

**Faculty of Management and Law**



**SCEPTrE Fellowship  
Report**

**By**

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**‘A people centric approach to development  
through professional training’**

**June 2008**

# **SCEPTrE Fellowship Report**

## **Executive summary**

The focus of this fellowship considers the personal development aspects of students experience during the professional training year. There are two main aspects of this development, learning about the company and its processes and learning about people and human relationships. It is the latter of these that appears to have the most significant impact on the student, creates the greatest demands on them but also has the potential to generate the most lasting learning experiences.

The research suggests that overall the students have gained from taking part in this SCEPTrE study. In particular the element of personal mentoring at regular intervals that has facilitated their understanding the dynamics of people relationships, both in the workplace and perhaps beyond.

It is also evident from the study that a high level of tutor engagement is required in order that adequate coaching and support levels are provided; in particular, open and sincere lines of communication are available. Even with this enhanced level of support there are still concerns with things about which they are unsure, for example cases where they experience very poor workplace mentoring, bad practice, and conflicts of personality. Problems also arise when heavy demands are made upon them without proper training or support in place which creates anxiety about being unable to meet the challenge.

At the start of their journey the students are pre occupied by the anticipation of the experience before them, what they are going to learn and excitement about embarking on the actual professional training experience, work processes, meeting new people and living in a new environment, often many miles from home. A key feature of the Professional Training (PT) year is the PT report and students taking part in the

SCEPTrE study are required to produce a PT report with a different focus to the norm. It is not certain whether it was this change in report focus, or the increased tutoring about the report focus, that caused a significant impact on the student's perception of what they had learned during the year. As a tutor supervising the completion of these reports it was very noticeable that the emphasis had shifted from being preoccupied with facts, figures and the overall grade they would achieve towards one of reflection and self-evaluation of their achievements, development and learning.

The emphasis of mentoring has been focussed on the student being able to resolve issues for themselves using reflective practice to visualise a creative way to deal with difficult situations especially those involving people. During the study it was found that the first stage of this process required the student to step out of the situation and analyse the facts as one might, for example, when considering a case study. This of course was easier said than done so a template was developed to provide a series of prompts around which the student could learn to take a different perspective to the problem and plan their strategy.

The overall grade and the span of grades for the reports under the SCEPTrE study are slightly higher than those where a regular P/T report has been produced. However, the student development section is very much improved and in most cases it is this that has had the effect of increasing the overall mark. Students like to talk about themselves and see their development unfold – using the personal progress logs as a support in writing up this section appears to show some better engagement with this process. This research has identified that consistently the single thing that all students bring to the start of their PT year is aspiration and visiting tutors can play a large part in supporting students in mentoring these.

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## **1. Introduction to Sceptre Fellowship Project**

‘A people centric approach to development through professional training’

This SCEPTRe fellowship project was developed following a conversation amongst a group of students discussing their experience and reflections of managing an event as part of the Hospitality Operations Management (HOM) module. The HOM module was developed and delivered using an enquiry based learning approach where groups of students were set a task, namely to create an event, within certain criteria, i.e. had to take place somewhere on campus, would generate a profit to be donated to a charity of their choice. To perform the task it was essential that they worked as a team and pooled their resources utilised individual skills within the group to identify and seek out the information they needed. The projects had been very successful in meeting the learning outcomes set for the HOM module itself but additionally the people interactions, both within the group and across the wider university, selling tickets, hiring venues arranging licensing and outsourcing a variety of services, had created both natural enquiry behaviour and high levels of anxiety and stress.

These new levels of anxiety and to some extent considerable frustration led to groups sharing their experiences in an open forum. This was quite remarkable because these conversations all took place some eight or nine weeks and a Christmas vacation after the module had been completed, yet these quite vivid accounts of personal experience remained.

