

**THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION**

**Experiential Learning Requirements for the  
Postgraduate Diploma in Education Programme – Full Time**

- I. Aims and Learning Outcomes of Experiential Learning**
- II. EL Block**
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## **I. Aims and Learning Outcomes of Experiential Learning**

### **Aims**

In broad terms, the implementation of Experiential Learning (EL) in the Faculty of Education aims at:

- Enhancing students' learning by connecting theory with experience and thought with action;
- Assisting students to understand the relevance of their respective academic disciplines to the real world;
- Developing a richer context for students' learning;
- Exposing students to social and global issues; and
- Cultivating students with critical thinking, creativity and problem-solving skills.

### **Learning Outcomes (LOs)**

More specifically, students are expected to have attained the following LOs after completion of the EL programmes in our Faculty.

#### **1. Planning, pedagogy and problem solving**

- Design, conduct, complete and present EL projects on identified issues independently and collaboratively;
- Develop abilities in critical thinking, communication, collaboration, problem-solving, creativity and other 'learning to learn' skills;
- Prepare a service task/deliverable(s) in response to an ill-defined problem using a consultative and constructive approach that draws on research and practice; and
- Develop and contribute expertise to a wider community.

#### **2. Social and global issues**

- Identify, investigate and understand more about issues related to social, economic, political, environmental and cultural developments in Hong Kong and beyond; and
- Develop a role as a local, national and global citizen.

#### **3. Supporting stakeholders and beneficiaries**

- Develop teaching and learning resources that cater to the diverse needs of stakeholders across a range of EL projects;
- Plan and implement projects which promote stakeholders' and beneficiaries' capacities;
- Work collaboratively with staff and members of partner schools/organisations to ensure a satisfactory outcome to tasks and projects; and
- Develop a better understanding of the ethical issues surrounding EL.

#### **4. Professional conduct and reflections**

- Develop and display critical reflections on the strengths and weaknesses of own practices;
- Propose and implement changes as a result of these reflections to ensure ongoing personal and professional development;
- Write a reflective response that shows your appreciation of, and engagement with, an ill-defined problem and of the contribution of consultation and research to the deeper understanding of the problem and its solution; and
- Conduct themselves professionally when engaged with stakeholders and beneficiaries during the EL period.

\* You may use some of these LOs as the starting point for your reflective writing.

## II. EL Block (6 credits)

PGDE full-time non-language major students are required to undertake the EL Block in Semester 1 of the programme. The placement normally lasts for five to six weeks. Students can either enroll in an EL project offered by the Faculty of Education or nominate their own project (which must be approved by the EL Team and your Methods Coordinator first). Details of the Faculty-offered EL projects can be viewed under the 'PGDE (Full-time) EL Block' section of the Faculty's website (<https://web.edu.hku.hk/programmes/experiential-learning>). Please note that Chinese and English majors have their immersion programmes at this time, and the following:

- Students are normally expected to work five full days per week at the partner organisation. Weekend or evening duties may be required on a case-by-case basis with compensatory leave arranged on weekdays, subject to the community partners' approval. Individual community partners will decide the work schedule at the outset of the project.
- Students are expected to comply with the requirements set by individual partner and these will also be negotiated with the Faculty.
- After students sign up for a particular project, the Faculty expects them to remain committed throughout the duration of their engagement with the respective institution/organisation. If students fail to complete their projects due to unsatisfactory attendance or by leaving the project earlier, they will not receive any credits for this compulsory part of the programme.

### III. Assessment

PGDE non-language major students' performance in EL will be assessed on two key dimensions:

- Professional conduct, and
- Written reflections, satisfactory completion of EL projects, including feedback from project supervisors and participation in a final poster presentation integrated with the capstone requirement.

As hurdle requirements, students are also required to attend two pre-EL departure briefings and one post-EL reflection sharing session and submit an online post-EL survey as well.

#### Professional Conduct: Levels of Performance and Descriptors

Experiential Learning	
Pass	Fail
<p>Students receiving a pass grade are expected to fulfil the EL outcomes in their EL projects.</p> <p><u>There is evidence of:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective engagement and participation with the student's EL project;</li> <li>• Satisfactory completion of the projects set by the NGO or stakeholder;</li> <li>• Professional conduct at all times.</li> </ul> <p>Additionally, they demonstrate <u>evidence</u> of critical self-reflections on their involvement with the EL project, and the impact of their experiences on their personal and professional development.</p>	<p>Students receiving a failing grade would NOT have fulfilled the EL outcomes in their EL projects.</p> <p><u>There is LITTLE or NO evidence of:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective engagement and participation with the student's EL project;</li> <li>• Satisfactory completion of the projects set by the NGO or stakeholder;</li> <li>• Professional conduct at all times.</li> </ul> <p>Additionally, they demonstrate <u>LITTLE or NO evidence</u> of critical self-reflections on their involvement with the EL project, and the impact of their experiences on their personal and professional development.</p>

