# ****Vilnius University****

# ****Institute of International Relations and Political Science****

**REGULATIONS OF ADAPTIVE COMPULSORY INTERNSHIPS**

## *Clarification of Terms*

The following terms are used throughout the Regulations of Adaptive Compulsory Internships:

**Internship institution** – the organization (public, private, or non-governmental) where the student completes their internship;

**Internship agreement** – a formal agreement signed by the VU IIRPS, the Internship institution, and the student, outlining the rights, responsibilities, and the scope of the internship;

**Internship supervisor** – a VU IIRPS lecturer appointed by the Director of the Institute to oversee the student’s academic and research progress during the internship;

**Institutional internship supervisor** – a representative of the Internship institution (appointed by the head of the institution or HR department) who supervises the student’s daily tasks, provides guidance on institutional processes, and contributes to the evaluation of the student’s work;

**Public Presentation (Open Defense) –** at the end of the internship period, students deliver a structured public presentation of their research findings and proposed solutions to a specific challenge identified within the host institution. This event brings together representatives from both IIRPS VU and the internship institution, creating space for constructive dialogue, feedback, and reflection on the feasibility and relevance of the proposed recommendations.

**Research Project** – throughout the internship, students conduct a targeted analysis of a real-world issue relevant to their host institution. This includes defining a research question, applying appropriate political science concepts and methodologies, collecting and analyzing data, and developing actionable recommendations. The research project is presented orally during the final public presentation.

**Reflections** – students are required to submit regular written reflections critically assessing their internship experience. These reflections serve as a space to evaluate personal and professional growth, identify key learning moments, and consider how the internship has informed their future goals or academic interests. While not graded, reflections are a mandatory component of the course and essential for successful completion.

## *1. Objectives of the internship*

The internship is an integral part of the study program at VU IIRPS, designed to bridge academic learning with practical experience. During the internship, students apply, deepen, and reflect on their theoretical knowledge through active engagement in a professional environment. The process is guided and supported by VU IIRPS lecturers. Completion of the internship is mandatory.

The main objectives of the internship are:

1. To apply and further develop the knowledge and analytical skills acquired during your studies;
2. To strengthen your ability to work independently and take initiative in a professional setting;
3. To gain insight into the structure, operations, and career opportunities within the host institution;
4. To contribute to the capacity of public, private, and non-governmental organizations by offering the expertise of well-prepared students.

## *2. Internship Procedure*

The internship process includes four main stages: selecting the internship institution, starting the internship, completing the internship tasks and research, and finalizing the internship.

## 2.1 Duration and Placement Procedure

2.1.1. According to the study plan for the Politics of Global Challenges Bachelor's program at VU IIRPS, the internship takes place during the 7th semester and lasts for 12 weeks (3 months). Students may complete their internship in one or two institutions, depending on mutual agreement between the internship institution and VU IIRPS. All students are expected to undertake an Adaptive Internship, which involves completing regular tasks assigned by the Internship Institution and conducting a research-based project that addresses a relevant issue faced by the organization. This dual focus ensures that students contribute meaningfully while developing both academic and professional competencies.

2.1.2. A list of recommended internship institutions will be published by **15 April**. However, students are also welcome to propose their own placement in institutions not included in the list. Students who are unable to secure a placement on their own should contact the VU IIRPS administration for assistance. Student preferences for a specific institution will be accommodated whenever possible, provided that the organization can offer sufficient learning opportunities and meaningful tasks that support the development of both subject-specific and general skills.

2.1.3. Students may choose between two internship tracks, depending on their individual circumstances and in consultation with the VU IIRPS administration:

2.1.3.1. **Autumn track.** This is the standard option aligned with the study plan. Students who choose the Autumn track carry out their internship during the 7th semester. They must inform the VU IIRPS administration of their selected internship institution by **15 August**.

2.1.3.2 **Summer track**. The Summer track is available by exception and must be approved by the Head of the Studies Department. It is intended for students who, due to valid and documented reasons, are unable to complete their internship during the 7th semester. Students wishing to pursue this option must submit their request and confirm their internship placement no later than **15 May**.

## 2.2. Starting the Internship

2.2.1. The exact start date of the internship is coordinated between the student and the Internship institution. The official starting date is confirmed by an order from the Director of VU IIRPS. Students are expected to report to the Internship institution on the agreed date and time specified in this order.

