WIE in China

Mainland China internship can help students to explore Chinese business and culture as well as shed some light on their future career development.

CAPS offered various types of opportunities for students in Mainland China. In 2013, students were placed in different placement locations in China:

- Beijing
- Shanghai
- Nanjing
- Hangzhou
- Xi’an
- Chengdu
- Fuzhou
- Chongqing
- And more…
Shanghai

POON Sze Wai
BA (Hons) Scheme in Fashion and Textiles

Shanghai Metersbonwe Fashion and Accessories Co., Ltd, Shanghai

I was assigned to the department of supply chain apparel technology which is important for garment manufacturing as its major function is to turn designers’ conceptual and artistic fashion sketches into wearable products. As I was not familiar with apparel pattern drawing, especially using the CAD computer drawing tool, I was asked to learn the drawing skills through practice at work.

My greatest accomplishment in the internship is that I learnt computer apparel pattern drawing skills. Initially, I had little knowledge and only some very basic theories of apparel pattern drawing which were taught in class, not to mention computer pattern drawing by CAD. However, it did not make sense for a pattern drawer to produce drawings by hand for mass production. To fulfill the duties of a pattern designer, I tried my best to learn computer drawing skills. At the beginning, I tried to learn through a reference book in simplified Chinese. I discovered there was a difference between theory and the operational practice and my first attempt was a disaster. Luckily, I had a very helpful tutor who supervised my progress and taught me a lot. Finally I successfully drew the patterns for trousers and shirts which were used to make garments with the sewing machines.

China Shanghai Architectural Design and Research Institute Co., Ltd, Shanghai

On the first day of the internship, we were invited to participate in an online interview between a project manager from the US and a Chinese urban planner for which we were the interpreters. Later we helped translate three books of regulation and codes for a project in Kuwait, which took us five weeks to complete.

I was very fortunate that I was given the chance to look at some of the formats of their design submission to the government. Also, I took time to reflect on the difference between two fast growing cities, Shanghai and Hong Kong. I had many questions as to why Shanghai could maintain such a good balance of development, while Hong Kong could not? I am quite interested in China’s situation and I might choose China as the subject of my final year project.

To me, the whole internship experience was a kind of mock working experience and I think it really showed me what my life would be like after I graduate. I had thought that studying was hard work, but now, after spending time with designers and architects who worked all day and often leave the company only after 10 p.m., I realized that I did not have a clear concept of what hard work really was. If a careless mistake was made, the consequence would not be failing a subject, but a loss of employment.

It is time for me to grow up and prepare myself for the battlefield of work.

Shanghai

YU Hoi Yat
BSc (Hons) Surveying

Shanghai Water Resources Protection Bureau of Taihu Basin, Shanghai

During the six-week internship, I was involved in a number of projects, some of which were related to island road construction, and submarine optical cable pavement, while others were about the improvement of fishing harbor channels. I also took part in project related tasks, such as helping to produce the CAD drawings of roads or industrial reconstruction layouts, and researching on enterprises in Shanghai’s industrial district by making phone calls and surfing the internet.

Apart from those tasks, I also participated in two on-the-spot investigations. One was collecting data on the countryside surrounding Shanghai and the other was checking the water quality of Taihu, which was the project that left the deepest impression on me during my internship. Our team chose many of the measurement locations that span both Jiangsu and Zhejiang province to make sure that we could have a proper understanding of the situation in different places. Then the supervisor lectured us on the blue-green algae situation in the last few years, especially the serious pollution in 2007. He also demonstrated to us how to analyze the nitrogen and phosphorus content in the water.

XU Zihao
BEng (Hons) Industrial and Systems Engineering
WIE IN CHINA

ZHU Yongshi
BA (Hons) Chinese and Bilingual Studies

The Bund, Wenhui Xinhui United Press Group, Shanghai

As a student of the Faculty of Humanities, I always dream of working as a reporter. Therefore, this summer internship was a perfect opportunity for me to learn more about this industry and help me decide whether this kind of job is suitable for me.

