



Chartered
Institute of
Environmental
Health

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING PORTFOLIO (ELP)

MARKING SCHEME

VERSION 3.1 – April 2006

Introduction

The Experiential Learning Portfolio (ELP) was first published in March of 2004 and is designed to support the new curriculum for environmental health introduced in April 2003.

The ELP is quite different from its predecessor the Practical training Logbook (Logbook), in that it requires a significantly higher level of intellectual involvement from students who are completing it; although it is probably easier to physically complete than the logbook.

The ELP is the means by which a student documents his/her experiential learning that has taken place within the workplace as part of the process of qualifying as an EHP; consequently, in this respect, the term “learning” is key. It is not sufficient for a student to demonstrate that they have physically been to a range of premises and seen environmental health practiced in those premises. It is a fundamental requirement of the ELP that students demonstrate what they have actually learned whilst experiencing a range of prescribed interventions. Consequently, evidence must be provided by each student to show that he/she has learned from the process sufficiently to allow them to apply that learning for themselves and to demonstrate that the skills, developed as part of the learning experience, have become embedded and transferable.

In short, students must successfully demonstrate, via the ELP, that they have been “*set on the road to achieving competence*” in their overall environmental health practice.

Determining that a Student has been “Set on the Road to Achieving Competence”.

Clearly, asking a CIEH appointed assessor to make a judgment about whether a student has been ‘set on the road to achieving competence’ is a significant departure from that expected of an assessor dealing with the old Logbook. Assessing the logbook was comparatively straight forward – assessors had merely to check that students had been to and completed a series of prescribed tasks and developed a very limited range of practice skills. The assessment was largely objective in nature.

The ELP is quite different. What is now required of the assessor is, in effect, a subjective judgment, but one that is made more robust by the inclusion of some objective criteria.

The assessment process that has been developed for use with the ELP can be summarized as follows: the process begins with a series of objective administrative ‘checks’ in Stage 1 and moves through a subjective assessment (objectively supported) of experiential learning being successfully achieved and applied in Stage 2 and, finally, through to a subjective determination of skill development, embedding and transferability in Stage 3. Stages 1 to 3 are then pulled together in Stage 4 for the final determination of success.

Stage 1 – The Administrative Checks

Stage 1 contains seven administrative checks (see ELP Assessment Summary Sheet 1) which, if the ELP fails to pass, results in the portfolio not being further assessed and returned to the candidate. Effectively, the seven checks are a determination of the portfolio meeting the basic criteria for it to be regarded as practically complete. Checks 1 to 6 can be completed by an assessment administrator whilst Check 7 must be undertaken by an appointed ELP assessor only. Responses for each check are entered in the relevant box on Assessment Summary Sheet 1

Stage 2 – Experiential Learning Achieved in Interventions

Stage 2 of the assessment involves the assessor determining whether the candidate has completed experiential learning within each of the prescribed Intervention Areas in each of the Intervention Groups. To do this, the assessor will examine all of the supporting evidence provided by the candidate for each of the three evidence sources cited in each Intervention Area. The assessor's task being to determine that, from the evidence provided in the three sources, experiential learning has been achieved and that learning applied by the candidate.

To pass each Intervention Area, the candidate **MUST** either:

1. Achieve a grade A or a Grade B within their 'Primary' (best) evidence source; **or**
2. Achieve any combination of grades A, B, C and a single D so long as improvement is demonstrated sequentially over all three sources and the last (by date) evidence source is awarded an A or B.

In respect of (1) above, where the student achieves the desired result within their primary evidence source, then the assessor need not further consider the evidence from the two supplementary sources.

Gradings are initially entered in the appropriate boxes at the bottom of each relevant assessment sheet by the assessor. Having assessed all individual pieces of evidence provided in respect of each Intervention Area then an overall decision of "Pass", "Marginal Fail" or "Fail" is determined for each Intervention Area and entered on the sheet – the criteria for the award of each overall result is as stated on the individual intervention group sheets. Finally, each overall decision is transferred to the relevant box on the Assessment Summary Sheet 1.

Stage 3 – Skill Development, Embedding and Transferability

The third stage of the assessment undoubtedly requires the greatest level of subjective judgment by the assessor. **For each prescribed skill**, the assessor must consider the three evidence sources cited by the student on each Intervention Group Matrix (beginning with the 'Primary' evidence source). The assessor's task is to determine the strength of the supplied evidence, vis a vis the extent to which each skill has been practiced and has become 'embedded' i.e. achieves a Grade A or B – 'Strong' or 'Good' evidence of embedding. The assessor then grades each skill – not only in respect of the evidence supplied in the sources nominated by the student,

but the assessor may also consider all other evidence sources over and above those nominated by the student. If the student achieves grade A or B for the Primary source then the assessor need not consider the two 'Supplementary' sources; however, where an A or B is not achieved in the 'Primary' source then the assessors task is to continue assessing the remaining 'Supplementary' sources until at least an A or B is achieved in one of the other two 'Supplementary' sources.

In order to recognize the importance of the Key Intervention Area, the assessor must determine that the skills, marked with an asterisk (*) are addressed within the Key Intervention Report. The key Intervention Report must be structured in accordance with the requirements detailed in Appendix 2 of 'Success in Experiential Learning' and must have been considered to have achieved a 'Pass' in Stage 1 of this assessment.

Finally, having assessed the level of skill embedding within each core area, the assessor must then make a judgment about skill transferability - this is done by transferring the grades achieved in each Intervention Group to the summary sheet and making an overall assessment by applying the following test:

A skill becomes 'transferable' when A (strong evidence) or B (good evidence) graded evidence is available to demonstrate that it is embedded in at least two intervention groups.

Stage 4 – Making an Overall Judgment

The final stage of the assessment process involves the assessor collating the results of all three previous assessment stages to give an overall result. The final result is not 'pass' or 'fail' but a simple affirmation of whether the candidate has been "*set on the road to achieving competence*" or not.

Where a candidate fails to achieve the above affirmation, but falls short by a comparatively small margin (achieving a 'Marginal Fail' in not more than three Intervention Areas overall) and these deficiencies might be reasonably addressed and corrected within a period of not greater than 2 calendar months; then the assessor, in conjunction with the moderator, might offer the candidate a 'Deferred Result'. A 'Condoned Pass' is not available as a result option in respect of the ELP – this is because the grading system used at Stage 2, and particularly at Stage 3, already gives latitude for sub-standard performance.

The Assessment Sheets

Appendix 1, attached, contains examples of the assessment sheets.

APPENDIX 1
Assessment Sheets