

# **‘But I thought you were doing that’ – Clarifying the role of the host supervisor in experience-based learning.**

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The host supervisor plays a vital and complex role in experience-based learning and the various forms of learning through participation (LTP) such as cooperative education, work-integrated learning, work-based learning, practicum and so on. This paper offers a new resource, the *Analysis and Reflection Tool*, which is designed to assist all stakeholders to understand and better articulate the roles, responsibilities and activities that an individual host supervisor might be expected to fulfil. The resource, based on an extensive review of the literature, presents a conceptual framework that outlines the four key roles commonly expected of host supervisors: support, education, administration/managerial and guardian. The discussion highlights different emphases used in disciplines such as education, nursing and business, and some of the factors that may lead to mismatched expectations of stakeholders. Clearer understanding of stakeholder roles and better communication are important steps to providing adequate support to host supervisors. (*Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education*, 2012(2), 115-134)

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Experience-based learning has a long and distinguished history in higher education. Some of the earliest and most enduring models entail students going away from learning institutions into workplaces. This approach involves someone in the workplace or host organisation ‘looking after’ the student. The actual tasks and responsibilities of this person, whom we refer to as the ‘host supervisor’, vary enormously depending on many factors such as the length and purpose of the placement, the age of the student, the stage of education the student has attained, type of workplace, the traditions of the discipline area, and the accreditation requirements of particular professions. The title ‘host supervisor’ was chosen over terms such as workplace supervisor, mentor, preceptor etc., because these are limited to certain types of experiences. Our intention was to be inclusive of the full range of experiences and supervisory roles that appear in the literature. Further, many terms (particularly workplace supervisor/guide) imply that this position relates only to the workplace, which is not always the case.

The term ‘learning through participation’ (LTP) is used in this paper to refer to experience-based education models and curriculum design approaches that are based in higher education institutions, incorporate community engagement in the public, private or not-for-profit sectors, are based within the curriculum and involve assessment of student learning. LTP thus covers work-integrated learning (WIL), work-based learning (WBL), cooperative education, practicum, project-based learning, service-learning and many other models.

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Research literature discusses the role of the host supervisor to varying degrees (e.g., Hall, Draper, Smith, & Bullough, 2008; McDermott, 2008; Richardson, Jackling, Kaider, Henschke, Kelly, & Tempone, 2009), and the topic is also explored in LTP practice guides and handbooks (Cooper, Orrell, & Bowden, 2010; Martin & Hughes, 2009). Supervisory models can change over time, for example from a master/apprentice model to a 'learning community' approach (Le Cornu, 2010) and may even hybridise (Pungar, 2007). Terminology is often used interchangeably with no real understanding of the differences implied for the host supervisor role, for example, mentor versus supervisor. There are also tensions resulting from whether an education-led or employer-led view of curriculum is used (Keating, Jeffries, Glaisher, & Milne, 2010; Patrick, Peach, Pocknee, Webb, Fletcher, & Pretto 2009; Woolf & Yorke, 2010). These divergent views affect how the role of the host supervisor is conceptualised, understood and enacted (Hall et al., 2008).

Fundamental to successful supervision is the need for a shared understanding between the stakeholders as to the purpose of LTP. However, there is considerable evidence of stakeholder disconnect in this respect (Allen, 2011; Patrick et al., 2009; Todd & Siddons, 2004). Examples of these differences range from host supervisors who see LTP as largely a recruitment and workforce management strategy (McRae & Baldwin, 2004; Spencer, 2007) through to academics and students who assume host supervisors will facilitate theory and practice linkages (Allen & Peach, 2007; Clarke & Burgess, 2009; Cooper et al., 2010), irrespective of whether the host supervisor has the knowledge, skills, or language which would enable them to do this for students (Christie, Conlon, Gemmell, & Long, 2004; Parliament of Australia, House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education & Vocational Training, 2007). It is not surprising that both students and supervisors report frustration, stress and disappointment when their experience of LTP does not match their anticipation (Hastings, 2004; 2010). The aims of the project are:

1. to identify the range of roles and responsibilities commonly expected of host supervisors, based on relevant literature; and
2. to assist academics and host supervisors to recognise and articulate their expectations with a view to building better understanding between the two groups.

## METHOD

A systematic literature search was undertaken to identify the roles, responsibilities and associated activities enacted by host supervisors when responsible for university students on placement. The literature review comprised a comprehensive, but not exhaustive, search of sources in a variety of disciplines and curriculum models (e.g., education, health sciences, law, business, IT). As it was not possible to cover all disciplines extensively, the intention was to cover a broad range of approaches (e.g., practicum, projects). In line with this approach, disciplines were chosen that had a long history of LTP in the literature, or were new and emerging areas (e.g., IT, business). The search incorporated different aspects and terminology and included terms such as preceptor, workplace coach, workplace supervisor, workplace learning guide, protégé, mentor, and master teacher. Papers that reported research findings as well as practice-based reports were sought, with approximately 80 publications consulted.

