Guidelines for the Supervised Work Experience Semester

Criteria for a pass grade

- Full class attendance, i.e., attending classes is mandatory
- Submitting the term paper (work experience report) by the stipulated deadline
- Work experience presentation (approx. 20 min + 10 min discussion)
- Presentation documentation (handout, slides on paper, agenda, overview, etc)
- Reference letter from the company

Work Experience Report and Presentation Design

- Outline
- Length: 10 – 15 pages
- You may also include references and bibliography and Appendices (business report, material…) as appropriate

The report should not be purely descriptive, i.e., a sensible approach would be to discuss the placement from the perspective of a particular question or issue.

Minimum content requirements for the report / presentation:
- Presenting the company e.g., structure, products/services, corporate culture, regulations
- Job description Department, tasks and responsibilities, function in the department
- Outcome Purpose of your work; what contribution did you make to the company?
- Dovetailing of theory and practice Analysis and appraisal (using materials learnt on Part One/Two of your programme): What could you apply directly, what was an indirect help, (in retrospect) what would you have needed to learn
- Personal evaluation of your work experience see the Reflection Guidelines

You can fail the seminar for any ONE of the following reasons

- A poor presentation, too short and unprofessional. (The presentation should narrate a "story", with slides supporting the points and development, the right amount of time spent on the different elements, and with evidence of audience awareness.)
- The term paper does not meet the requirements for a term paper or is insufficient in terms of substance (cf. § 11 PrakO).
- Not attending every seminar (seminars are mandatory).
Starting Your Work Experience (Or initial situations say a lot about the overall picture)

- How did you get the place at the company? Coincidental, intentional, supported by others…?
- The placement interview and what you noticed at the time...

General (The gap between anticipation and reality benchmarks happiness)

What did I want, hope for, expect – in terms of
- Job area or tasks
- Colleagues and superiors
- Supervision?

What was the reality? Were your expectations met? Were there (pleasant or unpleasant) surprises?
- Does the company have a motto or guiding principle? If it does, how does that motto or vision square with your impression while working there?
- □ Your overall impression

Tasks and supervision (Motivation comes from a job you like and that suits you)

- Were you over- or under-challenged by your tasks, or were they just right?
- Were you only challenged by the substance of the work or did you also have to contribute in other areas (negotiations, meetings, discussions, presentations)?
- Did you enjoy the work?
- Did you learn from it?
- How were you supervised?
- Did your supervisor give you sufficient information? Were your tasks properly explained?
- Did you get feedback about your performance? Was there something like a staff appraisal meeting?

Contribution to the wider picture (Can I see a wider picture?)

- Within the limits of your remit, was your work useful for the company (or was it just giving you "something to do")?
- What connection can you see between your own performance and the department / company?
- Could you contribute towards the company / department goals? Did you know what the company or department goals were?

Work climate, colleagues, superiors (Help or hindrance)?

- How was the cooperation with your colleagues?
- Were there any points of conflict? If yes, how was it treated in the organisation?
- What was the relationship between staff and supervisors like in general and how was your own relationship to your superiors?
- What was your impression of the corporate and work climate? Was it a pleasant working atmosphere?

Self Assessment (Criticism is all very well, but how brilliant am I really?)

- How involved were you with your work?
- Did you meet the company's demands? (Did you know the standards you had to meet?)
- Can you truthfully say "I gave my best"? Or was it more just a job you had to get through somehow?

How would you evaluate your own key qualifications, if you had to put them to the test?

Social competences: Communication and discussion skills, ability to handle conflict situations, team skills, good manners (punctual, polite, respectful, considerate, etc.) ...
Methods: Presenting, facilitating discussions, moving discussion forwards, asking pertinent questions, bringing ideas into debate … How do you know that you have /do not have these skills?

**Taking on a leadership role? (Would I trust myself to do it?)**

Would you trust yourself to take on your superior’s job? 
No, I wouldn’t trust myself to because I’m lacking …. 
Sure, s/he does …… and I can do that too!

Imagine you are the boss there. What would you change? What would you leave the same?

**How work experience relates to your future career (Was I following my own agenda or only doing what the University programme prescribed?)**

- Why did you take this particular work placement?
- Has the experience improved your chances of a future career?
- What are those new chances concretely?
- What impetus have they given to your perspective on your career?