I spent six weeks working to support Pet Fair Asia, which took place in August. My main responsibility was contacting customers and inviting them to join the Pet Fair Asia conference. This not only tested my communication skills but also my work efficiency. As I had to call around 150 customers and assist in administrative work every day, I needed to schedule my work efficiently and effectively.

In general, Chinese society seems to me to be a collective society with its members yearning for group affiliation, whether to their family, school, work group, or country. In order to maintain a sense of harmony, people will act with decorum at all times and will not do anything to cause anyone public embarrassment. The quality that I respect most is that the people I met were willing to subjugate their own feelings for the greater good of the group. In some situations this means giving face to others and refraining from speaking up as doing so would make them lose face.

However, all those achievements were followed by the inevitable challenges and setbacks. I found that I am always getting stuck for fresh ideas or in finding the proper words when translating or writing. At those moments, I learnt to find a way out for myself by searching for more related material to achieve a breakthrough.

Communicating with different people is one of the most important skills that a reporter should master. During my internship, I had the chances to meet with people, including reporters from other media and public relations firms. Finally I regard myself as a real media professional when attending social occasions and this attitude, along with the work experience I have gained could give me a valuable boost for my future career.

ONG Fen Fen
BBA (Hons) Marketing

VNU Exhibitions Asia, Shanghai

This internship was an eye opener for me, looking back I experienced more personal growth than at any time in my life. This internship opened me to the world of event management and also learnt a lot about the types of environment I would work best in, how to work efficiently and what motivates me.

I would love to return to this company again as an intern. Since I am a student of business administration, I seldom come into contact with other fields. Working in this company allowed me to gain a lot of knowledge of interior design. After the internship has ended, I have learnt the differences and characteristics of different interior design styles such as Mediterranean, English and French. Also, I was exposed to a lot of interior decoration materials which has enriched my knowledge.

FUNG Wing Yeung
BBA (Hons) Marketing

Vacuum Best Design, Zhejiang Chance Investment Co., Ltd, Hangzhou

My major duty was to do research and provide my opinions on how to use social networking sites to attract potential customers. My responsibilities were to understand the functions and workings of Weibo and identify the weaknesses of the company’s Weibo presence. Taking reference from other companies I had to prepare a proposal on improving the company’s Weibo image.

My colleagues preferred teamwork to individual work, they usually have a lot of discussion before making a final decision. They liked to give opinions and suggestions to others to make the work perfect.

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ZHOU Aonan
BBA (Hons) Management

Xi’an Qujiang Publishing & Media Investment Group Co, Ltd, Xi’an

During my first summer break at university, I chose to travel to Xi’an by myself to work after comparing the city with Beijing and Shanghai. The reason was that I had lived in eastern China and I wanted to experience the differences in culture between eastern and western China.

This company’s core businesses include investment, publishing, distribution, printing, advertising media, animation, etc. I learnt a lot about how a real business operates and realized the difference between working and studying. My colleagues taught me how to behave properly at work and during business negotiations. Also I found my weakness was in financial accounting. Therefore, I decided I would improve my accounting knowledge by studying.

The greatest accomplishment in my internship was that I completed a comprehensive analysis of the cooperation methods of a Xi’an community website - The Glory of Xi’an. I highlighted the weaknesses of the website and suggested several cooperation methods. Another achievement I am proud of is that I took part in the negotiations for the acquisition of Luya Anime Company. I learnt a lot about company acquisition during the negotiations.

Xi’an is a traditional city, rich in culture, with a history of more than two thousand years. On weekends, I visited the Terracotta Warriors Museum and Tang Paradise. I was awed by their grandeur.
I was assigned to the Research and Development Department, which mainly focuses on product design and product related fields. In the company, my supervisor organized group meetings about twice every two days. In the meetings, he would assign work to everyone. During this period, I undertook employee training in the morning every day for two weeks. I received training not only in professional knowledge but also some workplace skills.

