SPOT Workplace Internships

Objectives of the Workplace Internship

(For regulations, see *Module 9: Internship*)

The supervised workplace internship is a mandatory component of the SPOT programme and is awarded 15 ECTS credits. It provides structured professional experience following the completion of coursework and supports the development of competencies that cannot be fully acquired through classroom-based learning.

Internships are conducted within a professional organisational setting under the guidance of an experienced psychologist (workplace mentor) and the supervision of a member of the SPOT Internship Committee. Throughout the internship period, students receive structured guidance, undertake assigned tasks, and are supported in the preparation of the internship report.

IMPORTANT: The regulations outlined in this document apply exclusively to the mandatory SPOT internship and do not extend to additional internships undertaken independently after graduation.

Eligible Internship Organisations

Internships must be completed within legally registered public or private organisations engaged in professional psychological work. Eligible institutions include hospitals, foundations, clinical centres, NGOs, non-university research centres, start-ups, and spin-offs. Public institutions with independent legal status (e.g. university hospitals and outpatient clinics) may also qualify.

Universities and affiliated research institutes are not eligible as host institutions. Internships conducted within SPOT partner universities (e.g. counselling centres, research groups, or laboratories) cannot be recognised as part of the SPOT degree.

Internship Pathways

Pathway 1:

The SPOT programme offers structured internship placements within a network of organisations in the Western Balkans (see *Internship Providers* on the SPOT website).

Pathway 2:

Internships may also be completed worldwide, provided that the host institution and mentor are approved by the SPOT Internship Committee and the relevant partner university.

Supervision and Mentoring

Internship supervision is provided by academic coordinators from the University of Sarajevo, the University of Banja Luka, and the University of Niš (SPOT Internship Committee). These supervisors oversee the approval, organisation, and recognition of internships.

Workplace mentors must meet the following minimum requirements:

- A bachelor's degree in psychology (minimum)
- At least three years of professional experience
- A formal and ongoing relationship with the host organisation
- Availability for regular supervision within the organisation

Finding an Internship

Pathway 1:

Students may apply for up to three placements within the SPOT internship network. Allocation depends on individual profiles, interests, and organisational capacity.

Pathway 2:

Students may independently arrange internships by contacting organisations directly. Applications should clearly demonstrate the applicant's potential contribution. Acceptance is at the discretion of the organisation and mentor.

Approval Procedure

All internships require prior approval by the SPOT Internship Committee. Requests must be submitted in writing to: internship@spot-psychology.eu.

Pathway 1

Submission of Internship Application Form 1, including three ranked preferences and short motivation statements.

Pathway 2

- Submission of Internship Application Form 2, including organisational details, mentor information, motivation letter, planned activities, and expected duration.

Internships must not commence without formal approval.

Duration and Workload

The internship comprises 300 hours of practical training. Activities may be undertaken full-time (up to 40 hours per week) or part-time. Employment cannot be recognised as an internship.

For placements in the Western Balkans, a full-time internship should take approximately two months, while a part-time internship should not exceed three months (Pathway 1).

For internships outside the Western Balkans, part-time internships can exceed three months with the approval of the SPOT Internship Committee (Pathway 2).

The remaining 75-hour workload covers the following:

- Western Balkans placements (Pathway 1):
    - Full-time: approx. 2 months
    - Part-time: max. 3 months

- External placements (Pathway 2):
    - Extended part-time duration possible with approval

An additional workload of 75 hours includes preparation, coordination, documentation, and report writing.

Remuneration and Funding

Internships are generally unpaid and do not constitute employment. Students should clarify potential expense coverage with host organisations in advance.

Non-scholarship students may apply for Erasmus+ mobility funding for internships in the Western Balkans (Pathway 1).

Timing of the Internship

The mandatory internship is typically completed during the final semester, alongside the Master's thesis.

Voluntary internships may be undertaken between the second and third semesters; however, these are not credited within the SPOT programme.

Documentation Requirements

Prior to the internship, formal approval from the SPOT Internship Committee is required. Additional documentation (e.g. medical certificates, proof of enrolment) may be requested by the host institution.

For placements in the Western Balkans, administrative support (e.g. visa arrangements) is provided.