## **2. Building on the Experience**

In the following year it was decided that this additional learning should be captured and become part of the module learning outcome. Also it was felt that there needed to be some form of closure on the events themselves. The groups were smaller, between

eight and ten and each student was asked to keep a personal log (appendix A) of their experiences during the planning and execution of the event. A de-briefing session was built into the assessment feedback process so that any issues could be discussed and where necessary conflicts could be resolved. An initial period of twenty hours was built into the tutorial time for this process i.e. 15 minutes per student for 80 students. This proved totally inadequate many of the students had very problematic experiences either with other group members, other groups or with other members of the university with whom they had come into contact. The eventual workload amounted to over forty hours of tutorial time, which was thought to be unsustainable in the future.

### **3. Making the connection to Professional Training**

This moment arrived when the researcher realised the similarities of experiences and opportunities for personal development that were available from completing the HOM module were the same experiences likely to occur during the Professional Training year. It was the personal view of the researcher, gathered anecdotally from both the experience of the HOM module and from visiting students on placement that the increased maturity shown by students when they returned from the P/T year was predominantly due to the inter-personal relationships, other staff, customers, and their peer group, encountered as part of the P/T year, as this is a significant feature of the management process. In the researchers view this was really important learning that was not recognised and for the most part going unrecorded by the academic community. It was in essence what the P/T process was all about, however students were firmly focussed on completing the P/T report, the main focal point of which required a business analysis of the placement provider. This business section also carried a higher proportion of the marks. Many students had considerable difficulty in

obtaining the material needed to complete the report in an accurate or meaningful way. The net result of this was that in most cases this section of the report became the central focus of their effort and they lost sight of their personal development achievements and had little time or thought for reflection.

#### **4. SCEPTRe Fellowship PT Approach**

The research process in this study was structured around Reflection, Discourse and Subliminal Thought, a de-briefing/interview process and more importantly open conversations. Essentially the P/T visit is primarily about enquiry in that the process requires dialogue exchanges between the tutor and the student to assess the general well being of the student and how the placement is progressing. As part of this enquiry the tutor is seeking to assess what issues there might be and how the student is relating to the workplace experience particularly the reporting processes, tasks, practices and company culture and inter-relationships with others where these are remarkable in nature. This is followed by a more detailed conversation with the student and the mentor/manager where issues of process are discussed. In order to provide structure for this conversation a student feedback form is completed by the mentor/manager in consultation with the student and the tutor. This provides an open forum, previously agreed with the student, to discuss issues, praise, and note any future action that may be required by any of the parties present.

The course of action adopted for this study uses conversation in both formal and informal setting. The format of the formal setting starts with a general chat in the student's workplace and becomes more enquiring as the conversation develops enabling the tutor to pick up on issues, often subliminal in nature gained during the student's performance of daily tasks. In this case the term subliminal is used to

suggest that it is sometimes what is not said or how a topic is approached and the student's body language that offers some clue as to how the student has engaged with the problem, or not as the case may be, and how much of an impact this experience has had on their development. Essentially this became the most crucial part of the intervention process and led to the researchers development of the Template for inducing creativity in problem resolution, see table 1 page 9. At the macro level most students appear to handle the majority of occupational issues fairly well and in accordance with normal behaviour, however, at the micro level the differences in managing challenging situations can be enormous, even when two or more students are working for the same employer, as the case studies demonstrate.

#### **4.1 Mentoring an intervention**

This can be a very emotional exercise and it is important that the tutor is able to both empathise but remain objective. It appeared to the researcher that developing objectivity is the first stage in helping a student to create a coping strategy that they can follow after the tutor visit has passed. Separating out feelings from thoughts and one thought from another so that a better understanding of the situation can be achieved. Typically a student will rationalise the problem and bury it deeply as part of a defence mechanism but it is essential that the student is able to analyse the problem systematically based on the reality, the environment and any other influencing factors that help to get things in proportion. To help achieve a more informal but analytical approach the template for inducing creativity in problem resolution was used. The application of this approach allowed the tutor to probe areas that were of obvious concern in an attempt to diffuse, what had been previous experiences an emotional reaction. This enabled the tutor to be perceived by the student in what might be described as an educator's role – supporting the learning from the experience in this

non-teaching environment. The results were significant in that all twelve students in this study faced employment traumas in differing degrees and each resolved the issue through a sense of empowerment achieved via objective mentoring.