In my daily work, I was assigned different work in different periods. Our group developed the enterprise standards for 220V photovoltaic grid-connected devices and 380V photovoltaic grid-connected devices. Our group also applied for a patent for photovoltaic grid-connected devices. Also, we wrote the instruction manual for 10KV photovoltaic grid-connected devices. After gaining a further understanding of the technology, I was able to work independently: I wrote the instruction manual for 380V photovoltaic grid-connected devices.

After this internship, I learnt that my academic background helped me little in this job, because the business world is ever-changing. For example, in the Financial Advisory Department, when I was doing data analysis, many situations could not be explained simply by mathematical and financial theories. They may be caused by company policy, world financial markets or just investor irrationality. Another interesting aspect of working in China is that every morning we were required to do stretching exercises and attend the morning assembly.

I found that working in the business field is challenging and therefore interesting. Most of the people I met are highly intelligent and have a clear mindset. I would like to be one of them after my graduation.

In the public education department, I was responsible for assisting my colleagues in daily operations and preparation for activities and functions such as summer activities for children to have block printing lessons, kindergarten museum visits, and an exciting experience living in Nanjing for one and a half months. It has left me with a lasting impression.
WIE IN CHINA

Eve Fashion Limited, Beijing

The main goal of my internship was to better understand China’s fashion industry. To develop my future career, working in China may be an option. Another goal was to learn more about the Chinese culture. My achievements included being one of the fitting models in the photo shoot for the “Tai Chi” project. I have never done Tai Chi in my life, it was a new experience for me. Also, I completed two presentations during the last six weeks and I am proud of them. I had to work till midnight because my boss asked me to finish before the deadline. The heavy workload was a big challenge for me, and I felt a sense of accomplishment when the project was completed.

Also, I really admire the designers in my team who worked on the brand EVE de CHINA. They did not have much support from the company since it is a new brand. For example, they had to pay for the textiles and transportation fee out of their own pockets, to them, these expenses were large (even though they could claim the money back from the company later). I really admire those designers who never give up and put all their efforts into building the brand.

Baker Tilly China, Beijing

As a second-tier accounting firm, Baker Tilly promotes transparency, inclusiveness and simplicity in its corporate culture. As old-fashioned as this might seem, I could really sense these values the first day I walked into their office. The staff kept asking us what we needed, despite our differences in language and culture, and they managed to bear with us at times when our limited Putonghua ability did not deliver our messages as clearly as we had hoped.

I was assigned to the Quality Control Department where we helped inspect and maintain reports, and upload the approved ones onto the company database. One can imagine that this is a tedious job. However, our supervisor was very considerate and she managed to find us more interesting jobs – to help advising us on real and difficult accounting cases. In addition to recalling all the accounting knowledge that we have learnt, we had to cross reference this with the accounting practice in China to handle each case.

Qiandao Capital Management (Beijing) Co., Ltd, Beijing

After this internship, I believe I have experienced personal growth and become a more competent person. One of my strengths, as my supervisor noted, was that I am a good speaker and suitable for working in the public relations field. He observed that even when serving foreign guests, I was able to engage them in conversation. Also, I found that I am a very detail-oriented person and I tend to double check my work to ensure there are no errors.

Also, the internship allowed me to discover some of my weaknesses, one of them being my lack of confidence. I always have doubts about my ability to complete tasks well. Another weakness is that my horizons are not broad enough. Every time I am given a task or a research topic, I do not think through the issues deeply enough. That is the reason why I often ignore some important aspects which I should have paid more attention to.

I have a clearer picture of my future career after the internship. I understand better the work of different positions in the financial industry after I have met people from different departments. After learning about their job nature, I know I am interested in observing and predicting economic conditions and analysing data. So, before graduation, I plan to put more efforts into upgrading my skills in order that I can be capable of handling a job in the financial industry.

