

INTERNSHIPS IN JORDAN

SUPPORTING THE PROVISION OF QUALITY INTERNSHIPS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN JORDAN

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What many young Jordanians need more than anything else is experience of real work in a real-work environment. Internships can offer them this experience through a well-managed internship programme that supports interns, employers and LOYAC.

- Supporting employer engagement
- What employers need to know
- Developing soft skills
- Developing internship plans
- Recording intern achievements
- Supporting supervisors
- Mentoring interns
- Benchmarking against international best practice

SUPPORTING A WELL MANAGED INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME IN JORDAN

To provide young people in Jordan with the valuable work experience they need for a successful future, the British Council is working with LOYAC and employers in Jordan to provide quality opportunities in a controlled work environment. The project focuses particularly on creating strong links with a wider range of employers.

By sharing experiences and expertise with LOYAC, existing employers offering internship opportunities and new employers who have expressed interest in offering internships, the British Council has been able to harness the energy and enthusiasm of existing and potential internship providers in developing the processes and procedures that underpin good internship opportunities. The project has helped to embed best practice in managing internships, developing talent management and soft skills development.

For LOYAC's trainers too, the British Council has explored opportunities to enhance and build the capacity of LOYAC's trainers in developing the soft skills that interns need to function effectively during their internship.

Some organisations seem to expect interns to know how to behave on the job. They tend to assume that everyone knows and understands the importance of being on time, taking initiative, being friendly, and producing high quality work.

Whilst technical skills may enable interns to operate in a commercial environment, having the right work ethic, attitude, communication skills, emotional intelligence and a whole host of other personal attributes is crucial for career success and will enable LOYAC's interns to add real value for an employer and the wider internship experience.

With support from the British Council to develop their provision, LOYAC has been able to improve the professional training for both their own trainers and for interns undertaking orientation training in preparation for an internship, exposing them to valuable soft skills development that will guide and sustain them in the professional world.

The British Council's Partnerships & Contracts Manager for the Employer Engagement Project explained the project's success:

"British Council is supporting young people in Jordan with their skills development and helping them to define their career paths, by supporting LOYAC in developing their internship programme.



The programme has helped LOYAC to place more than 700 students in internship opportunities annually. The project helps to build the confidence and capability of young people and marginalised communities through partnership work with local and international partners. The project is also increasing the engagement of private sector organisations, which will result in a demand-driven approach

Internships and volunteer experiences make candidates more competitive in the job market. In addition to gaining exposure and experience in the field, they also provide an opportunity to see if the particular career sector is the right one based on getting personal experience in industry.

SUPPORTING EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

Offering an internship can be time-consuming and a challenge – especially for smaller employers. The British Council’s consultant has worked with LOYAC and employer representatives from organisations in Jordan to identify the benefits of offering LOYAC internships. These include:

- **Influencing the quality of future employees**
Employers can help improve the quality and preparation of young people coming onto the labour market.
- **Development of recruitment channels**
Building links through internships can help to attract interns into jobs and can reduce recruitment costs.
- **Influencing career choices**
Many employers have found that internships are the ideal way of raising the profile of career opportunities within their organisation and, in some cases, of dispelling unwarranted stereotyped views.
- **Promotion of vocational qualifications**
There is clear evidence that well-organised internships enrich an intern’s general education and help to improve the standard of their vocational work.

- **Raising the community profile**
Many employers attach importance to raising their profile in the community – internships provide a valuable means of creating a positive image amongst interns, training providers, teachers, parents and employees.
- **Creation of management development opportunities**
The process of policy development, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of internship programmes gives scope for employees to develop their management and coaching skills in order to widen their experience.

The British Council’s main partner for this project is LOYAC – a non-profit organisation working towards the overall development of Jordan’s youth.

LOYAC is supported by organisations and businesses that believe in its mission. LOYAC believes in engaging and fostering partnerships between the private sector, the civil society and the government.

