

Guidelines of Offshore Work-Integrated Education Sponsorship (OWS) 2024/25

Global Engagement Office
<https://www.polyu.edu.hk/geo>

Contact: wie.nonlocal@polyu.edu.hk

Executive Summary

To encourage more students to involve in Offshore WIE, sponsorship and incentives are budgeted for Offshore WIE Sponsorship (OWS) 2024/25. The subsidy amount each student can receive is capped at HK\$19,000.

Basic Sponsorship¹

| Zone classification | | | Passage (Max.) | Subsistence Allowance ² (Max.) |
|---------------------|----|---|----------------|---|
| A | A1 | China (Guangdong Province) | HK\$600 | HK\$100/day |
| | A2 | China (other than Guangdong Province) | HK\$3,200 | HK\$100/day |
| B | | Asian Countries (other than China) | HK\$3,500 | HK\$100/day |
| C | C1 | International (other than Europe and America) | HK\$7,000 | HK\$180/day |
| | C2 | International (Europe and America) | HK\$10,000 | HK\$180/day |

Please refer to Appendix I for more examples of OWS calculation.

WIE Learning Incentive³

A WIE Learning Incentive (HK\$2,300) will be granted to students for their effort placed in maximising the WIE learning opportunities.

Advanced OWS

Advanced OWS may be released on a discretionary basis prior to departure but is subject to the approval status of each application.

Hardship Allowance⁴

Students with proven financial difficulties can apply for Hardship Allowance in support of expenses to be incurred during Offshore WIE.

- Level I: For applicants who received a **FULL grant and loan** and/or obtained approval from the **Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme**
- Level II: For applicants who received a **PARTIAL grant and loan** and/or obtained approval from the **PolyU Financial Assistance Scheme**

| Zone classification | | | Hardship Allowance | |
|---------------------|----|---|--------------------|-------------------|
| | | | Level I (Lv. I) | Level II (Lv. II) |
| A | A1 | China (Guangdong Province) | HK\$80/day | HK\$40/day |
| | A2 | China (other than Guangdong Province) | | |
| B | | Asian Countries (other than China) | HK\$80/day | HK\$40/day |
| C | C1 | International (Other than Europe and America) | HK\$160/day | HK\$80/day |
| | C2 | International (Europe and America) | | |

Only successful OWS applicants will be eligible, and they will receive a separate email from GEO about the application for hardship allowance.

For enquiries: wie.nonlocal@polyu.edu.hk

¹ The Basic Sponsorship is subject to availability of funding.

² Subsistence Allowance is calculated based on a daily rate for a specific zone according to the placement duration as confirmed by the employer/host organisation.

³ WIE Learning Incentive is subject to availability of funding.

⁴ The Hardship Allowance is subject to availability of funding.

Table of Contents

| | | |
|---|--|-------|
| I. | An Overview | 4 |
| 1.1 | Introduction | 4 |
| 1.2 | Eligibility | 4 |
| II. | Details of Offshore Work-Integrated Education Sponsorship | 5 |
| 2.1 | Basic Sponsorship | 5 |
| 2.2 | Zone Classification and OWS Calculation | 5-6 |
| 2.3 | WIE Learning Incentive | 6 |
| 2.4 | Application Procedures and Deadlines | 7-8 |
| 2.5 | Approval and Release of Basic Sponsorship and WIE Learning Incentive | 9-10 |
| 2.6 | Special Cases | 11 |
| III. | Hardship Allowance | 12 |
| 3.1 | Purpose | 12 |
| 3.2 | Eligibility | 12 |
| 3.3 | Calculation of Hardship Allowance | 13 |
| 3.4 | Application Procedures and Deadlines | 13 |
| 3.5 | Conditional Approval and Release of Hardship Allowance (HA) | 13 |
| 3.6 | Final Approval of Hardship Allowance (HA) | 14 |
| 3.7 | Important Notes for HA Applicants | 14 |
| IV. | Insurance Coverage for WIE | 15 |
| 4.1 | Insurance Covered by The Hong Kong Polytechnic University | 15 |
| 4.2 | Making Insurance Claims | 16 |
| 4.3 | Worldwide Emergency Assistance Services | 17 |
| Appendix I Illustration of different levels of OWS based on locations and placement duration..... | | 18 |
| Appendix II Check List for Documents / Receipts..... | | 19-20 |

1. An Overview

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) has been placing top priority in nurturing students to become all-rounded graduates with professional competence and a global outlook. All students taking undergraduate degree programmes are required to complete a mandatory Work-Integrated Education (WIE) component as part of the curriculum requirement.

To encourage students to take part in a meaningful Offshore WIE which may not be remunerated, the following sponsorships and incentives are offered, the subsidy amount each student can receive is capped at HK\$19,000:

- a. A Basic Sponsorship, subject to funding availability, will be provided for eligible students to help support part of the costs incurred during WIE. This idea is based on the principle of shared responsibilities.
- b. Different levels of sponsorship will be granted based on the internship destination and duration.
- c. A WIE Learning Incentive, subject to funding availability, will be provided for students who have demonstrated positive learning outcomes through clear articulation of learning gains, and achievement of WIE requirements as specified by Faculty / Department / School.
- d. Students with proven financial difficulties can apply for Hardship Allowance in support of expenses to be incurred during Offshore WIE for the fulfillment of WIE requirements with endorsement from their respective Faculty / Department / School.

