



**national treasury**

Department:  
National Treasury  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

# GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF MUNICIPAL FINANCE MANAGEMENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME (MFMIP)

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## **1. Introduction**

Capacity building is a long term process that must be seen as an attempt to build individual, organisational, institutional and environmental processes to strengthen the service delivery mandate of organisations including municipalities. In all initiatives, it is imperative to begin such efforts with building people as they are at the centre of the organization as delivery vehicles or agents. There could be diverse approaches to this norm depending on the focus on hand i.e. whether the focus is on people or organisations first, among others. Proper systems and processes are usually the cornerstone to the translation of public funding into service delivery supported by competent officials, i.e. those that are knowledgeable, skilled and understand the public ethos and ethics or attributes expected of them. Further to the required competence, the public being served expect officials to be accountable.

The Municipal Finance Management Internship Programme (MFMIP) is a further attempt to build the municipalities capacity to deliver on their financial management responsibilities and thus their constitutional obligations. This programme was introduced in 2004 and forms a component of the Division of Revenue Act (DORA) Financial Management Grant (FMG) Framework conditions.

There are a number of opportunities presented by the macroeconomic challenges of unemployment of graduates not able to find employment opportunities for all municipalities' consideration. Such opportunities cover the in-house development of the talent pipeline for utilisation on future municipalities capacity needs. If the MFMIP is implemented appropriately, this programme may serve as the long lasting solution to the talent pipeline needed by the LG sector in these specialised financial management areas. It is on this basis that we urge all municipalities to factor this requirement into their human resource management policies to enable it to gain the required stature.

The MFMIP specifically, encourages municipalities to employ unemployed graduates in Accounting, Economics, Finance, Risk management and Internal Auditing, among others, over a multiyear period in line with the issued conditions.

### **1.1 Institutionalisation of the internship programme**

It is imperative for municipalities to look into innovative ways of making a programme of such paramount importance to work to the municipality's advantage in the backdrop of forever changing MFMA reforms. The reforms cover MFMA regulations and guidelines, MFMA reporting standards, asset management practices, revenue enhancement practices, management development, billing processes, community engagement practices, technology etc.

The municipality interested in this programme must as a start influence the inclusion of this programme into their Human Resource management policy directive adopted by Municipal Council.

This effort will assist a municipality to recognise this as one of the credible sources of the talent pipeline needed by the municipality as it also faces the inevitable realities of high staff turnover, retirement, knowledge development under the MFMA reforms and many other variables impacting on the continuity of the municipality as a going concern.

A municipality and its officials must see an anomaly if a municipality is not meeting this obligation of preparing a new crop of officials through this programme who will take over the reins once the older officials vacate their positions through the natural and economic attrition of moving on into the different career paths and retirement, among others.

The Presidential 12 Outcomes including outcome 4, 9 and 12 demand an innovative modality of being responsive to the public needs. Moreover, the National Development Plan, now adopted by Cabinet as a living document to change the landscape of the country development warrant a greater participation of the three spheres of government including LG to make a long lasting impact to the citizenry through greater participation and creative means of resolving impediments of service delivery challenges. The MFMIP programme is but one of those attempts to meet the obligations of the government of the day.

This MFMIP guideline must assist municipalities in developing the knowledge and skills of the interns employed under this programme in areas such as strategic planning, strategic management, municipal budgeting and financial management, among others. These guidelines standardise the implementation of the MFMIP across all municipalities in line with the government's Skills Development Act and the Municipal Regulations on Minimum Competency Levels, Gazette 29967 of 15 June 2007 redesigned as a Municipal Finance Management Programme for ease of delivery and compliance by all officials responsible for financial management.

## **2. The MFMIP: An overview**

The MFMIP provides interns preferably recruited from previously disadvantaged backgrounds with a logical training sequence founded on the knowledge they acquired from tertiary institutions. Through workplace interaction with and mentoring by chief finance officers, municipal managers, other officials within the Budget and Treasury Office and/or advisors where present, the interns will benefit from the expertise and experience of these officials. The two to three-year programme is expected to end, where appropriate, with the awarding to each intern with a professional qualification in Municipal Finance Management Programme to strengthen the chances of permanent retention within the same or neighbouring municipalities at the onset.

Municipalities are requested to ensure that interns are constantly exposed to and evaluated in all areas covered by the MFMIP. The issued skills learner guideline and

logbook can also serve as a benchmark to strengthen the required training through work rotation plans. The skills guideline is available through this link <http://mfma.treasury.gov.za/MFMA/Training%20and%20Validation/MFM%20skills%20training%20programme%20Learner%20Guidelines%20And%20Logbook.pdf> .

This exercise will assist the municipality to make an informed decision to retain or afford further training opportunities to these interns. National Treasury considers municipalities to be a suitable environment within which skills in municipal financial management can be transferred to interns. In this regard, a suitable environment is one with stated commitment to provide training for interns. Municipalities participating in the reform programme have, through their respective Municipal Council resolutions, committed themselves to achieving all the reform milestones, including the building of capacity through training.

In addition, a suitable training environment will consist of:

- well documented policies for the recruitment and development of interns;
- the dedicated official, preferably from a Human Resource unit supported by the line managers/supervisors within the BTO to take on the responsibility of managing the internship programme;
- the use of an accredited (registered) Education and Training Provider (ETP) for the provision of the required minimum competency levels training; and
- the quarterly evaluation of an intern's progress during the programme and at the end of the programme.

The breadth and depth of on-the-job training of interns may differ across municipalities. This, in part, is attributable to the fact that some municipalities are larger (and therefore have more capacity to train their interns) than others and therefore may present more opportunities in the specialised fields from year two of the internship programme, if they so desire. However, through the use of regional workshops facilitated by both National and Provincial Treasuries supported by regional advisors where available and enrolment in the regulated programme, outputs of the MFMIP will have quantity and quality specifications that are equivalent across all municipalities.

### **3. Selection of municipal finance interns**

A municipality should select and appoint at least five (5) interns consistent with the FMG framework conditions over a multiyear period. These interns must be holders of a three-year Bachelor's Degree or National Diploma with major concentrations in Economics, Accounting or Finance, Internal Auditing or Risk Management. It is only under exceptional circumstances that the municipality may appoint Further Education and Training graduates in the above fields as FMG financed interns.

The merits must firstly be discussed with the transferring national department, National Treasury, before finalisation and the Provincial Treasury be copied in this regard. This request is in keeping with the stringent career paths planned for interns and the complexity of the municipal finance responsibilities within the BTO that require solid foundational knowledge from institutions of higher learning to master.

If FET graduates are selected for this purpose, training and support would have to be rigorous and hands on to assist them to bridge the gaps between knowledge and applied skills.

Intern selection will normally be in line with employment equity requirements and must be done through the internship implementation team. Interns will be required to sign an internship agreement, in addition to an employment contract, committing themselves to full participation in the educational and workplace assignments in accordance with laid-down policies and procedures. A sample Internship Advert is shown in **Annexures A** and Internship Agreement in **Annexures B**.

Selected interns should, by interest, aptitude and previous achievements, demonstrate their readiness for the programme's strategic goals and objectives. In addition, they are expected to reflect, through their intellectual and professional development, an intended career path in line with the programme's strategic goals, objectives and philosophy.

#### **4. Duration of the internship programme**

The duration of the internship contract must be minimum 24 months and maximum 36 months. During the period of the internship contract, the interns must have covered at least 80% of the areas as listed above. The Municipality may extend the interns contract only under the following circumstances:

- The interns are still in the process of completing their training on the regulated programme, MFMP;
- The municipality is of the view that interns still have gaps in their learning supported by the evaluation of their PoE.
- There are no immediate vacant positions against which to appoint interns who have completed their training but some would be emerging in within a short while.

The Municipality must, three (3) months before the expiry of the contract, inform both the National and Provincial Treasury of their intension to extend or terminate the interns' contract including any appointments to date

#### **5. Interns Stipends**

Interns are paid a stipend and **NOT** a salary. A municipality shall pay the interns a stipend of a maximum of R100 000 per annum per intern as total cost to the

municipality. If the municipality wishes to pay more than the recommended R100 000, then the excess of R100 000 must be sourced from its own MTREF budget.

However, such cases should be documented in the municipality’s policies under the internship programme. This directive will assist the municipality to avail even more opportunities to previously unemployed graduates to participate in this programme.