I am very glad that I now know what I want for my future career, even as a year one student, through this internship program. The earlier I choose my career path, the better I can prepare for it.

Blue Ocean Network, Beijing

What is currently happening in the media industry? What exactly would I encounter if I were a member of this industry? Would I be able to handle the challenges? These are some of the questions that I have to answer in order to find out whether this industry is really suitable for me.

I worked in the program production and marketing departments, both of these have a staff of over 20. My duties included assisting colleagues to do research for upcoming projects, converting files or documents into soft copies, translations and assisting in recording interviews. Although my role may not have been directly related to program production, my work was essential in the making of a program so I never thought my responsibilities were trivial.

When I was doing research on different topics, I was fascinated by how big the world actually is and how many things we do not know. It seems that there are always new things for us to discover.

In the past, I have always considered myself a patient person, but after the internship experience, I realize I have to redefine my understanding of ‘patience’. While others were concentrating on their work, I found I had to develop my skills to be able to maintain the high level of focus needed. This new skill will certainly benefit me in future work and study.

Lee Pui Fong
BA (Hons) Scheme in Fashion and Textiles

TSE Yuk Hei
BA (Hons) Scheme in Fashion and Textiles

Blue Ocean Network, Beijing

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Lee Pui Fong
BA (Hons) Scheme in Fashion and Textiles
Beijing

CHAN Ming Kei
BSc (HONS) Enterprise Engineering and Management
Yonyou Software Co., Ltd., Beijing

Yonyou is a leading enterprise management software company which went public on the Shanghai Stock Exchange in 2001. I was appointed to one of its subsidiaries, Seentao, which focuses on the education sector and writes tailor-made software for higher education institutions. Among its clients are such well-known institutions as Peking University and Tsinghua University.

I was placed in the Strategic Marketing Department. As an intern, I had to deal with different tasks. I was responsible for managing the Wechat public platform account which was used to promote the brand and deliver the latest information on their educational products. Also, magazines are published twice a month and I needed to prepare the material and sources. Also, we had to keep the staff informed internally by sending messages.

Obviously, there is a big difference in the culture and lifestyles between Hong Kong and Beijing. It is not uncommon to observe uncivil behavior, especially when travelling on public transportation. One example is that the trains are often extremely crowded and you have to ‘fight’ your way out when you have reached your destination. In spite of this, Beijing is still a lovely city.

Wong Ka Lo
BSc (Hons) Logistics Engineering and Management
The Leader Logistics Co. Ltd., Beijing

During my internship with The Leader Logistics Co., my team members and I conducted research to find possible solutions to improving the performance of one of the company warehouses. We looked into methods that would increase the efficiency of the work flow, which included warehouse design and management.

We found the existing situation of placing goods on the shelves was not effective. The location of each type of goods was not optimal. After working hard on the project and gaining an understanding of the concepts from our supervisors, we came up with an improvement plan. By conducting tests and making calculations, we devised some solutions and presented our findings to the senior management. When I was drawing the new floor plan, I suddenly realized that what I have learnt in class was useful and the knowledge helped me in this project. Our supervisors really appreciated our efforts, they each provided positive feedback to us. It was a great encouragement to us.

Beijing

Sina.com Technology (China) Co. Ltd., Beijing

The most unforgettable project during my internship was a project about promoting a Nokia mobile phone. It required the use of Weibo for the promotion. It was really challenging for me because I do not have much knowledge of Weibo nor was I experienced in preparing a Chinese PowerPoint presentation. Fortunately, my supervisor was very nice and helpful. He explained Weibo and its functions to me, and he also gave me a background of the China market as well as many recommendations for improving my work. Finally, I completed the project and my supervisor was satisfied with it.

In terms of personal growth, I learnt to be an independent person through the internship experience. I had to take care of myself during the forty days I was in Beijing. Tasks which seemed trivial and simple required a lot efforts. For example, I had to wash my clothes by hand as there was no washing machine in the hotel, nor any laundry shop nearby. Therefore, I had to buy a bucket to store my clothes and a line for hanging up the clothes after washing. This was a challenging task for me every night because it was really quite exhausting.

