

THEME OF PRACTICE SCHOOL (PS)

Practice School is an educational innovation of BITS Pilani seeking to link industry experience with university instruction. The effort is to orient education so as to (i) meet the rapidly changing needs and challenges of a professional workplace, (ii) enable students to acquire learning by applying the knowledge and skills they possess, in unfamiliar, open-ended real work life situations, and (iii) bear an economic relevance to society. These objectives are achieved by bringing the reality of the world of work into the process of education, thereby creating a sound base for experiential and cooperative learning. The students under supervision of faculty are made to work on relevant assignments with the guidance of experts from the industry.

BEGINNING OF PS:

Birla Institute of Technology & Science, Pilani introduced the PS programme in 1973 for all disciplines across the Institute. Though PS programme began in 1973 with merely 12 students and 4 faculty members at HINDALCO, Renukoot, it has been growing at a steady pace ever since.

SALIENT FEATURES:

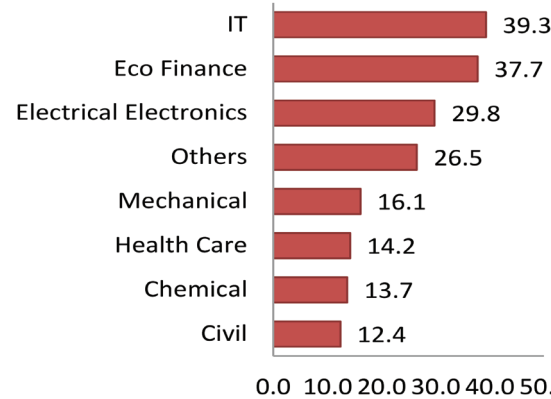
- Institutionalized linkage between the institute and industry
- Applicable to all degree programs
- Integral part of the curriculum
- Student involvement in real-life projects
- Continuous internal evaluation system
- Monitoring and evaluation by resident faculty member

PS OPERATIONAL STATISTICS:

- Today, Practice School programme has established massive linkages across the country. During 18th May-27th June, 2020, we conducted PS-I in 225 organizations for more than 2946 students accompanied by over 101 faculty members.
- In the current session of PS-II (Jul-Dec. 2020), we have over 1378 students working in 354 organizations all over the country (and a few abroad), with about 70 faculty supervising it.

Appendix -1: Industry-wise Monthly Average Stipend during PS-II, Jul. -Dec. 2020 (In Thousands)

Avg. Stipend in INR'000



OFF-CAMPUS WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING PROGRAMMES:

BITS has very strong presence in the domain of continuing education for employed professionals, with over 21,000 students registered in various off-campus work-integrated learning degree programs. Organizations interested in associating with BITS Pilani to promote industry relevant education system and to enhance their innovation and growth through human resources development may contact the following

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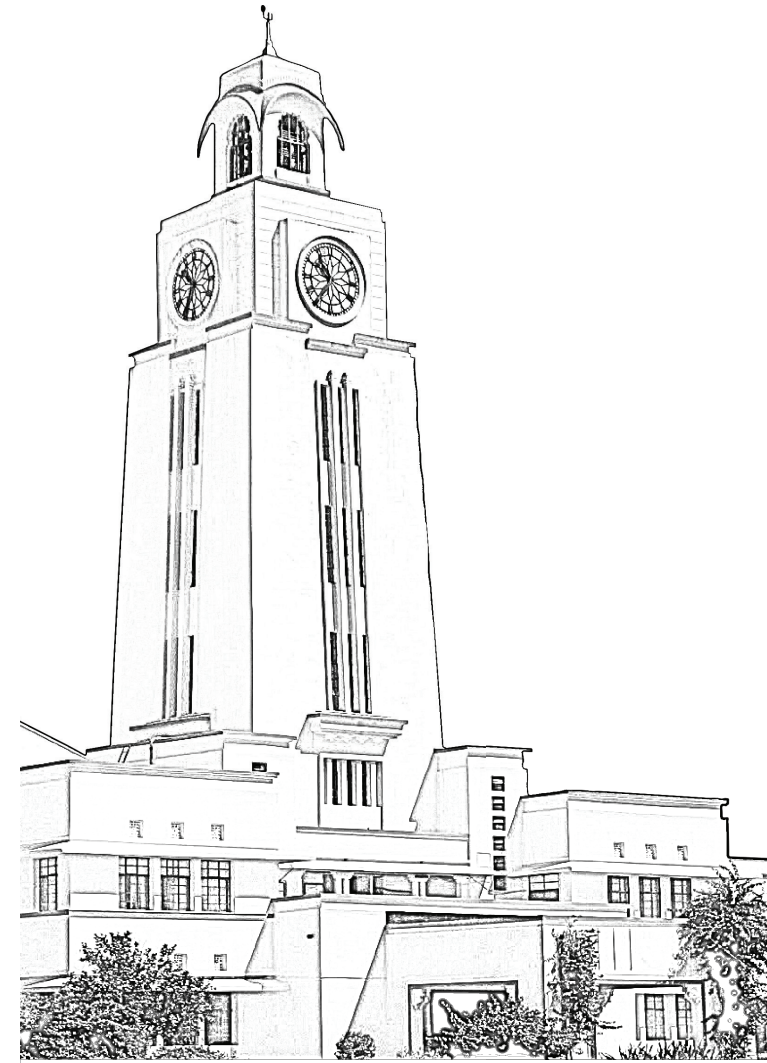
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PRACTICE SCHOOL INFORMATION BROCHURE