“At LOYAC we work with our youth to help them find their sense of purpose through self-discovery and service. The way we see it when these students realize and appreciate their worth, this will extend to how they see and treat their communities, locally and at large.”



Rula Aburayyan Jardaneh - Chairperson LOYAC Jordan

WHAT EMPLOYERS NEED TO KNOW

Working with both LOYAC and their employers who already offer internship opportunities, the British Council has developed the *Strong Training Guide*, which offers general guidance and practical advice on the main issues relating to work experience placements for students in their last two years of compulsory schooling.

It is intended to assist employers in establishing structured programmes which generate the maximum benefit for both employers and students.

Sections include:

- Preparing for an internship
- Providing training and support for employees and supervisors who will be supporting interns
- Developing and maintaining internship plans and training records
- Understanding opportunities for soft skills development
- What happens after the internship

The British Council has also helped LOYAC to develop a series of awards – Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum – in recognition of the commitment of employers to supporting successful internships.

HR Workshop 28th – 29th March 2017

97.5% of the participants said that the HR workshop met their expectations.

76% of the participants said that the issues covered in the HR workshop were essential.

80% of the participants rated the HR workshop as a high-quality event.

78.4% of participants said they had acquired new knowledge about the HR issues.

85.7% of the organisations said they will amend their action plans as a result of the workshop.

DEVELOPING SOFT SKILLS

At the outset of the project, LOYAC had a programme of soft skills training which they provided for interns as part of the preparation for their internships. What LOYAC wanted was a scheme to evaluate each intern's range of skills, so that these could be further developed during the internship period.

LOYAC explored different options with the British Council consultant during focus groups and workshops. LOYAC's new approach will be to work with prospective interns to determine which soft skills the intern believes they are good at, which they think they need to improve on, and which they just don't understand.

The British Council and LOYAC have linked this strand of the project to opportunities to support intern supervisors during the placement, helping them to understand both the value of soft skills development and how to identify openings to add value to the intern's soft skills capabilities, scaling up the range of soft skills development opportunities that LOYAC is able to support.



"We are committed to support the LOYAC programme through securing internship opportunities for their graduates. We encourage other employers in Jordan to participate in this unique programme, which proved to be one of the best programmes up to date."



Mohamed Hamad, Head of Learning and Development, Housing Bank for Trade and Finance

MAKING PLANS

One of the features of the recognising the importance of an 'Internship Plan'.

The first workshop for Human Resources participants discussed the project development that had the greatest impact on employers was

value of writing a 'job description' for interns. This would give real shape to the internship period – usually 6 to 8 weeks for LOYAC interns.

Employers with experience of LOYAC internships already had plans for rotations through different departments, but the addition of a 'job description' – the foundation for the internship plan – adds value for employers who are now able to define clear learning objectives for interns – making sure that the right training is in place for them at the right time.



"The partnership between the British Council and LOYAC to develop the "Darb" programme has enriched my character – I have now acquired additional skills to employ when I start my work. I have been able to identify my career path and have now the knowledge to communicate with others. I have

become a more sociable person and expanded the network of my contacts."

Adnan Ghabeen, Darb Internship Graduate

DOING A 'SUPER' JOB

Providing an internship (for one or several interns) requires a certain level of commitment – not only from the organisation, but also its staff. Internships involve managers, supervisors and mentors to a greater or lesser degree, depending on the size of the organisation and how it makes its internship arrangements.

The British Council and its partner LOYAC were delighted at the willingness of one of LOYAC's leading internship providers to share with other employers their approach to supporting the supervisors who would be responsible for the organisation's interns.

The impact of this exchange of expertise has led the British Council to exploring opportunities to develop a new workshop aimed specifically at preparing supervisors for their role as part of an internship programme – a workshop that will be accessible to other providers and employers.

IT'S A RECORD!

As employers started to recognise the importance of an internship plan with clear learning objectives, attention began to turn to ways of capturing evidence to support the learning that had taken place during an internship.

The project has been able to develop clear guidance on developing and maintaining a training record, including work logs, daily diaries, projects and assignments.

