

## **What is required and recommended from an IAESTE supervisor? A short guide.**

We asked a few of our most experienced supervisors about what advice they would give an employer about hosting their first IAESTE trainee and what is their overall experience of receiving trainees. Their main points are outlined below. The contributors are Siddhant Gupta, Volvo Cars, Jonas Henningsson, Volvo Cars, Johan Lindgren, Iggesund Paperboard and Leonidas Matsakas, Luleå University of Technology.

### **1. What does the supervisor's work include – and what advice would you give?**

- **Finding the right trainee**

Focus on selecting someone with a strong motivation to really get something valuable from the experience. He or she should be aware why they want to do the internship (i.e. gain some technical experience, use it as leverage for further plans, etc). From the beginning we try to convey this to our students and that we want to support them to become independent and stress what they can gain for their future professional careers. We try to give examples of successful internships and how the internship helped in finding a future career path. This helps to motivate students to really become involved.

- **Introduction and onboarding**

The supervisor plays a crucial role in providing a comprehensive introduction and onboarding experience within the company. This includes guiding the student in the company's mission, values, and organizational structure and clarifying any specific expectations there might be. Providing insights into team dynamics, roles, and responsibilities helps the student feel a sense of belonging and encourages collaboration. In the beginning, it is important to give close support to the student until they get used to their tasks and the workplace - and then to leave them space to be able to become independent. We make sure to incorporate the IAESTE students in our group to make them feel part of the team. The supervisor supports the student, but most often the relationship is more of being colleagues rather than having to monitor every step.

- **Mentorship**

The dedicated supervisor should have expertise in the relevant field and be capable of guiding the intern through the tasks and challenges associated with the assigned projects. Also, he or she should offer insights into future career paths. Providing advice on professional development, networking opportunities, and career planning contributes to a holistic mentorship experience. Identify specific areas within your team that can benefit from research and development. This ensures that the intern's efforts align with the team's goals and adds value.

- **Communication and collaboration**

Arrange regular communication channels between the supervisor, mentor, and the IAESTE candidate. Clearly communicate project expectations, goals, and any specific guidelines the intern needs to follow. Arrange opportunities for the IAESTE candidate to collaborate with other team members. Facilitate team meetings, project discussions, and knowledge-sharing sessions to enhance the intern's integration into the team and provide exposure to various aspects of the work environment.

- **Feedback**

Regular and constructive feedback is essential for the student's growth and improvement. The supervisor should provide timely feedback on the quality of work, offer guidance on areas for improvement, and acknowledge achievements.

## 2. What is your experience with IAESTE students?

- Supervising IAESTE students has been an exceptionally positive experience. The interns consistently bring enthusiasm, a fresh perspective, and a strong willingness to learn and contribute to the team. Their knowledge and expertise contribute significantly to ongoing projects, providing innovative solutions and contributing positively to the team.
- Our IAESTE students have been highly professional in their approach to work. They demonstrate a strong work ethic, reliability, and a commitment to meeting project goals and deadlines. IAESTE students consistently bring technical skills that align with the needs of our projects. Their ability to collaborate effectively, communicate ideas, and integrate seamlessly into our team enables a positive and productive working environment. They actively seek opportunities to take on responsibilities, participate in team discussions, and offer valuable insights, demonstrating a proactive attitude.
- We have very much appreciated students from all over the world coming to our group - and especially young people, which is 'refreshing.' Over the years, we have retained good contact with several of our IAESTE alumni that continue to help us with networking with industry and academy. Some of our previous students also stayed with our group for pursuing a PhD – starting with IAESTE was an excellent opportunity to get to know the person and see how they work.
- The IAESTE organization has played a crucial role in supporting the students throughout their internship. The organization's resources, guidance, and commitment to the development of the interns contribute to a well-rounded and successful experience for both the students and the host company.