



Regulations for external academic placements on the bachelor's degree in Informatics Engineering, bachelor's degree in Artificial Intelligence, master's degree in Informatics Engineering, master's degree in Innovation and Research in Informatics, master's degree in Artificial Intelligence, master's degree in Data Science and master's degree in Cybersecurity

Decision CP.FIB/2022/06/06, of 1 July 2022, by the Standing Committee of the FIB to approve the amendment of the regulations for external academic placements on the bachelor's degree in Informatics Engineering, bachelor's degree in Artificial Intelligence, master's degree in Informatics Engineering, master's degree in Innovation and Research in Informatics, master's degree in Artificial Intelligence and master's degree in Data Science

Office of the Vice-Dean for University-Business Relations

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Preamble

The Barcelona School of Informatics (FIB) considers external academic placements an important complement to a degree, as they provide a technical and cross-disciplinary skill set that prepares students for their professional future.

Given the great number of agreements that are signed each semester, the FIB has consolidated its experience in managing these placements, mainly thanks to the network of collaborating entities and companies and students' interest in getting closer to the world of work through this practice.

These regulations replace the regulations approved by the Standing Committee on 24 February 2021 (CP.FIB/2021/03/02) and their amendment, of 5 May 2021 (CP.FIB/2021/05/15), which update the content as a result of the amendment of the UPC's regulations of 17 December 2021 in Governing Council Decision CG/2021/06/37.

Article 1. Aim and scope

The Barcelona School of Informatics (hereinafter, the FIB) promotes the participation of its students in external academic placements through educational cooperation agreements.

External academic placements are optional academic activities that are part of the curriculum. They enable students to apply and complement the knowledge they have acquired in their education and foster the acquisition of competencies that equip them to practise professionally, enhance their employability and promote their capacity for innovation.

External academic placements can be taken at collaborating entities, such as national and international companies, institutions and public or private entities, and at the University itself.

These regulations are developed under the protection of the external academic placement regulations of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (Governing Council Decision CG/2021/06/37, of 17 December 2021) and apply to the following FIB degrees: bachelor's degree in Informatics Engineering (GEI), bachelor's degree in Artificial Intelligence (GIA), master's degree in Informatics Engineering (MEI), master's degree in Innovation and Research in Informatics CP.FIB/2022/06/06

(MIRI), master's degree in Artificial Intelligence (MAI), master's degree in Data Science (MDS) and master's degree in Cybersecurity (MCYBERS).

Article 2. Types of external academic placements

External academic placements can be curricular or extracurricular.

2.1 Curricular placements

Curricular placements are academic activities that are designed to form part of the curriculum. They are considered the same as any other subject and are optional. This means that students must enrol for them and have a tutor and that they are assessed and graded.

Curricular placements may be linked to a bachelor's thesis or master's thesis.

2.2 Extracurricular placements

Extracurricular placements have the same purpose as curricular placements, but they do not form part of the curriculum nor are they included in the student's academic record. They are, however, included in the Diploma Supplement.

Students are assigned a tutor who will monitor and follow up on the progress of the project, as well as perform a subsequent assessment.

Extracurricular placements may not be recognised as curricular placements. Students must decide which placement type they want upon requesting the placement.

On the master's degree in Data Science and the master's degree in Cybersecurity, curricular placements can only be taken in the case of the master's thesis.

Article 3. Shared provisions for participation

Curricular or extracurricular external academic placements must not compromise students' academic performance.

For this reason, the maximum number of hours to be dedicated to external placements on a degree is set at:

1. For the GEI and GIA degrees (hereinafter, the bachelor's degrees):
 - 900 hours in an academic year.
 - 1,800 hours over the course of the degree.
2. For the MEI, MIRI, MAI and MDS (hereinafter, the master's degrees), with a limit of 900 hours per academic year:
 - 600 hours over the course of master's degrees worth 60 ECTS credits (MCYBERS).
 - 900 hours over the course of master's degrees worth 90 ECTS credits (MEI and MAI).
 - 1,200 hours over the course of master's degrees worth 120 ECTS credits (MIRI and MDS).

For curricular placements with credit recognition on the student's academic record, a minimum of 30 hours of placement must be completed for every ECTS credit recognised (30 hours is equivalent to 1 ECTS credit).

Given their educational nature, it is recommended that the minimum length of placements be no less than 180 hours.

