SD3192 Internship: Student Guidelines

*****Before starting your internship, make sure that you have done the subject registration in "SD3192 Internship" so that you will get academic credits for it.***

These guidelines are intended to help you gain the maximum possible benefit from your internship experience. They should help you to set up a framework for reflection and review which will enable you to get the most out of the learning opportunities in 3 sessions as follows:

1. Preparing for internship
2. Managing your internship
3. Internship report writing

1. Preparing for internship

- You will be expected to identify and approach an appropriate internship company, under the guidance of the Internship Coordinator from your design discipline.
- You will be expected to develop, in discussion with the Workplace Supervisor, specific goals for learning on internship.
- There are different ways of learning that take place during an internship. Sometimes the projects assigned to you will require creative thinking and certain jobs will be daily routine assistance. Try your best to do the tasks you are assigned and show initiative in asking for additional learning opportunities.

Remember that all internships must fulfil this subject requirement of an 8-week full time design-related.

2. Managing your internship

- In order to be sure that your internship is working effectively, it is important that you and your Workplace Supervisor have a procedure of reflection and review.
  This would work along the following lines:
  a. At the outset of your internship, yourself, your Workplace Supervisor and preferably, your Internship Coordinator should negotiate what your role will be within the company / organization and the potential opportunities which the internship has to offer.
  b. You and your Workplace Supervisor should meet regularly to review progress and highlight any areas of difficulty and agree on what could be done to resolve them.
- You are required to keep a log of your work experience. This may include descriptions of skills or knowledge you are acquiring and accounts of experiences. You should also keep a record of your meetings with your Workplace Supervisor.
- Sometimes you will need to stand back and reflect on what you have done in order to be aware of what you have learned.

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3. Internship report writing

- The internship report is an **assessable component** of your internship experience. You should report your experience; describe, analyze, and reflect on the important aspects of learning; and appraise your own performance. Please refer to the guiding questions (Appendix 1) and writing critical reflections (Appendix 2) for internship report writing.
- The internship report should be accompanied with a work experience log, samples of work undertaken and an updated resume.
- The report must be completed and submitted on the due date.

Report submission deadline:
26 August 2024 (Monday) 3pm HKT

4. Assessment elements

Assessment is based on the following components:

(1) Workplace Supervisor's Report: 35%

(2) Student's Internship Report: 65%

Includes:
- Report Contents: Detailed description of learning experiences (work experience log, samples of work undertaken) with critical reflections (min. 1000 words), and an updated resume: **45%**
- Report Visual Presentation: layout/formatting, organization/flow, visual aesthetics: **20%**

Note: Student must submit and pass both components to pass the subject.

5. Further Readings

Aspelund, K. (2006). *The design process*. New York: Fairchild.
Best, K. (2006). *Design management: managing design strategy, process and implementation*. Lausanne: AVA Publishing.
Fanthome, C. (2004). *Work placements – A survival guide for students*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
Kaser, K.; Brooks, J. R. & Brooks, K. (2007). *Making the most of your internship*. Mason, Ohio: Thomson South-western.

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Appendix 1: Guiding questions for internship report writing

Student name & student no.:
Dates of internship:
Internship company/organization:
Workplace Supervisor & contact no.:

Learning goals

- What are the learning objectives listed in your internship contract?
- What have you done to prepare for your internship?

The company

- What is the nature of the company?
- What is its size and structure (major departments and their relationship)?
- What is the function of the department in which you worked?
- Who are the members in the department and their job description?
- What type of clients do they serve?
- What changes and developments are happening?

Work processes

- What are the typical procedures in which work is done in the department?
- How is the design process carried out in a professional setting?
- What ideas, attitudes and values influence the manner in which the department/staff goes about the work?
- What are the things that sometimes bring constraints at work?

The internship

- What was your role?
- What was the range of work assigned to you?
- Who were the people you contacted? How good was your interaction with them?
- What tasks did you undertake? (refer to your work experience log)
- How did you tackle the tasks assigned to you?
- How did you apply knowledge and skills learnt at School to the work situation?

Learning

- What learning did you achieve? e.g.
- Skills – what can you do now that you could not do before?
- Knowledge and understanding – what do you know now that you did not know before?
- How was your learning achieved?
- Where and when do problems occur? Is there a pattern? What do you need to do differently?
- What evidence could you supply of learning achieved?

