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Learning for and from work

Integrating the disciplinary and the reflective assessment of placement learning

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Integrating the disciplinary and the reflective assessment of placement learning

• Placement learning in politics
• Assessing placement learning
• Reflection (and challenges)
• Findings / next steps
Placement learning in politics (& IR)

‘External’ drivers:

• Employability, value for money, student experience agendas

• HEA Active and Experiential Learning strategic priority

‘Internal’ drivers:

• Placements as active/experiential ‘learning’ activities
Assessing placement learning

1. Research paper
2. Statement from placement provider
3. Reflective essay (blog/journal)
4. Award credits, but not marks
Assessing placement learning

1. Research paper
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Reflection

- ‘Reflective observation’ – necessary step in cycle of experiential learning - Kolb
- A method for constructing knowledge from experience – Moon
- Necessary for lifelong learning – Mezirow
- Facilitates deep learning
Challenges to reflective learning & writing

Students:

• Objectivity, hyper-personalisation, instrumentality, self-obsession
Challenges to reflective learning & writing

Students:

• Objectivity, hyper-personalisation, instrumentality, self-obsession

Staff:

• Do we know what reflection is and how to do it?

• Integrating two logics of assessment: the disciplinary & the reflective
Preliminary findings

• Students want to and attempt to reflect on their placement experience

• Immediate potential reflection on (research and transferable) skills

• Reflection on cognitive domain: further work needed

• Reflective assessment can enhance – as well as measure – the learning process
Next steps

• Designing placement assessment with clarity, verifiability, consistency:

• *What*: knowledge & understanding, cognitive & intellectual ‘skills’, research (disciplinary) skills, ‘transferable’ skills

• *How*: frameworks for assessing levels of reflection or non-reflection: spectrum from descriptive to critically reflective