**5.1 An illustration of the implication of the R100 000 p.a. per intern stipend:**

Recommendation of R100 000 stipend if solely payable from the FMG with the assumption that the intern is registered for a minimum competency levels programme at level 6 with one of the regionally based training providers and R42000 payable upfront for the given and agreed number of unit standards for interns development:

Implications:

<b>Stipend payable in the respective years</b>	
<b>Year 1 (Rands)</b>	<b>Year 2 (Rands)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100 000 (p.a. stipend) – 42000(qualification costs) = 58000 (net stipend)</li> <li>• 58 000(net stipend) / 12(months) = 4833.33 p.m.</li> </ul>	<p>100 000 (p.a. stipend) / 12 (months) = 8333.33 p.m.</p> <p>Take-home increase of 72.41% since year of internship programme!</p>

Given the above example, the interns’ registration fee of R42 000 on the regulated programme is deducted from the budgeted amount for his/her stipend for the year, i.e. R100 000 as soon as the intern is appointed as a trainee in the municipality. The intern will be left with a take home stipend of R58 000 to structure as per their choice, equating to R4833 per month for year 1. Assuming that the intern formal training will take 12 months to complete, Year 2 of the internship programme sees the intern taking the whole R100 000 over 12 months equating to a R8333 per month. This increase also serves as an incentive to interns to also take their studies seriously and finalise all the required assessments timeously.

Should an intern breach the contract in place by resigning, the municipality may enforce the contract by asking the intern to pay back all the training related costs. On the same note, the municipality must do everything possible to retain trained interns’ at appropriate levels for sustainable capacity building efforts. The same performance information must be shared with both National and Provincial Treasury as outlined elsewhere above.

## **6. Responsibilities of parties in this programme**

### **6.1 Municipalities**

Depending on its human resource capabilities, each municipality must consider appointing a suitable and dedicated person within its existing staff complement to act as the programme's training coordinator. The on-the-job training to which the interns will be exposed needs to be properly coordinated if the objectives of the programme are to be achieved within the duration of the internship. In addition, it is recommended that:

- the municipality plan its training activities by identifying and addressing the interns' skills gaps;
- identify and appoint a mentor or coach from within its ranks;
- appoint an accredited education and training provider(s) to deliver the regulated programme;
- provide, on an on-going basis, on-the-job and formal but practical training;
- constantly monitor the progress of the interns;
- avoid using interns for perpetual permanent responsibilities without affording them an opportunity for work rotation;
- avail permanent retention opportunities to interns through a formal process of interview among others.

### **6.2 Municipal Finance Interns**

Municipal interns must regard this programme as an opportunity to learn LG municipal finance management and thus an opportunity to further their careers in LG and municipalities. If this objective is to be realised, it is recommended that interns:

- be receptive to the training support provided by the municipality through any of the delegated officials in this regard;
- obey all policies and procedures of the municipality in respect of work process, ethics and ethos, among others;
- take ownership of their own personal development by initiating self-directed learning and requesting clarifications if need be through the nominated mentors and coaches;
- present themselves for a possible placement against any of the suitable positions within the BTO;
- compile the necessary documentation required to monitor their learning progress.

## **7. Training philosophy**

Since the primary training method is practical (i.e. service delivery in direct contact with service recipients), the municipal finance management interns' service delivery tasks and duties are twofold: oriented towards, firstly, learning and, secondly, adding value through a tangible contribution to the operations of municipalities. Experiential



training focuses on training for a practical workplace and is sequential, cumulative and graded in complexity. In cases where advisors are available, training offered might be used to expose the interns to best practices that will enable them to improve current procedures.

The training philosophy requires that in the process of learning new skills the interns be required to demonstrate that they are capable of applying what they learn in a tangible “value-added” way. Owing to the fact that the MFMIP is a capacity-building initiative, special tasks/processes or research projects are considered to be an appropriate way to add value. If well administered and managed, such projects would be challenging for the interns, provide management with an opportunity to evaluate their contribution and capabilities and provide something of value that other staff at the municipality would be unlikely to do (owing to a lack of time or skill sets).

It is not recommended that interns perform routine process-oriented functions that are normally covered by full-time employees. If the situation is beyond the control of the municipality due to unbudgeted positions, this must be managed closely and not last until the end of the interns’ contract. Interns must be given an opportunity to learn different responsibilities under the BTO.

Education and training objectives should be specified and included in terms of the competencies expected of the interns. These competencies should be consistent with the substantive area(s) of municipal finance and the BTO. Furthermore, municipalities are encouraged to:

- place interns in settings that are clearly committed to the achievement of training objectives;
- supervise interns using an adequate number of appropriate financial management professionals; and
- provide a wide range of training, educational and work experiences.

Developments in information technology have transformed the work of financial managers. Computers pervade financial management practice. In planning their training, the internship implementation team should bear in mind that interns will be making careers in which information technology is the norm. It follows that computer literacy must be acquired as part of the main training areas of municipal finance management.

The internship programme requires that training be spread evenly over the term of the contract. The training coordinator of the programme may have to discourage any attempts by interns to obtain experience in the various identified training areas at the same time and over a shorter period lest the planned skills and knowledge are not entrenched.

## **8. Management of the internship programme**

All municipalities are required to have a well-documented structure for managing the programme, which should be coordinated by the Human Resources Manager or nominated official within this unit. Both the Municipal Manager and CFO have a critical role to play in this programme. However, their demanding roles within the municipality may not always allow them to be hands on and some responsibilities may be delegated accordingly. If not already present, National Treasury recommends that an internship implementation team should be formed, comprising the training coordinator, an intern's immediate supervisor, the advisor (where available) **to carry out the following functions:**

- Facilitate the planning, preparation and implementation of the internship programme;
- Compile a budget for the internship programme;
- Develop a communication strategy with all stakeholders on internship programme;
- Establish an administration system to support the internship programme;
- Liaise with coordinators of other municipalities involved in the programme to share best practices;
- Establish criteria for mentor selection;
- Implement criteria for intern selection in line with these guidelines;
- Coordinate the identification and selection of interns;
- Coordinate on-the-job and off-the-job structured learning;
- Liaise with the appointed education and training provider(s) to deliver the regulated programme;
- Take collective responsibility to monitor progress on an on-going basis.

## **9. Personal Development Plan (PDP)**

A PDP is used to document and identify the knowledge, skills and abilities needed by the intern to perform efficiently in a particular department. It should also identify assignments to be given to the intern during his or her internship in a given department. Other matters that should be included in the PDP are formal training courses required and on-the-job training and the person(s) who will provide this training.

A PDP should be prepared for interns, with inputs from the municipal manager (MM), chief financial officer (CFO), Human Resources Manager and assistance from the advisor (if available), immediately after the initial orientation session. These serve as road maps for developing interns so that they acquire the knowledge, skills and abilities to perform at the expected rank of a municipal financial officer. The PDP is prepared by each intern with the assistance of the training coordinator and approved by the internship implementation team or delegated supervisor for the responsibility.

The PDP serves as the basis of the intern's performance plan and will therefore serve as a key results document if one is needed to manage the relationship between the municipality and the intern. Supervisors may incorporate the PDP into the performance plan and add performance criteria to complete this plan. Elements not covered by the PDP, if appropriate to the job, may be added to the performance plan. A sample PDP has been included as **Annexure C**.

### **10. Interns must compile a Portfolio of Evidence**

A Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) is a collection of documents which demonstrate knowledge based skills and work you have undertaken to be assessed as evidence to meet the required skills outcomes.

The purpose of the PoE is to document internship experience for later use by interns to complete an exit evaluation that will confirm the intern's competencies acquired during their contract. Interns are required to develop a portfolio of evidence of the experience gained during the internship programme including the work Rotation Plan signed off by the respective supervisors.

Interns are required to have their own PoE, which should be shown to the mentor and CFO to prove their competence in areas of the internship. Guidelines regarding the Preparation of the PoE are shown in **Annexure D** and the role of the PoE is shown in **Annexure E**.

### **11. Mentors**

Sound implementation of the internship programme requires that mentors be identified to support interns' on-the-job learning. A mentor is a person who guides a less experienced person by building trust and modelling positive behaviours. The chief financial officer, in consultation with the Human Resources Manager assists interns to identify their mentors. In the context of these guidelines, a mentor is deemed to be a counsellor, head of the BTO unit, tutor or coach.

