

# Internship Program for University Student Skill Development: A Case Study in UIN Sunan Kalijaga

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**Abstract:** Indonesian university graduates frequently encounter challenges after being employed. Many graduates have not had some skills needed to manage their tasks in the real workplace. Prospective undergraduates are expected to prepare themselves to face the demands of the workplace by having abilities related to their fields, being able to develop knowledge, and having broad insight so that they can compete with other graduates in the workplace. This issue encourages universities to continue to improve the quality of their graduates. One of the programs launched by the Faculty of Science and Technology of UIN Sunan Kalijaga to improve students' soft skills was the internship program. This study aims to review whether the implementation of this internship program has an impact on improving the skills and competencies of students who had participated in this program.

**Keywords:** internship, university students, skill improvement, apprenticeship, learning, soft skill.

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## Introduction

The increasing number of university graduates in Indonesia has its own problem (Luthfia & Rahadi, 2020). Many university graduates are still not ready to be employed in the workplace (Shaliska, 2019). In addition, competition in the work place is increasingly tight, which could be seen by research conducted by the Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education (2019) which noted that around 8.8% of the total 7 million unemployed in Indonesia are graduates. One of the basic problems in Indonesia is the quality of human resources who do not have any expertise to compete in the work place (Tilaar, 2004; Basry, 2002). Therefore, prospective undergraduates are expected to prepare themselves to face the challenges of the workplace by having abilities according to their fields, being able to develop knowledge, and having broad insight so that they can compete with other graduates in the workplace (Agusta, 2015; Baiti et al., 2017).

This readiness to face the workplace is often known as work readiness (Baiti, 2017). Atlay &

Harris (2000) state that when job readiness is well prepared it is possible for an individual to succeed in the workplace. There are several aspects for build job readiness building including personal characteristics, organizational skills, work competencies, social intelligence, experience and generic skills (Caballero et al., 2011; Pool & Sewel, 2007). One of work readiness is the preparation of work competencies, namely skills and standard performance achieved by a person (Sanghi, 2007).

Things that can affect a person's success in the workplace consist of 80% soft skills and 20% hard skills (Sailah, 2008). The facts on the ground show that the current education system in Indonesia prioritizes hard skills over soft skills (Nugroho, 2009). Meanwhile, universities only provide 10% soft skills in the education curriculum (Sailah, 2008). The real conditions of society are far different from life on campus, therefore universities must be able to make their graduates competitive and able to offer good quality and service (Shaliska, 2019). This encourages universities to continue to improve the quality of

their graduates (Supriyati & Luthfi, 2020). Therefore, one of the programs launched by the Faculty of Science and Technology of UIN Sunan Kalijaga to improve students' soft skills was an internship program.

The internship/apprenticeship program can improve the soft skills and competencies possessed by students (Rugaiyah, 2011). Internship activities are job training for students in increasing understanding, appreciation, and skills (Ismail, 2018). Internship activities provide a hands-on experience to integrate knowledge with practical experience (Chan Lin and Hung, 2015). Internship activities also provide opportunities for students to apply academic knowledge and improve soft skills and add up additional skills needed in the world of work (Sahrir, 2016).

Based on these conditions, the Faculty of Science and Technology would shape its students into students who have the skills and competencies needed in the workplace. The internship program at the Faculty of Science and Technology UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta has been implemented for 3 periods. This study will examine whether the implementation of this internship program has an impact on increasing the skills and competencies of students who had participated in internships.

### Materials and Methods

This study used a qualitative descriptive method to analyse internship document and data, interviews, suggestions from the faculty members, supervisor, apprentices/interns, and the user at the Faculty of Science and Technology UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, and also from expert opinions and related literature (data not shown). Data was collected by means of observation, interviews, and documentation to obtain qualitative data (Sugiyono, 2010). The subjects in this study were internship supervisors, internship supervisors, students and alumni of the internship who were selected by random sampling. This research was conducted for 2 months, from September 10, 2021 to November 10, 2021. Data analysis was carried out descriptively from interviews, secondary data,

supporting document files, literature studies from various sources, and expert opinions.