Upon completion, the mentor must confirm successful participation. This confirmation, together with the final report, must be submitted to the SPOT Internship Committee.

Internship Activities

Typical activities include:

- Participation in professional psychological work (e.g. assessments, interventions, meetings)
- Contribution to applied projects and interventions
- Engagement in psychoeducational and support activities (e.g. counselling, social integration work)
- Use of psychological instruments under supervision
- Documentation and adherence to ethical standards
- Maintenance of a structured internship diary
- Regular feedback sessions with the mentor

Additional activities may include research support, literature review, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Internship Report

Upon completion of the internship, students are required to submit a report of 2,000–4,000 words. The report serves both evaluative and reflective purposes, linking practical experience with theoretical knowledge.

The title page of the report must include the following information:

- Name and surname
- Student enrolment number
- Organisation in which the internship was completed
- SPOT supervisor
- Duration of the internship (start and end dates)
- Name of the mentor at the host institution

The report is structured into three sections: a technical description; a section outlining practical activities and reflections; and a section presenting suggestions for scientifically informed improvements.

Technical Description

- A description of the organisation in which the internship was completed, including its history, function, internal structure, number of psychologists employed, and the primary and secondary populations with which they work
- A description of how the student established contact with the organisation
- A description of the mentor, including their position, professional experience, and main responsibilities

Experiences

- Goals defined by the student in cooperation with the mentor prior to the start of the internship
- A work diary documenting the specific activities carried out during the internship, to be submitted alongside the report
- An evaluation of outcomes, comparing initial expectations regarding the organisation and anticipated tasks with the actual experiences
- An explicit account of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes acquired during the internship
- A description of both positive and challenging aspects of the internship experience
- A description of the position and role of psychologists within the organisation's multidisciplinary team
- A reflection on the contribution of the student's presence to the mentor and the organisation
- Recommendations for future students interested in completing an internship in the respective field or organisation

Important: Goals, activities, and outcomes must be clearly formulated, specific, and coherently interconnected. It is recommended that these elements be structured using appropriate subheadings.

Suggestions for Scientifically Informed Improvements and Research Opportunities

- Reference to at least five relevant scientific sources related to the topic
- Explicit linkage of selected theories and/or empirical findings to specific activities carried out during the internship

- Concrete proposals for improving the practical work of psychologists in comparable organisational contexts
- Identification and discussion of aspects that warrant further research, particularly in relation to the tasks and challenges faced by psychologists in the respective role

Evaluation of the Internship

The mandatory workplace internship is evaluated on the basis of the written report submitted to the SPOT Internship Committee, together with any required supporting documentation. Following review, the Committee assesses whether the required activities have been completed and whether the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. A pass/fail grade is then assigned (SPOT Internship Report Approval).

In addition, students are required to complete an oral examination based on their written report before a SPOT Internship Examination Committee. Successful completion of both the written report and the oral examination is required for the internship to be recognised as successfully completed.

Additional Work Experience for Professional Certification in Psychology

Please note that, although the SPOT curriculum is designed to meet the requirements of European Federation of Psychologists' Associations (EuroPsy) and the national requirements for a Master's degree in Psychology at all partner universities, additional internships or certification procedures may be required in order to obtain specific national licences or to join professional associations after graduation.

Relevant professional bodies include:

- EuroPsy – the European Standard in Psychology set by the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations AISBL (EFPA)
- Germany – Berufsverband Deutscher Psychologinnen und Psychologen (BDP)
- Portugal - Ordem dos Psicólogos Portugueses (OPP)
- Italy – Consiglio Nazionale dell'Ordine degli Psicologi (CNOP)
- Estonia – Eesti Psühholoogide Liit (EPL)
- Serbia – Društvo psihologa Srbije (DPS)
- Bosnia and Herzegovina: Federation - Udruženje psihologa u Federaciji BiH (UPFBiH)
- Bosnia and Herzegovina: Republika Srpska - Društvo psihologa Republike Srpske (DPRS)

The SPOT Internship Committee and academic advisors will support students in planning further certification pathways, including entry into national labour markets within SPOT consortium countries or pursuing EuroPsy certification.