

GRADUATES, STUDENT JOBS AND INTERNSHIPS

This is DSF's policy paper on graduate-, student job- and internship policy, and concerns what happens when students and the labour market meet. It is essential that students, in our encounter with the labour market, are offered decent conditions and are for example not employed on precarious conditions.

In addition, DSF believes that it is important that we as students have the peace to immerse ourselves in our studies, and that student jobs and internships, etc. about having the right experience on the CV, getting the right job as a graduate and having the right student job during the education, do not compromise the immersion in the education.

Graduates

When we graduate, we as students have a desire to get into professionally relevant work and apply the knowledge and competencies we have acquired through our studies. But the fact that we get a job, must not be a criteria that affects our very educations, either in content or supply. The challenge of unemployment among graduates must not be solved with education policy, such as business direction and dimensioning, but must instead be solved with employment policy. The educational institutions' task is to develop the best education we can achieve, so that we as graduates leave with the best possible competencies within our core professionalism. Some graduates deliberately choose not to go directly from graduation to the labour market. This must be acceptable and not become a picture of a false high unemployment rate among graduates.

For some graduates, starting their first job can be challenging because of limited prior work experiences a result of not having had a relevant student job and/or internship. This can result in graduates who are involuntarily looking for a job or who feel forced to accept employment in precarious positions. This problem cannot be solved in one place but must be broadly incorporated into labour market policies as a shared responsibility between the parties of the labour market, in particular employers and trade unions. Therefore, DSF must secure and participate in increased coordination between the parties of the labour market, educational institutions and students.

It is important that labour market and education policies are clearly separated, so that labour market policy does not cause regulation of the educations. Our educations must never compromise on core professionalism. Therefore, the educational institutions should not offer ECTS-eligible courses, where parts of the teaching are solely intended to get graduates faster in employment.

Graduates with disabilities often find it harder to get a job because of structural barriers. This is partly because students with physical and/or mental disabilities to a lesser extent have student jobs and therefore as graduates are more affected by demands for prior work experience to get a job. DSF believes that graduates with physical and/or mental disabilities need to be supported so that they have equal access to the labour market. Therefore, DSF believes that the job centres must be qualified to take better care of people with disabilities and efforts needs to be made to make the labour market more inclusive. As an international graduate, further problems are experienced when one wishes to enter the Danish labour market. Economic incentives in themselves are too narrow a parameter

43 to assess the benefits of international students, as they to a large extent contribute with
44 knowledge that raises the level of education and creates a global perspective both on
45 education and the labour market. Therefore, DSF must work to improve conditions for
46 international graduates, including extending the job search period to one year.

47 One of the cornerstones of being able to contribute to the Danish labour market is good
48 Danish language skills. These skills are achieved during the education and therefore DSF
49 believes that Danish language courses must be free and easily accessible during the
50 education for international students.

51 The educational institutions must make the skill set we students acquire through our
52 education clear. Employer panels are meaningful when they create the opportunity and
53 room for professional clarification between institutions and employers. However, it is
54 important that this does not lead to a deterioration of the core professionalism of the
55 education with an aim to increase the business direction. Therefore, DSF believes that it is
56 important to create and further develop good employer panels.

57 The agreement on limitation of double education, the “Uddannelsesloft”, is a hindrance
58 for graduates to start a new education at the same level. It is beneficial for society that
59 graduates have the opportunity to acquire additional knowledge and proficiency within
60 several disciplines. Therefore, DSF believes that the “Uddannelsesloft” must be abolished.

61 It is the position of DSF that employers, trade unions, graduates and educational
62 institutions have a responsibility to cooperate with each other in order to keep themselves
63 informed of the academic development, and to use the graduates' competencies in the best
64 possible way.

65 DSF believes:

- 66 • that labour market and education policy must be separated, and that our education
67 never have to compromise on core professionalism.
- 68 • that educational institutions should never offer ECTS-eligible courses with the
69 purpose of getting graduates faster into employment
- 70 • that it is a shared responsibility between educational institutions, trade unions,
71 graduates and employers to reduce unemployment among graduates
- 72 • that graduates with physical or mental disabilities must be supported so that they
73 have equal access to the labour market
- 74 • that it is important to create and develop good advisory boards
- 75 • that employers must keep themselves informed of the academic development and
76 understand and use the graduates' competencies
- 77 • that the “Uddannelsesloft” must be abolished
- 78 • that international graduates contribute with knowledge that raises the level of
79 education and contributes with global perspectives and that the job search period
80 must therefore be extended to one year

81 Student jobs

82 Student jobs are for many students an integral part of everyday life both personally and
83 professionally. A meaningful student job depends on what the individual is looking for in
84 a student job. A student job is defined as a paid job performed alongside the education and
85 should not be considered part of the education. It should not be necessary to have a
86 student job to make ends meet or qualify for a later job.

87 It is also important that the workplace offers pay and conditions according to the
88 academically relevant agreement. This includes that it is ensured that student jobs does
89 not lead to underpayment in the work area. In continuation of this, DSF believes that it is
90 crucial that student employees have the opportunity to get a permanent union
91 representative. It must always be clear to the student employee what rights you have and
92 where to report if they are violated.

93 There must be enough work for graduates and students. Therefore, DSF believes that
94 students should not be employed in full-time positions that should be occupied by
95 graduates, but have the opportunity for employment in actual study jobs.

