

Assessing Humanities Internship at the University of Otago

The Humanities Internship Practicum (HUMS301) is an elective for all full-time undergraduate students in any of the Humanities disciplines at the University of Otago in New Zealand. Students are expected to work at a partner organization for eight hours per week, for 13 weeks. There is no automatic admission to the elective, and students have to receive approvals from both the departmental supervisor and the course coordinator to be admitted. This course focuses on enabling students to develop a range of personal and interpersonal skills, it also allows students to learn about the reality of the workplace. Students are expected to reflect on their internship experiences and make effective use of what they learnt during the internship. Through developing personal and

workplace skills of students, their employability can be enhanced.

Distinctive Features:

- ✔ Generating and agreeing on expected learning outcomes among the student, the university and the partner organisation;
- ✔ Assessing students through hosting a Humanities Symposium of the University of Otago;
- ✔ Giving students a choice of assessment formats among written report, portfolio and hybrid combination.

Expected Learning Outcomes (LO):

- I. the development of a range of personal and interpersonal skills, particularly communication, team working, priority setting and time management skills;
- II. demonstrate applying, integrating and evaluating the body of knowledge and the method of inquiry of a discipline or a field via first-hand participation;
- III. show the ability to learn the expectations of employers and the reality of the workplace;
- IV. present evidence of internship experiences clearly and appropriately;
- V. reflect on experiences and the learning derived from the internship;
- VI. investigate a topic relevant to the internship context or experience.

Source: Humanities Division, University of Otago (2018)

Coursework Teaching & Learning Activities:

- ✍ Pre-Internship
 - Discussion with students' department
 - Preliminary Project form
 - Initial meeting with workplace coordinator and departmental liaison person
- ✍ During the internship
 - Internship and reflective field notes
 - Report/portfolio
- ✍ Post-Internship
 - End-of-placement assessment form
 - Symposium

Assessment Approaches

Name	Learning Activities	Weight	Aligned LO	Type	Generic Skills
A1 Reflective Field Notes	Students have to complete a weekly diary, approximately one page per week, containing reflections on how their work is related to theories they have learnt at the university. Students are expected to discuss their reflective field notes with the departmental supervisor at fortnightly meetings.	25%	III. VI.	Formative	Communication, Critical Thinking, Problem-solving, Self-management

A2	Final report/ Portfolio	Students have to submit a final report/portfolio at the end of the internship to demonstrate their ability to undertake a research project related to their work experience	60%	I. II. IV.	Summative	Critical Thinking, Problem-solving, Creativity, Study Skills
A3	End-of- placement assessment	The assessment is a symposium session for students to showcase their ability to present their internship experience and to critically reflect on their personal development of different types of skills and competencies.	15%	V.	Summative	Communication, Problem-solving, Critical Thinking

Assessment Type

The assessment approaches demonstrate a mixture of formative and summative assessments, although the summative ones are the focus. This enables evaluation of students' growth throughout the internship and of the learning outcomes after the internship.

Assessment Focal Areas

Problem-solving skills: students are expected to manage challenges of the workplace during the internship. With weekly field notes and fortnightly discussion with their supervisor (A1), students receive advice on their problems and suggestions for improvement. The final report/portfolio (A2) and end-of-placement assessment (A3) then allow students to reflect on their problem-solving skills throughout the internship, which also test students' problem-solving skills as students may meet challenges while presenting their internship experience in written and verbal forms.

Communication skills: Throughout the internship, students are expected to communicate with people in the workplace and with supervisors both in the workplace and in the university. In discussions with the supervisor (A1), students need to communicate effectively to show what they have done in the internship. Students are expected to actively seek feedback and suggestions for improvement during such discussions. For the end-of-placement assessment (A3), students have to outline and discuss their internship experience through verbal presentation. Students also have to communicate with the audience and answer any questions the audience may have. Communication is thus assessed in various ways.