It is recommended that a mentor be someone who is an expert in the relevant field within the area of study in the BTO structure. The mentor-intern relationship requires special attention and care to ensure that all the parties involved meet expectations and undergo a fulfilling and rewarding professional experience. Although he/she may wear many hats, the mentor's distinguishing characteristic is a commitment to the intern's professional and personal development.

It is advisable that this role be shared equally among supervisors as and when interns rotate within the BTO structure in line with their work rotation plans.

As a motivator, the mentor can encourage the interns to accept challenges they might otherwise shy away from. Consciously or unconsciously, good mentors know that it is far more important to empower than to teach. The mentor can serve as a

networking resource, guiding the intern toward opportunities. While not an expert on everything, the mentor can help identify the correct source for information. A more detail outline of the role of a mentor is given in **Annexure F**.

## **12. Duties of training coordinator(s)**

A municipal official required to assume the responsibilities of a training coordinator is expected to –

- act as a point of liaison between the municipality and the National and relevant Provincial Treasury in matters pertaining to the respective interns;
- familiarise himself/herself with internship guidelines (this document) and advise the municipality in this regard, as required;
- act on behalf of municipalities in all contractual documents relating to these guidelines;
- keep the management of the municipality and interns informed of all changes affecting the internship programme;
- ensure that the interns employed by the municipality have access to all the relevant instruments, documents and space to train ;
- establish that prospective interns possess the necessary minimum qualifications to enter into internship contracts;
- keep and maintain appropriate records or portfolio of evidence of the training experience of all interns under their control;
- plan the training programme of interns;
- inform both National Treasury and Provincial Treasury of any breaches of conditions of the internship;
- notify both National Treasury and Provincial Treasury when interns contracts are about to expire and request the necessary extension or notification of absorption to enable these stakeholders to update their records accordingly; and
- provide such information as the National and Provincial Treasury may require in the arbitration of a dispute between the employing municipality and an intern.
- Provide both National and Provincial Treasury with quarterly updates pertaining to the number of interns in the respective municipalities.

## **13. Priority training areas**

All interns must complete the freely available 6 modules of the MFMA Interactive DVD Learning to give them a broad overview of the MFMA and the related reforms. The following are recommended priority training areas that a municipality must consider in its endeavour to formulate a training action plan for an intern serving on the MFMIP:

- Strategic Management; Budgeting implementation and Performance Management;
- Accounting and Risk management;
- Governance and Legislation;
- Cost and Capital planning;
- Municipal IT support and Project Management;
- SCM and PPP;
- People Management.

The above areas and the related broad outcomes are highlighted in the specific SAQA Unit Standards and the Municipal Finance Management Programme accessible through this link <http://mfma.treasury.gov.za/TrainingandValidation/Pages/default.aspx>

The exact internship activities carried out by an intern are bound to reflect skills identified in the personal development plan and the regulated minimum competency levels.

In order to achieve the outcomes attributable to the priority training areas identified above, an intern has to spend a certain period of time on each specific item, which must be related to the intern's Personal Development Plan (PDP). In the context of an intern's PDP, the internship implementation team must determine the approximate duration of training for each area.

Outcomes used in an internship programme refer to contextually demonstrated end products of a training process. The internship requires both critical and specific outcomes. Specific outcomes are end products of a training process specific to the intern's occupation and field of training. They thus refer to what the intern will be able to do/know/understand at the end of the internship programme.

The outcomes for the priority training areas listed above are interdependent. By implication, an intern gaining experience in any one area will have valuable interaction with others. This work-based career-oriented training will be obtained through in-house training and formal education.

It is imperative that interns complete the MFMIP. The interns must sign internship contracts that reflect the contents of this guide in addition to the already completed employment contract. All the interns must get exposure in all priority training areas.

#### **14. Training records**

The training coordinator should keep a record of an intern's practical training experience from the date of the intern's first appointment. The record of practical training experience should be kept in a suitable form to enable evaluation of recorded work-based skills. An intern who fails to participate in the completion of relevant training records contravenes an important requirement of the internship contract. The records consist of:

- Weekly/Monthly training plans;
- Signed evaluation forms;
- Evaluation outcomes.

In instances where an intern was unable to complete the abovementioned documents due to proven absence of the sport structure from a municipality, an intern may not be unjustifiably penalised in this regard.

### **15. Evaluation of the training programme**

It is important to ensure that learning and skills development activities during the internship are evaluated so as to determine their suitability for the municipal finance management internship outcomes. Evaluation is done in order:

- to determine whether training objectives are being achieved;
- to gain information on how to improve the training;
- to decide whether to continue, expand or eliminate the training;
- to assess training and learning activities as they relate to improved organisational performance;
- to identify gaps and recommend corrective actions.

### **16. Supervisors' responsibilities**

Each municipality must identify an experienced official e.g. supervisor to be responsible for the day-to-day management of the interns. This supervisor should ideally be located in the Budget and Treasury Office. There is a possibility for a supervisor to also play a mentorship role depending on the capacity of the municipality to avail experienced officials to undertake the dual roles. Therefore, these guidelines provide municipalities with liberty to apply their minds in this regard for efficient and practical implementation of the programme.

It is required from the Supervisor to perform the following duties:

- Familiarise themselves with the governing requirements related to the internship programme including these guidelines;
- Meet regularly with the intern to review and discuss the intern's training progress and career goals;
- If the intern is having difficulty in obtaining experience in certain areas, suggest additional training and supplementary educational activities that may be helpful;
- Recognise the ethical responsibilities inherent in the supervisor/mentor-intern relationship;
- Be available as needed to provide assistance, advice and support;
- Listen attentively and respond empathetically to questions and concerns raised by the intern;

- Be receptive to feedback and new ideas.

### **17. Monitoring by supervisor**

The supervisor may agree with the interns on the practical schedule of meetings to review, assess and evaluate the intern's experience on the programme. The supervisor will review the following:

- The work done by the intern since the last review;
- The role of the intern;
- Steps that can be taken by the intern to address deficiencies in the practical training process;
- Examples of work executed by the intern;
- Internship-related problems experienced, and possible solutions;
- The extent to which the goals and objectives established in earlier meetings have been fulfilled;
- Career-related issues;
- Acknowledge good work and motivate the intern.

At the end of the meeting, the supervisor should document all work activities discussed with the intern.

### **18. Verification of the internship programme**

National Treasury with the support of the Provincial treasury will conduct scheduled evaluations and verification workshops. The following are some of the areas that will be evaluated:

- Validity of contracts;
- Validity of formal qualifications of appointed interns;
- Documented work rotation plans;
- Formal training opportunities in line with the minimum competency levels;
- Availability of mentors to support interns development;
- Stipends payable to interns; and others

It is imperative for National Treasury to receive the correct data on all interns as a transferring department of the DORA Financial Management Grant framework. The correct data and performance information on interns will assist National Treasury to plan, make a case and allocate for further disbursements of this grant in the Medium Term Expenditure Framework period.

Therefore, all municipalities are urged to release interns when the verification schedules are issued by National Treasury with the support of the respective Provincial Treasuries. Municipalities must notify both National and Provincial Treasury through the LG database or otherwise on any movements of interns.

Municipalities may not unilaterally terminate the interns' contracts without the knowledge of the transferring officer as this practice tends to inflate the interns' numbers and distort the programme performance information.

When interns are afforded permanent retention opportunities, municipalities must update National Treasury in this format:

Name and Surname	ID number	Internship period, e.g. 1 June 20xx to August 201x	Period of appointment e.g. September 201x to permanent	Position against which appointed e.g. Assistant Accountant
Joe Sample	9201040054180	1 June 2011 to 1 January 2014	1 September 2014 - Permanent	Assistant Accountant - Revenue

National Treasury supported by the respective Provincial Treasuries has now embarked on a process to verify and reconcile individual municipal data on internship presented through the FMG monthly expenditure reports with the quarterly and yearly verification workshops to improve on quality of information presented for programme audit purposes. Any inconsistencies found, if any, will be brought to the attention of both the Accounting Officer and CFO to correct at once.

Municipalities must note that it is imperative that the data credibility presented through these reports and verification process be maintained as these are utilised by National Treasury for policy directives in the MTEF process under the DoRA FMG framework.

