8. WORK-INTEGRATED EDUCATION (WIE)

8.1 WIE is a mandatory component of the programme. There are many routes or options for the students to pursue Work-Integrated Education (WIE). These options include the Cooperative Education Scheme (CES), Sandwich mode of study, industrial attachment, Preferred Graduate Development Programme (PGDP), industrial projects, and other workplace training opportunities provided by the University or found by students themselves, etc.

8.2 Credits Requirement

In order to graduate from this programme, students must attain a minimum of one WIE training credit within the period of study. WIE credits to be earned by students may vary in a range of 1 to 39 credits. Following the Faculty of Engineering’s guideline, students will be awarded one WIE training credit for acquiring every two weeks’ full-time training. WIE training credits will not be counted towards the Grade Point Average (GPA) nor the Weighted GPA (WGPA). After assessing the student’s training performance, a Pass or a Fail grade will be awarded to the student on his/her WIE component. Depending on the actual job duration, the number of training credits obtained by the students varies. For instance, in the case of CES mode of study, the student will earn a maximum of 39 WIE credits over a period of 79 weeks of full-time employment. In the case of Sandwich training, the number of WIE credits earned over a period of 1-year full-time employment will be 26. For the case of industrial attachment or industrial project, normally 2 WIE credits will be earned by the student over a period of 4 weeks of workplace training. For the case of PGDP, the nominal working period is 2 months, resulting in 4 WIE credits.

The WIE credits will be reflected in the Co-curricular Activities Transcript of the student, but will not be counted towards the non-credit bearing co-curricular activities as stated in Section 9.

8.3 Intended Learning Outcomes of WIE

Since WIE can be taken in different forms and applied to different kinds of job, the learning outcomes to be achieved will vary depending on the job nature and its duration engaged by the student. However, based on the experience gained from operating the CES and Sandwich modes of the Programme, WIE can bring a lot of advantages to students’ learning both in the profession-specific areas and in their all-round development. The intended learning outcomes of the WIE component are elaborated in the following paragraph.
On successful completion of WIE component, the students will be able to:

(i) Apply knowledge and skills learned from the Programme on the job in a broad context of networking and multimedia profession.

(ii) Recognize the operation and requirement of real-life business, leading to the development of entrepreneurship, global outlook, professional ethics, social and cultural understanding.

(iii) Recognize the expectation of employers, hence leading to better employability.

(iv) Develop their all-round attributes such as interpersonal skills and leadership.

(v) Develop their critical and creative thinking, and problem-solving skills while taking into account various real-life constraints, helping them to pursue life-long learning and continuing professional development.

8.4 Structure of the WIE Component(s)

WIE component under the Programme can be in many forms, namely Cooperative Education Scheme, Sandwich Training, industrial attachment, industrial project, Preferred Graduate Development Programme, and other job opportunities.

8.4.1 Cooperative Education Scheme (CES) (EIE387)

Under this Scheme, the students engage in WIE after the second year of study in the Programme. From Semester 3 of Year 2 up to Semester 1 of Year 4, students will take up a full-time job to work. Concurrently, they will pursue their study of the remaining curriculum through a “day-release” (the student is released from the job one day per week by the employer) arrangement. The advantage of the CES mode of WIE is that the students can engage in larger scale of projects and are assumed to bear more responsibilities as a result of a fairly long period of employment (1.5 years). Furthermore, there may be possibility for the student to stay with the job “non-stop” after graduation. The WIE performance of the student in CES mode is assessed and a grade is assigned to the subject EIE387.

8.4.2 Sandwich Training (EIE388)

The Sandwich Training is quite similar to the CES, except that its workplace training duration is not as long as CES. After the second year of study, the students will engage in a full-time job for one year. On completion of the WIE component in the Sandwich mode, the student will return to the University to continue the study of the remaining curriculum. The WIE performance of the student in Sandwich Training is assessed and a grade is assigned to the subject EIE388.
8.4.3 Industrial Project

Industrial projects are Honours Projects working with the industry. Students working on an industrial project will pursue the project in the company for a certain period of time. With the arrangement, the students will work with a real-life project in the real working environment.