Participants at a Human Resources workshop were also able to explore the process and procedures for capturing evidence and maintaining training records.

LOYAC now plans to use training records as a key evaluation tool that will benchmark their leading employers.

MENTORING – EXTENDING LOYAC’S CAPACITY

The predominant impact of the British Council’s work with LOYAC, its support teams and trainers, has been to develop their capacity to support both interns and employers in managing the internship programme.

To add further value, LOYAC wanted their trainers to develop their skills in mentoring. A key workshop provided the opportunity for trainers to develop their understanding of the concept of mentoring and the benefits to youth of providing effective mentoring.

During the workshop, the trainers learnt how to apply their mentoring skills and techniques.

The increased ability of LOYAC’s trainers to understand youth, their mind set, how they feel and the challenges they face will add significant value to the way in which they are supported during their internships.

But LOYAC’s mentoring capabilities will go far beyond internships. As one participant in the workshop put it, ‘good mentoring is for life, not just the internship!’

“The ‘Wheel of Life’ is a great technique we can use with our interns to work out their level of satisfaction with each life area. We also know how to change the different areas so we can tailor the technique to suit the needs of individual interns.”

Mentoring workshop – 27th March 2017

87.5% of the participants through the mentoring issues covered in the workshop are vital and that their organisations should take them into account.

76.6% of the participants believed that the Mentoring Workshop was a high-quality event.

73.3% of the participants indicated that they have improved their knowledge of mentoring issues and skills.

93.7% said they would be working on their action plan based on what they had learned from the workshop.

BENCHMARKING AGAINST INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICE

The British Council is keen to support its partners in benchmarking their work against international best practice. As part of the project, the British Council’s Project Manager Nour Al Jumaili and LOYAC’s General Manager Ra’ed Madanat spent three days in the UK visiting organisations engaged in providing internships for UK students, including:

Education providers

- Manchester College
- Manchester Metropolitan University
- Manchester University
- University of Salford

Employers

- Beatstream Media
- Manchester Airport Group
- Hilton Hotel

Agencies

- Graduate Prospects
- Inspiring Interns

The visitors from Jordan were able to learn valuable lessons which they can apply to their work in Jordan about:

- The UK’s processes for recruiting and supporting employers offering internships
- The methodology for allocating learners to internships

The mechanisms for providing support for learners before, during and after internships

The project at a glance: a collaboration between the British Council, LOYAC, trainers and employers to develop and enhance the provision of quality internships for young people in Jordan

Who:

- 20 talent acquisition and human resource managers from new and existing internship providers
- 25 LOYAC trainers
- 10 LOYAC interns
- British Council consultant

What:

- 3 focus groups and 4 workshops for stakeholders in and around Amman, Jordan

Why:

To develop an operational guide for employers willing to provide internship opportunities and to improve the soft skills that interns would need during a successful internship

Impact on the project:

Prior to the project, employers lacked guidance on how to structure and monitor an internship and trainers had limited skills in the development of young people's soft skills. Following the project, LOYAC has an effective *Strong Training Guide* which explains all the processes and procedures that underpin successful internship provision. Trainers also have a wider range of soft skills activities to build on, together with an effective mechanism to capture an intern's soft skills profile and guide them on how they can improve selected soft skills during their internship

Partners in the project:

- British Council
- LOYAC
- Hickman Enterprises
- Jordanian organisations hosting or planning to host internships

Benefits to the partners:

- Building and sustaining relationships between organisations hosting or planning to host internships
- Helping participating organisations to build a presence and exchange of expertise
- Developing an approach to internship management and support that can be implemented in the wider MENA region

What made the biggest difference:

- Consulting with employers, interns and trainers to determine how to add best value
- Encouraging employers to develop an internship plan with clear objectives and associated training records
- Identifying and developing activities to support intern's progress with soft skills that meet and reflect industry's needs
- Sharing best practice amongst all the project's stakeholders



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