

Q&A – Project internship course of the 3rd semester

What is the idea behind the course?

The course takes place in the 3rd semester of the cand.mag. in journalism studies. Here, the student, either individually or in co-operation with an external part, works on a project which combines the student's primary educational standards and the communicative skills acquired during the journalism studies. Teaching and supervision is distributed over the course of the semester, which will contribute to further academic development of the students and their projects. The project concludes with an exam by the end of the 3rd semester. The course can take many forms; but it is not participating in the regular production or taking over the production which is usually carried out by journalists, freelancers or journalism interns from, e.g., the SDU bachelor programme. Thus, if any work made during the project period is to be published, this work must be paid. This should, to the extent possible, be arranged with the external co-operation partner before the project begins. The goals, means etc. of the project are described in detail in the course description. (link).

With whom can I develop this project?

The project can either be an independent work or a co-operation with others. In case of the former, the students themselves can develop a project, a platform, own company or similar under the supervision of SDU teachers. In the latter case, the student works together with media organizations, authorities, organizations, companies or similar, where they will use their academic and communicative skills. It is not a requirement that the external partner is a media organization, but the students are studying journalism, will be educated as journalists and should, therefore, also use this third semester to develop their journalism within a project frame. SDU must approve the external partner as a co-operation partner; the partner could either be preapproved as such, or should be approved before the project period begins. In all cases, the study programme will provide a supervisor and an academic counsellor, who will ensure that the students meet the requirements of the course description.

How will the Centre for Journalism contribute to the process?

SDU will provide teachers and supervisors for the 3rd semester to ensure the academic outcome. Furthermore, SDU has a supervisor who, in particular, is responsible for the cand.mag. course, who has contacts in the business, and assists with advise in connection with individual search facilities etc. During the 1st and 2nd semester of the cand.mag. in journalism studies, the supervisor will meet individually and collectively with the students to help them examine which project period suits them best in relation to the original competences, communication wishes etc. The supervisor will also help to ensure that the match between students and any external co-operation partners complies with regulations and happens as easily as possible for all partners. The academic supervisor, on the other hand, will ensure that the project develops within the frames and regulations outlined in the course description. It is also the academic supervisor who holds a so-called power of direction in relation to the student – not any external partners.

What are the responsibilities of each individual student?

Each individual student is responsible for developing and working on the project – but with supervision from the journalism study programme at SDU both before and after. It will not always be possible for the

student to do precisely the project period with precisely the external partner they wish. Some external co-operating partners might not have the time or means to engage in the co-operation. Or perhaps they have some wishes that do not move in the same direction as laid out by the student and the course description. Thus, the project period is no different from the other forms of internship, neither the journalistic bachelor internship nor the university internship. If this is the case, the student will have to contribute by applying elsewhere, work independently or similar – in co-operation with the SDU supervisor.

How similar or different is this period from the journalism internship of the SDU's bachelor programme?

The cand.mag. journalism students are not part of the overall internship system, which is paid work. Cand.mag. students also have their own system with regard to finding internships and their own internship supervisor. The period is also shorter: Whereas the journalism internship of the bachelor programme – and the two other journalism programmes in Denmark – takes 12 to 18 months, this course is only for one semester with a concluding exam in January. Furthermore, in this programme, the project internship can take many different forms, but it is not participating in the regular production or taking over production that is normally carried out by journalists, freelancers or journalism interns from, e.g., the SDU bachelor programme. Hence, if any of the work made during the project period is to be published, this work must be paid. This should, to the extent possible, be arranged with any co-operation partners before project begin.

How similar or different is this period from the university internship?

Today, many university interns already work for media organizations and organizations, companies etc. that work with communication. If it is at all practically possible – and this is a very important point: taking the project frames into consideration which apply to this project period (according to the course description) – cand.mag. students will potentially be able to conduct their project period as a university internship position. This should, however, be arranged with the supervisor at SDU and matched with the provider of the university internship position, in order to ensure a relevant academic outcome (also according to the co-operation contract which should be completed and signed beforehand by the student, the external co-operation partner and the SDU supervisor).

Am I allowed to receive payment during the project period?

According to the current ministerial order, you cannot receive ECTS points during such a project-oriented course, if you also receive payment from an external co-operation partner. This is because students are also eligible for the state education grant during the project period. However, students at SDU are allowed to take a student job, and this is also an option here. What happens outside the study programme-related frames of the project period is not related to SDU. Neither at this or any other study programmes. However, as always applies that if any of the work made during the project period is to be published, this work must be paid. This should, to the extent possible, be arranged with any co-operation partners before project begin.

What are my rights to the work produced, developed etc. during the project period?

Questions about rights, payment etc. should always be agreed upon before the project co-operation begins. For this, SDU has prepared a contract that the student and co-operation partner should consult beforehand. The contract will contribute to matching expectations and clarifying any points of uncertainty.

Also including the contributions of the external partner in the form of materials, access to editorial managers or employees as part of the project, statement after the project period finishes, etc. As always applies that if any of the work made during the project period is to be published, this work must be paid. This should, to the extent possible, be arranged with any co-operation partners before project begin.

When can I begin the project period?

The academic teaching and supervision in relation to this period begins – as always – at SDU in the beginning of the semester. In this case, that is the beginning of the 3rd semester. However, the SDU supervisor will already during the 2nd semester assist the students who wish to co-operate with external partners, in order for the agreements to be finalized before the semester begins. In this connection, it is also possible to begin the project before the actual semester begins, if this is decisive for the completion of the project period. For example during August. In all cases, this should – as with any other projects – be approved before by the project supervisor at SDU. In order to avoid that the project work might hinder attendance at teaching, some parts of the teaching will be made digitally available. This will also ensure that students have the opportunity to complete the project period abroad.