1.2 ELIGIBILITY

- a. Full-time, non-foundation / non-final year students of UGC-funded undergraduate degree programmes.
- b. Internship must be completed before students' graduation as having satisfied all, or part of, the WIE requirements.
- c. In processing applications for OWS, priority will be given to PolyU-arranged placements (i.e. arranged by GEO / Faculty / Department / School).
- d. While students are encouraged to source offshore placements through their own effort, students must seek prior endorsement / approval for fulfillment of WIE requirements, and apply for OWS through their respective Faculty / Department / School.
- e. Priority will be given to students who have not been granted with any sponsorship or subsidy for previous offshore placements and who need to fulfill WIE requirement for graduation in 2024/25.
- f. As part of the WIE requirement, students must attend the required training workshops which will be commenced in April/May 2025. If students fail to do so, OWS application will be rejected by GEO.
- g. Students should be aged 18 on or before 30 April 2025.
- h. OWS is NOT applicable to non-local students whose placements take place in their home cities / countries.

2. Details of Offshore Work-Integrated Education Sponsorship

2.1 BASIC SPONSORSHIP¹

Based on the principle of shared responsibilities, different levels of sponsorship, subject to funding availability, will be granted to students in condition of satisfactory completion of offshore placements for fulfillment of WIE requirements. The amount of sponsorship will be calculated based on:

- a. the placement location;
- b. the placement duration according to information provided by the hosting organisation (for a maximum of 49 days²);
- c. the condition that NO remuneration or allowance has been provided for the placement³; and
- d. expenses incurred in passage and accommodation upon presentation of related receipts. Expenses incurred in accommodation will be reimbursed by means of subsistence allowance.

Please refer to Appendix I for more examples of OWS calculation.

2.2 ZONE CLASSIFICATION AND OWS CALCULATION

The Basic Sponsorship for OWS will be calculated according to the WIE area (categorised into 5 zones) and the duration of the offshore placement. OWS approval will be based on **actual expenses** upon **presentation of related receipts** and the maximum grant will be calculated according to the destination, duration, and remuneration for the placement; details are indicated as follows:

2.2.1 Coverage items

a. Passage

- i) To cover *Passage for ONE round trip⁴ between HK and the placement city (in the case of non-local students taking on self-sourced internships, the passage will cover one round trip between students' home city and the placement city)*;
- ii) There should be no stopovers during the flight journey;
- iii) If transit flights are taken, the transit(s) should be made within 24 hours

b. Subsistence Allowance

- i) Accommodation⁵ in the placement city;

Important note: The OWS will only provide coverage to the above items with an aim to provide partial financial assistance for WIE-related activities. Other expense items such as visa application fees, and private expenses (e.g. transportation costs of going to work, meals) will not be covered.

2.2.2 Duration of coverage

- a. Placements in China (Zone A) must be a minimum of 14 days.
- b. Overseas placements / internships (Zone B and C) must be a minimum of 28 days.

¹ The Basic Sponsorship is subject to availability of funding.

² For programmes that require placements of more than 7 weeks to qualify for the minimum WIE requirements, the maximum amount granted will be capped at 10 weeks. For placements in China (Zone A) of less than 14 days, there will be **NO** Basic Sponsorship and students will be eligible for WIE Learning Incentive only.

³ For WIE which is remunerated by organisations or subsidised by Faculty / Department / School or other parties, 50% of the total income and allowance for up to 49 days will be deducted. (In cases where the placement duration is over 49 days, the total income and allowance will be deducted proportionally.)

⁴ If only a one-way trip is granted / approved, the maximum sponsorship amount for passage will be adjusted downward to 50% of a round trip placement.

⁵ **ONLY** applicable to ROOM RATES and RENTAL charges as stated on official receipt or in a valid lease contract, excluding expenses in relation to any other daily costs such as, electricity, internet, water, gas, laundry, and etc.

- c. In the case where the placement period is **less than the Zone required**, i.e. a minimum of 14 days for Zone A and 28 days for Zone B and C respectively, there will be **NO** Basic Sponsorship and students will be eligible for the WIE Learning Incentive only.
- d. The covered period refers to the **actual placement period** as indicated by the exact dates stated in the official proof endorsed by employers or placement organisations.
- e. The covered period for overseas or Mainland China placements is up to a maximum of **49 days** only. For WIE which are remunerated by organisations or other parties, 50% of the total income and allowance for up to 49 days will be deducted from the total amount of sponsorship (in cases where the duration is over 49 days, the 50% income and allowance will be deducted proportionally).

2.2.3 Calculation of Basic Sponsorship

| Zone classification | | | Passage (Max.) | Subsistence Allowance ¹ (Max.) | Example of a 49-day WIE placement [#] |
|---------------------|----|---|----------------|---|--|
| A | A1 | China (Guangdong Province) | HK\$600 | HK\$100/day | HK\$600 + (HK\$100 x 49 days) = HK\$5,500 |
| | A2 | China (other than Guangdong Province) | HK\$3,200 | HK\$100/day | HK\$3,200 + (HK\$100 x 49 days) = HK\$8,100 |
| B | | Asian Countries (other than China) | HK\$3,500 | HK\$100/day | HK\$3,500 + (HK\$100 x 49 days) = HK\$8,400 |
| C | C1 | International (other than Europe and America) | HK\$7,000 | HK\$180/day | HK\$7,000 + (HK\$180 x 49 days) = HK\$15,820 |
| | C2 | International (Europe and America) | HK\$10,000 | HK\$180/day | HK\$10,000 + (HK\$180 x 49 days) = HK\$18,820 |

Please refer to Appendix I for more examples of OWS calculation.