A grounded theory approach (as described by Flick, 2006) was used to capture the breadth of roles reported in the literature. This was an iterative process, using a constant comparative

method (Thorn, 2000). Key findings were used to develop the conceptual framework (Figure 1) and an *Analysis and Reflection Tool* to assist stakeholders (refer Appendix 1).

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### *Roles, sub-roles and associated activities of the host supervisor*

Four key roles commonly attributed to host supervisors have been reported in the literature: support, education, administration and guardianship, and each of these incorporates a number of sub-roles (Figure 1). The first three roles are loosely based on Proctor's (1986) three functions of supervision: normative (administrative), formative (educational), and restorative (supportive). Proctor's model is widely accepted within clinical education (particularly nursing and counselling) and has been applied to a diversity of nursing contexts. The fourth function, guardianship, has been added by the present authors, based on literature from health, education and similar placements where there is an assessment made of the student's performance and/or competency.

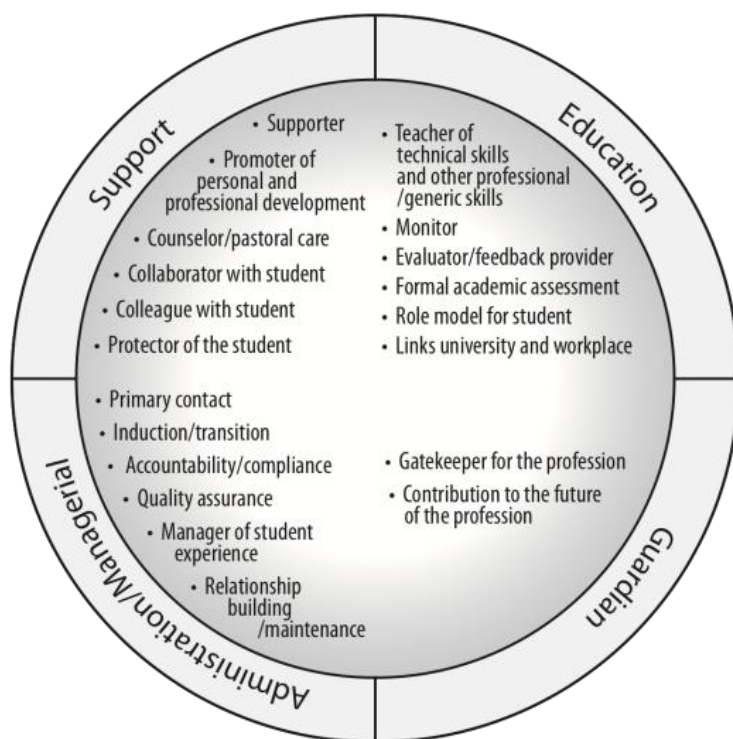


FIGURE 1.  
Conceptual framework of the *Analysis and Reflection Tool*

### 1. Support

Host supervisors are generally expected to offer support and guidance to students (Bray & Nettleton, 2007; Gray & Smith, 2000). At the very least, this involves being available for the student (Drennan, 2002; McNamara, 2007; Rothman, 2007), making time for regular

meetings, and cultivating a sense of belonging to the workplace (Clarke, Gibb, & Ramprogus, 2003; Dunn & Hansford, 1997; Jackson & Mannix, 2001).

Many host supervisors are reported as nurturing the personal and professional development of students. This may involve simply providing opportunities for appropriate levels of autonomy in the workplace (Chur-Hansen & McLean, 2007a; Johnston, 2010), or encouraging students to have a sense of ownership over tasks (Johnston, 2010; Smith, Mackay, Challis, & Holt, 2006). Some go further by assisting in career decision-making (Rothman, 2007; Smith et al., 2006) and promoting professional socialisation (Jackson & Mannix, 2001; Richardson et al., 2009; Smith et al., 2006). In certain situations, emotional support may also be required, and involves assisting students to alleviate feelings of stress, anxiety and inadequacy (e.g., Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Chow & Suen, 2001; Hall et al., 2008; Jackson & Mannix, 2001) and debriefing after critical incidents or distressing situations (Pungur, 2007; Williams, 2009). Such emotional support may not be needed for every student or in every discipline, but will be required in special or unusual situations.

Unlike the other three roles which imply a hierarchical relationship between the student and supervisor, the support role entails a more collegial relationship, for instance the supervisor may share resources (e.g., knowledge, skills) and prior experiences, (Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Brady & Broadbent, 2007; Fairbanks, Freedman, & Kahn, 2000; Hall et al., 2008; Le Cornu & Ewing, 2008) or may go out of their way to treat the student as part of the profession and the workplace (Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Hayes, 2001; Millwater & Ehrich, 2008; Pungur, 2007).