## 19. Evaluations of Interns

Municipalities are responsible for evaluating the interns every four months. During the work period, interns must be provided with the necessary feedback on work done as per their daily logbook. Interns must also be given written feedback, within seven days of completing a relevant work assignment, by the head of the relevant department (or the supervisor assigned to the intern) on the extent to which they are meeting the programme's requirements and performance expectations. Such feedback should include –

- written notification of progress and related challenges (if any) that have been noted and the opportunity to discuss them;
- guidance regarding remedial steps (if remediable); and
- Substantive written feedback on the extent to which corrective actions are (un) successful in addressing the issues of concern.



For purposes of evaluation, interns are expected to be competent in all the priority training areas. Interns are considered competent if they are capable of executing tasks with minimal supervision.

## **20. Formal documentation of policies**

On commencement of the internship the municipality must make available to the intern, Provincial Treasury and all interested parties formal written policies and procedures that govern –

- recruitment and the qualifications required;
- administrative and financial arrangements;
- intern performance evaluation, feedback, retention and termination decisions;
- level of work achievement required for interns to be considered competent and to complete the internship programme; and
- Due process and grievance procedures for interns.

The policies and procedures should be consistent with all relevant national legislation and must be complied with by the municipality at all times.

## **21. Interns leave of absence opportunities**

Municipalities must recognise the internship programme as part of the talent pool and workforce that will add further value to the continued organisational human capital needs into the future. It is therefore, critical that human resource policies be adjusted to recognise this programme in all respects. In instances where such policies already recognise the internship programme as recommended, the following shall apply:

- **Study leave** -The Municipality shall give interns study leave in case they are attending the regulated MFMP training and for any qualifications that relates to the Municipal Finance;
- **Annual leave** - The annual leave shall be according to the Municipality's policy and /or the agreement as per the internship contract;
- **Maternity leave** - The Municipality shall use its own discretion, in line with its Human Resource policies to deal with maternity leave;
- **Other leave** - The Municipality shall use its own discretion, in line with its Human Resource policies to deal with any other leave request.

In either case, it is critical that the interns not be unduly prejudiced when a municipality applies its mind and policies in this regard. It is imperative that interns are allowed time to rest through leave allocation to improve on their efficiency. It may also be common practice across municipalities depending on policy directive to sell leave days or convert leave days into credits. We recommend that all due process must be followed in line with the municipal policies in this regard and if need be force

interns to take all the needed rest before converting any days to monetary compensation.

## **22. Recommended model for permanent placement**

The following model is recommended for the permanent placement of interns:

- The municipality could amend the BTO organisation structure (with Municipal Council approval) to include internship programme as a two year stepping stone towards the appropriately identified permanent positions. For example, Assistant Accountant;
- The interns must on appointment be given permanent placement in line with the above given consideration;
- The recommended and reasonable salary for placement on the identified position after a two year migration may be +20% of interns' stipend or whatever it is reasonable based on the position. However, a municipality may remunerate more if their respective budget allows and provision for this purpose has been made.

It is envisaged that this model may assist interns to focus and commit more to their learning with the understanding that they have been taken permanently subject to continuous assessment and positive outcomes on the one hand while the municipality focuses on training for retention on the other. This model will require absolute commitment from all stakeholders to changing the landscape of LG for the better and a concerted effort to capitalise on unemployed graduates to make the desired change in this regard also consistent with Presidential Outcomes approach.

## **23. Cancellation of the internship programme**

In view of the legal nature of the municipal finance management internship contract and to avoid the possibility of an action for damages suffered as a result of breach of contract, the parties should formally record their agreement to cancel the contract.

The intern's contract may be cancelled due to the following circumstances:

- If the intern is in breach of the internship contract;
- If the intern fails to report for work even though he or she is not entitled to leave or sick leave in terms of the employment contract;
- If the interns fails to attend scheduled training and also does not submit the required POE as per the scheduled time;
- If the intern commits a criminal offence relating to corruption, fraud and related offences.

A further list of Q&A on internship programme has been included as **Annexure G**. However, all queries related to the internship programme may be sent to [mfma@treasur.gov.za](mailto:mfma@treasur.gov.za)

## **ANNEXURE A: Draft Advert for the Internship Programme**

### **MUNICIPAL FINANCE MANAGEMENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME,**

#### **MFMIP (x5 Positions)**

#### **24 to 36 Months CONTRACT**

**Remuneration:** Between R90000 – R100000. (All inclusive and dependent on year of internship)

**Requirements:** The candidate should hold as a minimum, a three-year Bachelor's Degree or National Diploma with majors in Accounting, Economics, Finance, Risk Management and/or Auditing, among others.

The intern will sign both an employment contract and an internship agreement. The purpose of the agreement is to ensure commitment to the programme which require, amongst other, full participation in the educational and workplace assignments and observance of policies and procedures of the municipality. The candidate must be between the ages of 21 and 35.

**Internship Overview:** The MFMIP is a structured professional training and work experience programme with the goal of providing high quality training and practical exposure in all aspects of a Municipal Budget and Treasury Office which is governed by the Municipal Finance Management Act, Act 56 of 2003 and the underlying reforms. The programme has a logical training sequence that builds on the skills and competencies acquired during University and Technikon training. It ends with a qualification in Municipal Finance Management in line with the Municipal Regulations on Minimum Competency Levels, Gazette 29967 of 15 June 2007.

*Please note: No faxed applications will be accepted. A covering letter clearly stating the position you are applying for, certified copies of academic qualifications and a copy of your curriculum vitae must accompany all applications. Short listed candidates will be required to produce original copies of academic qualifications on the day of the interview.*

*Correspondence will ONLY be entered into with short listed candidates. If you do not receive notifications regarding your application within one month of the closing date, kindly assume that your application was unsuccessful. The municipality reserves the right not to make any appointment.*

*Please forward all application to: The Municipal Manager, Your municipality, PO Box 1234, Your Area, 1234*

*Closing date: xx April 20xx*

## **ANNEXURE B: Sample Internship Agreement**

### INTERNSHIP AGREEMENT

Entered into by and between:

ABC MUNICIPALITY

duly represented by JOHN DOE in his capacity as MUNICIPAL MANAGER (hereinafter referred to as “THE MUNICIPALITY”)

and

JOE SOAP

(ID: 0000000000000) of 44 PINE STREET, ABC TOWN, 0700 (hereinafter referred to as “THE INTERN”)

WHEREAS:

- It is generally accepted that most municipalities have gaps in terms of financial management skills;
- The National Treasury has undertaken to assist municipalities in terms of capacity-building in respect of the DORA Financial Management Grant framework;; and
- The FMG Framework conditions envisages the appointment and training of interns by municipalities as a way of addressing the identified skills gap in municipalities

NOW THEREFORE the parties agree as follows:

Part A: Terms and conditions of agreement

1. Rights of the parties

1.1 Intern

The intern shall have the following rights:

1.1.1 To have, at the beginning of the internship, copies of all written policies and regulations governing this internship

1.1.2 To be educated and trained in terms of this Agreement and the National Treasury’s Municipal Financial Management Internship Programme Guidelines (“the Guidelines”)

1.1.3 To have access to the required resources to receive training in terms of the internship

1.1.4 To have his or her performance in training assessed and to be granted access to the assessment results

1.1.5 To receive a recognised formal qualification upon successful completion of the regulated programme, the Municipal Finance Management Programme;

1.1.6 To raise grievances in writing with the municipality concerning any shortcomings in the training given under the internship programme.

## 1.2 Municipality

The municipality has the right to require the intern to –

1.2.1 perform duties in terms of this Agreement; and

1.2.2 comply with the rules and regulations governing the affairs of the municipality.

## 2. Duties of the parties

### 2.1 Intern

The intern must –

2.1.1 work for the municipality as part of the learning process;

2.1.2 be available for and participate in all learning and work experience required by the internship;

2.1.3 comply with the workplace policies and procedures of the municipality;

2.1.4 complete any daily logs or any written assessment tools supplied by the municipality to record relevant workplace experience;

2.1.5 attend all study periods and theoretical learning sessions, also after hours (evenings and/or Saturdays), with the education and training provider and undertake all learning conscientiously; and

2.1.6 complete and maintain a professional portfolio of evidence in accordance with the Guidelines.