PROGRAMME STRUCTURE:

SINGLE DEGREE:

- It is notionally of four years duration, with the input being 10+2 pass students who have qualified for admission through BITSAT (the online admission test of BITS Pilani)
- The first two years are devoted to establishing a strong foundation. The courses drawn from Mathematics, Science, Engineering Science (Electronics, Thermodynamics, Materials Science), Technical Arts (Computer Programming, Workshop Practice, Engineering Graphics, Measurements, Report Writing), and Management (Principles of Management) are mostly common to all the degree programs.
- Practice School-I is conducted during the summer following the second year.
- The third year is spent on Specialized Discipline Courses and various other Analysis and Application Oriented Courses. By the end of the third year, the student would have completed all the named (compulsory) courses of the degree program.
- In the final year, the student spends one semester doing elective courses and the other doing Practice School.

DUAL DEGREE:

- A student may be admitted to the Composite Dual Degree Program under which the student simultaneously pursues two degrees.
- Practice School-I appears in the chart at the end of two years in this program. Such a student may opt for PS-II to satisfy the requirements for both the degrees, which will be done in the last two semesters of the program.

HIGHER DEGREE:

- The program is of two years duration.
- The first three semesters are spent on course work while the last semester is devoted either to Practice School or Dissertation.

PRACTICE SCHOOL-I (PS-I)

Practice School-I (PS-I) of eight weeks duration, is offered during the summer after the students have completed two years of course work, which consists of a judicious mix of Mathematics, Sciences, Technical Arts, Analysis and Application Oriented Courses, Engineering Science and Humanities. PS-I is primarily an exposure-oriented course which is graded for five units as it is an integral part of the curriculum. PS-I provides an exposure to professional workplace, organization structure and functions, develop personality traits, and enhance their communication and presentation skills.

PRACTICE SCHOOL-II (PS-II)

Concept: Practice School-II (PS-II), of five and a half months duration, carrying twenty units credit, is operated round the year, July to December and January to June. This judicious planning makes available a continuous stream of well-prepared students to work on developmental projects in industry.

Since the students participate in, and contribute to live projects, they are supported by a stipend and/or other facilities such as accommodation, travel reimbursement, etc.

Aim: PS-II is directed towards providing an opportunity to students to experience the world of work, thereby participating in live projects in industry, even before they graduate. Apart from the academic benefits, this also serves to hone their problem solving skills, and build team spirit, initiative, and leadership skills, which makes the eventual transition to the professional world in a smoother way.

Methodology: After a brief orientation, the students are involved directly in addressing the identified problems, generally of multidisciplinary nature, of direct relevance to the host organization. The students are encouraged to work independently, under the guidance of an industry expert, and the faculty, and are periodically required to defend their work through various evaluation instruments. Emphasis is laid on the importance of team work, developing leadership qualities, and effective time management.

Allotment Process: The participating organization sends information (Problem Bank) regarding the list of assignments/projects with details of skill sets, number of students required stream-wise, the facilities which include the details of stipend and other supports provided by the organizations. The above information is made available to students and based on this information; the students submit their preferences for the various projects and organizations. The allotment of students is done by matching the project requirements with students' profiles, keeping the preferences and merit of the students in view.

Industry Support: In Practice School-II, the students work like full time employee of an organization and are therefore able to devote their time completely to the tasks assigned, and ensure their timely completion. In part for this reason, the students are supported financially by all host organizations. The stipend provided varies over a wide range across the project domains, and it is left entirely to the discretion of the organization.

Foreign Stations: Over the years, PS-II has been operated at few locations outside India. These have the added dimension of providing international exposure (both at the professional and the personal levels) to the students. Typically, these organizations provide financial support adequate to take care of their travel, living expenses, and medical insurance.

Role of PS-II Faculty:

- Interfacing between the institute and the host organization
- Generating problem bank for subsequent semester in consultation with the coordinator of the organization
- Ensuring smooth operation by being in constant touch with the students, project mentors, and coordinator
- Monitoring, evaluating, and grading the performance of the students
- Initiating PS activity in new organizations

Role of Professional Experts:

- Identifying suitable assignments for the students
- Providing necessary technical guidance in the execution of the projects
- Participation in the evaluation components such as seminar, project reports, and provide inputs to the PS faculty

Requirements for Operational Success of PS:

- Enthusiastic, result-oriented, and industrious students, with eagerness to learn
- Cooperation from Industry
- Additional infrastructure outside the campuses
- Efficient communication network, and information processing systems
- Committed and dedicated faculty

Benefits of PS:

The success of the PS system is primarily attributed to the cooperation from all stakeholders including the host organizations, students, and the institute, resulting in the continuous and sustainable model of university industry linkage through this unique educational endeavour.

Benefit to Students:

- Learning by doing
- All round development
- Aid in career planning
- Experience of professional working conditions
- Smooth transition from academia to industry

Benefits to Industry:

- Steady stream of skilled manpower provides value addition and increased productivity
- Human resource development benefits
- Platform for partnership with academia
- Employer Branding