## 2. *Education*

In some situations host supervisors are expected to teach technical as well as professional and generic skills. This may involve merely providing access to 'real life' learning opportunities (Chow & Suen, 2001; Drennan, 2002; Dunn & Hansford, 1997; Hall et al., 2008; Proctor, 1994), or helping students construct knowledge through talking and reflecting on practice (Fairbanks et al., 2000; Sim, 2010) or actually providing training for specific workplace skills (Klink & Athaide, 2004). Strategies for teaching may include monitoring student progress, ensuring they remain 'on track' (Chur-Hansen & McLean, 2007a), offering practical advice for improved performance (e.g., Clynes & Raferty, 2008; Desplaces, Steinberg, Coleman, & Kenworthy-U'Ren, 2006; McNamarra 2008), and acknowledging the student's successes and strengths (Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Hall et al., 2008; Hayes, 2001; Le Cornu, 2010). Host supervisors may be required to formally assess student performance by providing information to the tertiary supervisor who will draw inferences about the their level of competence (e.g., Godar, 2000; Johnston, 2010; McNamarra, 2008), and alerting the university if students are at risk of failing, or of having potential problems in future practice (Le Cornu, 2010).

Supervisors may act as role models for professional practice, for example by modelling ethical behaviour (e.g., Brady & Broadbent, 2007; Chur-Hansen & McLean, 2007a, 2007b; Smith et al., 2006) and professional presentation (Hudson, 2010; Sim, 2010). Other responsibilities may include linking theory and practice; developing authentic tasks that support student learning (Allen, 2011) and providing opportunities to put into practice what students have been learning at university (Allen & Peach, 2007; Chow & Suen, 2001; Johnston, 2010; Rothman, 2007).

### 3. *Administrative/Managerial*

As manager of the student experience, the host supervises daily activities (Klink & Athaide, 2004; Williams, 2009). This may include negotiating and/or establishing expectations and agreeing on roles and goals with the student and academic supervisor (Godar, 2000; Klink & Athaide, 2004; Rothman, 2007; Smith et al., 2006). Often supervisors will be responsible for establishing clear working agreements (Desplaces et al., 2006; Fairbanks et al., 2000; Godar, 2000; Klink & Athaide, 2004) and scope, and define projects which are doable in specified timeframes (Klink & Athaide, 2004; Smith et al., 2006).

There are also many implicit activities that are necessary for the smooth integration of the student into the workplace, in particular facilitating relationships between the student and staff, and between student and the host organisation/workplace (Brady & Broadbent, 2007; Hayes, 2001; Johnston, 2010; McNamara, 2007; Millwater & Ehrich, 2008). Other possible responsibilities include acting as primary contact for the student and academic supervisor (Clarke et al., 2003; McNamara, 2007); arranging 'operational' aspects of the placement including the provision any necessary 'equipment' (Fairbanks et al., 2000; Johnston, 2010); and, inducting students into the workplace and providing support during the transition period (Proctor, 1994; Rothman, 2007; Smith et al., 2006).

### 4. *Guardianship*

This role is less task-oriented than the other categories and encompasses two key, forward-looking responsibilities: acting as a gatekeeper for the profession and contributing to the future of the profession. By acting as a gatekeeper, the host supervisor aims to maintain quality standards for the profession (Hastings, 2010; Mackenzie, Zakrewski, Walker, & McCluskey, 2001), for example by assisting students to determine ethical vs. unethical behaviour (Proctor, 1994), and recommending failing grades when students do not meet standards set by professional bodies or academic supervisors (Hastings, 2010; Le Maistre, Bourdreau, & Pare, 2006; Proctor, 1994). Contribution to the future of the profession, while appearing less frequently in the literature, is nevertheless important, and includes empowering students to be 'change agents' (Bailey, 2004).

## ANALYSIS AND REFLECTION TOOL

Recognition of mismatched expectations between stakeholders across a range of disciplines has led to a call for 'an integrated approach' to the planning and implementation of LTP between universities and host organisations (Clarke & Burgess, 2009; Hastings, 2010; Keating et al., 2010; Le Cornu, 2010; Patrick et al., 2009). This would involve, *inter alia*, ensuring that all parties have a shared understanding of the purpose of the placement, and clearly defined expectations of the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder. These expectations also need to be mutually agreed, with clear and open communication between the stakeholders (Clarke & Burgess, 2009; McGurr & Damasco, 2010; Richardson et al., 2009). To address this issue, the authors designed a tool to clarify roles and responsibilities of the host supervisor, which could be used to facilitate communication between academics and host supervisors as they engage in the LTP experience.

The *Analysis and Reflection Tool* is based on the conceptual framework outlined above. The tool is organized under the four key roles, with sub-roles and examples of associated actions and activities. The structure of the tool is adapted from Ambrosetti and Dekkers (2010).

Activities will inevitably vary according to the type of placement, the sector, particular workplace characteristics and purpose of the placement. It is therefore, not expected that host supervisors will be able to take on all of these roles and activities; nor is it meant to be an exhaustive list.

#### APPLICATIONS OF THE TOOL AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE USE

The tool is designed to be used by either academic or host supervisors. Instructions direct participants to identify the roles and sub-roles, and any activities the host supervisor is expected to perform. They are asked to do this across three categories of activities: preliminary 'setting up' activities (e.g., negotiating with stakeholders to organise projects); day-to-day actions (e.g., monitoring progress, teaching technical skills, making time for the student); and special activities that only occur when something out of the ordinary happens (e.g., a confronting situation for a student). Questions are provided to help participants reflect on whether the roles and activities they have chosen align with the learning objectives and purpose of the placement.