2.3 WIE LEARNING INCENTIVE²

With an objective to encourage students to put in the effort and maximise their learning outcomes through Offshore WIE activities, in addition to Basic Sponsorship, “WIE Learning Incentive” was introduced in the year 2010/11.

For 2024/25, a WIE Learning Incentive (HK\$2,300), subject to funding availability, will be granted to students in reward for the effort placed in maximising the WIE learning opportunities, clear articulation of learning outcomes, and satisfactory fulfilment of WIE requirements as required by Faculty / Department / School. Faculty / Department / School will have full discretion in granting the incentive based on the WIE assessment criteria.

In deciding whether to grant individual students the incentive, the Faculty / Department / School may take into consideration the following:

- a. A high quality reflective learning journal with a clear articulation of learning gains*;
- b. Satisfactory feedback about internship performance from the employer or hosting organisation, and / or evidence of responsible behaviour during the placement (e.g. records of attendance, reference letter, employer feedback survey etc.);
- c. Participation in sharing, mentorship, or learning enhancement activities / events;
- d. Other forms of commendation deemed as appropriate by Faculty / Department / School.

**Students planning to join Mainland WIE Programmes will receive training which will help to equip students with skills to articulate the learning outcomes.*

¹ The Subsistence Allowance is calculated based on the daily rate for a specific zone according to the placement duration as confirmed by the employer / host organisation.

² WIE Learning Incentive is subject to availability of funding.

2.4 APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND DEADLINES

- a. Following the practice of previous years, all OWS applications for internships arranged by Faculty / Department / School or sourced by students (including those publicised through PolyU Job Board) must go through Faculty / Department / School with prior approval as qualifying fulfilment of WIE.
- b. After collation of students' information and internship details, Faculty / Department / School must send applications to GEO by batch:

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| 1 st round OWS application deadline: | 4 April 2025 |
| 2 nd round OWS application deadline: | 9 May 2025 |
| Final round OWS application deadline: | 20 June 2025 |

For offshore placement occurring other than summer (May to August), Faculty / Department / School should submit the OWS applications 2 weeks before the commencement of the placement. The approval of OWS placement outside the summer period will be subject to funding availability.

- c. In cases where internships are being arranged by Faculty / Department / School and the costs will be settled directly by Faculty / Department / School, in arrangement of application and payment, Departments should take note of the following:
 - i) State clearly in the application form (an excel template provided by GEO) that which part of the costs will be settled by Faculty / Department / School.
 - ii) In the application form, provide the account code for transferring the actual amount of sponsorship.
 - iii) Upon students' completion of the internship with WIE approval by Faculty / Department / School, provide related invoice / receipt to claim sponsorship.
- d. Students can only submit **ONE** OWS application during academic years. Priority will be given to The Hong Kong Polytechnic University students *who have NOT been granted an offshore placement subsidy before*. For applicants who have applied more than one offshore placement, they should apply for OWS for the placement with the highest cost.
- e. Taking into consideration that students may need to pre-pay some of the expenses incurred from an offshore placement (i.e. passage / accommodation charges), GEO may consider releasing an Advance OWS (a portion of the Basic Sponsorship) to eligible applicants who have submitted the required documents. If students request Advance OWS, they should submit their applications to GEO at least one month prior to departure.
- f. Please refer to Appendix II for the Check List of Documents and Receipts.

| Placement arranged by: | Application procedures | Deadlines for Faculty / Department / School |
|--|--|--|
| <p>(A) Faculty / Department / School</p> <p>(B) Students self-sourced placements (including offshore placements posted on the Job Board)</p> | <p>Application for OWS to support Offshore WIE activities will be processed by Faculty / Department / School –</p> <p>Step (1): Students are required to submit WIE details to Faculty / Department / School at the earliest stage possible to obtain prior approval for fulfillment of WIE requirements.</p> <p>Step (2): Faculty / Department / School will screen and confirm offshore placements sourced by individual students as being qualified to fulfil WIE requirements.</p> <p>Step (3): Faculty / Department / School will submit a consolidated list of OWS applications (including WIE opportunities sourced by Faculty / Department / School and individual students) to GEO before the deadline.</p> <p>Step (4): Students will receive an email from GEO to provide the necessary documents (Appendix II). Please submit all the documents within one week.</p> <p>All OWS applications: The Hong Kong Polytechnic University has travel insurance covering the entire travelling to and from the placement city / country.</p> <p>If students fail to submit the required documents to GEO for processing, the OWS application will be <u>REJECTED</u>.</p> | <p><u>1st round Application</u> <i>OWS applications for internships during <u>1 May – 31 May</u> must be included in this round.</i></p> <p>4 April 2025*</p> <p><u>2nd round Application</u> <i>OWS applications for internships commencing before <u>30 June</u> must be included in this round.</i></p> <p>9 May 2025*</p> <p><u>Final round Application</u></p> <p>20 June 2025*</p> <p><i>*Advance OWS may be released prior to departure but will be subject to the approval status of each application.</i></p> |
| <p>Placement arranged by:</p> | <p>Application procedures</p> | |
| <p>Global Engagement Office (GEO)</p> | <p>GEO will not accept OWS applications from students who have joined Mainland WIE Programme(s) organised by GEO. GEO will have GROUP ARRANGEMENT for passage, accommodation, and travel insurance for students joining the programme(s), subject to any travel restriction in the placement city. Students are advised to refer to the detailed terms and conditions separately. Please note that there is a separate Check List of Documents and Receipts for GEO Mainland WIE participants in Appendix II.</p> | |

Due to the limitation of funding, there is no guarantee that all OWS applicants will be approved and granted with full amount as stated in the guidelines. Students should NOT make commitment to an Offshore WIE placement based on the assumption that approval will be granted once an application is submitted to GEO.