### 2.2 Municipality

The municipality must –

2.2.1 comply with its duties in terms of all applicable legislation, including but not limited to the following:

- Basic Conditions of Employment Act (Act 75 of 1997)
- Skills Development Act ( Act 97 of 1998)
- Labour Relations Act ( Act 66 of 1995)

- Employment Equity Act ( Act 55 of 1998)
- Occupational Health and Safety Act ( Act 85 of 1993)
- Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act ( Act 130 of 1993)

2.2.2 provide the intern with appropriate training in the work environment to achieve the relevant outcomes required by the internship;

2.2.3 provide the intern with adequate assistance at work, specifically by appointing or designating a mentor for the intern in accordance with the Guidelines;

2.2.4 ensure that the intern has a personal development plan in terms of the Guidelines;

2.2.5 release the intern during normal working hours to attend off-the-job education and training required by the internship;

2.2.6 pay the intern the agreed stipend both while the intern is working for the municipality and while the learner is attending approved off-the-job training;

2.2.7 conduct on-the-job assessment, or cause it to be conducted;

2.2.8 appoint or designate a training coordinator to keep up-to-date records of learning and periodically discuss progress with the intern;

2.2.9 if the intern was not in the employment of the municipality at the time of concluding this Agreement, advise the intern of –

a) the terms and conditions of his or her employment, including any learning allowance; and

b) the municipality's workplace policies and procedures.

2.2.10 apply the same disciplinary, grievance and dispute resolution procedures to the intern as to other employees; and 2.2.11 comply with any other obligation it has in terms of the Guidelines.

### 3. Termination of agreement

This internship agreement terminates –

3.1 on the termination date stipulated in Part B of this Agreement; or

3.2 on an earlier date if –

3.2.1 the intern successfully completes the internship;

3.2.2 the intern is fairly dismissed by the municipality for a reason related to the intern's conduct or capacity as an employee;

3.2.3 the municipality and the intern agree to terminate the Agreement; or

3.2.4 the National Treasury approves a written application to terminate the Agreement by the intern or, if good cause is shown, by the municipality.

#### 4. Disputes

4.1 A dispute about the interpretation or application of any provision of this Agreement may be referred to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA).

4.2 A dispute about the termination of this Agreement must be referred to the National Treasury, who may appoint a recognised arbitrator to settle the dispute through arbitration.

4.3 A dispute about the termination of the employment contract between the parties may be referred to the CCMA.

4.4 The municipality shall bear all costs associated with the arbitration of a dispute contemplated in 4.2.

#### 5. Declaration of parties

The parties declare that they understand that this Agreement is legally binding and commit themselves to the rights and duties contained herein.

#### Part B: Details of the internship and the parties to this agreement

Please note the following:

If the intern is not already in the employ of the municipality, the intern and the municipality must conclude a contract of employment.

If the intern is a minor, his or her parent or guardian must complete section 3.

If a group of accredited education and training providers are party to this Agreement, one of the providers must perform the function of lead education and training provider. The lead education and training provider must complete section 5 and details of the other accredited education and training providers must be attached on a separate sheet.

### 6. Internship details

6.1 Name of internship:

---

6.2 Commencement date of internship agreement:

---

6.3 Termination date of internship agreement:

---

## 7. Intern details

7.1 Full name: \_\_\_\_\_

7.2 Identity number:  
\_\_\_\_\_

7.3 Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

7.4 Gender: Male / Female (please circle appropriate selection)

7.5 Race: African Indian Coloured White

Other (specify):

7.6 Do you have a disability, as contemplated by the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998?2

Yes (specify): No

7.7 Home address:

7.8 Postal address (if different from above):

7.9 email address:\_\_\_\_\_

7.10 What language(s) do you speak at home?

7.11 Are you a South African citizen? No (specify and attach documents indicating your status, Yes for example permanent residence, study permit, etc.)

7.12 Highest qualification (e.g. National Diploma, BSc, B.Com.):

7.13 What is the main focus of your highest qualification?

7.14 Have you previously undertaken an internship? Yes (specify title and code)  
No

2 The Employment Equity Act defines a disability as a long-term or recurring physical or mental impairment which substantially limits prospects of entry into, or advancement in, employment.

7.15 Were you in the employ of the municipality before concluding this Agreement?

Yes No

7.16 If you were unemployed before concluding this Agreement, state for how long:

7.17 If you were employed, when did you start work with the municipality?

## 8. Parent or guardian details



(To be completed if intern is a minor, i.e. an unmarried person under 21 years)

8.1 Full name:

---

8.2 Identity number:

---

8.3 Home address:

8.4 Postal address (if different from above):

8.5 Telephone number (home and work):

8.6 E-mail address:

---

## 9. Municipality details

9.1 Name of municipality:

---

9.2 Physical address: 9.3 Postal address (if different from 9.2):

9.4 Name of contact person:

---

9.5 Telephone No:

---

9.6 Fax No:

---

9.7 E-mail address:

---

10. Are the intern's terms and conditions of employment determined by a document of general application (e.g. sectoral determination, bargaining council agreement, collective agreement)?

Yes (specify): No

11 Attach a copy of a document reflecting the conditions of employment for interns who were not employed by the municipality when this Agreement was concluded (e.g. contract of employment, written particulars of employment).

Intern's signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of witness

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Municipality's signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of witness \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or guardian's signature \_\_\_\_\_

(Only if the intern is a minor)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of witness \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Education and training provider's signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of witness \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 12. Offer of permanent retention to interns

12.1 While it is the intension of this programme to build capacity on a sustainable manner by retaining trained interns, the municipality may struggle to secure the said permanent opportunities due to a number of reasons including budgeting and BTO structure, among others.

12.2 If an intern is offered a permanent placement opportunity within the municipality, he/she may be obliged to take it for a minimum of 24 months period or repay the municipality an equivalent of costs incurred to train him/her under the minimum competency levels if so concluded.

12.2 This provision is subject to the reasonable offer extended to the intern which may be an additional 20 per cent of the initial internship stipend or more depending on the capacity of the municipality to pay more.

## **ANNEXURE C: Sample Personal Development Plan**

### **Introduction**

National Treasury is committed to the personal and professional development of all municipal finance management interns. This personal development plan (PDP) offers interns a means to analyse their own development needs, set specific short and long-term goals and decide which opportunities best meet those needs and goals in line with the municipal financial management internship outcomes. The PDP will also assist the immediate mentor or supervisor in supporting the intern's development.

The PDP process should stimulate useful introspection and focus planning. The PDP should be reviewed every four months and updated annually. The intern should keep one copy, provide his or her immediate supervisor or mentor with one copy and file the original with the municipality's human resource unit.

Completion of the PDP is compulsory as it is part of the internship process. It may therefore require inputs from the municipal Manager, CFO and training coordinator in some cases.

### **Definition of terms to be used in the PDP:**

- Short-term – will be accomplished in one to two years;
- Long-range – accomplished within five years
- Personal goals – those skills or activities the intern would like to undertake because they will improve his or her personal life, e.g. time management skills in order to improve the work and personal environment;
- Professional goals – those activities that will contribute to the effectiveness of what the intern is currently doing and plans to do (e.g. database management; preparation for a professional qualifying examination; refining of leadership skills in order to apply for a new position);
- Career goals – activities undertaken to advance the intern within the municipality structures beyond what he or she is currently doing.

### **Goal setting**

This section is mandatory:

- List your short-term individual/professional/career goals (one year);
- List your long-range individual/professional/career (five years).

Interns are expected to set their own goals and not work on what they feel others think they should do. The goals should be:

- S – specific
- M – measurable
- A – achievable
- R – realistic
- T – time-bound

Interns need to prepare their own PDP with the assistance of a mentor and the training coordinator.

**PERSONAL/PROFESSIONAL PROFILE – SELF-ASSESSMENT**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Job title: \_\_\_\_\_ Department/Directorate:

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail:

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone:

\_\_\_\_\_

The following section is optional; you may work on it on your own:

- At what stage of your career are you now?
- At what stage of your life are you?
- Where do you want to be in your career life in five years' time?
- What do you want to be doing in your personal life in five years' time?
- List your strengths, interests and areas of proficiency or areas of potential growth

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES**

Indicate the specific programmes you wish to take advantage of to support your goals.