Critical appraisal

- How would you evaluate your own performance?
- Have you achieved the learning objectives listed in your internship contract? If not, what else could you have done to learn more from the internship?
- What were the good and bad aspects?
- In what ways could the experience be improved by the company, your own initiation, the School's supervisory support?
- How does the internship help you understand your strengths and weaknesses, career interests and directions?
- What are your next steps to pursue your personal and professional growth?

Note: The internship report should be accompanied with a work experience log, samples of work undertaken and an updated resume.

Critical reflection

Critical reflection is an important creative tool.
Becoming reflective critically means continually evaluate the effects of your choices and actions, and actively seek out opportunities to grow professionally.
Writing critical reflection is worth the time. You will sharpen your observation skills through collecting and analyzing observations; organize and clarify thoughts; develop a different or deeper understanding of issues in the work setting; and enhance your skills in writing with clarity and depth. Most importantly, you will recognize habits of your minds and actions and how they shape your design ideas and practice.
This set of guidelines aims to introduce you to reflective practice through FAQs

What is a reflective internship report?

- How can critical reflection develop my creative thinking?
- What can I do to improve my skills in critical reflection?
- What should I do to reflect on my experience?

and examples of writing critical reflection.

What is a reflective internship report?

- There are two basic elements in the report: **evidence of learning** and **reflection on the learning**. It presents your internship learning journey; records your observations, questions, mistakes, explorations, analyses as well as achievement; and shows how you develop knowledge and skills reflectively.
- It is an assessment tool that assists teachers to evaluate whether student learning meets the subject learning outcomes.

Subject learning outcomes

- describe the company structure and work processes
- apply knowledge and skills learnt at school to a real life work situation
- apply design process in a professional setting, including project management, production and business
- reflect critically on learning experience
- demonstrate communication and organization skills

How can critical reflection develop my creative thinking?

- Critical Reflection is closely related to the success of generating ideas.
- It helps to improve your thinking and problem-solving by re-visiting and re-examining the creative / design process.
- Critical reflection gives you another opportunity to assess the importance of each aspect of the design experience. Reviewing your experience can help you understand why you tend to approach things in certain ways and avoid others.
- You will discover new priorities and ways of seeing things.
- And the very act of writing down your reflections stimulates the flow of more ideas and possibilities.

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What can I do to improve my skills in critical reflection?

- Simply saying what you think is not a reflection. Show your thinking by describing what happened, saying what you agree or disagree and why, and discussing your own points of view about controversial issues.
- Keep a daily log to form the basis of the reflective writing – a log with notes on observations, problems and accomplishments, feelings, thoughts, reasoning, reactions, questions, and areas of growth you are experiencing. Such document helps you see how you change and develop through time.
- Be a keen observer of your own self, others and the situation. Try to relate your work experience to a bigger picture of social, cultural, psychological and economic contexts.
- Review the learning of design projects to sharpen your skills in observation and reflection on the design process in a professional setting.
- Share experience with your friends – Get different perspectives and question your unaware assumptions.

Some techniques of keeping a daily log

- 10-minute free writing at the beginning or end of a day
- Focused free writing on a question or issue e.g. Key elements for design process is …, I was unaware of…
- Listing e.g. What's new/important today, Concerns of project X
- Concept / mind mapping
- Dialogue: conversation between people, ideas or things to help look at an issue from a different perspective

What should I do to reflect on my experience?

Look at an experience which you want to reflect and find relationships among self, knowledge and real-world experience. For example:

- a time when you were effective on prioritizing tasks and meeting a deadline: How did you do? What strategies did you use to achieve it?
- an idea that you had to convince a resist colleague to use: How do you go about getting agreement? What was the result? What did you learn?
- a situation that you keep your knowledge or skills up to date with the ongoing changes in the industry: What did you do?

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Writing critical reflection

A few examples from design students' internship reports

Extract 1

For school project, I need to create designs that are not made before, either in terms of function or appearance. However, at the internship, even I need to create an innovative design, I have to base on practicality. Does it function and with aesthetics and meet market needs? It is not easy to fulfill these three requirements. So many times, my designs are with aesthetics but they do not work functionally, and I need to improve and improve until the managing director is satisfied. I need to think creatively and rationally.

Comments

Question own **assumption** of innovative ideas. **Reflect** on how things can be done differently to cope with the business of design.