2.2.2. Before beginning the internship, students must attend a mandatory introductory meeting with the VU IIRPS internship supervisors. During this meeting, students will be introduced to the internship structure, requirements, evaluation criteria, and the principles of the Adaptive internship model;

2.2.3. Upon arrival at the internship institution, the designated Human Resources Officer or another responsible staff member will provide an orientation. This includes information about the work environment, the student’s expected activities, and an introduction to their institutional internship supervisor;

2.2.4. In addition to the institutional briefing, VU IIRPS administration or designated internship supervisors will ensure that students are fully informed about the objectives, procedures, expectations, and assessment criteria of the internship;

2.2.5. Students who are more than two weeks late in starting their internship without a valid justification will lose the opportunity to complete the internship at the designated institution. In such cases, the internship is considered an academic debt, which must be resolved in the following academic by completing an internship at the same or a different institution.

## *2.3 Internship Agreement*

2.3.1 The rights and responsibilities of the student, the internship institution, and VU IIRPS during the internship are formalized through an Internship Agreement.

2.3.2. The Internship Agreement must be signed by all three parties - VU IIRPS, the Internship Institution, and the student - no later than within two weeks after the official start of the Internship. A signed copy of the agreement must be submitted to the Study Administrator, who is responsible for registering and archiving all Internship Agreements.

## 2.4. Internship Process

2.4.1. Throughout the internship, students are required to attend **5 mandatory meetings** with VU IIRPS Internship supervisors. These meetings are designated to monitor progress, troubleshoot challenges, and provide students with additional tools and methodological support as needed. During the meetings, students will also present their situation analysis and preliminary proposals for institutional change, based on their ongoing research project.

2.4.2. During the internship, students are expected to actively participate in the daily activities of their host institution and fulfull all assignments given by the institutional internship supervisor. They should engage with the work of the institution, critically assess its strengths and weaknesses, and provide regular progress updaes to their institutional and academic supervisors as required.

 2.4.3. Students must adhere to the professional conduct, work discipline, and internal regulations of the Internship institution for the entire duration of the internship.
2.4.4. If a student is unable to attend the internship due to illness or other valid reasons, they must notify both the Institutional internship supervisor and the VU IIRPS Internship supervisor on the same day. Upon return, the student must submit supporting documentation justifying the absence within three days.

2.4.5. In consultation with the internship supervisor, each student must develop a research project during the internship. This project, along with the institutional supervisor’s feedback, serves as the primary basis for the final evaluation of the internship.

## *2.5 Completion of the Internship.*

2.5.1. The Institutional internship supervisor is invited to attend the student's **final open presentation**, where they are encouraged to provide **oral feedback** on the student’s performance, the relevance of the research project, and its potential or actual impact on the institution. If the institutional supervisor is unable to attend the presentation, they are required to submit a written evaluation by email to the VU IIRPS internship supervisor. This evaluation should briefly reflect on how the student fulfilled their internship tasks, the quality and usefulness of the research project, and whether the proposed recommendations have been or are planned to be implemented.

2.5.2. At the conclusion of the internship, students must ensure a professional handover. This includes returning all work tools and documents, informing institutional supervisor about the status of any remaining tasks, and returning any access badges or materials issued by the Internship institution.

2.5.3. An open presentation of the student’s research project - including recommendations and proposed solutions tailored to the internship institution - is held at the end of both internship tracks. Representatives from both IIRPS VU and the Internship Institution are invited to attend.

2.5.3.1. For students on the Autumn track, internships generally conclude in December, while the open presentation is held in January. Students are encouraged to use this interim period to finalize their research and prepare their presentation.

2.5.3.2. For students on the Summer track, internships typically end in September, and the open presentation takes place in October. The time between should be used to complete the final research outputs and prepare the presentation.

## *3. Internship Management*

## *3.1. Appointment and Responsibilities of the VU IIRPS Internship Supervisor*

3.1.1. Each student is assigned a VU IIRPS internship supervisor, appointed by the Director of the Institute.

3.1.2 The VU IIRPS internship supervisor is responsible for guiding the student throughout the research project component of the internship. This includes offering feedback on the project’s design, methodology, and findings, as well as supporting the student during the scheduled supervision meetings.

3.1.3. At the end of the internship, the VU IIRPS Internship Supervisor assigns the final grade. The grade is based on the quality of the Research project and the student’s active participation in the required internship supervision meetings.

## *3.2 Appointment and Responsibilities of the Institutional Internship Supervisor*

The Internship Institution appoints an internal supervisor – typically designated by the Head of the Institution or its Human Resources Department - who is responsible for overseeing the student’s daily tasks and integration into the workplace. The Institutional Supervisor assigns tasks that reflect the organization’s needs and are aligned with the objectives of the internship; assists the student in drafting the internship plan; offers ongoing support and feedback throughout the internship; if unable to attend the final presentation, submits a written review of the student’s performance, addressing the quality of their work, the usefulness of their research project, and the relevance of their recommendations.