### Important notes:

1. The overall EL component in the PGDE full-time programme consists of 18 credits, with a combination of 12 credits for Professional Practicum and 6 credits for Experiential Learning.
2. Evidence of professional conduct assessment should be based on official feedback collected from the EL project supervisors from EL partners and the project coordinator(s), as well as the EL Team.
3. An overall 'satisfactory' evaluation of a student's professional conduct and reflective ability is a prerequisite for students to attain an overall pass grade for EL.
4. In the case of any unsatisfactory report/feedback/evidence on the professional conduct of a particular student, a case conference will be conducted. The conference will include the student concerned, the respective project supervisor(s), the relevant Programme Director and/or Deputy Programme Director, the School-University Partnership Office Director (if the case occurs in a partnership school), and the Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching). A representative of the EL partner to whom the student was assigned might also be invited to attend.

### **Pre-departure Review**

A pre-departure review (approximately 500 words) should be submitted before the EL Block commences. (Refer to **Appendix I** for details)

### **Mid-course Reflection**

A mid-course reflection (approximately 500 words) should be submitted at the project's midpoint. (Refer to **Appendix II** for details)

### **Post-EL Reflection**

A post-EL reflection (approximately 1,000 to 1,200 words) should be submitted within two weeks after the EL Block. (Refer to **Appendix III** for details)

### **PGDE Capstone Presentation**

Students will be participating in a programme capstone presentation event at the end of the academic year. (Details of the event will be provided by the PGDE programme office nearer the time.)

**PGDE – Full-time Experiential Learning**  
**Assignment Specification and Assessment Rubrics - *Pre-departure Review***

**Aims**

The pre-departure review serves the following purposes:

- To allow you to demonstrate some research and prior knowledge of the community partner/NGO you are placed with;
- To allow you to demonstrate some research on the educational and social issues tackled by your EL project;
- To allow you to set goals, convey your expectations and worries ahead of the EL Block; and
- To serve as an important reference point as the course progresses.

**Task**

In this part of the assignment, you are expected to write approximately 500 words using the following template:

<b>Project Name:</b>
<b>Relevant Educational Issues / Topics:</b> <i>(e.g. Poverty Education, Museum Education, Service Learning, Positive Education, Social-emotional Learning, Science Education, Financial Education, Public Education, Multicultural Education, Sustainable Development Goals Education, Education for Sustainable Development, Arts Education, An Experiential Approach to Science Education, Environmental Education)</i>
<b>Literature Review (500 words):</b> <i>(What are some critical issues tackled by your project? What are some relevant academic or theoretical findings that relate to your project? Quote at least two pieces of academic references.)</i>
<b>List three things you wish to find out / learn about the community partner:</b> 1. 2. 3.

**List three things that you wish to try out during the placement:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### **Assessment**

The EL Team will read your pre-departure review before you start your EL project and might provide you with comments or feedback via Moodle, email or face-to-face means if necessary.

Please note:

- You should write around 500 words.
- Please make sure you submit your pre-departure review via Moodle before the EL Block commences.
- You may refer to your pre-departure review while working on your mid-course reflection and post-EL reflection of this course.
- Moodle link for PGDE full-time non-language major students: <https://moodle.hku.hk/course/view.php?id=117423>

Your work will be assessed based on the criteria described below:



## PGDE Grade Descriptors for Pre-Departure Review in Experiential Learning

	PASS				FAIL
<b>Understanding, analysis, synthesis and application of knowledge in the pre-departure review</b>	The writer provided a comprehensive and critical analysis, applying existing literature to support the arguments/aim of the study. He/she also identified limitations of the literature relevant to the EL project based on comprehensive understanding.	The writer provided a good critical analysis, applying existing literature to support some arguments/aim of the study, and showing a few limitations of the literature relevant to the EL project.	The writer provided appropriate critical analysis, presenting existing literature mostly in a descriptive way, with limited analysis on the limitations of the literature and the EL project.	The writer provided limited critical analysis, presenting existing literature in a descriptive way, with limited analysis on the limitations of the literature related to the EL project.	The writer provided no critical analysis, only describing some existing literatures, without mentioning the limitations of the literatures or of the EL project.
<b>Structure/organisation of the pre-departure review</b>	The introduction clearly states the writer's thesis or position, and the conclusion clearly summarises the main arguments and points. Paragraphing is appropriate at all times.	The introduction states the writer's thesis or position, and the conclusion summarises the main arguments and points. Paragraphing is appropriate.	The introduction and conclusion are included, but they do not fully capture the essence of the topic and discussion. The is evidence of an ability to paragraph, but some paragraphs lack a central idea or supporting detail.	The topic is not properly introduced, and the conclusion is very brief. The ability to construct a paragraph with a central idea and supporting details is somewhat limited.	The introduction and conclusion are unclear, lack detail or are missing altogether. There is very little evidence of an ability to organise the review into paragraphs with one central idea and supporting details.
<b>Research and discussion of the educational and social issues, project and community partner chosen</b>	The writer is able to integrate a multitude of viewpoints in discussions, including those raised in the community by reputable secondary sources such as journalistic articles or research studies where relevant.	The writer is able to integrate different viewpoints in discussions, including those raised in the community by secondary sources such as journalistic articles or research studies.	The writer is able to identify viewpoints in discussions, including those raised in the community by secondary sources. However, the material is not well integrated.	The writer is able to identify viewpoints in discussions, including those raised in the community by secondary sources. However, the sources referenced are limited or obvious.	The writer uses only one or no outside source material in their discussion.
<b>Mechanics of the pre-departure review</b>	The language contains very few, if any, errors in grammar and vocabulary. If there are any slips, the meaning is still clear. Conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation, references, footnotes, etc.) are followed meticulously.	The language is mostly accurate but contains a few systematic errors in complex grammar and vocabulary. Conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation, references, footnotes, etc.) are mostly followed.	The language is sometimes inaccurate, although errors, when they occur, are more often in complex grammar and vocabulary. Conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation, references, footnotes, etc.) show some inconsistencies.	The language contains frequent errors in both simple and complex grammar and vocabulary. Conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation, references, footnotes, etc.) show significant inconsistencies and may contain errors.	Errors in language and vocabulary are so frequent and distracting that the review is largely incomprehensible. The review does not adhere to the conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation, references, footnotes, etc.).

**PGDE – Full-time Experiential Learning**  
**Assignment Specification and Assessment Rubrics – *Mid-course Reflection***

**Aims**

The mid-course reflection serves the following purposes:

- To provide space to review your work and performance during the first half of the EL Block;
- To provide an occasion for you to reflect on your experience and observation;
- To allow you to explore the applicability and implications of your findings to your teaching philosophy;
- To allow you to set or refine goals for the remaining project period; and
- To allow you to identify and prepare for challenges you may face.

**Task**

At the mid-point of the EL Block, you will write a short 500-word mid-course reflection on your experience. You could refer to the following prompts for this piece of reflection:

1. What experience have you had so far?
2. How do you feel about these experiences?
3. Why do you think you felt that way?
4. How might these experiences/findings relate to teaching and learning in a school context?
5. What do you wish to find out and try out in the remaining half of the EL Block?
6. What are some foreseeable challenges of achieving #5, and how do you plan to overcome or work around them?

## **Assessment**

The EL Team will read your mid-course reflection and might provide you with comments or feedback via Moodle, email or face-to-face means.

Please note:

- You should write around 500 words.
- You may refer to your mid-course reflection while working on your post-EL reflection of this course.
- Moodle link for PGDE full-time students: <https://moodle.hku.hk/course/view.php?id=117423>

Your work will be assessed based on the criteria described below:

## PGDE Grade Descriptors for Mid-course Reflection in Experiential Learning

	PASS				FAIL
<b>Understanding, analysis, synthesis and application of knowledge in the mid-course reflection</b>	An original prompt or question is chosen for discussion. There is consistent, perceptive and critical engagement with issues and themes based on comprehensive understanding of the EL project chosen.	An appropriate prompt or question is chosen for discussion. There is generally perceptive and critical engagement with issues and themes. There are some shortcomings in understanding the EL project chosen.	An appropriate prompt or question is chosen for discussion. There is occasional perceptive and critical engagement with issues and themes. The reflection tends toward a rather superficial understanding of the EL project chosen.	An appropriate prompt or question is chosen for discussion. There is very limited critical engagement with key issues and themes. The reflection rarely goes beyond reproduction of the website and handbook description of EL project chosen.	A weak prompt or question is chosen for discussion. There is no critical engagement with issues and themes. The reflection is characterised by inaccuracies and misunderstandings.
<b>Structure/organisation of the mid-course reflection</b>	The introduction clearly states the writer's thesis or position, and the conclusion clearly summarises the main arguments and points. Paragraphing is appropriate at all times.	The introduction states the writer's thesis or position, and the conclusion summarises the main arguments and points. Paragraphing is appropriate.	The introduction and conclusion are included but do not fully capture the essence of the topic and discussion. There is evidence of an ability to paragraph, but some paragraphs lack a central idea or supporting detail.	The topic is not properly introduced, and the conclusion is very brief. The ability to construct a paragraph with a central idea and supporting details is somewhat limited.	The introduction and conclusion are unclear, lack detail or missing altogether. There is very little evidence of an ability to organise the reflection into paragraphs with one central idea and supporting details.
<b>Personal development</b>	The writer develops extensive and highly perceptive self-understanding from reflective writings. He/she consistently demonstrates a willingness and ability to subject his/her own beliefs, values and behaviour to critical scrutiny and an openness to change.	The writer develops perceptive self-understanding from reflective writings. He/she demonstrates a willingness and ability to subject his/her own beliefs, values and behaviour to critical scrutiny and an openness to change.	The writer develops some perceptive self-understanding from reflective writings. He/she is generally disposed to scrutinising his/her own beliefs, values and behaviour but not always in a sufficiently critical manner. He/she shows some openness to change.	The writer develops some limited self-understanding from reflective writings. He/she shows willingness to examine own beliefs, values and behaviour but mostly without sufficient questioning of them. He/she occasionally shows openness to change.	There is no evidence of the development of self-understanding from the reflective writings. The writer is unwilling or unable to scrutinise his/her own beliefs, values and behaviours. He/she shows no openness to change.
<b>Mechanics of the mid-course reflection</b>	The language contains very few, if any, errors in grammar and vocabulary. If there are any slips, the meaning is still clear. Conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation, references, footnotes, etc.) are followed meticulously.	The language is mostly accurate but contains a few systematic errors in complex grammar and vocabulary. Conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation, references, footnotes, etc.) are mostly followed.	The language is sometimes inaccurate, although errors, when they occur, are more often in complex grammar and vocabulary. Conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation, references, footnotes, etc.) show some inconsistencies.	The language contains frequent errors in both simple and complex grammar and vocabulary. Conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation, references, footnotes, etc.) show significant inconsistencies and may contain errors.	Errors in language and vocabulary are so frequent and distracting that the reflection is largely incomprehensible. The reflection does not adhere to the conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation, references, footnotes, etc.).

**PGDE – Full-time Experiential Learning**  
**Assignment Specification and Assessment Rubrics – *Post-EL Reflection***

**Aims**

The reflection serves the following purposes:

- To allow you to make critical reflections during the EL Block;
- To illustrate your perceptions and understanding of target communities/social groups, learning and teaching, personal and professional development, ethical considerations, project impact and intercultural communication (where applicable);

**Task**

After the post-EL reflection sharing session, you are required to submit a post-EL reflection consisting of 1,000-1,200 words, which should be based on your experience. This thought piece should discuss the critical issues related to your project and reflect on what you have learned from this placement regarding education and how this placement could shape/change your thoughts about your identity as an educator. You do not need to follow the prompts closely when writing your reflection. However, with reference to Rolfe et al.'s (2001) reflective model, you should address the questions asked using the following prompts to write your reflection piece. Students should NOT answer these questions individually as a question-and-answer task.

**What?**

Recall and observe the changes. With reference to the pre-programme literature review and the mid-course reflection, discuss how your understanding of education or aspects of education has/has not changed since the placement and how it shapes your identity. What have you observed from the people you interacted with through this project (they may include your supervisors, colleagues, teachers, parents, students, community members and peers)? Is there anything you find surprising or unexpected? You may illustrate your findings with the help of one or more memorable incident(s).

### **So What?**

Examine and, if found appropriate, challenge your assumptions. How might your identity, experience and educational background influence your experience, interest and attitude towards your placement? Are there instances where you find yourself ‘unlearning’ from the experience? If yes, why do you think that happened? Through this project and an in-depth reflection on your reactions, feelings and thoughts, what have you learnt about yourself as an individual and an educator? What implications might these findings have on your subject-specific knowledge?

### **Now What?**

Make action plans. How will your new-found understanding of your teaching philosophy, strengths and growth areas impact your future professional and personal development? What do you still wish to learn about education or a highlighted aspect of education, and how do you plan to build your professional competencies further?

### **Multimodal Assignment**

Video Presentation / Podcast

In replacement of the post-EL reflective essay, students can choose to submit a 5-6-minute video or podcast audio showcasing their reflection using the same prompts. For the video option, students are encouraged to use PowerPoint slides, including appropriate visual aids, to present the above information in the video. However, you are not encouraged to use the slides as a script. Instead, only point forms should be included.