WHAT	HOW	WHY
Have a dose of reality	Take a look in the mirror	You have shortcomings too
Do you need to grieve	Have a good rant	Better out than in
Define a difficult person	List pros and cons	You might be one
Deal with strong feelings	Talk to someone you trust	Strong feelings have no place in conflict resolution
What roles are people playing	Examine their agenda	May reveal hidden truths
Can you both win	Examine what each needs	Easier to resolve
Can you attain Catharsis	Disentangle your emotion	For liberation and peace

Table 1. Template for inducing creativity in problem resolution: Peter Alcott

SCEPTRe Fellowship 2008

This template provided a framework that enabled the student to analyse the human relationship difficulties that many found to be fairly frequent occurrences.

## **4.2 Case study Student A**

The following is a transcript from a student's personal progress log received 12 weeks into the placement.

“Over the last week I have finally decided that I have had enough of my current job (and the company itself). This conclusion has been a gradual one over the past few months – a number of incidences have contributed to this decision. Every morning I wake up with the dread of going to work. I have no motivation and no respect for the workplace. The underlying problem is our director (\*\*\*\*\*). I can only really describe her like a dictator, like Hitler or Stalin. She is very unpredictable, short, stubborn, superficial, uncooperative, defensive, irrational, unprofessional, and temperamental; the list goes on. She regularly belittles managers in front of their employees, which is very unprofessional of her (and is highly embarrassing). She has an extremely sharp tongue, she will do things out of spite, she is never wrong, she likes being hated – she seems to get a kick out of it”.

## **4.3 Tutor visit (intervention)**

The following is a transcript from the student's personal log received 1 week following the visit.

“Peter Alcott made his first visit to see the Managers in Development (MID) at the xxxx xxxx resort and club. It was good to see him, and to let him know the current situation and incidents that had gone on over the past few months. Peter (Alcott) spent the majority of his time having meetings and luncheons with MIDs and other important people, such as Sandra (HR Director), to see how we were getting along. Peter (Alcott) and I had a long meeting one day after work to discuss my progress: I felt as if this was my last opportunity to try and solve my current state of affairs. He made me feel more positive and inspired me to stay at the resort and to carry on

pursuing a new job role with more responsibility. A couple of days after Peter (Alcott) had left Yulia (MID) and I decided that we would write an email to Josie (director), Sandra (HR director) and Jennifer (HR manager) to make them aware of our concerns. A couple of days later Josie replied and we had a meeting with her and her assistant Silvia later that week. Yulia and I were both promoted to new positions within the spa – Yulia – Manager of the Salon, and myself – Assistant Guest Services Manager. We were both very happy indeed to hear of the good news, I am very glad that we persisted with our goal. Josie also told Yulia and I that she was very impressed with both of us, and that we were very professional”.

#### **4.4 Thoughts**

If we consider the style and likely content of the email that this student may have sent before the intervention it is most probable that the result subsequently achieved would not have happened. As Levinson comments this is a transitional period of development and hitherto most students that have reached this level of a degree programme have primarily been focused on the attainment of qualifications and academic learning. Bridging the gap between academe and employment is complex because many, soon to be graduates, believe they have won a right of passage to be taken seriously; and finding a creative approach in dealing with people, bridging the gap and securing solutions for work based problems is an essential skill for them to acquire.

#### **4.5 Case study Student B**

The following is a transcript from a student’s personal progress log received 12 weeks into the placement.

“Trying to fit in is the most challenging part. This place will be my home for a year so I have to fit in some way. I have to find a way to create bridges with everyone in the

retail division and prove to them that they did not make a mistake bringing me here. Also I need to make friends because I am here on my own and at times it's lonely. Entering the workforce is not as easy as expected. You have responsibilities; people depend on you and expect you to act in a professional way because whatever you do does not only reflect on you but also on them. It seems that they are not interested in my ideas, I don't think they respect me or are willing to discuss my ideas or believe I can take my responsibilities seriously".

#### **4.6 Tutor visit (intervention)**

The following is a transcript from the student's personal log received 1 week after the visit.