#### LIMITATIONS

While the tool was based on a variety of sources across discipline and curriculum models, there is limited research in this area. The majority of studies are discipline specific, focusing on particular fields that have a long tradition of using placements, i.e. teaching and nursing. Research in other fields is in its infancy, and there have been few attempts at integration across different discipline areas. Thus, the tool is influenced more by those disciplines where there has been such traditions, i.e. teaching practicum, law, nursing, counselling and clinical placements. Each of these areas has its own limitations: for example, nursing and teaching studies are often based on small sample sizes, and so it may be difficult to generalise findings to the wider population or to all other types of LTP experiences. Unlike the teacher education literature which provides more balanced views on the mentor role, in nursing there has been a bias towards reporting only the positive aspects of mentoring (Merriam, 1983 cited in Gray & Smith, 2000).

#### EVALUATION

An evaluation survey was developed to assess the effectiveness of the tool, and was circulated to academic and host supervisors from the authors' university. A small group of 10 participants responded, and the overall response was very positive. Most participants (9 out of 10) agreed that it was very useful for clarifying thoughts about the roles and the responsibilities of the host supervisor and the types of activities that hosts engage in.

Responses to open ended questions revealed that the tool was viewed as useful for communicating to host supervisors 'their responsibilities, especially when forming agreements', 'as a guideline' and in developing 'new resources'. The best aspects of the tool were its 'comprehensiveness', 'clear and concise structure', the 'diverse...relationships' presented, and its potential for 'starting a conversation'. Host supervisors commented on the tool's usefulness in assisting them to 'align' their internship programs with the expectations of the university.

Overall results suggest that the main value of the tool lies in assisting supervisors to reflect on and clarify their thoughts prior to discussion or negotiation with other stakeholders. In

response to concerns about the large number and diverse range of roles and activities listed in the *Tool*, a disclaimer was added to clarify that all the activities were not expected of any one supervisor. Another recommendation, to make the tool more 'interactive' so that supervisors could 'self-evaluate through critical questions and reflection', was addressed by modifying the instructions so that supervisors colour-coded the top ten activities relevant to their particular LTP activities.

## DISCUSSION

While there is much in commonality across disciplines with regard to the functions expected of host supervisors, some differences emerge. For example literature pointing to the host as a collaborator and colleague was sourced almost solely from teaching education (Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Millwater & Ehrich, 2008). This is likely because teaching supervision entails more of a collegial relationship between the student and host supervisor whereas health supervision (particularly nursing and medicine) is generally hierarchical, i.e. there is a more obvious power imbalance between the student and supervisor.

Discussion related to pastoral care whilst common in health and education, is far less so in business and law. This is likely because of features specific to education and nursing placements such as exposure to stressful situations, and/or could be due to the fewer studies undertaken in disciplines outside of these fields. Acceptance of students in the workplace is a recurrent theme in both the nurse and teacher education literature. Many studies show students are highly stressed and anxious about undertaking placements, largely as a result of not being accepted or 'frozen out' by staff (Johnston, 2010, p. 313; see also Jackson & Mannix, 2001). Nursing also brings students into contact with challenging experiences (e.g., people with serious illnesses) and these can arouse strong emotions. Such situations offer meaningful learning experiences; however, they also require a supervisor who can help students cope (Saarikoski, 2003).

Although in education the role of a host supervisor generally incorporates an assessment capacity (Hall et al., 2008), this feature is much less common and has more variation in nursing literature. Business and law literature focuses primarily on managing the daily experience of the student (Klink & Athaide, 2004; Smith et al., 2006), evaluating students' performance and provision of feedback (Klink & Athaide, 2004; McNamarra, 2008).

As noted previously, the guardian role emerged from the research on health and education placements – probably because these disciplines are accredited, unlike disciplines such as business. Following completion of the placement, health and teacher education supervisors are expected to make a judgment of a student's performance, determining their suitability for the profession. Thus they act as gate keepers for their profession (Hastings, 2010). This is not generally the case for business, IT and other types of placements.

The literature identifies a number of factors which contribute to mismatched expectations of the roles and responsibilities of host supervisors. Disparate views between stakeholders as to the purpose of the placement, lack of communication and the impact of differing power balances as previously discussed may influence expectations. Other factors include:

- lack of adequate preparation of students for the activity, or for the realities of 'authentic' participation in a given profession, workplace or real world context (Allen & Peach, 2007; Hastings, 2010; McDermott, 2008; Thomas & Goc, 2004);

- poor matches between the student and host organisation (McDermott, 2008) or between the student and supervisor (Hastings, 2010);
- students expectations of their host supervisor varying depending on what stage of their degree program they are in (Christie et al., 2004);
- inability of host supervisors to provide the level of supervision that the student expects or requires due to conflicting demands and workload; time pressures; resource limitations; and cost implications (Allen, 2011; Chow & Suen, 2001; Spencer, 2007);
- student workloads and competing commitments impairing a student's ability to perform as well as either they or the host supervisor expected (Hastings, 2010; McDermott, 2008); and
- the multiple roles and responsibilities the host supervisor assumes will, at times, be in conflict with one another i.e., assessor versus mentor; teacher versus manager (Bray & Nettleton, 2007; Hastings, 2004; Le Maistre et al., 2006; Neary, 2000).