In the case of curricular external academic placements that coincide with the preparation of a bachelor's or master's thesis (hereinafter, final thesis), these limits may be exceeded once during the degree, with the number of extra hours completed being equal to the sum of multiplying the number of enrolled credits for the final thesis by 15.

It is recommended that no more than 80 hours a month be dedicated to placements during the teaching period. Exceptions to these limits may be made for curricular placements.

The placement's timetable must not coincide with that of the enrolled subjects.

Article 4. Collaborating entities

The national and international companies, institutions and public or private entities that welcome students on placement must guarantee their health and safety in all aspects relating to the tasks contained in the educational cooperation agreements.

Collaborating entities must at all times ensure students' safety while they are on placement. It is the collaborating entity's obligation to register students in the Social Security system and, if necessary, pay the corresponding contributions, to inform students of the applicable health and safety regulations, to keep records and to ensure compliance with data protection regulations.

Likewise, external placement entities must abide by the UPC's bullying prevention regulations. If necessary, the collaborating entity must provide the student on placement with all necessary personal protective equipment, in compliance with safety regulations and according to the tasks detailed in the individual training plan and the environment in which they are performed.

These obligations must appear in the educational cooperation agreement that must be signed for each placement.

The tutor designated by the collaborating entity is responsible for ensuring that students adhere to the individual training plan while on placement at the collaborating entity, monitoring students' progress and, if applicable, assessing them. The tutor must maintain direct communication with the student and the academic tutor overseeing the placement.

The rights and obligations of the student, collaborating entity tutor and academic tutor are detailed in the UPC's external academic placement regulations.

Article 5. Individual training plan

All placement students must submit an individual training plan before the placement starts. This plan must detail the objectives of the placement and the tasks that the student will perform, taking into consideration the basic, technical and cross-disciplinary competencies of the degree and the area of specialisation being studied by the student.

The individual training plan must be validated by the student's academic tutor.

Article 6. Educational cooperation agreements

The bachelor's and master's degree placements governed by these regulations must be entered into by signing educational cooperation agreements with the national and international companies, institutions and public or private entities that wish to accept students on placements.

External placements at international collaborating entities are arranged through a mobility placement and governed by the prevailing UPC regulations and the regulations in the country where the entity is headquartered.

Educational cooperation agreements must be signed by the legal representative of the collaborating entity, the student and the rector, or whomever they designate.

The individual training plan must be attached to the educational cooperation agreement. This plan must be signed by the student, the person at the collaborating entity who will tutor the student and the student's academic tutor during the placement.

Students meeting the following requirements may participate in educational cooperation agreements:

- a) They are enrolled in a bachelor's or master's degree at the UPC.
- b) They have passed the minimum required number of credits, in the case of bachelor's degree students, who must have passed 50% of the degree's credits (120 credits) at the start of the agreement.
Exceptionally, in justified cases students who have passed fewer than 120 ECTS credits may be authorised to carry out extracurricular placements.
- c) They have student insurance while the agreement is in place. Students over the age of 28 must provide their own insurance.

Bachelor's degree students who have passed 60 ECTS credits are allowed to participate in UPC calls designed to support students from previous stages at university so as to decrease school dropout rates, improve education and inform and guide the choice of degree, as well as to promote and disseminate STEAM in society.

These placements are extracurricular, and the hours do not count towards the maximum number of hours allowed for the education level.

Students completing an external academic placement have the right to receive a financial contribution from the collaborating entity, either as a grant or student financial aid. The minimum amount is established by the FIB.

Collaborating entities must contribute to maintaining the educational cooperation agreement service. The amount of the contribution and its rules of application are established each academic CP.FIB/2022/06/06

year in the University's budget.

Students on placement may not maintain a contractual relationship with the entity or institution at which they are completing their placement.

Placements completed at the UPC must be curricular. The amount of time dedicated to the placement may be 5, 10, 15 or 20 hours per week, and the financial regulations are established in the first additional provision of the UPC's external academic placements regulations.

Exceptionally, the placement may be of 25 or 30 hours/week for the writing of the final thesis when the conditions outlined in the first additional provision of the UPC's external academic placements regulations.

Once students have obtained all of the credits for the curriculum that they are studying, they are considered to have completed their degree and the agreement is cancelled.

The FIB reserves the right to deny participation in an agreement or the renewal of the participation in an existing agreement when it is considered that a student's academic performance does not meet the minimum requirement of 0.5 (understood as the quotient between the credits passed and the credits enrolled).