List training, workshops or classes that you would like to attend to achieve your goals:

Other activities

For assistance in developing your PDP, call **Mentor/Supervisor** on ..... Once the personal development plan (PDP) has been completed, the mentor, the training coordinator and the intern should sign it and include it with the intern's evaluation material.

Intern's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor/supervisor's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **ANNEXURE D: Preparation of the professional Portfolio of Evidence**

Interns are required to have their own portfolio of evidence that can be shown to the mentor/supervisor or a delegated official to prove the intern's competence in certain areas of the internship. A portfolio maintained by an intern must contain the following:

- A copy of the intern's identity document or passport
- A brief curriculum vitae (CV) showing the following personal details:
  - Academic achievements and dates (highest educational level)
  - Employment details such as dates, organisation, jobs held, positions held, extent of function, extent of responsibility, specialist duties performed and other personal experience
  - Evidence in the form of copies of membership of relevant bodies, relevant licenses, relevant qualifications, formal and informal education certificates, diplomas and credits achieved, and attested affidavits of lost records
- A copy of the skills development training programme for interns
- Periodic evaluation feedback from the supervisor
- The intern's self-evaluation reports
- The intern's mentor's name, job title, contact telephone number and e-mail address.
- A copy of the internship contract.

The process of portfolio development can be labour-intensive and time-consuming. Interns should thus start collecting potential documents early in the internship and keep a reflective journal to remind them how these documents contributed to their professional growth and accomplishments.

The professional portfolio of evidence represents a carefully selected collection of exemplary documents that highlight the intern's best work and accomplishments. It should be organised around the internship programme objectives identified in the internship plan. An easy way for the intern to do this is to divide the portfolio into labelled sections, one for each personal objective. A table of contents is essential to the portfolio, regardless of how the intern chooses to organise work-related experiences. Using a table of contents in conjunction with colour coded section tabs is recommended for ease of inspection.

At the beginning of the portfolio, an introduction should provide an overview of the materials that follow. The introduction may include professional goals and commitments, an overview of the objectives of the internship programme and their relationship to the intern's professional goals, the rationale for the

inclusion of the documents that follow and comments about how the documents support the objectives of the internship.

## **ANNEXURE E: The Portfolio of Evidence**

### **1. Objectives**

The objectives of this annexure are threefold:

To demonstrate the importance of preparing and utilising portfolios in the municipal finance management internship:

- To highlight the component parts that are to be included in an intern's professional portfolio of evidence;
- To develop an understanding of how an intern can compile and present his or her portfolio in a professional manner

### **2. Preliminary activities**

Itemised below are activities to help municipal finance management interns attain the required objectives regarding preparation of a professional portfolio of evidence. The interns will be close to meeting the stated objectives if they –

- read through this guide to understand the basic dynamics of portfolio preparation;
- ask the training coordinator, career advisor or mentor about portfolio preparation and related activities that are most appropriate for their career planning needs.

In the present competitive labour market, effectively showcasing relevant knowledge and skills to an employer is critical to a successful career. Along with a tailored résumé, a professional portfolio of evidence can help provide further evidence of professional qualifications, skills, knowledge and abilities. The purpose of this annexure to the municipal finance management internship guidelines is to assist interns in organising their own professional portfolio of evidence and using it as a tool in professional development.

### **3. Meaning of a portfolio of evidence**

A portfolio is a personalised collection of materials. There are two types of portfolios: personal and professional. In a personal portfolio, the focus is generally on specific life events, for example one's birth, graduation and wedding. This type of portfolio highlights memories that are more personal in nature. This annexure focuses on the creation of a professional portfolio.

A professional portfolio of evidence –

- provides a reflection of an intern as a professionally minded person;



- provides a record of an intern's educational and work-related activities undertaken for professional development purposes;
- shows how an intern performs/excels on the job or in the formal educational environment;
- provides information on what an intern has accomplished, i.e. tangible evidence required for the evaluation of technical skills;
- provides information on efforts made by an intern at developing and acquiring new skills.

#### **4. Needs served by a portfolio of evidence**

- a. It forms a basis for the evaluation of technical skills relevant to the municipal finance management internship.
- b. It markets the intern's capabilities in job assessments.
- c. The intern may use portfolio of evidence (POE) as a tool to negotiate promotions and raises.
- d. The intern will find a POE useful in support of applications for bonuses, scholarships, or grants.
- e. A POE may also serve as documentary proof of the quality and quantity of an intern's professional development.
- f. The intern may use a POE to demonstrate prior work or learning experiences for educational credit, normally granted where recognition of prior learning is formalised.

#### **5. Material that can be included in a professional portfolio of evidence**

##### **Items to be included in the POE include the following:**

- Résumé or curriculum vitae (interns are encouraged to ask the training coordinator or their mentors for information on curriculum vitae preparation);
- Signed internship and employment contract;
- MFMA Interactive DVD Learning certificates;
- Transcripts from schools and/or universities attended;
- Evidence of professional affiliations and memberships;
- Licenses or professional certifications;
- Letters of reference and commendation;
- Evidence of specific skills (e.g. public speaking, leadership, report writing) and related assessment feedback;
- Work samples (e.g. class projects, items produced during internship or co-op experiences) and the related assessment feedback;
- Work-related evaluations by supervisors and peers

As can be observed from the above, interns' POEs can comprise quite a varied collection. During an assessment of technical skills, it would be impossible and unwise to go through every item with the assessor. A better approach is to select

items from the POE to be included in a smaller assessment portfolio. This portfolio can be presented during an assessment to add evidence of important knowledge or skills interns possess that are relevant to the municipal finance management internship programme. The interns are advised to take their cue from the assessor's instructions with regard to an appropriate number of items required in any given assessment of internship outcomes.

## **6. Advantages of developing and using an assessment portfolio**

Assessment portfolios should include the best examples of interns' skills and abilities from their POEs that are particularly relevant to the technical skills and knowledge to be assessed. When interns customise their assessment portfolio to the requirements of the specific internship outcomes, it demonstrates that they have done their work assignments and understood the nature of the outcomes being assessed.

Developing a POE helps interns prepare themselves for technical skills assessments by allowing them to think critically about their work experiences and accomplishments. When preparing for an assessment of technical skills, this process will enable interns to highlight specific experiences that led to the development of valuable workplace skills. In addition, preparing a POE allows interns to see how well their professional developments match the outcomes of the municipal finance management internship.

## **7. Points on compiling an assessment portfolio**

- Place items in a loose-leaf binder
- Use sheet protectors
- Use copies (keep a master copy of all items)
- Make use of index tabs and/or title pages to separate the sections
- Keep it to a manageable size
- Leave out page numbers to make it easier to add and move items around
- Make use of consistent headings and placement of work samples
- Put sections together according to what the assessor will be looking for (training outcomes)
- Ensure that it looks professional and is error-free

## **8. POE presentation format**

A. Introductory title page

B. Table of contents

The table of contents can be organised in one of two ways:

- Chronologically: Sections are packaged according to the job description and date the portfolio samples represent. This organisational scheme will help an individual who has been in a particular field over time demonstrate increasing improvement and accomplishment;
- Functionally: Sections are packaged according to job description only. For example, sections may be packaged under the heading of “Computer Skills”, “Financial Reporting” and “Legislation”. This organisational scheme works well when an individual has varied experiences that need to be pulled together to demonstrate ability in specified areas.

### C. Work-related evidence

The sample technical evaluation form and daily logbook are to be used to support work-related evidence an intern may adduce on assessment. Where possible, provide a reflection statement in either paragraph or bulleted format that contains the following information:

- A brief description of the outcome/skill demonstrated and the context in which the skill or outcome was noted (e.g. “Drew up the agenda and arranged a venue for orientation of finance clerks on 30 January 2004” or “Chaired a meeting for the payroll office on 24 March 2003”);
- A detailed list of the competencies developed or revealed through technical evaluation (It is this second part of the reflection statement that makes the portfolio element especially useful in the assessment process)

## 9. Assessment portfolios

Assessment portfolios should –  
look professional;

- reflect an individual’s actual skills and knowledge;
- be occupationally and outcomes-focused ;
- be easy to update;
- be easy for the assessor and supervisor to review quickly;
- be able to stand alone without explanation; support information presented in the résumé.