## Results and Discussion

### Faculty of Science and Technology Internship Program

The Faculty of Science and Technology Internship Program was a program organized by the faculty with the target audience was students or alumni of UIN Sunan Kalijaga. This program was aimed to improve the soft skills and competencies of apprentices according to their talents through an internship program. This program has a working period of 3 months and registration is open every year.

The internship program was carried out for 3 months with a duration of 3 days per week (according to the vacant class schedule and consultation with the supervisor). The task of the apprentices was given directly by the supervisor to the apprentice. Supervisors have responsibility for planning, implementing and evaluating apprenticeship activities for apprentices under the authority of the supervisor. Various activities of the Faculty of Science and Technology internship program can be seen in table 1.

**Table 1.** Activities of the Faculty of Science and Technology internship program.

No	Activities
1	Seminar and Cooperation of the Faculty of Science and Technology UIN Sunan Kalijaga with Nglanggeran Geopark Management
2	Konferensi Integrasi Interkoneksi Islam dan Sains in 2018, 2019, dan 2020
3	Writing and publishing papers
4	Entrepreneurship development, training, courses
5	Graphic design training for internship students of the Faculty of Science and Technology UIN Sunan Kalijaga
6	Photography training for internship students of the Faculty of Science and Technology UIN Sunan Kalijaga
7	English courses for internship students of the Faculty of Science and Technology UIN Sunan Kalijaga
8	Internships for the staff of the dean of the Faculty of Science and Technology of UIN Sunan Kalijaga (staff of the vice dean 1, 2, and 3)

9	Performing arts
10	Academic writing training
11	Master of Ceremony training and activity management
12	Training on making posters for learning media
13	Research program activities and student mobility of the Faculty of Science and Technology UIN Sunan Kalijaga
14	Community-based service programs, Faculty of Science and Technology, UIN Sunan Kalijaga
15	Establishment of a botanica museum, Faculty of Science and Technology, UIN Sunan Kalijaga
16	Contest of ambassadors for the botanica museum, Faculty of Science and Technology, UIN Sunan Kalijaga
17	Guest Lecture of the Faculty of Science and Technology UIN Sunan Kalijaga
18	Saintek in harmony (art performance)
19	International student research attachment & student mobility program
20	International Conference on Science and Engineering (2019 and 2020)
21	Assisting Senior Expertise Program in UIN Sunan Kalijaga
23	English conversation class
24	Sketch and drawing workshops
26	Organizing public discussions

In accordance with the activities in table 1 that had been carried out by the Internship of the Faculty of Science and Technology, interns can choose these activities according to their interests and talents that they want to improve through the internship program. Each activity had a supervisor who was responsible for the activity. The supervisor was a lecturer at the Faculty of Science and Technology who was an expert in the field.

This internship program is beneficial for both faculty and apprentices so that it is effectively carried out every year. According to the results of an interview with one of the internship supervisors, Mr. Widodo, he said, "The internship program teaches apprentices to gain new experiences and real challenges as well as train them for time management. In addition, this program helps the completion of some of the work of the dean or vice deans". This shows that the internship program of the Faculty of Science and Technology of UIN Sunan Kalijaga has a good impact.

Based on table 1 of the activities organized by the internship program of the Faculty of Science and Technology of UIN Sunan Kalijaga, interns were directly involved in these activities and handle the activities as committees according to the choice of interests and talents of each apprentice, which had been selected from the outset of internship application process. Therefore, interns have the opportunity to practice directly in the workplace in order to improve the soft skills of interns in the fields of administration, organization, and management.