For educational cooperation agreements, the academic year lasts from 16 September of the calendar year in which the academic year starts to 15 September of the following year.

Article 7. Monitoring, assessment and academic recognition

Academic supervision is performed by means of monitoring and academic tutoring undertaken by a professor at the UPC or any other university that participates in teaching the degree.

The student's academic tutor at the University assesses the placement, paying particular attention to the progress reports issued by the collaborating entity tutor and the placement report completed by the student.

7.1 Extracurricular placements

Extracurricular placements are included in the Diploma Supplement following the presentation of the collaborating entity tutor's report within the established terms. Academic tutors use these reports to complete their final reports.

In this case, given that the placement is not recognised in the form of credits, no mark is assigned to the placement, just whether it has been successfully completed or not; if it is, it is included in the student's academic record.

7.2 Curricular placements

Curricular external placements are included in the academic record and are assessed and given a numerical and descriptive mark, which is used to calculate the average mark.

Curricular placements linked to a final thesis

The tutor for the final thesis serves as an academic tutor for the external placement when the external placement coincides with the preparation of a thesis.

The University's academic tutor (tutor for the final thesis) uses the initially proposed individual training plan, the collaborating entity tutor's report and the student's report to assess the placement, deeming it either favourable or unfavourable.

The mark for the External Placement subject is the mark obtained for the final thesis when the placement has been deemed favourable. If the result is unfavourable, however, the student may not present their final thesis and, consequently, the External Placement and Final Thesis marks will be "Absent". Otherwise, the final mark for the placement is the same as the one for the final thesis.

Curricular placements not linked to a final thesis

Curricular placements that are not linked to the preparation of a final thesis are assessed based on the final report that is completed by the academic tutor for the placement. The mark in the report appears on the academic record as the mark for the external placement. This final report is prepared using the reports completed by the student and the collaborating entity tutor.

Regardless of whether the curricular placement is linked to a final thesis, the student may enrol in the optional External Placement subject, which:

1. In the case of bachelor's degrees, this optional subject can be worth from 6 to 12 ECTS credits.
2. In the case of the MEI, the MAI and the MIRI, this optional subject can be worth from 6 to 12 ECTS credits.
3. In the case of the MDS and the MCYBERS, curricular placements can only be linked to the final thesis, and there is no External Placement subject (and it is not therefore possible to obtain optional credits with external placements).

In any case, 1 ECTS credit is equivalent to 30 study hours.

Article 8. Procedure

8.1 Formalisation of educational cooperation agreements

In order to begin an external academic placement, whether curricular or extracurricular, the necessary documentation to enter into an educational cooperation agreement must be submitted to the School, in accordance with the mechanisms it establishes, at least 15 days before the start of the external placement.

Projects that imply the performance of tasks different to those that students perform in their field of study are not accepted.

8.2 Monitoring and completion

The tutor at the collaborating entity and the academic tutor must ensure that the placement runs smoothly. If applicable, a monitoring report may be prepared for this purpose.

Once students finish the placement, they must prepare a report and present it to the University, together with the report prepared by the tutor at the collaborating entity.

These documents are essential in order to be able to assess the placement.

If the placement is curricular and linked to a final thesis, the reports must be submitted before the defence of the thesis, which may be no later than the day that the thesis report is submitted. These reports are given to the student's academic tutor in order to be assessed.

If it is a curricular placement that is not linked to a final thesis, the academic tutor submits a report and a numerical and descriptive mark for the placement.

For all extracurricular placements, the academic tutor must complete a questionnaire that serves as a report and an assessment of the student.

Temporary provision

Educational cooperation agreements that are in force on the date of approval of these regulations are not affected.

Repealing provision

The FIB's external academic placement regulations are repealed, and in particular the FIB's regulations for external academic placements on the bachelor's degree in Informatics Engineering at the FIB, approved in Standing Committee Decision CP.FIB/2018/05/03, of 24 September 2018, and the FIB's regulations for academic placements on the master's degree in Artificial Intelligence, master's degree in Informatics Engineering and master's degree in Innovation and Research in Informatics, approved in Standing Committee Decision CP.FIB/2018/05/04, of 24 September 2018, and the amendments approved by the School Board on 19 December 2018.

Final provision. Entry into force

These regulations enter into force the day after they are approved.