career planning,
- learning based on the work process, and
- networking activities.

Initial career planning includes initial interests and competencies assessment, participation in career and work experience research, development of initial CV or professional resume, and development of initial employment plan. Work based learning includes direct on-job training and recognized work experience, a wide area of training for different fields of work, on-job mentoring work. Networking activities include actions that encourage workers and the employers in constant participating in counselling activities, introducing students to work options and conditions, helping connect learning in school with learning within the very work process, connecting students, parents, employers and employment services, providing help for

graduates in finding adequate job or additional training within the work process, monitoring the individual progress

4. Counselling for employment helps students define immediate employment goals, understand and engage in job training and gaining the needed skills and competencies, and acquire the skills needed for job searching and maintaining it.
5. Job placement (mediation in employment) is organizing or placing students in vacant job positions.
6. Promote and maintain partnership with academic departments to ensure seamless referrals between the Career Centre, the academic community, and future employers.