This list is by no means exhaustive and there will be other factors that influence and impact on how host supervisors understand and perform their role. Chur-Hansen and McLean (2007b) observe that "the role of supervisor is a complex one, requiring many skills and much is required of the host supervisor" (p. 274). These key players, however, have many demands on their time aside from their supervision duties, and time constraints have been identified as a key barrier to quality LTP experiences (Coates & Gormley, 1997; Hastings, 2004; Keating et al., 2010). Host organisations have also expressed concern about the time required to liaise with universities to set-up and monitor LTP activities, including selecting, inducting, training and debriefing students (Keating et al., 2010; Patrick et al., 2009). Higher education institutions and students need to be cognisant of this when determining what actual responsibilities are required of the host supervisor.

In addition to the vexed issue of adequate time, is the question of whether it is realistic to believe that host supervisors can in fact assume all supervisory roles expected of them if they are not provided with adequate support and professional development. For instance, Spencer (2007) wonders "[H]ow can we ask host supervisors to take on the role of teacher when they have no qualifications in education or teaching?" (p. 373). These issues do not just involve higher education institutions, there is also a role for industry and host organisations to work together to find creative, workable solutions.

## CONCLUSION

The host supervisor clearly plays a pivotal and crucial part in any form of learning through participation. The very nature of the task is multifaceted and complex and at its best blends "aspects of mentor, advisor, counsellor, not to mention facilitator and problem solver" (King, 2001, p. 23). In the higher education sector, more and more students are being expected or encouraged to undertake placements. This is particularly true in disciplines, professions and workplaces which have traditionally not provided student placements in any great numbers in the past. Moreover, there are high expectations of what LTP styles of learning can achieve for students as any cursory review of education literature will attest.

It is inevitable that host supervisors will need assistance to become effective partners in this educational enterprise. The first step in providing this much-needed support is a clearer understanding of the functions of all stakeholders. The *Analysis and Reflection Tool* presented



in this paper will assist all partners to appreciate what the host supervisor is expected to do, not the least being host supervisors themselves. Ultimately, recognition of the vital role of the host supervisor is imperative if this style of education is to fulfil its potential.

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APPENDIX 1

CLARIFYING THE ROLE OF THE HOST SUPERVISOR: AN ANALYSIS AND REFLECTION TOOL

Over the past two decades there has been an increased interest in all forms of experience-based education, including work-integrated learning (WIL), work-based learning (WBL), cooperative education, practicum, project-based learning, service-learning and several other curriculum models. Many of these rely on a person or people external to the Higher Education Institution to assist students in various ways during a placement with a host organization.

The roles and activities of this external party are rarely examined or articulated and this can lead to mismatched expectations, confusion for all stakeholders and missed opportunities.

The purpose of this *Analysis and Reflection Tool* is to assist stakeholders to identify the roles and activities that are expected of host supervisors. The term *host supervisor* is used in this resource in a generic and neutral way, and does not imply any particular emphasis or approach. Other titles that fall under this umbrella term include: workplace supervisor, mentor, preceptor, cooperating teacher, etc. Similarly, the term ‘academic supervisor’ or ‘academic’ in this resource refers to whoever is charged with fostering the learning and/or has duty of care of the students whilst in the placement.

This resource draws on literature from national and international sources in a variety of disciplines and curriculum models (e.g. education, health sciences, law, business, IT). A version of this document with full citations and references is available on the Resources page of the Learning and Teaching Centre, Macquarie University at <http://www.mq.edu.au/ltc/resources/index.htm>.

RESOURCE AIMS

- to identify the roles and associated actions or activities of host supervisors, based on reports and research from the relevant literature;
- to provide a means for both academics and host supervisors to better understand and articulate their expectations of the role of host supervisors in placement activities;
- to facilitate communication between academics and host supervisors about their expectations and to develop appropriate support mechanisms.

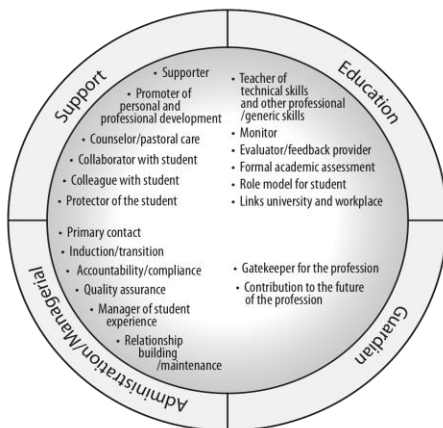


FIGURE A1:  
Host Supervisor – summary of primary roles

Four key roles commonly attributed to host supervisors have been reported in the literature. These are **support, education, administration and guardianship**. Each of these incorporates a number of sub-roles (see Figure A1).

The *Analysis and Reflection Tool* (see Table A1) is organised according to the four key roles **support, education, administration and guardian\***, with related sub-roles listed in the left-hand column and the right-hand column shows some of the actions and activities that have been associated with each sub-role.