"The visit by Peter Alcott has been invaluable. His support and presence was incredibly useful as he helped me identify and recognise the different stages of development, through the initial objectives, strengths and weaknesses I had identified prior to starting my placement year. He further provided encouragement through bad times and rejoiced with me when specific goals were achieved. It was good to know that support could be graciously provided and that links still existed with the university in case something did not go to plan. Listening attentively and cooperating are the main approaches, in order to get good training I have to pay attention and cooperate with Lauren in order to learn the processes. My managers seem to trust me quite a lot and are eager to teach me. They treat me as a normal employee and not as an intern. Because of this I try to please them and do my work properly. I have to admit that their approach to me motivates me to do better and I am more eager to learn".

#### **4.7 Thoughts**

Much has been written on personality, those unique characteristics of people that make them different and yet allow comparison. Student A and student B have very different personalities and yet the same approach of inducing a mindset that could visualise a more creative and open thought process beyond the symptoms of the problem provided the impetus to finding resolution.

#### **5. Contribution to SEPTRE's educational goals**

- 1) That Professional Training provides a wider arena for learning; it provides an opportunity for 'Growing in real world wisdom' not just work experience.
- 2) It demonstrates that a professional training tutor and tutor visits require the same, if not a higher level of experience, preparation and dedication to learning that would be expected from the delivery of any other academic module.
- 3) That those engaged in professional training tutoring deserve the same level of esteem and recognition afforded to any other specialist academic discipline.
- 4) That the institution should provide proper training for all engaged in professional training.

It is difficult to measure the success of personal development and personal awareness and undertaking this research it remains hard to define but 'you know it when you see it'. In examining SEPTRE's educational roles, 'learning for a complex world' then comparing the environment in which professional training takes place we should think less about teaching and more about educating our students. It is simply not sufficient to adopt a classroom approach with a classroom mentality when attempting to mentor students in difficult workplace situations. Tutors need to think about how they learn in

their workplace environment, but more than this, how they learnt during the first few months in a new workplace environment.

If we try to sum up what students bring to the start of their professional training year it is aspiration. As professional training visiting tutors we need to focus on becoming educators delivering knowledge to meet these individual aspirations because the life experiences are perceived, learned and understood in the context of the individual experiencing them.

## **6. Conclusions**

It is evident that providing this level of professional training support is not an insignificant undertaking on the part of either the tutor or the student. It should be remembered however that it represents 120 P credits and has the potential to provide a tremendous opportunity for the student's self-development and practitioner experience and as a CPD opportunity for the tutor.

Discussion with students post SCEPTrE project revealed the following perceived benefits of adopting this new format for future Professional Training Experience, (currently in progress) :-

- It is very helpful to meet with the visiting tutor prior to departing on the professional training year.
- The monthly personal progress logs whilst initially appearing cumbersome to complete were found very beneficial in both creating a focus for the experience and for the feedback process they instigated with the tutor on a regular basis. This regular feedback conversation is an essential element of the PT process if personal development experiences are to be optimised and relationship difficulties overcome.

- The focus on personal professional development enabled the student and the tutor to create a strategy for dealing with people related problem solving. This proved to be a good coping strategy until either the problem was resolved or until the tutor visit when the situation could then be addressed.
- Finally, at a debriefing lunch held late in the autumn semester students suggested that the Professional Training Report could be a substitute for the final year dissertation; they felt that their PT report was well supported whereas the final year project is less so.
- The PT report should contain two sections, one academically framed around an appropriate technical or managerial process and operational complexity of the organisation and the other a reflective self-appraisal of personal development. This could easily be externally moderated. Further more those that attained a grade of 60% or over should be given the option to take an alternative 20 credit module in place of the level 3 undergraduate project; specifically again writing a report, investigating and researching a topic, analysing and drawing conclusions. This would save them repeating the exercise and allow them to focus on a module in their final year more relevant to their career aspirations. It might also encourage a greater take-up of the PT year with this added academic value.

Finally, whilst this SCEPTRe Fellowship was designed to offer improvements to student support and learning from Professional Training placements, the journey has also provided considerable learning for the tutor undertaking the research. The opportunity for detailed, personal investigation of the ‘learning from experience’ process, with this group of students has provided the tutor with a new understanding

of how this phenomenon works and what needs to be done to help students understand and learn from their experiences, hopefully, long into their future working lives.

