

# Tech firms for extended internships this season

## Recruiters say they need more time to train students for niche jobs

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Chennai/Bengaluru, 28 November

Seeking to train students for niche jobs, some recruiters have asked for long internships this placement season, say some leading engineering institutes.

At institutes such as SRM University, Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) and RV College of Engineering, which are halfway through their placement process, recruiters have given prominence to internships before hiring candidates.

Mandatory internship at leading engineering colleges occurs generally in the eighth semester, spread over six months. However, early trends this year during placements have seen some of the recruiters asking for extended internships, with part of it in the seventh semester.

Though an early trend, engineering institutes say this could stay.

"Some companies are asking more time for internship. They are enquiring whether they can get students during the seventh semester as against internships for six months during the eighth semester," said Sriram S Padmanabhan, director (Career Center), SRM University. As a result, some recruiters are seeking two semesters' internship to ensure the students are job-ready from the beginning. Over 4,700 offers were made to engineering students of SRM University this year.

More companies are linking job offers to internships in the eighth semester, in which induction training is getting factored in, and that is beneficial for all stakeholders, senior placement officials said.

The number of companies preferring internship-linked job



The All India Council for Technical Education has asked institutes to reduce the number of mandatory credits

### CATCHING THEM EARLY

- Recruiters ask engineering colleges to extend internships by 3-6 months
- More recruiters insist on internship in the last semester
- Recruiters cite employability as the need for extended internships
- Early trends show demand made by firms from sectors other than core manufacturing, IT
- Around 4,700 offers were made for engineering students in SRM University so far this year
- VIT University has seen 3,500 students getting offers so far this year

RV College of Engineering has seen 1,110 offers so far, the highest being ₹4.9 million per annum

offers is increasing. "Major companies are making internship mandatory. We are seeing a 30 per cent increase in this," said V Samuel Rajkumar, director, placement and training, VIT University.

"It is a win-win situation for the student and the company. The student gets to know about the company, job profile, work culture, environment, etc. For the company, it can train the students during the internship

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to assess the students and from Day One," Rajkumar added. Around 3,500 students have got offers so far this year at VIT University. Sector-wise, recruiters from industries other than core engineering and IT services are making such demands.

"More companies are asking students to undergo internship during their eighth semester and there is more demand for such a concept in the batch of

2019," said K N Subramanya, principal, RV College of Engineering, Bengaluru.

Companies in the IT, ITeS, e-commerce and consulting sectors are requesting longer internship for post-graduate programmes. Around 850 students of the institute have been placed so far with at least one offer and another 210 students are awaiting placement.

However, fitting an eight-semester course into six semesters is a challenge if there is demand for a year's internship. Since the institutes have to meet the demand of industry, options may be developed to meet the requirements, they said.

The All India Council for Technical Education has asked institutes to reduce the number of mandatory credits. "With the credits being reduced, the burden would be much less on the institutes. There is a possibility of at least five subjects getting offloaded," said an expert.

While it could be beneficial for companies from other sectors offering niche roles in data analytics, data science and related roles, some companies are concerned about offering extended internship.

"All the companies work on confidential data and exposing them to the students is a risk. We will mentor the interns. It is a journey just started. Companies need more time and infrastructure, and it is always a risk for the companies in our segment," said Sundararajan Narayanan, chief people officer of digital engineering and IT outsourcing services, Virtusa Corporation.

Officials of a National Institute of Technology (NIT) have said the trend has not been seen in the NITs so far, but the idea of internship before placement is being discussed among the institutes.