This resource documents the roles and activities performed by host supervisors as identified in the literature. Activities will inevitably vary according to the type of placement, the sector, particular workplace characteristics and purpose of the placement. It is therefore not expected that host supervisors will be able to take on all of these roles and activities; nor is it meant to be an exhaustive list. There may well be additional activities that have not been reported in the literature.

The listed actions and activities fall roughly into three main categories. Some are associated with the preliminary setting up of student placements, e.g. negotiating with the HE institution, paperwork, organizing projects or activities and adequate supervision for the students and so on. Most of the listed activities refer to the day-to-day actions associated with the student placement, but a small subset occur only when something out of the ordinary happens such as student failure to comply, situations which are dangerous or confronting, or where there is student illness or an accident. This last group of activities may not be enacted frequently, but often is expected without being articulated.

\*The first three roles are based loosely on Proctor's (1986) three functions of supervision and the fourth function, guardian, has been added by the present authors, based on literature reviewed from other disciplines.

#### HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

##### FOR THE ACADEMIC SUPERVISOR

**Step 1:** List the learning outcomes of the placement component in your unit or course.

**Step 2:** Identify the roles and sub-roles, as well as the associated activities that you expect the host supervisor to perform. Use blue to highlight the preliminary "setting up" activities, use green for the day-to-day activities and red for the special or unusual activities. [Note: The activities vary enormously and some are mutually exclusive; you may also have additional activities to add].

**Step 3:** Select and list the 10 most important preliminary and day-to-day activities. Add any special or unusual activities.

##### *Questions for Reflection:*

- Do the roles and activities that you have identified align with the learning outcomes of your placement?
- Are your expectations realistic?
- Have you communicated these expected roles and activities to the host supervisor? How might you do this?
- What kinds of support can you provide to the host supervisor to fulfil these expectations?

##### FOR THE HOST SUPERVISOR

**Step 1:** Determine the purpose of the placement and the relationship with the student's course and the learning outcomes of the placement.

**Step 2:** Identify the roles and associated activities that you expect to perform as the host supervisor. Use blue to highlight the preliminary "setting up" activities, use green for the day-to-day activities and red for the special or unusual activities. [Note: the activities vary enormously and some are mutually exclusive; you may also have additional activities to add]

**Step 3:** Select and list the 10 most important preliminary and day-to-day activities. Add any special or unusual activities.

##### *Questions for Reflection:*

- Do the roles and activities that you have identified align with the learning outcomes of the placement?
- Do these roles and activities align with the expectations of the university and/or academic supervisor or the student? How do you know?
- What resources and training are available to support your role as host supervisor? Examples might include something from your workplace, professional associations or the university.

An extended version of this resource with full references is available at [http://www.mq.edu.au/lrc/projects/curriculum\\_renewal/pace\\_host\\_supervisors.htm](http://www.mq.edu.au/lrc/projects/curriculum_renewal/pace_host_supervisors.htm)

TABLE A1:  
*Analysis and Reflection Tool*

Support roles	Examples of associated actions and activities reported in the literature [Note: It is not expected that all Host Supervisors will undertake all of the listed activities]
Supporter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides general support and guidance</li> <li>• allocates time</li> <li>• available for the student</li> <li>• has regular meetings</li> <li>• fosters open communication</li> <li>• encourages and empowers student</li> <li>• cultivates a sense of belonging to the workplace</li> <li>• decodes and explains unspoken processes and agendas in the workplace</li> </ul>
Promoter of personal and professional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• inducts students into the profession and the workplace</li> <li>• promotes professional socialisation, e.g. developing rationale for particular professional practices</li> <li>• advises student about work in the profession or area, e.g. opportunities, roles, expectations, etc.</li> <li>• structures activities to develop professional competencies/skills and self confidence</li> <li>• provides opportunities for appropriate levels of autonomy in the workplace</li> <li>• encourages student to have a sense of ownership of work/project as appropriate</li> <li>• acts as a sounding board for ideas or concerns and solutions to problems</li> <li>• promotes and models reflective practice</li> <li>• helps students to recognise strengths, weaknesses and suitability for the profession</li> <li>• assists students to identify their own professional needs</li> <li>• provides access to the discussions about concerns, news items, etc. that promote understanding of the profession</li> <li>• provides career advice and assists students with career decision making</li> </ul>
Counsellor/pastoral care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• offers emotional and moral support, e.g. alleviate student stress, anxiety feelings of inadequacy</li> <li>• helps student develop strategies to deal with difficult situations, conflict and difference</li> <li>• watches over student and promotes personal well-being</li> <li>• debriefs student after critical incidents or distressing situations</li> </ul>
Collaborator with student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• works alongside the student – plans activities/outcomes together, works as a team, brain-storms together, jointly evaluates outcomes</li> <li>• ensures the student has a ‘voice’</li> <li>• shares resources (i.e. knowledge, skills, insights) and prior experiences to support one another’s learning and work</li> </ul>
Colleague with student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• treats student as a colleague, a part of the profession, and a part of the workplace, e.g. attend staff meetings</li> <li>• invites student to evaluate outcomes/processes of work and make suggestions for improvement</li> </ul>