### **Assessment**

The EL Team will post comments and feedback on some or all of your Moodle reflections during and after the EL Block.

Please note:

- You are welcome to write more than the suggested number of words in the reflection.
- Moodle link for PGDE full-time non-language major students: <https://moodle.hku.hk/course/view.php?id=117423>

Your work will be assessed based on the criteria described below:

## Grade Descriptors for Post-EL Reflection in Experiential Learning

	PASS			FAIL	
<b>Addressing the prompt or research question</b>	The writer identifies and clearly addresses the main question(s) or prompt being posed in his/her reflection, as well as the subsidiary, embedded or implicit aspects, addressing their relationships to each other.	The writer identifies and addresses the main question(s) or prompt being posed in his/her reflection, as well as most of the subsidiary, embedded or implicit aspects.	The writer identifies and addresses the main question(s) or prompt being posed in his/her reflection, as well as some of the subsidiary, embedded or implicit aspects.	The writer identifies part of the main question(s) or prompt being posed in his/her reflection, as well as a few of the subsidiary, embedded or implicit aspects, but only addresses them partially.	The writer lacks an understanding of what the reflective question or prompt requires.
<b>Intellectual engagement with experiences, knowledge and practice</b>	The reflection consistently demonstrates informed, thoughtful and sustained engagement with a broad range of relevant experiences, theories and issues (where appropriate). The writer draws insightful connections between the experiences and other related issues in the students' knowledge of related theory and practice. Points are well-supported through the use of evidence.	The reflection mostly demonstrates informed and thoughtful engagement with a broad range of relevant experiences, theories and issues (where appropriate). The writer draws connections between the experiences and other related issues in the students' knowledge of related theory and practice. Points are generally supported through the use of evidence.	The reflection mostly indicates informed intellectual engagement with concepts, theories and issues, but not always with sufficient depth, breadth or understanding. The writer draws rather simplistic connections between the experiences and other related issues in the students' knowledge of related theory and practice. Points are generally supported through the use of evidence.	The reflection indicates some intellectual engagement with concepts, theories or issues, but mostly at a superficial level. The writer draws simplistic connections between the experiences and other related issues in the students' knowledge of related theory and practice. There is a lack of evidence to support of points made.	The reflection reveals an absence of intellectual engagement with concepts, theories or issues. The writings are irrelevant or superficial, with no attempt to link experiences and other related issues to the students' knowledge of related theory and practice. Viewpoints are poorly articulated or supported.
<b>Personal development</b>	The writer develops extensive and highly perceptive self-understanding from reflective writings. He/she is able to draw upon personal examples in everyday life and consistently demonstrates a willingness and ability to subject his/her own beliefs, values and behaviour to critical scrutiny, with an openness to change.	The writer develops perceptive self-understanding from reflective writings, demonstrating a willingness and ability to subject his/her own beliefs, values and behaviour to critical scrutiny, with an openness to change.	The writer develops some perceptive self-understanding from reflective writings, generally disposed to scrutinising own beliefs, values and behaviour, but not always in a sufficiently critical manner. He/she shows some openness to change.	The writer develops some limited self-understanding from reflective writings, showing willingness to examine his/her own beliefs, values and behaviour, but mostly without sufficient questioning of them. He/she occasionally shows openness to change.	There is no evidence of the development of self-understanding from the reflective writings. The writer is unwilling or unable to scrutinise his/her own beliefs, values and behaviour, showing no openness to change.
<b>Mechanics of the post-EL reflection</b>	The reflection shows evidence of diligent editing and proofreading, with a clear desire to make the reflection accessible to the reader. The language contains very few, if any, errors in grammar and vocabulary.	The reflection shows evidence of editing and proofreading, with a desire to make the reflection accessible to the reader. The language is generally accurate but contains a few systematic errors in complex grammar and vocabulary.	The reflection shows an attempt to edit and proofread. The language is mostly accurate, and errors, when they occur, are mainly in complex grammar and vocabulary. These errors can be distracting, but the overall meaning is still intelligible.	The reflection is fragmented and/or inconsistent. The language is sufficient for the meaning to be understood with effort. However, the language contains frequent errors in both simple and complex grammar and vocabulary.	The reflection is missing some entries. Errors in language and vocabulary are so frequent and distracting that the reflection is largely incomprehensible.

**Reference**

Rolfe, G., Freshwater, D., & Jasper, M. (2001). *Critical reflection for nursing and the helping professions: A user's guide.*