GEO reserves the rights to adjust the OWS arrangements, calculations, and amounts granted based on funding availability.

2.5 APPROVAL AND RELEASE OF BASIC SPONSORSHIP AND WIE LEARNING INCENTIVE

2.5.1 Expenses Pre-paid by Faculty / Department / School

- a. For placements arranged by Faculty / Department / School with expenses pre-paid, GEO will work with the respective Faculty / Department / School on payment arrangements.
- b. In cases where actual expenses incurred by the Faculty / Department / School exceed the maximum of the Basic Sponsorship entitlement for each student, the Faculty / Department / School may use the WIE Learning Incentive to offset the variance. Students should check directly with the Faculty / Department / School regarding arrangements for the Basic Sponsorship and WIE Learning Incentive.

2.5.2 Approval and Release of Advance OWS (for expenses settled directly by students)

- a. Taking into consideration that students may need to pre-pay some of the expenses incurred during non-remunerated offshore placement (i.e. passage / accommodation charges), GEO will release Advance OWS (a portion of the Basic Sponsorship) to eligible applicants who have submitted the required documents subject to funding availability.
- b. Calculation of Advance OWS is based on the estimation of the eligible amount of Basic Sponsorship. Eligible OWS applicants will receive approximately 50% of the estimated Basic Sponsorship (depending on the estimated expenses to be incurred by the student).
- c. GEO will check if the applicant has attended the required training sessions in order to be eligible for OWS application. If students fail to do so, the OWS application will be rejected by GEO.
- d. How and when the Advance OWS will be released:
 - i) Students are required to provide bank account details via the “Student Account Information System” (<http://www.polyu.edu.hk/fo/internet/student>) when submitting OWS application to the respective Faculty / Department / School, in order for the release of the Advance OWS to take place.
 - ii) Applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
 - iii) After reviewing applications sent from Faculty / Department / School, GEO will send eligible applicants a “**conditional approval**”.
 - iv) Applicants who have received the “**conditional approval**” for advance OWS should submit the signed OWS Student Charter and the official receipt to GEO before the deadline. Failure to return the signed Student Charter will be considered as a withdrawal from the OWS application. Late submissions of the signed Student Charter and official receipt will not be accepted.
 - v) Advance OWS will be released to eligible applicants with “**conditional approval**” within 4 weeks upon receiving the signed OWS Student Charter, and official receipt.
- e. The approved OWS will be released AFTER students’ successful completion of the placements; upon submission of all the required documents and WIE approval granted by Faculty / Department / School.
- f. If students fail to complete the placement, students are required to refund the Advance OWS to GEO by cheque.

2.5.3 Post-placement approval and release of Basic Sponsorship (for expenses settled directly by students)

- a. The remaining balance of the approved Basic Sponsorship will be released AFTER students' successful completion of the placements. Students are required to seek approval from the Faculty / Department / School to confirm whether the offshore internship is qualified for WIE fulfilment and submit the required documents as listed below.
- b. All OWS applicants are required to take the following action within 2 weeks upon completion of placements:
 - i) Complete a "Student Feedback Form on Learning Experience in WIE" from the WIE website at <https://www.polyu.edu.hk/pfs2/index.php/184472?lang=en>
 - ii) Complete an Online Declaration by Student from the WIE website at [POSS](#)
 - iii) Submit to GEO at [POSS](#) with the following documents:
 - Official receipts of passage (boarding passes must also be submitted) and accommodation expenses
 - *Declaration by Employer (completed by the placement organisation, with supervisor's signature and company chop) *This form can be downloaded from the WIE website

Sample forms are available on the [WIE webpage](#) for reference. Please refer to Appendix II for the submission checklist.
- c. OWS will be processed only when ALL actions listed in Item 2.5.3b have been completed. Failure to complete required actions and / or submission of all required documents, OWS application will be rejected and withdrawn from the "**conditional approval**". Students will therefore be required to refund the released Advance OWS back to GEO.
- d. Eligible applicants will receive an email notification regarding the actual OWS amount after GEO has received the WIE approval confirmation from the respective Faculty / Department / School.
- e. In case where the released amount of Advance OWS has exceeded the final approved OWS amount, the variance will be required to be refunded, and students must return the amount to GEO by cheque. Students should follow the payment procedures and deadlines as stated in the email notification which will be sent individually.
- f. Applicants are not guaranteed to receive the maximum OWS amount as entitled due to budget constraints and availability of funding.
- g. Any enquiry / appeal regarding the approved amount of OWS should be made within TWO WEEKS from the date of the result notification. Late requests for review will not be accepted.
- h. It normally takes around four weeks or more for approved OWS (from the date of the email notification) to be deposited into students' bank accounts.
- i. Applicants are advised to keep a copy of all relevant documents submitted to GEO, Faculty / Department / School. All announcements regarding OWS applicants will be made via PolyU email, students should check regularly for news and updated information.