Protector of the student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• manages expectations and boundaries of the role of the student and project</li> <li>• mediates the 'messiness' of the workplace and new environment for the student by providing advice, guidance, asking questions, acting as 'refuge centre', providing diplomatic counsel, etc.</li> </ul>
Education	<p>Examples of associated actions and activities reported in the literature          [Note: It is not expected that all Host Supervisors will undertake all of the listed activities]</p>
Teacher of technical skills and other professional/generic skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides access to 'real life' learning opportunities</li> <li>• offers students appropriate challenges through a wide variety of activities</li> <li>• identifies learning needs of the student</li> <li>• provides training where appropriate for workplace specific skills, e.g. project management, particular software, etc.</li> <li>• scaffolds practical application of skills and knowledge to facilitate development of professional hard and soft skills</li> <li>• provides explicit instruction for some skills and knowledge, e.g. current practices</li> <li>• demonstrates, shares and passes on knowledge/skills</li> <li>• assists students with academic aspects of learning, e.g. relevant readings, preparation for assessment tasks</li> <li>• helps student construct knowledge through talking and reflecting on practice</li> <li>• assists students develop reflective practice, e.g. sharing of strategies</li> <li>• hands over responsibilities to the student gradually and with support</li> <li>• allows students the freedom to explore, experience and/or try new things, and take risks with appropriate support</li> <li>• offers advice and suggestions on how to address difficult aspects of professional practice</li> <li>• suggests how to adapt resources and approaches to suit specific situation/circumstances</li> <li>• makes accessible to the student the thinking processes and reasoning underlying their particular choices and decisions in the workplace ; make transparent the complexities/challenges of the profession</li> <li>• explains and answers questions to support deeper learning</li> <li>• supports the development of specific 'approaches' relevant and required by the profession</li> <li>• explores and teaches professional ethics (i.e. confidentiality, cultural awareness)</li> <li>• allows student to practice and enhance technical abilities</li> </ul>
Monitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• monitors students' progress and ensures that they remain 'on track'</li> <li>• informs and liaises with academic supervisor when there are issues with the student or activity</li> </ul>

<p>Evaluator/ feedback provider</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• observes student 'in action'</li> <li>• reviews material from students, i.e. reflective journals, presentations, activities linked to experiential learning</li> <li>• provides timely individualised feedback on a regular basis in oral and/or written form that is both constructive and specific</li> <li>• provides a variety of feedback, e.g. situational feedback - on the job/day to day vs. general conversation - away from the job</li> <li>• verifies student's knowledge and appropriate application to context/circumstances</li> <li>• makes judgements about performance and offers practical advice for improved performance</li> <li>• acknowledges successes and strengths</li> <li>• helps student identify their weaknesses, suggests adjustments and identifies areas for growth</li> </ul>
<p>Formal academic assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• measures students' performance, knowledge and skill</li> <li>• provides information (formal and/or informal) about student performance which is used by the tertiary supervisor to draw inferences about the student's level of competence</li> <li>• completes requisite university assessment forms/rubrics</li> <li>• alerts university if students are at risk of failing, or of potential problems in future practice</li> </ul>
<p>Role model for student</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• models good and ethical practice</li> <li>• models specific strategies/approaches and explains rationales to develop the student's thinking/consciousness</li> <li>• models professional presentation (i.e. language, behaviour and dress appropriate to the context/profession)</li> <li>• displays appropriate interactions with all relevant stakeholders</li> </ul>
<p>Links university and workplace:</p>	<p>Curriculum development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• works with the university to scope and develop authentic tasks that support student learning</li> <li>• negotiates roles and learning activities</li> </ul> <p>Links theory and practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• incorporates relevant theory within the experience/activities undertaken by the student</li> <li>• provides opportunities for students to put into practice what they have been learning at university</li> <li>• integrates theory and practice, relates learning to other areas of practice</li> </ul>
<p>Administration/ Manager</p>	<p>Examples of associated actions and activities reported in the literature [Note: It is not expected that all Host Supervisors will undertake all of the listed activities]</p>
<p>Responsible for:</p>	<p>Primary contact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• acts as a liaison person with the university (unless there is another administration contact)</li> <li>• acts as primary contact for the student and academic supervisor</li> <li>• deals with difficult situations or emergencies (especially for international or remote placements)</li> <li>• maintains lines of communication</li> </ul>

Induction/ Transition

- inducts student into work environment, i.e., takes student on tour of workplace, makes introductions to other staff, deals with any OHS induction requirements
- introduces student to the workplace environment and initiates student into the procedures, protocols and customs of the particular workplace
- provides support during the transition period and assists students adjust to the workplace context
- integrates the student as much as possible into the daily life of the workplace

Accountability/Compliance

- provides a satisfactory secure and supportive learning environment
- ensures the safety of students and all other people encountered during placement, e.g. patients, children, clients

Quality assurance

- ensures work practices are appropriate and fall within expected standards
- ensures staff are aware of the learning outcomes, expectations and assessment of student (where there are multiple supervisors)

