

International Internship Course: Seminars

FIE Faculty:

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The work you put into your internship may bring you considerable benefits in terms of life experience and future employability. Colleges or universities do not necessarily regard doing the internship itself as an academic activity. Credit is given for reflective written work based on your internship experience. Therefore, your grade will be a reflection of the quality of your written work through its detail, clarity and analysis. You should not take your grade as a comment on your personal performance in the workplace. I hope you enjoy and learn greatly from your internship experience. If you have any queries about this document please talk to your professor.

Aims and Outcomes of the Academic Seminars

The key aim of the placement and seminars is to provide students with support in order to allow them to develop their understanding of the UK workplace and enable them to make the most of their experience in their internship placement. The seminars will enable students to work with the faculty and exchange ideas with their peers. Students' ability to engage analytically with their internship experience will be assessed. Students will also be required to give oral presentations. These presentations, together with short pieces assembled into a portfolio, and a final report will provide structured expression of student development before and during the internship process.

By the end of this course students should be in a position to understand general aspects of the UK workplace and to have a high degree of understanding of the organisation in which they have been interning as well as the sector in which that organisation operates. They should be able to look back and describe and reflect on their internship experience and the way in which they have developed during the semester. They should also be able to reflect on their own performance in the workplace and to be able to engage with intercultural issues which have emerged during that experience.

Assessment

25% Portfolio (A structured set of materials – requirements set out in appendix 1)

25% Internship Report (A structured essay – requirements set out in appendix 2)

25% Presentation (requirements set out in appendix 3)

25% Attendance and Participation (12.5% for each element)

In addition the workplace supervisor will attest to student performance as either excellent, satisfactory or unsatisfactory (via Supervisor's Evaluation of Intern Form). Students cannot be awarded academic credit with an unsatisfactory rating by the workplace supervisor. They may not be awarded credit, unless there are special extenuating circumstances, if they withdraw from an internship or their position is terminated by the workplace supervisor.

Set Readings

Materials will be specified by faculty and given to students in class.

Teaching Methods

The six two-hour seminar sessions will include:

1) lectures (3 hours approx.),

- 2) discussion/learning activities (9 hours approx.)
- 3) one-to-one discussion sessions (15 minutes approx.) per student

Your FIE Faculty will give you a session by session list of class topics. These will, however, cover the following areas (and may bring in other relevant material):

CULTURE SHOCK AND CULTURE LEARNING
DEALING WITH EXPECTATIONS
WORKING IN THE UK
ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE
STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

IIC Faculty will hold "office hours" in which they will be available for one-on-one meetings. Your professor will inform you as to when and where s/he will be available. You are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to meet with your professor. Your professor is able to assist you in dealing with the challenges that you may face in your placement as well as in your written assignments.

INTERNS WILL BE EMAILED THEIR GRADE WITH FEEDBACK. IF, ADDITIONALLY, THEY WISH A COPY OF THEIR MARKED WORK TO BE SENT THEY SHOULD PLEASE PUT THEIR HOME ADDRESS, AS WELL AS THEIR EMAIL, ON THE FRONT PAGE OF THE SUBMITTED WORK.

APPENDIX 1: INTERNSHIP PORTFOLIO

- PLEASE SUBMIT THE INTERNSHIP PORTFOLIO AS A SINGLE, STAPLED DOCUMENT
- PLEASE WORD-PROCESS AND DOUBLE-SPACE ALL ASSIGNMENTS

Elements of the Internship Portfolio

1 page – *Expectations and Strategies* (to be completed after class 2). Hand in at class 3. (The Expectations & Strategies will be returned to the student with comments and resubmitted in the final portfolio). The purpose of this piece is for the intern to explain their aims and hopes for the internship, areas of personal strength and weakness, any problems they expect to encounter and how they might deal with those problems.

4-8 pages – *Weekly Workplace Summaries* (These should be completed during each week of the internship. Each week should be less than a full page and may be written in bullet points or continuous prose.)

The purpose of these pieces is to act as a brief diary of the work each week. Interns should include notice of any important occurrences, problems or 'moments of revelation' in which they gained a new insight into the workplace or cultural issues.

1 page – *End of Internship Reflection* (to be completed after class 5) The student should reread the Expectations and Strategies page they wrote at the start of the internship and summarise the degree to which the placement has met or differed from their expectations, and how they have made the most of that situation, what they have learned and how they have developed.