2.6 SPECIAL CASES

2.6.1 Students who will be out of Hong Kong for academic exchange together with WIE

- a. If the Offshore WIE is taken during, before or after any international exchange programme, students should have received the PolyU Student Exchange Sponsorship (provided by GEO), which is meant to cover part of the expenses incurred during the exchange; such as transportation, accommodation, and other incidental expenses. Students thus will only be eligible for sponsorship directly related to WIE placement, and the amount of OWS granted will be adjusted to avoid “double benefits”. Students MUST declare if receiving sponsorship(s) or allowance(s) for the exchange programme from other sources and provide the related documents.
- b. If students, currently on exchange, decide to extend the offshore trip activities, the following action MUST be taken:
- i) To seek WIE endorsement / approval from Faculty / Department / School, so that Faculty / Department / School will pass on the OWS applications to GEO for processing.

2.6.2 Students who plan to be out of Hong Kong for over 366 days

- Students, who are planning to go on an academic exchange together with the Offshore WIE, should not last for over 366 days in order to secure appropriate travel insurance coverage.
- Students who need to be away from HK for more than 366 days, for academic exchange together with WIE internship, should alert respective Faculty / Department / School at the earliest convenience and seek advice from GEO, if needed.

2.6.3 Students who plan to join an internship programme that requires payment to external organisations

The calculation of OWS amount and release of sponsorship will be based on actual expenses incurred in passage, accommodation, and in view that there may be an administrative fee (or service charge) involved in internship organised by external organisations, OWS applicants SHOULD request for invoices / receipts that clearly state the detailed breakdown of fees or expenses (i.e. passage and accommodation). OWS applications will NOT be accepted if students provide invoices / receipts that show only a lump sum of the programme fees.

2.6.4 Students who have received subsidy / allowance / salary / scholarship / sponsorship related to the WIE

Any subsidy, allowance, salary, scholarship, or sponsorship received by applicant for an Offshore WIE will be considered as “remuneration” and 50% of the total income and allowance will be deducted from the total amount of sponsorship. Students must declare if any financial support / subsidy from other sources, and GEO reserves the right to adjust the OWS amount accordingly.

2.6.5 Students who need to transit or stop over before reaching the placement destination

OWS will normally grant one round-trip on public transportation between cities, including economy class travel on airplanes, trains, buses/coaches, and ships only. Students MUST consult GEO and seek prior approval before committing to any special travel arrangements. Intra-city transportation (including arrangements from the airport to the residence or from the residence to the workplace) will not be subsidised.

3. Hardship Allowance

3.1 PURPOSE

- a. The Hardship Allowance¹ (HA) is provided to support students with proven financial difficulty:
 - i) For offshore internship in fulfillment of WIE requirements
 - ii) To help partially cover expenses incurred during offshore internship
- b. To qualify for this allowance, OFFICIAL documents are required to justify the student's need for financial assistance, which can include:
 - i) A letter of approval from the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme; or
 - ii) A letter of approved grant and loan amount from the Tertiary Student Finance Scheme – Publicly-funded Programmes (Government Grant and Loan) in 2024/25; or
 - iii) A letter / email notification of approval from The Hong Kong Polytechnic University Financial Assistance Scheme 2024/25; or
 - iv) Other documents issued by agencies endorsed by Departments of HKSAR Government.

3.2 ELIGIBILITY

Successful applicants of Hardship Allowance (HA) 2024/25, who must be:

- a. full-time non-foundation / non-final year UGC-funded undergraduate students of bachelor degree programme(s),
- b. taking offshore internship in fulfillment of WIE, which is
 - i) arranged by Faculty / Department / School or GEO; OR
 - ii) sourced by a Student with prior endorsement / approval from his / her corresponding Faculty / Department / School.
- c. having proven financial difficulties as shown in the submitted OFFICIAL document(s)

3.3 CALCULATION OF HARDSHIP ALLOWANCE

Two levels of Hardship Allowance will be granted based on the OFFICIAL document(s) submitted by the student, using the following guidelines:

- a. Level I: For applicants who received a FULL grant and loan and / or obtained approval from the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme.
- b. Level II: For applicants who received a PARTIAL grant and loan and / or obtained approval from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University Financial Assistance Scheme.

A daily rate will be adopted in the calculation of the amount to be granted based on the placement duration (for a maximum of 49 days²) and location; grant will be subject to changes based on funding availability:

¹ The Hardship Allowance is subject to availability of funding.

² For programmes that require placements of more than 7 weeks to qualify for the minimum WIE requirements, the maximum amount claimed will be granted up to 10 weeks. The daily rate for a specific zone will apply to the placement duration as confirmed by the employer / host organisation.

| Zone classification | | | Hardship Allowance | | Illustrative example of a 49-day WIE |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|---|--------------------|-------------------|---|
| | | | Level I (Lv. I) | Level II (Lv. II) | |
| A | A1 | China (Guangdong Province) | HK\$80/day | HK\$40/day | Lv. I : HK\$80 x 49 days = HK\$3,920 Lv. II: HK\$40 x 49 days = HK\$1,960 |
| | A2 | China (other than Guangdong Province) | | | |
| B | Asian Countries (other than China) | | HK\$80/day | HK\$40/day | Lv. I : HK\$80 x 49 days = HK\$3,920 Lv. II: HK\$40 x 49 days = HK\$1,960 |
| C | C1 | International (Other than Europe and America) | HK\$160/day | HK\$80/day | Lv. I : HK\$160 x 49 days = HK\$7,840 Lv. II: HK\$80 x 49 days = HK\$3,920 |
| | C2 | International (Europe and America) | | | |

Due to the limitation of funding, the approval of Hardship Allowance cannot be guaranteed. The approval of Hardship Allowance will be subject to the funding availability for the year and justification of the need as indicated by the submitted official document(s).