Logistics of placement

- arranges for the 'operational' aspects of the placement including the provision of a desk, filing space, computer, building access, and any other necessary 'equipment'

Manager of student experience

- negotiates and/or establishes expectations and agrees on roles and goals with the student and academic supervisor
- establishes with the student a clear working agreement for operation of the placement and holds to this agreement
- works with the university (and students where required) to scope and define a project which is doable in the specified timeframe and mutually beneficial to all partners
- explains professional and personal expectations such as commitment, professional courtesy, professional demeanour, sets standards
- ensures the student workload while on 'placement' is appropriate and not over burdensome (in consultation with the academic supervisor)
- assists with the location and use of resources needed for placement activity or project
- understands the academic component of the course
- oversees student engagement with university tasks
- anticipates likely areas where students may need additional support and has strategies planned for this eventuality
- manages daily activities

Relationship building/maintenance

- facilitates relationships between student and staff, and between student and the organisation/workplace
  - establishes and maintains communication channels with any workplace staff involved with student in the placement
  - helps student network within the organisation and relevant outside contacts
  - facilitates wider learning opportunities, e.g. arranging work and/observation opportunities with others within the organisation
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mediates between students and staff if needed</li> <li>• establishes and maintains communication channels with the university and/or academic supervisor to ensure clarity around expectations, roles, etc.</li> </ul>
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<p>Examples of associated actions and activities reported in the literature          [Note: It is not expected that all Host Supervisors will undertake all of the listed activities]</p>
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<p>Guardian</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintains quality standards for the profession</li> <li>• provides/maintains professional approach</li> <li>• assists students determine ethical vs. unethical behaviour</li> <li>• contacts university or academic supervisor if there are concerns about the behaviour or suitability of the student</li> <li>• recommends failing grades when students do not meet standards set by professional bodies or academic supervisors</li> </ul>
<p>Gatekeeper for the profession</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• empowers students to be 'change agents'</li> <li>• supports professional development of host supervisor</li> </ul>
<p>Contribution to future of the profession</p>	

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## About the Journal

The Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education publishes peer-reviewed original research, topical issues, and best practice articles from throughout the world dealing with Cooperative Education (Co-op) and Work Integrated Learning/Education (WIL).

In this Journal, Co-op/WIL is defined as an educational approach that uses relevant work-based projects that form an integrated and assessed part of an academic program of study (e.g., work placements, internships, practicum). These programs should have clear linkages with, or add to, the knowledge and skill base of the academic program. These programs can be described by a variety of names, such as work-based learning, workplace learning, professional training, industry-based learning, engaged industry learning, career and technical education, internships, experiential education, experiential learning, vocational education and training, fieldwork education, and service learning.

The Journal's main aim is to allow specialists working in these areas to disseminate their findings and share their knowledge for the benefit of institutions, co-op/WIL practitioners, and researchers. It is hoped that the Journal will encourage quality research and explorative critical discussion that will lead to effective practices, advancement in the understanding of co-op/WIL, and promote further research.

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Before submitting a manuscript, please ensure that the 'instructions for authors' has been followed ([www.apjce.org/instructions-for-authors](http://www.apjce.org/instructions-for-authors)). All manuscripts are to be submitted for blind review directly to the Editor-in-Chief ([editor@apjce.org](mailto:editor@apjce.org)) by way of email attachment. All submissions of manuscripts must be in MS Word format, with manuscript word counts between 3,000 and 5,000 words (excluding references).

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Typically, authors receive the reviewers' comments about a month after the submission of the manuscript. The Journal uses a constructive process for review and preparation of the manuscript, and encourages its reviewers to give supportive and extensive feedback on the requirements for improving the manuscript as well as guidance on how to make the amendments.

If the manuscript is deemed acceptable for publication, and reviewers' comments have been satisfactorily addressed, the manuscript is prepared for publication by the Copy Editor. The Copy Editor may correspond with the authors to check details, if required. Final publication is by discretion of the Editor-in-Chief. Final published form of the manuscript is via the Journal webpage ([www.apjce.org](http://www.apjce.org)), authors will be notified and sent a PDF copy of the final manuscript. There is no charge for publishing in APJCE and the Journal allows free open access for its readers.

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Types of manuscripts the Journal accepts are primarily of two forms; *research reports* describing research into aspects of Cooperative Education and Work Integrated Learning/Education, and *topical discussion* articles that review relevant literature and give critical explorative discussion around a topical issue.

The Journal does also accept *best practice* papers but only if it present a unique or innovative practice of a Co-op/WIL program that is likely to be of interest to the broader Co-op/WIL community. The Journal also accepts a limited number of *Book Reviews* of relevant and recently published books.

*Research reports* should contain; an introduction that describes relevant literature and sets the context of the inquiry, a description and justification for the methodology employed, a description of the research findings-tabulated as appropriate, a discussion of the importance of the findings including their significance for practitioners, and a conclusion preferably incorporating suggestions for further research.

*Topical discussion* articles should contain a clear statement of the topic or issue under discussion, reference to relevant literature, critical discussion of the importance of the issues, and implications for other researchers and practitioners.



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