## Appendix A

Student Name.....URN.....

Job role.....Date.....

### MONTHLY PERSONAL PROGRESS LOG

1. How do you think this period's work went? How did it make you feel?
2. At this time how would you describe the Company Culture?
3. What was the most challenging aspect during this period and why?
4. What was the most satisfying aspect during this period and why?
5. What skills from the matrix provided have you developed most this period?
6. What is the main lesson you learnt this period?
7. Who in the organisation has been the most influential during this period and why?

## Appendix B

SCEPTRe Fellowship Scheme Proposal

April 2006

### Goal

To change the students' perception of taking a placement year from; 'being a chance to gain work experience' to; 'learning about themselves and understanding the employment relationship'.

### Rationale

Currently the focus of pre-placement lectures, the tutor visits and the final report is on factual information, how they are getting on in the job, collecting data about the company for their final report and thinking about what to use in their special topic. There is a section on personal development but this is based on a set of aims they made prior to the placement year and as such it becomes a 'tick box' section. Existing report format could be replaced by an enquiry based learning report perhaps marked progressively during tutor visits and/or online detailing workplace applications learned and how these relate to student development. The report really needs to identify more Who What Why When and How rather than routinely reporting company financial data. The report should reflect the road of discovery, the essence of working in and being part of the company culture, a team member and an employee! Tutor visits could focus more on helping students to profile managers and senior colleagues, developing their skills at negotiating things like a raise in salary or changing work patterns, how to put themselves in line for promotion, difficult skills to learn but essential. The professional training year at 120 credits equals the effort required to attain 6 x 20 credit modules and does therefore in my opinion warrant a

robust gauge and record of what a student has actually learned and how they have developed both professionally and personally during the process. Considerable effort is given to pre-placement information and education but we don't seem to capture what takes place during the process, we just marvel at how much they have changed.

### Previous development work

During the autumn semester 2005 I used an enquiry based learning approach for my Hospitality Operations Management module with great success. Briefly, students formed companies that had to put on some type of hospitality event utilising any of the hospitality facilities within the campus. They had to negotiate with facility managers, discuss issues like licensing, decide on job roles and delegate responsibility. During the process they maintained personal logs, which were later, analysed by Paul Tosie's team. I also used the logs to provide individual feed-back to students (took about 40 hours) but this was a particularly rewarding part of the module evaluation, more importantly it helped to identify what students had gained from going through the experience. What I was keen to identify was that in addition to the student s learning about running an event providing food and beverage, putting on entertainment and being accountable, they also learned how to deal with difficult people, awkward situations lazy team members, working around licensing law, what they were good at and what they did not like doing, the list is considerable and much of this learning would not have been recognised had this process not been used.

### Participants

Any changes to the PT module including the report would need to go through an academic board but I would hope to get permission from senior colleagues and the

ethics committee to run a pilot study with a group of students that had been assigned to me who are going on placement in July 2006. They would not have had an amended pre-placement lecture programme but this small group of between 8 and 10 students could be bought up to speed by giving them a bit more of my time on the first visit.

#### The difference I hope to make through this fellowship

I believe that if we can add value to our teaching by not only teaching the subject material but also show students how to use this material to navigate around the world of employment it will be much more rewarding for all concerned. My teaching has already changed, I teach the material, I put it in the workplace environment and I describe typical fall-out that material is likely to have. When I go on placement visits I test out the material on practitioners and gauge the response. This then forms part of the next class. We all marvel at how much students grow in stature following their placement experience but in fact some grow more than others and many grow despite our efforts. I would like us to be more pro-active in setting what we teach in the context of the world of work and then follow this through in the professional training process. Learning some things by rote is important, learning from experience is also important; learning from a tutored experience is priceless.