GEO reserves the right to reject HA applications that are submitted without official document(s).

3.4 APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND DEADLINES

- a. HA applicants, if eligible for OWS, (submission of OWS applications through Faculty / Department / Schools / GEO) will receive an e-mail notification from GEO. Students seeking to apply should respond and complete the online HA application form as required. Detailed application procedures will be stated in the email from GEO.
- b. LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Students must inform GEO immediately by writing once they know about any change of placement plan such as cancellation or change of dates / location.

3.5 CONDITIONAL APPROVAL AND RELEASE OF HARDSHIP ALLOWANCE (HA)

- a. Upon receipt and review of HA applications, GEO will send eligible applicants a “conditional approval” showing the approved amount of the HA. The approved amount of the HA will be calculated based on OFFICIAL documents, placement city, and duration.
- b. Since the HA is provided to support offshore internships that may not be remunerated in fulfilment of WIE, GEO reserves the right to adjust from the approved HA amount or all income / sponsorship provided by placement organisations or other parties.
- c. It normally takes around 4 weeks to deposit the approved HA amount into students’ bank accounts.

3.6 FINAL APPROVAL OF HARDSHIP ALLOWANCE (HA)

- a. The final approval of the Hardship Allowance will be officially granted ONLY after successful completion of the placement, submission of all required documents to Faculty / Department / School (for the approval of WIE fulfillment), and to GEO (for the approval of OWS). Please refer to the OWS Guidelines for detailed information.
- b. In cases where placement CANNOT be successfully completed or approved as WIE, or where the OWS application has been withdrawn / rejected, the “conditional approval” of the HA will automatically be withdrawn. The released Hardship Allowance MUST be refunded to GEO.
- c. Changes in the placement arrangements (e.g. placement duration being shortened) may lead to reduction of the final approved amount of HA, and the difference MUST be refunded to GEO accordingly. GEO reserves the right to adjust the approved OWS (if applicable) to offset the difference.

3.7 IMPORTANT NOTES FOR HA APPLICANTS

- a. Only successful applicants for the OWS 2024/25 are eligible to apply for the HA.
- b. Students MUST provide required information (e.g. provide bank account information via the Student Bank Information System at <https://www40.polyu.edu.hk/fosae/>) and submit the required documents (e.g. HA application form/official supporting documents/student charter) to GEO on or before the stated deadline. ANY LATE HA APPLICATIONS OR SUBMISSION OF DOCUMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.
- c. The HA Guidelines provide information regarding the maximum amount of HA a student can potentially be entitled to. Due to budget constraints, there is no guarantee that all HA applications will be approved and granted the full amount as stated in the guidelines. Students should NOT make commitments to an Offshore WIE based on the assumption that approval will be granted once an HA application is sent to GEO. GEO has full discretion in ALL decisions related to the granting of HA.
- d. Students must declare if they receive any sponsorship or allowance for the same offshore placement from other sources. GEO reserves the right to adjust the HA amount granted according to the purpose and value of any additional sponsorship / allowance provided.
- e. In cases where the released amount of HA has exceeded the final approved HA amount, the difference needs to be refunded to GEO by cheque or the outstanding amount will be deducted from the approved OWS.
- f. GEO reserves the right to take the following actions if students fail to refund excess amount of HA:
 - i) Any further application to OWS and HA will NOT be considered;
 - ii) A case record will be sent to respective Faculty / Department / School;
 - iii) WIE transcript may NOT be issued
- g. Any enquiries / appeals regarding the approved HA amount should be made within TWO WEEKS from the date of the result notification. Late requests for a review will NOT be accepted.
- h. GEO reserves the right to adjust the HA arrangements, calculations, and amount granted, based on funding availability.

4. Insurance Coverage for WIE

4.1 INSURANCE COVERED BY THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY

4.1.1 Group Personal Accident (GPA) Insurance for Students

(Policy number: APG/Z2949072/10/R2AG) (1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025)

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University has acquired an overall Group Personal Accident (GPA) Insurance Policy on an annual basis. The policy covers The Hong Kong Polytechnic University-registered students against accidental death and permanent total disability as well as accidental medical expenses arising from local, and offshore activities organised by the University or its student organisations.