## *4. Internship grading criteria and requirements*

4.1. The internship grade consists of:

a) Attendance of meetings with VU IIRPS supervisors (30%). The attendance is mandatory. Unpreparedness for such meetings will be counted as non-attendance. Final grade for the attendance and activeness during the meetings is proportionally lowered based on the number of missed meetings.

b) Research project – diagnosis of the situation (70%). During the semester the students have to plan and carry out the research project in their internship institution. The results will be presented in an open defense in January; the time and day will be agreed upon by all parties (students, internship institutions, VU IIRPS). Students must present the material in writing (text, slides, etc.), based on the research that was carried out. The material is provided to the internship supervisors a day before the open defense.

c) Reflections (0%) – submitted reflections will not be graded, however, failure to submit them will result in the overall grade being lowered. The student will lose 0,5 of the final grade for each not-submitted reflection.

4.2. A student who disagrees with the assessment of the internship may submit an appeal regarding the assessment of the internship to the Dispute Resolution Commission of VU IIRPS in accordance with the procedure stipulated in the Regulations of the Dispute Resolution Commission of Core Academic Units of Vilnius University.

4.4   The internship feedback form, filled in by the Institutional internship supervisor, must reflect the most important work carried out by the student in the institution throughout the internship.

* + 1. If the internship is done in multiple institutions, the research project has to be carried out in each institution.

4.5.1. The form of the compulsory internship evaluation questionnaire is the report table prepared by the administration of VU IIRPS (Appendix No. 3), which is completed in accordance with the methodological instructions of VU IIRPS.

## *5. Internship Evaluation*

## *5.1 Evaluation Criteria*

The internship is evaluated on a ten-point scale by the VU IIRPS internship supervisor. The final grade is based on the following components:

* Participation in mandatory internship supervision meetings;
* Quality and delivery of the research project and public presentation;
* Submission of required reflections;
* Feedback from the Institutional Internship Supervisor (oral or written, depending on attendance at the final presentation).

Evaluation is based on the following criteria:

**1. Integration of Theory and Practice (Professional Competence)**

Assessment of how well the student applied and deepened academic knowledge during the internship. The research project must demonstrate the ability to diagnose a real institutional challenge, draw on relevant **academic literature**, and offer well-grounded, theoretically informed solutions. Reflections, the research project, and the presentation are all considered.

**2. Engagement and Initiative**

Evaluation of the student’s contribution to the host institution’s work. This includes taking initiative, being proactive, and showing adaptability. The student is expected to familiarize themselves with the institution's structure and identify areas for improvement. This is assessed based on reflections, institutional feedback, and the content of the research project.

**3. Analytical and Methodological Rigor**

Assessment of the clarity, logic, and methodological soundness of the research project. Students must clearly articulate their research question, select appropriate methods, explain their data collection and analysis, and justify their choices. Projects must demonstrate methodological integrity and alignment with the adaptive leadership framework where applicable.

**4. Professional Standards and Formatting**

Evaluation of whether the research project, presentation slides, and other written materials meet VU IIRPS methodological and formatting standards for academic work.

**5. Presentation Quality**

Assessment of the student’s ability to clearly and persuasively communicate their research findings in the public presentation. This includes fluent delivery, structured argumentation, ability to respond to questions, and the effective use of high-quality visual materials. The presentation must be based on data and stay within the scheduled time frame.

## *5.2 Grade Descriptors*

**10 – Excellent**

Exceptionally active in the host institution. Delivered an analytically rigorous, methodologically sound, and literature-informed research project. Demonstrated deep understanding, critical insight, and professionalism across all internship components.

**9 – Very Good**

Highly engaged. Produced a strong research project supported by appropriate literature and methods. Presentation and reflections were well-prepared and thoughtful, with only minor issues.

**8 – Good**

Solid performance. Demonstrated basic engagement with relevant theory and methods, though some parts of the analysis or structure could be improved. Professional and complete submissions.

**7 – Satisfactory**

Partial engagement with either the institution or the research task. The research project demonstrated effort but lacked sufficient academic grounding or methodological clarity. Some issues with structure, formatting, or depth.

**6 – Weak**

Minimal theoretical and methodological grounding. Research lacked clear focus or rigor. Reflections or meetings incomplete or inconsistently attended.

**5 – Very Weak**

Limited involvement and poor quality submissions. Research project lacked independence or relevance. Major deficiencies in academic or practical components.

**4 – Fail**

Did not meet internship requirements. Research project incomplete, plagiarized, or irrelevant. Failure to submit key components or participate meaningfully in the internship process.

**6.**       **Final provisions**

6.1. The Regulations of Adaptive Compulsory Internships are approved by the Council of the Institute of International Relations and Political Science of Vilnius University on 22 April, 2025 and shall enter into force on 22 April, 2025.

6.2. The Regulations of Internship of the Institute of International Relations and Political Science of Vilnius University and amendments thereto must be published on [the website of](http://www.tspmi.vu.lt/) VU IIRPS.