Some of the publications came out from this program are as follows: *Kuliah dan Nyantri Sebagai Penerapan Visi Integrasi Interkoneksi* (Lintang & Luthfi, 2020), *Penguatan dan Implementasi Plagiarism Checking Berbasis Open Journal Systems (OJS) Pada Jurnal Biology, Medicine, & Natural Product Chemistry* (Yanuarief et al, 2018), *Histological Study of Respiratory Organ of Betta sp.* (Apriliani et al, 2018), *Morphology of Javan Broadhead Planarian (Bipalium Javanum)* (Ni'mah, 2021), *Anatomical and Histological Study on Digestive Organs of Tree Shrew (Tupaia javanica)* (Bahartin et al, 2021), *Effect of Marine Water to Ward Betta Sp. Survival* (Febriani et al, 2020), *Anatomy of Trabeculae Lumbar Vertebrae On a Bats (Megachiroptera)* (Hidayah et al, 2020), *Anatomical Study of Bat's Phalanx Bone* (Nurrizki et al, 2020), *Inovasi Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris dalam Mendukung Program Integrasi Interkoneksi di Fakultas Sains dan Teknologi UIN Sunan Kalijaga* (Happyalita et al, 2020), *Anatomical and Histological Study of Shark (Carcharhinus sorrah) Kidney* (Supriyati et al, 2019), *The Anatomy of Respiratory Organ of Climbing Perch (Anabas testudineus)* (Nuralam & Luthfi, 2019), *Comparative Anatomy of Axial Skeleton of Red-eared Turtle (Trachemys scripta elegans, Wied 1838) and Softshell Turtle (Amyda cartilaginea, Boddaert 1770)* (Mustafa et al, 2019), *Calcification of Axial Skeleton and Segmentation Muscular Regeneration of Gecko's Tail (Gekko Gecko Linnaeus, 1758)* (Syarifah et al, 2019), *Macro and Microanatomical Structures of Lizard's Regenerate Tail (Mabouya multifasciata Kuhl, 1820)* (Luthfi et al, 2019), *Comparative Anatomy of Labyrinth and Gill of Catfish (Clarias gariepinus)(Burchell, 1822) and Snakehead Fish (Channa striata)(Bloch, 1793)* (Karlina & Luthfi, 2018), *Anatomical Study of Red-eared TurteTail*

(*Trachemys scripta elegans*) (Nofita et al, 2018), *On Designing Interactive Online Atlas of Reptile Anatomy (Mabouya multifasciata)* (Luthfi & Riyanto, 2017), *Anatomical Study of Male Reproductive Organs of the Indonesian Short-Nosed Fruit Bat (Cynopterus titthaechilus Temminck, 1825)* (Anisatuzzahro & Luthfi, 2017), *Comparative Anatomy and Histology of Black Pomfret (Formio niger) and Nile tilapia (Oreochromis niloticus) Kidney* (Apriliani & Luthfi, 2017). The manuscripts sourced from interns own research and their undergraduate theses. In this activity interns have been learning how to conduct research, write the result, and publish the manuscripts. They have gotten important insight and skill about real academic works throughout this program.

Documentation of some of the activities listed in table 1 was presented in figure 1, figure 2, figure 3, and figure 4. Involvement in each of the activity would increase the understanding, skill, and competency related to the event. Those real tasks are rarely taught in any formal subject, and indeed they are not necessarily put into subjects. Subject are aimed for teaching concepts and principles of certain established theory, whereas real workplace tasks are very dynamic and very practical hardly to be taught formally. Real workplace tasks are a very wide spectrum of skills, competencies, and practices. It is more suitable to get them through hands-on experience following on job training, apprenticeship and internship program.



**Figure 1.** International Conference on Science and Engineering. Through this program interns had learnt all aspect of tasks related to the event ranging from preparing, managing, and running the conference; researching, writing manuscript and presenting the result; publishing the proceeding.



**Figure 2.** International student research attachment & student mobility program. This program was followed by 6 students from Turkey, Egypt, and Malaysia. They conducted researches and community-based outreach programs. The interns handled some tasks during the program.



**Figure 3.** Senior Experten Service Program in UIN Sunan Kalijaga. Three experts from Senior Experten Service (SES) conducted the program in UIN Sunan Kalijaga. The interns assisted the experts doing their job, manage activity and some other related tasks.



**Figure 4.** Saintek in Harmony (art performance). In this program, the interns planned and organized all aspects of the event. They had developed skills and knowledge on making art performance after practicing the tasks.



**Figure 5.** Sketch and drawing workshops. Many students have difficulties when they want to sketch and draw materials in their paperwork. This program was aimed to help students mastering the skill.

The interns would master some skills from doing tasks they got during internship, depending on what program they had been employed. For this reason, it was difficult to assess the exact development of every intern, since they employed in different kind and different number of many kinds of internship programs. However, we can draw some inferences from the completeness of the interns' tasks and the success of the events under consideration. Overall, the interns have gotten practical skill needed in the real situation in the real workplace. It would be beneficial to them in their next career in the future.