96 EU / EEA students must be allowed to earn as much as Danish students without losing the
97 right to SU. There should be no limit to how many hours non-EU / EEA students are
98 allowed to work. DSF finds it unacceptable that international students are discriminated
99 against. When international students from EU / EEA countries are required to work at least
100 10 hours a week to receive SU, while the same requirement does not apply to Danish
101 students, international students are disadvantaged. Therefore, DSF believes that this
102 requirement must be abolished, and all international students be placed on an equal
103 footing with Danes and be able to opt for or opt out of study jobs. As long as the rule of 10-
104 hour work is a reality, international students must be able to include voluntary work and
105 Danish lessons in the 10 hours. Moreover, this should be counted monthly rather than
106 weekly.

107 For some students, the student job may end up taking so much time that it becomes
108 difficult to follow a full-time study at the same time. Therefore, it is important that student
109 jobs are flexible, so you as a student do not get overloaded, especially during exam periods.
110 DSF understands student-relevant work as positions where there is a requirement for
111 study activity on a relevant higher education. DSF believes that higher demands should
112 be placed on the employer in this kind of positions. This implies, among other things, that
113 student-relevant positions offer work tasks that are academically relevant to the student.
114 One cannot expect a student employee to be available in the same way as a full-time
115 employee. Therefore, DSF believes that a student job of more than 15 hours a week is
116 unrealistic to manage for most students. DSF is critical towards the tendency that more
117 and more students are forced to work more and more alongside their studies, either for
118 financial reasons or because of increased pressure to build the best CV.

119 In addition, voluntary engagement contributes to experiences that can be rewarding for
120 student life now and in the future. These experiences can be as relevant as with a paid
121 student job.

122 DSF believes:

- 123 • that a student job should not be a professional qualification requirement for a later
124 job
- 125 • that a student job should not be a necessity to make ends meet
- 126 • that a good student job should be relevant to the student's academic skills
- 127 • that the workplace must offer pay according to the academically relevant
128 agreement and generally ensure good and safe working conditions
- 129 • that student employees must have the possibility to get a permanent union
130 representative
- 131 • that it must always be clear to the student employee what rights you have and
132 where to report if they are violated
- 133 • that the requirement for students from EU / EEA countries to work at least 10 hours
134 a week to receive SU must be abolished
- 135 • that volunteer work and Danish lessons also must be counted in the 10 hours work
136 a week
- 137 • that the ceiling on how much non-EU / EEA students must earn alongside their
138 studies must be abolished
- 139 • that all international students must be placed on an equal footing with Danish
140 students
- 141 • that student jobs must be flexible, especially during exam periods

142 **Internship**

143 It is very important that ECTS-giving internships are meaningful for the wider academic
144 content of the education. The educational institution must therefore be held responsible
145 for ensuring that internships take place under conditions that add quality to the education.
146 It is important that internships never just become cheap labour, but are also considered a
147 valuable contribution to the place of internship.

148 This includes that it must be prevented that internships are used to lower wages and
149 deteriorate working conditions in the workplace or in the industry as a whole. Likewise,
150 DSF is opposed to replacing permanent positions with interns.

151 Within certain fields of work, there is not a sufficient supply of internships. It is particularly
152 problematic on the educations where internships is an integrated, obligatory part of the
153 program. Therefore, DSF believes that the Danish state must contribute to ensure
154 internships in various fields of work that meet the quality requirements as described in
155 this paper. This must be done, among other things, by making it more attractive for
156 employers of all sizes to offer internships.

157 In certain educations, internships, including project-oriented educational courses, are
158 either an integrated part or something that students can choose. DSF believes that the
159 educational institutions have a responsibility for ensuring that these internships run
160 smoothly and with the student's learning in focus. DSF also believes that the educational
161 institutions have a special responsibility for internships, which is a compulsory part of the
162 education.

163 Study boards play an important role regarding quality assurance of internships. In
164 addition, the study board must determine the time frame and the number of ECTS credits.
165 When doing this, the unrealistic disparity between time frame and ECTS credits that exist
166 in several places, for example where an internship of 15 ECTS credits actually cover a 30-
167 to 40-hour work week, needs to end. The study boards must be responsible for approval of
168 the place of internship. The approval must never be based solely on hours, but must reflect
169 the internship's academic level and relevance for the student.

170 In the same way as study boards play an important role in ensuring the academic quality
171 of an internship, the trade unions play an important role in ensuring decent working
172 conditions and a decent working environment for the students in the internship. The trade
173 unions have a responsibility for this task, while companies and educational institutions
174 have a responsibility to work together to secure proper conditions for the students at their
175 internships.

176 The educational institutions must offer guidance to students, which ensure knowledge
177 about application, start-up, conditions and rights in internships. DSF believes that the
178 educational institutions must ensure that students are offered assistance in designing a
179 fair and legally binding contract, which among other things ensures that they can
180 participate in exams and potential lessons alongside the internship. In continuation of this,
181 the educational institutions must offer flexible courses during the internship period. In
182 addition, continuous feedback should be provided between students, internships and
183 educational institutions, to ensure that employers offer the best possible internships and
184 that the students receive proper guidance from both the educational institution and the
185 internship. Furthermore, DSF believes that it is problematic that some educations have
186 structural barriers to choosing internships in other cities, e.g. by having compulsory
187 attendance in the study town during the internship.

188 DSF believes:

- 189 • that internships must be academically relevant and take place under proper
190 conditions
- 191 • that internships should never just become cheap labour
- 192 • that it should be made more attractive for employers to provide relevant
193 internships
- 194 • that it must be the study boards that approve and establish the framework for the
195 internship

- 196 • that approval of internships should not be based solely on hours, but must reflect
- 197 the internship's academic relevance and level
- 198 • that educational institutions should have a central guidance function and offer
- 199 students assistance in designing fair and legally binding contracts
- 200 • that employers should be guided in providing better internships and in providing
- 201 thorough guidance to their interns
- 202 • that the Danish state must help secure internships in different fields of work