## 10. Using an assessment portfolio

Before interns attend an assessment, it may be beneficial for them to role-play using their assessment portfolio with friends or colleagues. This exercise will help them feel more at ease in handling their portfolio during an assessment. Once at the assessment venue, interns should “relax” and look for opportune moments to use their portfolios to address assessor questions. Remember that interns’ assessment portfolios include reflection statements, which should make it easier for them to feel confident in showcasing their abilities to an assessor. In addition, interns’

assessment portfolios can help remind them of information they wish to share with an assessor if their nervousness is likely to get the better of them.

## **11. Electronic portfolios**

Electronic portfolios use interactive multimedia to increase the range and type of materials that can be included as evidence of learning. They take full advantage of the advanced capacity of desktop computers to include text, graphics, animation, sound and video. There may come a day when the majority of assessors and supervisors require interns to submit electronic portfolios.

## **ANNEXURE F: The role of a mentor in the development of a municipal finance intern**

### **1. Introduction**

You can ask any accomplished professional who their mentor was as they developed their professional career and every one of them will be able to name at least one person immediately. No one gets to the front without some help – and out in front is where an accomplished professional would like to be. The importance of a role model in the municipal finance management interns' professional development cannot be overemphasised. In the context of the municipal finance management internship programme, a mentor is someone who models behaviour, offers advice and criticism and allows the intern to advance his or her own career.

The National Treasury (NT) recommends that municipal finance management interns should, with the help of the CFO and the municipal manager, identify mentors at the beginning of their internship programme. Once a mentor is appointed, preferably at the the beginning of the municipal financial year, it is recommended that their roles in supporting these talent pipelines be recognised accordingly as a performance deliverable. This will ensure that a municipality takes ownership of the interns' development, among others. The NT has a few hints to help interns in selecting these persons, as well as some do's and don'ts about working with mentors.

### **2. Where interns can find mentors**

Mentors surface in the strangest places. Municipal finance management interns cannot simply select someone and then just attach themselves in order to soak up experience, skills and information. Owing to the fact that the mentorship process works as a two-way operation, the mentors must agree to work with the interns and must have some interest in their future professional development. It follows that one of the criteria is proximity. The interns' mentors must be close enough to them geographically to permit them to obtain timely and relevant feedback. The NT wishes to suggest to interns to look in their own municipality for accomplished accounting and finance professionals. The CFO or other officers and international advisors in the interns' municipality or neighbouring municipalities may be good potential mentors. A staff member employed by the interns' municipality might be a good mentor if that person has coaching, financial management and leadership skills.

A second criterion is financial management experience. The interns' mentor should be someone who has demonstrated financial management leadership qualities from which interns can learn as their own professional skills emerge. Municipal finance management interns associated with professional bodies can call on them for names of accounting and finance professionals from their regions. These persons usually have good memories of professional issues.

The final criterion is willingness to mentor. Some outstanding accounting and finance professionals do not know how to mentor or choose not to be involved in mentorship

activities. Some are just too busy with their jobs and lives. In cases where a mentor is a staff member of the municipality, the NT recommends that mentorship activities undertaken by the mentor be included as part of the key results document. Other accounting and finance professionals have had bad mentoring experiences and do not wish to participate. Some simply do not want the responsibility. Such persons are in the minority. Most accounting and finance professionals remember the people who helped them get to where they are and are more than happy to support eager interns in their professional development. All other things being equal, it is a compliment to the professionals in the field of accounting and financial management to be asked and a privilege to share experience and insight with the intern. The interns will never know until they ask.

### **3. What interns can expect from their mentors**

**Advice:** Interns can expect their mentors to offer them advice on questions or problems based on experience and insight. They should feel free to ask their mentors about previous experiences with similar problems and possible outcomes. Also ask about potential ramifications that might not occur to them.

**Continuous feedback:** Interns are expected to inform their mentors what happened in order to receive feedback on whether the actions they took were the best possible and suggested alternatives. This type of interaction is very valuable to interns as it tests their newly acquired skills of looking at all sides of a problem and exploring possible outcomes.

**Role modelling:** Interns should accompany their mentors in performing their official functions so they can see professional leadership in action. They should ask polite questions about why decisions were made or actions were taken. However, they should be aware that there might be some information that their mentors cannot share with them. They should therefore not feel offended; this behaviour is called ethics and is also behaviour worth imitating.

### **4. What mentors can expect from interns**

**Assistance:** Owing to the fact that mentoring is a two-way process, the interns' side of the relationship is filled with action. One of the reasons working accounting and finance professionals may be willing to take on municipal financial management interns in a mentoring role is time management. These working professionals cannot do everything themselves, so interns who wish to be mentored should expect "to do the walk" for their mentor. They may be asked to make copies of minutes of a meeting, go to the library and look up information, get to workshop venues early and help set up and greet people. They should use each of these opportunities as a way to gain experience for the day when they are the leaders.

**Code of conduct:** Interns must adhere to the code of conduct as prescribed by the municipality. This includes conducting themselves professionally with their mentors

and supervisors and other officials within the municipality. Most working professionals are very busy people. Good mentors make time for what they deem core to the entire internship process. Interns must manage this element in their interaction with their mentors by making the best use of the time they have together. They should have their questions written out so that they do not waste time trying to think of them or have to call again later to get clarification. If their mentors decline to see them at a particular time, they should accept this outcome and return at an agreed time.

**Loyalty:** Interns must be loyal to their mentors. They may not agree with all of the ideas or plans they hear in their privileged position. Nevertheless, they must never criticise their mentor before others or work to undermine the mentors' activities. If they cannot ethically agree with what they are seeing, they should sever the mentoring relationship. That being the case, interns' actions are to be guided by their own conscience. However, interns must not remain in mentoring relationships while undermining persons from whom they are seeking the help. That would be considered unethical behaviour.

**Confidentiality:** Qualified professionals are bound to be leaders and are often privy to sensitive information that would not serve the best interests of the organisation to be commonly known. Such professionals and the governing bodies they serve are often given a great deal of information from which they must select the best solution. Usually information in executive sessions (from which interns will probably be excluded) and from specific governing bodies' activities is privileged. Interns may also overhear privileged information while working with their mentors. Interns will learn with time that information is a powerful tool in financial management. Therefore, interns should not be tempted to share it just to improve their own status or importance. Interns' mentors have a right to assume that they will be loyal and will keep activities confidential. Interns are encouraged to ask their mentors if there is a question about what is and is not confidential.

## **5. Do's and don'ts for municipal finance management interns**

Municipal Finance Management interns are expected to ask their mentors for advice if they are troubled or deeply concerned about a course of action. However, they are not expected to waste their mentors' time on trivial matters that they can figure out themselves or that are not really that important to the municipal finance management internship.

Interns can request advice if they are unable to make a decision. They should not ask for advice if the decision has already been made just to see what their mentors will say.

Interns can ask for advice and a reasonable amount of their mentor's time. However, they should not ask for money, contributions or exposure to certain areas unless their mentors suggest it first. Interns should endeavour to recognise and thank their

mentors for the time and energy invested in their career development. They are not expected to offer money. A mentoring relationship does not usually involve money. Interns should utilise every opportunity to make their mentors look good. They should not criticise or deride their mentors in front of others to make themselves look great. Interns should always treat their mentors as they would want to be treated.

In a mentoring relationship, interns will soak up knowledge, skills and experience. Interns are therefore expected to reciprocate by serving as mentors to some young aspiring finance and accounting professionals at some time in future.

To recap, interns are expected to –

- manage the relationship by establishing first contact and by continuing the relationship through e-mail, phone or personal communication;
- show a willingness to attend mentor programme events and/or to plan activities that could enhance their mentoring relationship;
- exhibit a sincere interest in developing a personal and professional relationship that supports their efforts toward completion of the municipal finance management internship and securing positions that match the skills they have acquired;
- maintain their zeal and go for it!



## **ANNEXURE G: Questions and Answers about the Internship Programme**

### **Where is the National Treasury located?**

The National Treasury office is located at 40 Church Square within the central business district of Pretoria. The Chief Directorate for Local Government is housed on the third floor.

### **How do I apply for an internship programme?**

Candidates who are interested in this programme and meet the minimum entry requirements can submit their applications to the respective neighbouring municipalities. This programme is implemented in all municipalities in the country. Most municipalities advertise this programme in the local newspapers.