Based on analysis and output on each program, we could simplify the capacity development of the interns in many events into four categories as follows: technical/practical development, administration development, organizational development and managerial development.

### **Development of student practical skills**

The internship program is one of the flagship programs at the Faculty of Science and Technology. Based on various student trainings held by the Faculty of Science and Technology internship program, they were able to improve the practical skills of apprentices related to the activity they have followed. According to the results of interviews with interns, "this internship program is very helpful for final semester students, add up portfolio of the student portfolios, and build self-confidence for each intern because they already

have provisions for the workplace". The internship program, according to Suharyanti et al (2014) is a learning activity in the field that aims to introduce and grow students' abilities in the workplace.

### **Development of student administration skills**

Interns have an obligation to work as staff of the dean of the Faculty of Science and Technology for 3 days a week. The deans in question are dean, vice dean I, vice dean II, vice dean III. The interns' duties as dean staff were responsible for the administration of the internship and some tasks were given directly by the intern supervisor during their work shift. The assignment of apprentices helps a lot in the work of supervisors as well as can improve the skills of apprentices in the field of administration. In actual administrative practice, interns learned to write letters, meeting minutes, memorandum of understanding, certificates, and other official documents issued by the institution. They also learned how to distribute, send, keep, and retrieve the documents. Records and administrative data of each activity were stored and reported to the intern supervisor at the end of the internship period. According to an interview with one of the alumnae of the apprentices, "the objectives of the internship program in this case were as follows: a) educating interns to be tenacious, conscientious, responsible, and able to work within a team. b) improve the quality of higher education graduates in the field of readiness to face the workplace, especially administration. c) create a good cooperative relationship between students, staff and lecturers, as well as faculty organizations". In this internship process, the interns learned to know how the administration worked and the interns are responsible for doing the administration under supervision.

### **Development of student organizational skills**

In accordance with table 2, the task of interns was to assist several programs held by the faculty in which interns were involved as committees and directly handle activities with other interns and several lecturers who were involved in. This can improve the organizational skills of interns to make given activity successful, namely collaborating with a team, learning how to

communicate with respected people, and practicing socializing with others. Using on job training they were comprehensively learning how a given event was managed and done properly.

According to an interview with alumni of the interns, "every activity has different preparations, for example, the *Saintek in Harmony* is an art performance where we as committees must be able to check all the preparations needed for an art performance, of course the preparation is different from English conversation classes for example. If we are one of the individuals who cannot work together in a team, it will be difficult to carry out an activity together". This means that in the internship program, interns are expected to work well together so that the event can run smoothly.

One of the efforts allowing good cooperation is effective communication. The function of communication at work is that messages/orders conveyed by the leadership to employees can be well received, resulting in a good job because the fluency and clarity of communication are important factors that encourage good performance (Kiswanto, 2010). Greene stated that internships or work practices enable interns to develop the communication skills of each individual (Greene, 2006).

Cooperating and communicating with others is an important part of interaction in workplace. Every individual cannot live alone, which definitely needs other people. Therefore, in this internship program, interns are expected to become individuals who easily get to know other people, open mind, and easily blend in with the surrounding environment, which is skills are definitely needed in various jobs.

### Development of student management skills

Interns have responsibility for the chosen program and work shift duties. They must come to the office to carry out their obligations as interns. In this case, it is expected to train the skills of interns in the field of time management and priorities as students and as apprentices. according to one alumnus of the apprenticeship participants, "by joining this internship program, I am used to noting what I have to do today and managing my time to be more effective". Interns are required to

be creative and innovate in carrying out their duties and obligations, both as students and as apprentices. This attitude includes a professional attitude in the workplace which trains students in managing attitudes/behaviors and priorities (Restuningdiah, 2009).

### Conclusion

Based on the research we had done, it can be concluded that the internship program of the Faculty of Science and Technology can improve the soft skills of apprentices (practical, administration, organization, and management). The internship program has a concept of practicing the skill in the workplace that \the interns can learn by doing the job in the real situation. This approach is rarely taught in the formal subjects.

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