

# COMMUNITY PARTNERS AS CO-EDUCATORS AND ASSESSORS

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## CONTEXT

The Internship courses in this context are uniquely placed within the social sciences and comparative literature curricula to facilitate the development of workplace competence through the application of disciplinary theory in an authentic workplace setting. This form of learning requires the workplace supervisor/community partner to assume the role of a co-educator, in addition to the traditional student-teachers relationship, in co-creating learning. Unlike a professional discipline, such as nursing, medicine or engineering, an important assessment feature in internship for a non-professional programme is that there are no explicit professional criteria for assessing the performance of students. Also, out- of-classroom learning assessment take place outside the controlled environment of a classroom, which poses challenges for assessment purposes. This TDG aims to explore the Community Partners as co-educators and assessors in the contexts of the social sciences and comparative literature disciplines.

## THE THREE ROLES AS CO-EDUCATOR



**SUPERVISOR**  
PROVIDES DAY TO DAY  
MANAGERIAL AND  
ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT  
AND FEEDBACK

**MENTOR**  
PROVIDES GUIDANCE IN THE  
CAREER-RELATED AND  
PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT  
(INTERPERSONAL ASPECT)



**ASSESSOR**  
EVALUATES STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN A  
FORMAL CAPACITY BY PROVIDING  
CONTINUOUS AND ON-GOING QUALITATIVE  
AND QUANTITATIVE FEEDBACK AND  
ADDRESSING PERFORMANCE ISSUE AND  
THEIR PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES IN  
CONTEXT

## CHALLENGES FOR ASSESSOR

(Jackson, 2017; McNamara, 2013; Wolf, 2015)

- Individualised context: The highly individualised and diverse contexts of the internship affect the inter-reliability and validity of assessment.
- Halo effect: It refers to assessors' bias when grading is not based on the actual performance but rather on the potential or on one single outstanding aspect of performance instead of considering overall performance.
- Leniency bias: The tendency to evaluate individuals more favourably than is supported by their performance. Some workplace supervisors see a good grade as a form of compensation for student interns for two possible reasons: (1) most of the interns are often unpaid. (2) an incentive for more students to interns at their organisations.

## WHAT TO ASSESS

- The purpose is for the students to learn what it means to be professional in the disciplines of social sciences and the assessment criteria would be a fair reflection of their professional capabilities.
- Workplace competence and the ability to acquire a broader set of transferrable work-readiness skills in a changing professional environment for future career- readiness.

**COMMUNICATION  
TEAMWORK  
CRITICAL THINKING /PROBLEM SOLVING  
SELF-DEVELOPMENT  
PROFESSIONALISM  
LEADERSHIP  
EQUITY & INCLUSION**

The above is adapted by the 8 Career Readiness Core Competence published by US National Association of Colleges and Employers in 2021)

## HOW TO ASSESS

- A combination of formative and summative assessment
- Continuous and on-going feedback:
  - > beginning of internship: mutual agreement of learning objectives, work expectation and understanding of the assessment criteria
  - > mid-term assessment: formative feedback about the internship progress
  - > end of internship: A review of progress and summative assessment
- Students as partners in assessment: The students were asked about the additional criteria they wanted to assess in the internship. The findings indicated that most of the students prefer more specific behaviours as the additional assessment criteria. For examples: problem solving/executing new projects, how they could be flexible in responding in unexpected situation. Among all their suggestion, “collaboration” and “flexibility” are the most frequently mentioned.

### References

Jackson, D. (2017). Challenges and strategies for assessing student workplace performance during work-integrated learning. *Assessment & Evaluation In Higher Education*, 43(4), 555-570. doi: 10.1080/02602938.2017.1378618

McNamara, J. (2013). The challenge of assessing professional competence in work integrated learning. *Assessment & Evaluation In Higher Education*, 38(2), 183-197. doi: 10.1080/02602938.2011.618878

Wolf, K. (2015). Leniency and Halo Bias in Industry-based Assessments of Student Competencies: A Critical, Sector-based Analysis. *Higher Education Research & Development* 34 (5): 1045-1059.