Grading Criteria of the Internship Portfolio

The aim of the portfolio is to show self-reflection and awareness through the process of the internship, to assess the ability to keep structured brief notes, and to provide the basic material from which presentations on the internship and the Internship Report will be constructed.

Grade A: Clear detailed notes, evidence of advanced planning for the internship experience and analytical self-reflection after the experience. The material should be presented in an objective, rather than a subjective manner (i.e. not just I liked this or did not like this, but the reasons for such feelings or intuitions explained). It would be expected that cultural insights would be incorporated as would moments of reflection on the nature of the work sector and of the specific workplace.

Grade B: This grade will be provided for adequate response to the three parts of the Portfolio. The material may be more uneven than would be the case for an A grade. The material may be more personally emotive and less analytical than would be the case for a higher grade. Insights gained during the internship may be of a narrower wide range, representing few cultural insights, for example.

Grade C: This grade would be awarded for either a perfunctory set of portfolio resources, or ones which were lacking in a distinct sense of analytical distance. Material at this level would show little awareness of cultural or workplace issues and would approximate more to a personal diary.

Grade D: This grade would be given to work which makes little attempt to address the requirements of the portfolio or which does not enable the marker to gain any clear sense of the student's attitudes and activities.

Grade F: This grade would be awarded for a Portfolio which does not include each of the elements, which fails to answer the requirements, which is composed largely of copied materials (plagiarism), or which consists of inappropriate or offensive material.

APPENDIX 2: INTERNSHIP REPORT

- *PLEASE SUBMIT THE INTERNSHIP REPORT AS A SINGLE, STAPLED DOCUMENT*
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It is important to plan this written work carefully. The materials from which to construct it will be provided by the Portfolio. Students should try to focus on analyzing and understanding the work environment, rather than writing a personal study centred on personalities or emotional feelings. Detailed comments on grading criteria are given at the end of this document, but overall, students should aim to be providing factual information, evidence of analysis and clear expression of ideas and experiences. Word limits are approximate and if there is need to write at slightly greater length to get ideas across then this is permissible. However, students are not advised to write less, or considerably more than specified. Students may, if they wish, provide illustrations, but will not be penalized if they do not. It is also a good idea to explain any industry-specific terminology, acronyms or jargon.

The primary purpose of this written work is to help students to focus their thoughts on their internship experience and not simply complete the work placement, but rather to analyze what they have learned about a new company, industry sector, working environment, or the experience of working abroad in a cross-cultural setting.

There are three elements of the report:

1. Workplace Profile
2. Internship Description
3. Cultural Analysis

It may be helpful to take notes through the course of the internship since it will be helpful when coming to the written work:

1. Workplace Profile - The objective is to show awareness of the company, department or individual providing the placement. It is also important to examine relevant issues in its commercial or cultural sector, in other words students need to explain the wider context in which the organisation operates. This profile should be in report-form and approximately 750 words in length. In this profile interns are advised to consider:

- The role of the organization or individual providing the placement
- The role of the relevant department
- The position of that organization or individual within its industry or cultural sector, including the main competitors
- How the organization is funded (private company, public funding or charity)
- The scale of the organization (numbers of sites, numbers of staff)
- The history of the organization and/or department and any changes which may lie ahead

In this section the student should focus on the organization rather than on their role there. The information about the company may come from work colleagues, workplace supervisor, through corporate literature or the organisation's website.

2. Internship Description - The aim of this paper is to demonstrate an awareness of how the student has set personal objectives for the placement and what they have achieved during the placement. This should be in report form and approximately 1500 words in length. In this report students are advised to consider:

- The role they have played in their placement, with a breakdown of their activities during a typical week
- The way they have assisted the work of the organization/department
- The skills they have developed as a result of the placement

The focus should be on factual expression and analytical thinking. Personal emotional issues can be mentioned but these should always be provided as a basis for thinking about what happened during the placement, why it happened, how the student coped, and what has been learnt from the experience. Interns should not shy away from saying what they found difficult or challenging. Marks are not given for 'success' in the placement, but rather for ability to analyse the situation.