8.4.4 Preferred Graduate Development Programme (PGDP)

Under the PGDP, students will engage in a real working environment by working in a company which is a partner of the PGDP programme coordinated by the SAO. The duration is usually several weeks in the summer vacation period. Such kind of training opportunity is also recognized as a WIE component. With the approval of the Department, PGDP pursued in the summer of Year 2 may be granted 4 training credits under the subject Industrial Attachment, i.e. EIE389.

8.4.5 Other Job Opportunities

It is possible that the students themselves find a job to work with during the summer vacation. This kind of job opportunity will be judged by the Department whether it is helpful to the students in achieving the intended learning outcomes of WIE. The students and the Personal Tutors/WIE Coordinators will work collaboratively with regard to the job selection and the subsequent training contents. The Department will constantly monitor the progress. At the end of the training, an assessment will be made on the achievement of learning outcomes by students.

8.5 Guidelines for Operation and Supervision of WIE

The Department adopts a set of strategies to support students’ learning in the workplace. The followings are the details of the operation at different stages.

8.5.1 Preparation

The Department will actively align with the industry to get WIE placement opportunities for students. It is important for students to be fully aware of the benefits brought by WIE. Students will be asked to attend employment seminars as early as possible. Through this type of arrangement, the students in all years will be better prepared for job hunting and employment in advance. Students will also be able to realize the benefits for engaging in WIE and the importance of taking an active role in completing the training with the best effort.
8.5.2 Operation

There will be WIE Coordinators overseeing all matters related to WIE activities under the Programme. The WIE Coordinators are the academic staff members of the Department responsible for the organization and operation of WIE activities. To guide and monitor students in obtaining the WIE component, each student will be assigned an academic supervisor (who is also the student's Personal Tutor) from the Department. The student and his/her Personal Tutor will jointly plan the WIE details, such as job selection, training plan, logging of activities, reporting, and assessment.

In the case that the student finds job placement(s) on his/her own, the Personal Tutor will work with the student to design the learning outcomes if the Personal Tutor finds the placement suitable to be recognized as a WIE activity. The Personal Tutor will make frequent contacts with the student and, if appropriate, the employer to monitor the progress of the student.

8.5.3 Monitoring and assessment

Each student will be guided by his/her academic supervisor when conducting the WIE training. The student's work will also be monitored continuously and an assessment will be given when the WIE placement is completed.

8.5.4 Assessment of the WIE Component(s)

The objective of assessment is to determine what has been achieved by the student through WIE. The actual type of work and duration will vary from case to case. For instance, there will be students taking 2-week full-time jobs while some other may undergo a 1.5-year CES training. Hence an assessment framework is set out in the following as a general guideline.

(i) Continuous Assessment

The Personal Tutor may visit the student during the training period so that the Personal Tutor and the employer will be able to discuss the student's performance together. This will give better feedback on the student's performance before the training is completed. In the case of CES or Sandwich training, the student is also required to keep a training logbook to document the details about the training received. The training logbook will be inspected by the training supervisor and the Personal Tutor regularly. When the training is completed, the training logbook will be submitted to the Personal Tutor for assessment.
(ii) Report

After the training is completed, the student is required to submit a report to the Personal Tutor. The details to be contained in the report should be commensurate with the training duration. In the report, the student should describe the training received, the objectives that have been achieved, and the experience gained. The student may also conduct a self-evaluation on his/her own performance.

(iii) Employer Evaluation

At the end of the training period, the employer will provide an evaluation of the student’s performance, assessing the student’s work and all-round development.

(iv) Overall Assessment

An overall assessment of the student’s performance will be made by the Personal Tutor by considering all the assessment components as stated in Section 8.5.4(i)-(iii). A pass grade will be given to the student upon satisfactory completion of the WIE component; otherwise a failure grade will be given.