4.1.2 Group Personal Accident Insurance for Students (Top Up Cover for WIE)

(Policy number: APG/Z2957046/10/R2AG) (1 September 2024 – 31 August 2025)

In order to provide further protection to students engaging in WIE, a “Top-up GPA Insurance Policy for Work-Integrated Education (WIE)” has been arranged to cover all participating students in cases of having sustained bodily injury caused by accident during the period of insurance and in connection with all local and Offshore WIE organised or arranged or endorsed or recognised or approved by The Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

| | | |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| Period | 1 September 2024 - 31 August 2025 (both days inclusive) | |
| Insured Person | <p>1. All full-time and part-time registered students (including exchange students). For the students who are joining the endorsed activities but ceased to be registered students, cover will be provided until the completion of the activities;</p> <p>2. All de-registered students whilst in process of academic appeal and until the decision is known. Cover will be automatically ceased once the appeal result is confirmed.</p> | |
| Schedule of Benefit | Permanent Disablement / Accidental Death | HKD400,000 (when occurring in Hong Kong) HKD1,000,000 (when occurring outside Hong Kong) |
| | Accidental Medical Expenses (including Chinese bonesetters and acupuncturists subject to HKD300 per visit per day and HKD2,500 in aggregate) | <u>For any one accident</u> HKD10,000 (when occurring in Hong Kong) HKD25,000 (when occurring outside Hong Kong) |
| Coverage | <p>The Insurers will pay the Insured Person an appropriate benefit in the Schedule of Benefits if any Insured Person sustains bodily injury caused by Accident during the Period of Insurance and in connection with Work Integrated Education (WIE) organised or arranged or endorsed or recognised or approved by PolyU.</p> <p>In respect of WIE, the coverage shall commence at the time when the Insured Person travels directly from his / her home to the Work Integrated Education (WIE) organised or arranged or endorsed or recognised or approved venue within three (3) hours and ceases at the time the Insured Person arrives home directly from the Work Integrated education (WIE) organised or arranged or</p> | |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| | endorsed or recognised or approved venue within three (3) hours, whichever comes first. |
| Territorial Limits | Worldwide |
| Aggregate Limit of Liability | HKD100,000,000 per accident |
| Remarks | All claims must be verified by the Insured. |

4.1.3 Group Travel Insurance (Policy number: STG/Z2949076/10/R2AG)

All University's students travelling abroad for Offshore WIE commencing between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025 (STG/Z2949076/10/R2AG) will be covered by the University's Group Travel Insurance. The maximum duration of a trip is 366 days for student internship programmes. Please refer to the respective links above for more details of the insurance coverage on the Group Travel Insurance leaflet.

Travel Insurance Certificate

Travel Insurance Certificate for applying visa or for submission to overseas Institution(s) can be issued by the insurance company upon request.

Notes to Faculty / Department / School

- a. Faculty / Department / School are therefore required to pass their organised / arranged / endorsed / recognised / approved WIE details at least one week prior to the commencement of WIE to GEO for central record purpose.
- b. Faculty / Department / School should note that only students who are on GEO central record should be included under the "Top-up Cover GPA for Work-Integrated Education (WIE)" policy.

4.2 MAKING INSURANCE CLAIMS

1. For Group Personal Accident, students should inform GEO and the respective academic departments and submit their claims together with scanned copies / photos of medical receipts & other supporting document, including the signed authorisation letter, to insurers (AXA General Insurance Hong Kong Limited) via email (anh.claims@axa.com.hk) directly, not later than 90 days from the date of accident. Please state the insurance policy number **APG/Z2949072/10/R2AG** for the accident(s) inflicted during the period of 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.
2. For Group Personal Accident (Top-up Cover for WIE), students should inform GEO and the respective academic departments and submit their claims together with scanned copies / photos of medical receipts & other supporting document, including the signed authorisation letter, to insurers (AXA General Insurance Hong Kong Limited) via email (anh.claims@axa.com.hk) directly, not later than 90 days from the date of accident. Please state the insurance policy number **APG/Z2957046/10/R2AG** for the accident(s) inflicted during the period of 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025.

3. For Group Travel Insurance trips between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025, please make claims directly via email (travel.claims@axa.com.hk) by stating the insurance policy number **STG/Z2949076/10/R2AG**.
4. If students come across the below situations, please take the following actions and provide the relevant supporting documents*.
 - a) If medical attention is received for bodily injury or sickness, student should, if possible, obtain receipts for all payment made plus a 'Medical Certificate' showing the nature of the injury or sickness.
 - b) For any loss of money, credit card or passport, student must report to the police or the consulate general within 24 hours of discovery and obtain a written report.
 - c) For any loss, damage or delay to baggage, student should report to the carrier, tour operator or hotel immediately, and obtain a written report.

* The accepted file formats of the supporting documents are **doc, docx, xls, xlsx, pdf, txt, jpg, jpeg, png, gif, avi, mgg, mp4, mov, and wmv**.

4.3 WORLDWIDE EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE SERVICES

Students who are going to take up an offshore internship should install **International SOS Assistance App** (scan QR code to get the mobile app) before departure.

International SOS is a leading medical and travel security assistance company providing services include but not limited to pre-trip advice, 24/7 global assistance and emergency support for authorised outbound activities.

Service Provider: International SOS ("Intl.SOS")

Expiry Date of Membership Agreement: 31 August 2026

Intl.SOS Website: www.internationalsos.com

Intl.SOS Membership No./Login Password – 07AYCA550139

Intl.SOS 24-Hour Assistance Centre No. in Hong Kong: +852 2528 9900

Intl.SOS Smartphone App – app.internationalsos.com

Intl.SOS Email: hongkong@internationalsos.com



Illustration of different levels of OWS based on locations and placement duration:**China – Guangdong Province (Zone A1)**

| | | | Placement Duration | | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | | Daily rate (HK\$) | 2-weeks ¹ | 4-weeks | 5-weeks | 6-weeks | 7-weeks |
| Basic Sponsorship | Passage | | - | 600 | 600 | 600 | 600 |
| | Subsistence Allowance | 100 | - | 2,800 | 3,500 | 4,200 | 4,900 |
| | | | | | | | |
| WIE Learning Incentive | | | 2,300 | 2,300 | 2,300 | 2,300 | 2,300 |
| | | | 2,300 | 5,700 | 6,400 | 7,100 | 7,800 |