Fuzhou

Yango Group Co., Ltd., Fuzhou

In the 20 working days I spent in the Engineering Management Department of Yango Group, I needed to follow my mentor, Mr Lin, who is a senior civil engineer. I was glad because he focused on how well I have learnt rather than my contribution to the company.

I discovered my strengths and abilities during the internship. Mr Lin said I was trustworthy and responsible, both commendable personal qualities, and he also said I was a capable worker, willing to learn and take up new roles.

After hearing the above comments, the first thing I did was to review the tasks that I had finished and the attitude I had during working. Understanding one’s strengths can be a bonus for future development. In addition, I am pleased that my mentor has written a reference letter for me, which will benefit my future career.

Mr Lin also commented that I should thoroughly analyze what he has taught me and learn how to practically apply the knowledge. I agree with his comments on my weaknesses as I usually quickly scanned the information that he gave me. At first, I was confused because the information he gave me was not directly related to engineering; but later I found that, those materials were useful for the last two weeks. From his comments, I have learnt a lesson: we cannot skip steps, otherwise, the task cannot be completed successfully.
WIE IN CHINA

China Radio International, Beijing

During the five weeks of my internship, I mainly participated in the production of the radio show “China Now”. I successfully assisted foreign reporters to file two news reports for segments of Hangouts and Cultural Voyage, translated and edited six news reports, participated in a radio station tour with middle school students and designed posters for the department. Among the completed tasks, I am most proud of the news reports I compiled for Hangouts. I assisted a foreign reporter to file a story about a famous Beijing Opera Museum - the Huqiuang Guild Hall and followed that report from concept generation to conclusion. I was so happy because I received compliments and recognition from my colleagues.

Having the chance to observe radio hosts and broadcasters at work, I realized language ability and communication skills are important in the media industry. Since I am currently a student of Chinese and Bilingual Studies, my academic background proved very helpful to my work as an intern. I had the chance to watch the professionals in broadcasting media working and I realized they have a very challenging job which gives them a sense of accomplishment. I am thinking about studying communication or broadcasting for my master’s degree in the future and working in the broadcasting media is definitely one of my top career choices.

New World Strategic (Beijing) Investment Consultancy Ltd Co., Beijing

My internship goals were practicing what I have learnt in the classroom and experiencing the working environment of the Mainland. Since I had taken a course in marketing research in year 2, I had basic knowledge of researching and analyzing data. In my internship, I applied the skills learnt in the course and explored different methods of researching data. This internship has been a test to see whether I am suitable for working in the mainland or not.

My duties in this company were researching targeted companies and conducting analysis of their financial status and background. This was to help the company assess the investment risk. In addition, I had three to four meetings with my supervisor each week. During the meetings, my supervisor would discuss the financial news with me. In addition, he explained the functions of different financial indexes and the principles of the stock market to me. This has enriched my financial knowledge and made me understand the development of the Chinese stock markets.

I had a chance to represent the trainees who had worked in New World Limited to do a presentation in a closing ceremony. This was an excellent opportunity to practice my presentation skills.

Chow Tai Fook Jewellery Group Ltd, Chengdu

My five-week internship was spent in three departments and can be divided into three parts, which are back office work, visiting branches and helping to develop a market research report.

Among the three departments, the most interesting was the marketing and branding department. In that unit, I learnt how Chow Tai Fook maintains its branding by using both software and hardware. For example, my colleagues brought me to a branch and taught me how to evaluate the appearance of the jewelry display and monitor the service quality of the staff in order to maintain the professional image of Chow Tai Fook. They also gave me some documents to read such as information about its advertising strategies and marketing events. After reading the documents, my knowledge of marketing in China has improved and I have learnt how a company builds good relationships with its customers.