### **How long will I take to complete my internship?**

Application for the internship should be filed with the relevant municipality in response to a specific advert placed in one of the newspapers that has a wide readership. The municipality makes the selection and signs an internship contract with the successful interns. Once the municipality has received a signed internship agreement and all other required paperwork (i.e. the writing of a personal development plan, updated CV and initial assessment) the decision is made by the municipality to start the internship programme. The internship is designed to last for at least 24 months. An intern is not expected to serve as an intern for a period in exceeding 36 months. An internship period of 36 months is considered by municipalities to be the most appropriate duration to enable full development of the interns.

### **What is a Personal Development Plan?**

This is a road map intended to guide the intern and the employing municipality. It is used to identify skills to be developed through the internship process. It provides a summary of skill gaps that need to be closed through specific training interventions such as lectures and special work assignments. PDPs are prepared by the intern with the assistance of the training coordinator or the mentor.

### **Why do I need to prepare a Personal Development Plan?**

Not all interns have the same training background. An intern is required to prepare a PDP so as to obtain common understanding with the municipality on the training programme, training activities to be undertaken and their timing. Because of the practical nature of the internship placements, much of the work will involve practical assignments and formal lectures. A PDP assists the municipality to plan the required work activities and lectures needed to develop the intern over a period not exceeding 36 months.

### **What happens to an intern who fails to prepare a Personal Development Plan?**

It will be hard to implement a meaningful training programme without a personal development plan. The preparation of a personal development plan is not a voluntary matter. An intern who fails to prepare a personal development plan contravenes an important requirement of the municipal internship programme.

### **What is the weighting between formal lectures and work-based assignments?**

This can vary. It all depends on the skill gaps identified by the internship implementation team and the intern. Remember that the theoretical training and knowledge underpins all practical aspects of the internship programme.

### **Are the identified training areas optional?**

No. All interns must be competent in all areas of the internship to qualify for the position of a Municipal Financial Officer. The exit qualification, Certificate Municipal Financial Management, SAQA ID 48965 to be achieved with one of the LGSETA accredited and National Treasury listed training provider is mandatory for all interns.

### **How many skill development workshops must an intern attend?**

The training coordinator and the ETP are required to specify the number of skill development training sessions in line with the personal development plan. Skills development workshops are meant to equip the interns with the necessary knowledge needed to execute practical work assignment(s).

### **What facilities are there at municipality level to support skill development?**

Each municipality is required to have a training coordinator who reports to an internship implementation team. The training coordinator is to arrange for Internet connection, office space, a desk and a telephone for each intern. If you have a laptop computer, you may wish to bring this along so that you can work in libraries, if necessary. Computers allocated to interns should be loaded with relevant software (e.g. MFMA DVD) that would normally support the business applications relevant to the internship programme.

### **What is the dress code for interns?**

You will not be required to wear a suit at all times. Smart clothes such as trousers, blouses, shirts and skirts are fine.

### **How many additional interns will municipalities be taking on board in future?**

The internship programme is a capacity-building initiative of the National Treasury. All municipalities are required to have at least five interns. Hence, there will be an overlap of interns starting and finishing their internship programme. It is also hoped

that municipalities will continue the programme from their own funding sources to supplement the DoRA Financial Management Grant allocation.

### **How are interns selected for the internship programme?**

The NT, through the Financial Management Grant framework conditions compels municipalities to employ at least five interns, who must be holders of a higher education qualification in Accounting, Finance, Internal Auditing or Economics. The normal recruitment policies in place at the municipalities are used to recruit interns.

### **What is the average age of interns?**

The ages of interns ranges from 18 to 35.

### **What are the typical office hours?**

The standard working day at most municipalities hosting interns is 8 am to 5 pm. A typical working day will be defined in the employment contract. The hours interns spend on practical work assignments will vary with the programme requirements for formal lectures and in consultation with the person an intern works with.

### **What am I going to be working on?**

There are many different projects on which interns could be asked to work on a rotational basis. This will be discussed with the intern at the outset and documented as part of the work Rotation Plan for a given period within the Budget and Treasury unit. Obviously, municipalities will try to tailor the projects to develop specific skills not covered by interns' previous learning background but key to financial reforms. There may be an opportunity to work on several projects covering different municipal financial management issues.

### **Can I have a paid job whilst working as an intern?**

The internship is a full-time job with extra study and training requirements. For this reason, interns will not find working hours at the municipality flexible enough to accommodate another paid job. Interns' spare time is to be used to follow up on training issues raised by their facilitators or mentors and to finish value-adding projects.

### **Who will I be working with?**

Depending on the project you are working on, you will either report to members of staff (CFOs, municipal manager) in the municipality or deal via electronic mail and phone with other prominent (distinguished) training facilitators.

### **How will I be treated?**

Interns are to be treated as staff on an internship (someone to be developed) and will be invited to office parties, celebrations and staff lunches. Interns work in accordance with the existing Basic Conditions of Employment Act.

### **Are all interns paid the same salary each year?**

Interns are paid a stipend to enable them to move from home to work, dress themselves and be able to cover amenable costs associated with training. Further details are contained elsewhere in this guideline. A stipend for interns is an issue dealt with in the employment contract. NT also recognises the fact that some municipalities may opt to award salary adjustments to interns who have shown progress in their internship activities. However, these adjustments would have to be financed from own resources if outside the given threshold if financed solely for the DoRA FMG Grant.

### **What will a typical day be like while I am an intern?**

It is difficult to summarise what a typical day is like for an intern. This is because a typical working day is dependent on the type of project an intern is working on. Below are some examples of the type of work that may go with the internship programme, although interns could be involved in a number of different projects at the same time. The work interns do is not similar to writing an essay that will not be used when they leave. Interns are expected to contribute to the delivery of services to residents of the municipality. On some days interns will be required to carry out research and write reports, while other days may be spent at the library of the relevant ETP. Sometimes interns may be required to travel to work-related meetings with their mentor(s).

### **Will I hold a senior management position at the municipality upon completion of a two-year internship programme?**

Interns must be provided with opportunities to be placed on entry level position on completion of their internship contract. The intern will have to work hard in order to climb the career ladder in the municipality within a reasonable time and relevant experience must have been acquired in line with the seniority of the position on offer.

### **What is the role of the Education and Training Providers (ETPs) in the internship? Who accredits ETPs?**

ETPs are accredited by the relevant ETQA SETA (e.g. LGSETA and HEQC). The ETPs are expected to provide formal training and assessment in the identified priority training areas of the internship programme. This is based on the understanding that certificates of participation are no longer recognised in South Africa, as they are not based on assessed competencies.

### **Should trade unions be represented on the internship implementation team?**

The NT does not prescribe the membership of an internship implementation team. A trade union representative may be involved in terms of the HR policies of a municipality. The use of an internship implementation team is one of the ways that the CFO can achieve buy-in from all stakeholders in the municipality.

### **What is a reasonable period over which formal classes will have to be attended?**

Most training providers are able to deliver block training wherein registered learners are able to attend once a month for a maximum of five days depending on the unit standard delivered under the regulated training.

### **What is the position of existing interns after the implementation of the guidelines?**

The existing interns need to sign an internship agreement. They would then be required to undergo initial formal training in line with the minimum competency levels together with a work rotation plan. The municipality management may decide to extend the employment contracts of the affected interns after this assessment.

The NT suggests that each section head/trainer prepare a written assessment for each training cycle passed. This assessment may be discussed with the intern in the presence of his or her mentor. This should be followed by technical skills assessment every four months. If this training is supplemented with the mandatory minimum competency levels training, it would be easier to understand the levels of competence of the respective intern within the BTO areas.

### **What are the minimum requirements to be an intern in a municipality?**

All prospective interns must be unemployed graduates in Accounting, Economics, Finance, Internal Auditing or Risk Management. Holders of B. Degrees and National Diplomas will be considered for this training opportunity.

### **I have an FET qualification in Accounting, Economics and Finance. Can I qualify for the internship programme?**

Municipalities may under exceptional circumstances employ graduates from FET colleges as interns. Training under the MFMA reforms builds on the foundational knowledge learned at institutions of higher learning, among others. It might therefore be difficult for FET graduates to cope with the said learning and a lot of hand holding will have to be made in this regard. In such cases notifications must firstly be lodged with both National and Provincial Treasury before finalisation.