China – other than Guangdong Province (Zone A2)

| | | | Placement Duration | | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| | | Daily rate (HK\$) | 2-weeks ¹ | 4-weeks | 5-weeks | 6-weeks | 7-weeks |
| Basic Sponsorship | Passage | | - | 3,200 | 3,200 | 3,200 | 3,200 |
| | Subsistence Allowance | 100 | - | 2,800 | 3,500 | 4,200 | 4,900 |
| | | | | | | | |
| WIE Learning Incentive | | | 2,300 | 2,300 | 2,300 | 2,300 | 2,300 |
| | | | 2,300 | 8,300 | 9,000 | 9,700 | 10,400 |

Asian Countries – other than China (Zone B)

| | | | Placement Duration | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| | | Daily rate (HK\$) | 4-weeks ² | 5-weeks | 6-weeks | 7-weeks |
| Basic Sponsorship | Passage | | 3,500 | 3,500 | 3,500 | 3,500 |
| | Subsistence Allowance | 100 | 2,800 | 3,500 | 4,200 | 4,900 |
| | | | | | | |
| WIE Learning Incentive | | | 2,300 | 2,300 | 2,300 | 2,300 |
| | | | 8,600 | 9,300 | 10,000 | 10,700 |

Overseas Countries – other than Europe and America (Zone C1)

| | | | Placement Duration | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | | Daily rate (HK\$) | 4-weeks ² | 5-weeks | 6-weeks | 7-weeks |
| Basic Sponsorship | Passage | | 7,000 | 7,000 | 7,000 | 7,000 |
| | Subsistence Allowance | 180 | 5,040 | 6,300 | 7,560 | 8,820 |
| | | | | | | |
| WIE Learning Incentive | | | 2,300 | 2,300 | 2,300 | 2,300 |
| | | | 14,340 | 15,600 | 16,860 | 18,120 |

Overseas Countries – Europe and America (Zone C2)

| | | | Placement Duration | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| | | Daily rate (HK\$) | 4-weeks ² | 5-weeks | 6-weeks | 7-weeks |
| Basic Sponsorship | Passage | | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 |
| | Subsistence Allowance | 180 | 5,040 | 6,300 | 7,560 | 8,820 |
| | | | | | | |
| WIE Learning Incentive | | | 2,300 | 2,300 | 2,300 | 2,300 |
| | | | 17,340 | 18,600 | 19,860³ | 21,120³ |

¹ For placements in China (Zone A) of less than 14 days, there will be NO Basic Sponsorship and students will be eligible for WIE Learning Incentive only.

² Other offshore placements (Zone B and C) must last for a minimum of 28 days.

³ The subsidy amount each student can receive is capped at HK\$19,000.

Appendix II

Checklist Documents and Receipts (Applied to GEO Mainland WIE Programme Applicants)

(I) Before Departure for GEO Mainland WIE Programmes

For ALL Offshore WIE Sponsorship applicants:

- A signed OWS & HA Student Charter
- Submission of Bank Account information to FO
<https://www40.polyu.edu.hk/fosae/>

ONLY for Hardship Allowance applicants:

- Submitted application form in POSS and upload the following documents
- Letter of approval from the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme; OR
- Letter of approved grant and loan amount from the Tertiary Student Finance Scheme – Publicly-funded Programmes (Government Grant and Loan) in 2024/25; OR
- Letter/email notification of approval from PolyU Financial Assistance 2024/25; OR
- Other documents issued by agencies endorsed by or Departments of the HKSAR Government.

(II) After Completion of GEO Mainland WIE Programmes

- Declaration by Employer with signature and company chop
<https://www.polyu.edu.hk/geo/exchange-and-study-abroad/work-integrated-education/useful-documents/>
- Student Feedback on Learning Experience in WIE
<https://www.polyu.edu.hk/pfs2/index.php/184472?lang=en>
- Original boarding passes / tickets
- Submission of Learning Journal

Checklist Documents and Receipts

(I) Before Departure for Offshore WIE

For ALL Offshore WIE Sponsorship applicants:

- A signed OWS & HA Student Charter
- Submission of Bank Account information to FO
<https://www40.polyu.edu.hk/fosae/>

ONLY for Hardship Allowance applicants:

- Submitted application form in POSS and upload the following documents
- Letter of approval from the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme; OR
- Letter of approved grant and loan amount from the Tertiary Student Finance Scheme – Publicly-funded Programmes (Government Grant and Loan) in 2024/25; OR
- Letter/email notification of approval from PolyU Financial Assistance 2024/25; OR
- Other documents issued by agencies endorsed by or Departments of the HKSAR Government.

(II) After Completion of Internship from Offshore WIE

- Declaration by Student (Online submission in POSS at www.polyu.edu.hk/poss)
- Declaration by Employer with signature and company chop
<https://www.polyu.edu.hk/geo/exchange-and-study-abroad/work-integrated-education/useful-documents/>
- Student Feedback on Learning Experience in WIE
<https://www.polyu.edu.hk/pfs2/index.php/184472?lang=en>
- Original boarding passes / tickets
- Passage Receipt (The amounts of flight tickets should be shown)
- Accommodation (official receipt or a valid lease contract)
- Programme Fee receipts from external organisation