#### Evaluating the effects

This is likely to be the most challenging aspect of the work because much of it will be subjective. The pilot study students would be asked to complete a modified version of the report. This might be achieved by asking them to use the 4000 word special project section to discuss what they have learned about employment relationships,

their personal and professional development, company employee culture and motivators. They could also keep a personal log which they email back each week/fortnight, similar to the one I used before (attached for reference). This is a good reflective practice and would provide them with some of the information for their report. It will also help them to identify that quite a lot of what they have learnt has been through an enquiry basis and once they have recognised this it is likely that they will use this process again and think logically about the issues of working in an organisation.

#### Contribution to SEPTRE's educational goals

I think it will promote excellence in, and enhance students' experiences of professional training education by enriching what they learn over and above the pure work experience by helping them to understand better what these experiences are actually teaching them. Quite a few students have really tough learning curves. In the early stages of a placement I have seen them experience tears, anxiety, frustration and anger, I saw the same things in last years HOM module and it was all captured on personal logs and it was all dealt with via good feedback sessions.

I think it will enhance students, experiences through enquiry-based approaches to learning particularly about things they want to achieve. What they need is a bit of a framework, some ideas. They can then set about finding out what they need to know to achieve the result they want. This in fact was the approach taken with one of my placement students last year who though she was doing too many hours for not enough pay. I gave her some guidelines she did the enquiring and put forward her own case, which satisfactorily rectified the situation.

## **Appendix C Independent Assessment of Reflective Placement Reports**

International Hospitality Management BSC (Honours)  
Assessment of Reflective Placement Reports  
October 2007

I have given three students a mark of 75%; one student a mark of 65%; 3 students a mark of 60; one student a mark of 58% and one student a mark of 55%. Marks in the higher range illustrated significant personal and professional development and had made stronger links to the business environment. The reflective logs were completed and go beyond description to suggest possible future courses of action/application of learning. There is repeated evidence of the students' ability to reflect on their experience and to try something new/different. Students in the higher range also presented their work in clear and coherent manner integrating a discussion of the personal, professional and business development; also drawing on appropriate theory.

### **Student A –**

This is an excellent reflective report which demonstrates significant learning over time, in the professional placement year. Student A illustrates both personal and professional development in this report. She has synthesised the in depth material contained in the reflective logs into a mature, sensitive and insightful report. She demonstrates an understanding of the different dimensions of her learning and her ability to apply this to practice (for example: managing her emotions; interpersonal skills; technical skills). There is a real sense of growth in self confidence and ability. Of particular note is her ability to integrate and link her personal learning and professional development with business development issues. Also she has faced significant challenges in this placement which are sensitively discussed and resolved, resulting in further learning. Excellent presentation of material.

Proposed mark: 15/20 - 75%

### **Student B -**

This is an excellent reflective report which demonstrates significant learning in the professional placement year. Student B illustrates both personal and professional development in this report. He has synthesised the in depth material contained in the reflective logs into a mature and insightful report. This paper tells the story of Student B's journey through the placement year, this provides ample opportunity for him to describe his learning and to illustrate his development. There is a real sense of his growth in self confidence and ability. Of particular note is his ability to integrate and link personal learning and professional development with business development issues. Student B has faced significant challenges in this placement which are sensitively discussed and resolved, resulting in further learning. He acknowledges the support and learning he has gained from colleagues in his placement and illustrates this well. Excellent presentation of material.

Proposed mark: 15/20 – 75%

### **Student C -**

This is an excellent reflective report which demonstrates significant learning over time, in the professional placement year. Student C writes in a clear and articulate

manner about his personal and professional development in this report. He has synthesised the in depth material contained in the reflective logs into a mature, sensitive and insightful report. Robert presents a considered account of his personal development which has depth and focus. There is a real sense of his growth in self confidence and ability. Of particular note is the very clear structure to this part of the report and Student C's ability to integrate and link personal learning and professional development with business development issues.

Proposed mark: 15/20 - 75%

#### **Student D -**

This is a good reflective report which demonstrates learning and development over time, in the professional placement year. Student D illustrates significant personal and professional development in this report. He has synthesised the material contained in the reflective logs into an insightful report. In particular he demonstrates development and insight in relation to managing himself - his emotions and motivation - in a sometimes conflicted environment. He has balanced the report by also focussing on some of more positive conditions and relationships that supported his learning with some insightful discussion. He is able to make the links between his professional development and the strategic goals of the organisation. Student D has thought about himself and his impact on colleagues and customers; he has extended this to some consideration of managing his emotions at work. It would be good to see Student D go a little further with his reflections on his colleagues and to think about the factors influencing their behaviours and how he might manage difficult team members. There is a real sense of his growth in self confidence over the year – a well presented report.