Knowledge Application: Students are expected to apply acquired knowledge during their internship. This can be assessed by the supervisor who has regular discussions with a student on workplace skills and challenges (A1). Through writing weekly reflective field notes (A1), students are encouraged to reflect on how their work is related to theories taught in the university, applying knowledge they have learnt in lessons to their workplace experience. Students can also employ theories or concepts in analyzing the problems they perceive during the internship, in the final report/portfolio (A2) and the end-of-placement assessment (A3).

Values for reflection: Reflection on job performance during the internship is assessed in the weekly field notes (A1), whereas fortnightly discussions with the supervisor (A1) may enhance the reflection process and provide more insight as to how the student can improve. Reflection on development of different skills and achievements throughout the internship is suggested in the final report/portfolio (A2) and the end-of-placement assessment (A3). The end-of-placement assessment (A3) is also a way to push students to further reflect upon what they have learnt and have acquired from the internship experience, as there is discussion time for attendees of the symposium to raise questions on the presentations.

Assessment Standards/ Sample Rubrics

	Criteria	Design
A2 Final Report/Portfolio	Critical thinking, problem solving, research skills development within work environment	<p>Aiming at assessing students' ability to undertake an applied task or research based assignment with a quantifiable outcome, this assignment is designed with 3 options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Report</i>: students can choose to write a report on a particular issue or topic for the organization. At the end of the placement, the completed final report should be provided to the organization. A research type report should have a maximum of 7000 words. – <i>Portfolio</i>: this is applicable when there is a large practical component in the internship. Portfolio attachments can include materials and other types of evidence. The portfolio should include an explanatory and reflective section explaining various tasks undertaken, how these were achieved, problems met and how they were addressed. A portfolio with a large practice component may have 3500-4000 words. – <i>Hybrid</i>: The first part of a hybrid should be a research report, then materials added to indicate the practice components.
A3 End-of-placement assessment	Critical thinking, communication, time-management, self-management	<p><i>Symposium presentation</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The symposium is run by the Humanities coordinator, inviting all departmental supervisors and organization mentors. – The presentation is open to students, supervisors, invited guests and interested members of the public. – All internship students are expected to give a 10-minute presentation to outline and discuss with insight their workplace experience, covering: 1) brief self-introduction; 2) the organization and their role; 3) role and task during internship; 4) how tasks were achieved; 5) challenges met and how they were addressed; 6) how successfully was the task completed; 7) Reflections – Each presentation is followed by 5-minutes questions and discussion starting with the organizational representative. <p><i>End-of-Placement Assessment Form</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Completion and submission of the End-of-Placement Assessment Form is mandatory before the symposium. – In the form, the organization comments on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Whether the student successfully completed the agreed task ○ How well did the student complete the task ○ How well did the student perform when working in the organization ○ Other comments on the student's performance

Source: Humanities Division, University of Otago (2018)

Teacher's Stories

Prof. Claire Freeman, Humanities Coordinator

Professional Engagements

Freeman was a planning coordinator for the Urban Wildlife Trust for the West Midlands, and was a Senior Lecturer for Planning and Housing Professional Group at Leeds Metropolitan University from 1991 to 1997. She then became a Senior Lecturer at the School of Regional and Resource

Planning, Massey University from 1997 to 1999. Currently a professor at the University of Otago, she is mainly in the Master of Planning program with teaching involvement in Planning Theory, Spatial Planning and Development, and Internship Practicum. The research interests of Freeman lie in planning and development of the natural environment, planning with children, and sustainable settlements.

Students' Side of Stories

- ✔ “I really enjoyed HUMS301 because they’re more hands on and I was able to do something that I was passionate about [...] This paper bridges a gap between being a

student and we’ll go into the real world, and having a mentor who is able to guide you from what you have learnt within your undergraduate degree to what and how you apply them in work situation...” (Student S, Nov 2016)

Featured Video

- ▶ Reflection of a student who has completed the internship <https://youtu.be/TZeMq1Xcd5k>

References

The University of Otago (2018). Humanities Division HUMS 301-401 Internship Practicum Programme Manual.

Retrieved 22 March, 2018, from <http://www.otago.ac.nz/humanities/otago611269.pdf>

Course website: <http://www.otago.ac.nz/humanities/study/otago611002.html#what>