3. Cultural Analysis - This should be about 750 words in length and should examine the way the intern perceives the differences between British and American attitudes, practices and ways of working. Interns are advised to focus on specific examples and insights drawn from the internship as a way of putting into context the wider experience of living in Britain. It is best not simply to say, 'I like this in Britain', or 'I prefer that in America', but to investigate the differences. Why are things different (or similar!) on each side of the Atlantic? What does that tell us about these two cultures and societies? Students may also want to think about whether they may have an atypical workplace experience – for instance, was the organisation primarily staffed with younger people?

This could affect the level of formality experienced. A further issue may derive from the fact that London is a cosmopolitan and international city. Work colleagues may not even be British. If so, what effect did that have?

Grading Criteria of the Internship Report

A comprehensive workplace profile, detailed self-assessment in the internship report and insightful cultural analysis, will receive an A grade. This work must be well written, clear and grammatically correct, showing evidence of strong analysis of the workplace experience.

Good performance will produce a B grade. This work must be sound overall, but may feature less detail, or may show less evidence of analysis of how the organization worked, or awareness of cultural issues.

Satisfactory performance will produce a C grade. This answer will address the main issues requested, but may contain vagueness, errors (grammatical or factual), or a focus on personal or emotional reactions at the expense of objective analysis.

Poor performance will lead to a D grade or lower. Such work will not have fulfilled the requirements set above. Answers can be graded I if incomplete, or F if there is no significant work produced, or major plagiarism.

Workplace Profile - The top grades would go to a student who had grasped the key issues in the workplace- environment in which they were based. A satisfactory performance would be derived from an adequate summary of the firm and its activities. Unsatisfactory performance would derive from a report that was marred by factual errors showing lack of awareness of key organizational characteristics.

Internship Report - Top grades would go to a student who had intelligently understood the role they were asked to perform and had demonstrated how they had achieved personal growth and acquisition of key skills and knowledge. A satisfactory performance report would show a decent, if not exceptional level of self-awareness. An unsatisfactory performance report would show a lack of personal development of the student derived from the workplace experience e.g. simply a descriptive listing of tasks.

Cultural Analysis -This paper is intended to focus on the cultural context of working in a foreign country. The best grades will be awarded to those who have become engaged with issues such as the difference between social attitudes, manners, humour, dress and so forth, in the context of how they impact on the working environment. Unsatisfactory performance would derive from an unreflective analysis, such as one lacking comparative examples related to the internship.

Grade Appeals

In the first instance the faculty who taught the course should provide, on request, a clarification of any grade they give the student. They can change grades at their discretion. Students, however, may only appeal from a decision of their faculty once their final grade has been issued. This is the procedure that should be followed when a student wishes to appeal a final grade decision by a member of FIE faculty.

1. All appeals are to be made in writing and must be received within 30 days of receipt

of final grades. Appeals should always be accompanied by a detailed rationale for requesting a review and should also be supported with relevant documentation (i.e. copies of essays or other materials).

2. Appeals should be sent in the first instance to the Academic Director of FIE.

3. In the event that the appeal is rejected, the student may make a final appeal to the President of FIE.

Plagiarism

If a student is found to have committed plagiarism, the matter should be brought to their attention as soon as possible by the FIE faculty who has been teaching them. Disciplinary measures are at the discretion of the Faculty. However, it is FIE policy that plagiarism constitutes unacceptable behaviour. Any work which contains more than a several lines of unattributed copied material should be regarded as a FAIL for grading purposes. Students should not, in those circumstances be able to resubmit the work. However, they can, when receiving their final grade, make appeal via the process given above.

APPENDIX 3: PRESENTATION

The aim of the presentation is for you to display a sense of knowledge and engagement with your internship placement and with your work in that placement. The precise date, length and form of the presentation will be assigned to you by your FIE Faculty. However, one format which may be used is for you, as a student, to imagine that you have been asked when you had been called to a job interview to give a presentation on the challenges you overcame in your last work position. Grading will be carried out by the FIE Faculty, and should assess the clarity and structure of your presentation of ideas, as well as your ability to demonstrate understanding of your workplace and your role within it, and your use of visual and other presentational materials. An 'A' grade presentation would demonstrate a clear and incisive understanding of the placement and of the role, and your achievements and development. A 'B' grade presentation might be lacking in either clarity, or detail or sense of self-awareness of personal development. Lower grade presentations would be deficient in more than one of these three key areas.