Proposed mark 13/20 - 65%

#### **Student E –**

This is a good reflective report which demonstrates learning and development over time, in the professional placement year. Student E begins the report with a nice discussion about her career motivation and continues this insightful and mature theme throughout the report. She very aware of the importance of building networks and is quite strategic in this respect! She identifies clear goals of how she wants to manage herself through the placement year – these could have been revisited at the close of the report. Student E has synthesised the material contained in the reflective logs into an insightful report. There has certainly been significant personal development informed by reflection on her experience and supported by her colleagues. This is a nicely structured report - which supports discussion of learning and development. There is scope for further in depth reflection on experience and evidence of the application of learning to new situations. It would be good to see some integration of personal/ professional development with business development issues.

Proposed mark 12/20 - 60%

#### **Student F -**

This is a good reflective report which demonstrates learning and development over time, in the professional placement year. Student F begins the report with a thorough skills profile and self assessment. This illustrates an awareness of how she wants to manage herself through the placement year. Student F has synthesised the material contained in the reflective logs into a mature, sensitive and insightful report. This is a well structured and provides insightful examples of learning to illustrate the more general discussion; also nice linking of theory and practice. There is scope for further

in depth reflection on experience and evidence of the application of learning to new situations. It would be good to see some integration of personal/ professional development with business development issues.

Proposed mark 12/20 - 60%

#### **Student G -**

This is a good reflective report which demonstrates learning and development over time, in the professional placement year. Student G begins the report with a nice self assessment and an awareness of how she wants to manage herself through the placement year. She describes and reflects on the two specific environments in her placement. This has clearly led to some significant personal learning and development. Much of Student G's learning seems to relate to her interpersonal relationships. There is scope for further in depth reflection on experience and evidence of the application of learning to new situations. It would be good to see some integration of personal/ professional development with business development issues.

Proposed mark 12/20 - 60%

#### **Student H -**

This report suggests that Student H has learnt a great deal from her placement in a five star hotel and has gained experience in a range of hotel operations. She describes her learning about the specific operations at The Hotel well and shows how these have been supported through training. Student H illustrates her awareness of her personal strengths and weaknesses and also relates these to her placement experiences. She identifies a number of areas where she has developed her managerial thinking and practice - it would be good to see her take this further, to explain what this means to her and how it relates to her behaviours and actions now and in the future. This would have enhanced her report and given us some deeper insights into her learning. This is a largely descriptive report which suggests Student H has grown in confidence, but it is quite hard to see exactly how this happened or how her personal behaviours and actions might have changed as a result of her experiences. There are no explicit links to her reflective logs and none provided as evidence. It would be good to see further evidence of Student H's ability to reflect on her experience and to think through how she might apply this learning to new situations and to her professional practice.

Proposed mark 11.5/20 - 58%

#### **Student J -**

This report identifies the personal challenges of undertaking the professional training year and describes in some detail the nature of the roles/tasks undertaken. Student J has learned about the technical and operational aspects of his placement and describes these well, making good links to their strategic importance. His confidence in his own ability has grown during the placement year - but there are few examples of specific personal learning or insights gained. There is some useful discussion around a series of themes identified in the placement year – this draws on appropriate theory and shows some reflection on the causes of particular issues evident in Student J's experience. This includes a comparison of management styles and skills across different departments and some insights are drawn from this. It would be good to see further evidence of Student J's ability to reflect on his own experience and to think

through how he might apply this learning to new situations and to his professional practice.

Proposed mark: 11/20 - 55%

### **General Comments**

- Could students be encouraged to cross reference specific learning to reflective accounts to illustrate their learning in more depth?
- I wondered about confidentiality – should students should be encouraged to anonymise any material used in their final report and dissertation – esp. where using named individuals. And in discussing difficult situations?

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