Extract 2

By working with different people, I can observe the difference between different levels of staff. For the senior staff, they are really good at pointing things out and presenting things clearly. Even the senior account servicing people are creative. They may not be able to do layout designs, but they have a certain art sense and are clear about strategy and client needs. As a student, I think I have to make use of the rest of my student life to **organize my ideas and speak as clearly as possible in my presentation**. When doing assignments, I usually work very fast and focus on my own work unless people ask me for help. I guess **I have to be more active to look around and give comments so as to train myself in art direction**. I also found that it is annoying if someone stands in front of my computer and gives vague art direction that doesn't work. Therefore, in order not to make people feel annoyed and stressed, I need to learn how to articulate my ideas clearly and politely when I want to help others for a good reason.

Comments

Analyze what was observed in the workplace and develop this **awareness** into possible practice strategies. This shows an ability to see **relationship** between personal learning and professional practice, and an ability to generate potential solution with an eye toward **future application**.

Extract 3

WEEK 4 Working with computer software is the main focus of this week. … Nowadays most of our designs cannot be executed without computers as some of them are not only for us to see but also other people, such as contractors, suppliers or even design partners. Even though software becomes one of the important tools for our design production, they should not limit our design thinking. My colleagues always draw out their ideas before they start using the CAD or sketch up models. Furthermore, they work even more than my expectation; they build the 3D from micro to macro.

I appreciate the thinking behind this action as this needs them to think more before rendering the idea in the computer. The logical thinking and planning behind are not easy job, because this also includes imagining forms, calculating the dimensions, and planning the sequence of building the 3D models. I always work wrongly as I miss the steps e.g. wrong calculation and sequences, etc.

Compared to Week 3 exercises, the computer works are really boring to me as I keep on repeating the same action. However, as a design tool, I think this kind of exercise is really good at training us software, and planning before the action. I remember I set the learning goal of "asking questions" during my Week 1 internship, now I need to add more. "Think carefully before and ask the right questions" should be a goal that I want to achieve.

WEEK 5 CAD is not only a visualization tool but also the communication language of our industry. Therefore, I tried to read what is on the CAD drawings while I was working. … Although my colleague explained the symbols to me one by one, I still

Comments

Give background of what triggers the **awareness** of the importance of CAD in the field of work.

Describe thinking about what's important to oneself that shows an ability to **make explicit** an increasing understanding of work process and own design skill.

Evaluate and refine learning goal.

Show active **thinking over time** leading to a personal viewpoint and an urge toward learning.

did not understand how to use them. The drawings are like Chinese and English, we use them to communicate with contractors, suppliers or our clients. I suddenly wonder why I did not learn the "language" at school. Isn't it also playing an important role in design production? …

Extract 4

As a design student, I think that design skills are needed in order to become a successful designer. However, what is the strength of a student who comes from School of Design of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University? That is research skills and awareness of the society. Design always relates to society, culture and lifestyle. Successful design should fulfill clients' needs. Furthermore, it should have social responsibilities. **In New York, most commercial leaflets and flyers were designed with one or two colours to reduce ink. It is because designers have responsibility of not wasting resources of the earth.** In Hong Kong, most designers only consider effect and appearance to attract the audience. They do not really care how much they are wasting resources in the design production stage.

Comments

A critical reflection of a **taken-for-granted assumption** and see the **relationship** of actions and the context. This new understanding of societal responsibility may translate into future professional practice.

Extract 5

During the whole internship period, I was required to report directly to my boss… Most of the time, he came to me with a sketch of what he wanted and asked me to work it out. As a designer, I first felt that it was quite an uncomfortable experience as I would like to have more chances to create things in my own way. But soon, I realized that I should not expect that much as I was working in a team. Things in a workplace were different from school. Not only **you** would not have that many chances to do things in your own ways, also you may have to change yourself in order to cope with the workplace. Soon after, I tried to work according to my boss's sketch, but at the same time I did another design in my own way. Although not every one of my versions would be chosen, I think it would still be a good chance for me to practice my creativity. To me, a designer should not only be an executer but also a creator.

Comments

Describe a situation which triggers a feeling and a decision.

Suggestions for reflection

- **Evaluation** e.g. What are good and bad about the boss's sketch and my sketch?
- **Analysis** e.g. What do the selected sketches have in common? What assumptions and needs do the boss feedback imply?
- Who is 'you'? Use 'I' because the reader of the report is often you and your tutor.

Reference

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Jasper, M. (2003). *Beginning reflective practice*. Nelson Thornes.

Park, C. (2003). Engaging students in the learning process: the learning journal. *Journal of geography in higher education* 27(20), 183-199.

Thompson, S. & Thompson, N. (2008). *The critically reflective practitioner.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Thorpe, K. (2004). Reflective learning journals: from concept to practice. *Reflective practice* 5(3), 327-343.