**Worcester Way Practice Educator Training Preparation Pack**

Welcome to the University of Worcester Practice Educator training. We are looking forward to welcoming you on our half day training session to prepare you to support our students on their important Practice Placements.

In order to maximise our time together and enable us to be responsive to your needs, you are asked to do a little preparation. This should not take you more than 30 minutes in total, plus reading time.

You have been sent a Practice Educator Handbook and we would ask you to use this to familiarise yourself with the overall structure of the course. This is likely to give rise to some issues that you would like to clarify, please do write these down for discussion at the training. We will not be looking at all of the content routinely during the training in order to allow us to focus on the key aspects.

**Task 1: Modified SWOT analysis**

Based on your previous placement experiences, record your strengths, weaknesses, concerns and expectations about yourself as a Practice Educator in relation to University of Worcester students.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **modified swot analysis** | |
| **STRENGTHS:** Enter text here | **WEAKNESSES:** Enter text here |
| **CONCERNS:** Enter text here | **EXPECTATIONS:** Enter text here |

**Task 2: Learning Styles Analysis**

Identify your **current** preferred learning style by completing the Honey and Mumford and VARK learning style questionnaires (see below)

Consider how you could create an effective learning environment for each learning preference

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Visual | Enter text here |
| Aural | Enter text here |
| Read / write | Enter text here |
| Kinaesthetic | Enter text here |
| Reflector | Enter text here |
| Pragmatist | Enter text here |
| Theorist | Enter text here |
| Activist | Enter text here |

**Honey and Mumford**

**Learning Styles Questionnaire**

This questionnaire is an internationally proven tool designed by Peter Honey and Alan Mumford, designed to find out your preferred learning style(s). This questionnaire will help you pinpoint your learning preferences so that you are in a better position to select learning experiences that suit your style and having a greater understanding of those that suit the style of others.

There is no time limit to this questionnaire. It will probably take you 10-15 minutes. The accuracy of the results depends on how honest you can be. There are no right or wrong answers.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **If you agree more than you disagree with a statement put a tick by it. If you disagree more than you agree put a tick by it. Be sure to tick each item** | | **Agree** | **Disagree** |
| 1 | I have strong beliefs about what is right and wrong, good and bad |  |  |
| 2 | I often act without considering the possible consequences |  |  |
| 3 | I tend to solve problems using a step-by-step approach |  |  |
| 4 | I believe that formal procedures and policies restrict people |  |  |
| 5 | I have a reputation for saying what I think, simply and directly |  |  |
| 6 | I often find that actions based on feelings are as sound as those based on careful thought and analysis |  |  |
| 7 | I like the sort of work where I have time for thorough preparation and implementation |  |  |
| 8 | I regularly question people about their basic assumptions |  |  |
| 9 | What matters most is whether something works in practice |  |  |
| 10 | I actively seek out new experiences |  |  |
| 11 | When I hear about a new idea or approach, I immediately start working out how to apply it in practice |  |  |
| 12 | I am keen on self-discipline such as watching my diet, taking regular exercise, sticking to a fixed routine, etc. |  |  |
| 13 | I take pride in doing a thorough job |  |  |
| 14 | I get on best with logical, analytical people and less well with spontaneous, "irrational" |  |  |
| 15 | I take care over the interpretation of data available to me and avoid jumping to conclusions |  |  |
| 16 | I like to reach a decision carefully after weighing up many alternatives |  |  |
| 17 | I'm attracted more to novel, unusual ideas than to practical ones |  |  |
| 18 | I don't like disorganised things and prefer to fit things into a coherent pattern |  |  |
| 19 | I accept and stick to laid down procedures and policies so long as I regard them as an efficient way of getting the job done |  |  |
| 20 | I like to relate my actions to a general principle |  |  |
| 21 | In discussions I like to get straight to the point |  |  |
| 22 | I tend to have distant, rather formal relationships with people at work |  |  |
| 23 | I thrive on the challenge of tackling something new and different |  |  |
| 24 | I enjoy fun-loving, spontaneous people |  |  |
| 25 | I pay meticulous attention to detail before coming to a conclusion |  |  |
| 26 | I find it difficult to produce ideas on impulse |  |  |
| 27 | I believe in coming to the point immediately |  |  |
| 28 | I am careful not to jump to conclusions too quickly |  |  |
| 29 | I prefer to have as many resources of information as possible - the more data to think over the better |  |  |
| 30 | Flippant people who don't take things seriously enough usually irritate me |  |  |
| 31 | I listen to other people's points of view before putting my own forward |  |  |
| 32 | I tend to be open about how I'm feeling |  |  |
| 33 | In discussions I enjoy watching the manoeuvrings of the other participants |  |  |
| 34 | I prefer to respond to events on a spontaneous, flexible basis rather than plan things out in advance |  |  |
| 35 | I tend to be attracted to techniques such as network analysis, flow charts, branching programs, contingency planning, etc. |  |  |
| 36 | It worries me if I have to rush out a piece of work to meet a tight deadline |  |  |
| 37 | I tend to judge people's ideas on their practical merits |  |  |
| 38 | Quiet, thoughtful people tend to make me feel uneasy |  |  |
| 39 | I often get irritated by people who want to rush things |  |  |
| 40 | It is more important to enjoy the present moment than to think about the past or future |  |  |
| 41 | I think that decisions based on a thorough analysis of all the information are sounder than those based on intuition |  |  |
| 42 | I tend to be a perfectionist |  |  |
| 43 | In discussions I usually produce lots of spontaneous ideas |  |  |
| 44 | In meetings I put forward practical realistic ideas |  |  |
| 45 | More often than not, rules are there to be broken |  |  |
| 46 | I prefer to stand back from a situation |  |  |
| 47 | I can often see inconsistencies and weaknesses in other people's arguments |  |  |
| 48 | On balance I talk more than I listen |  |  |
| 49 | I can often see better, more practical ways to get things done |  |  |
| 50 | I think written reports should be short and to the point |  |  |
| 51 | I believe that rational, logical thinking should win the day |  |  |
| 52 | I tend to discuss specific things with people rather than engaging in social discussion |  |  |
| 53 | I like people who approach things realistically rather than theoretically |  |  |
| 54 | In discussions I get impatient with irrelevancies and digressions |  |  |
| 55 | If I have a report to write, I tend to produce lots of drafts before settling on the final version |  |  |
| 56 | I am keen to try things out to see if they work in practice |  |  |
| 57 | I am keen to reach answers via a logical approach |  |  |
| 58 | I enjoy being the one that talks a lot |  |  |
| 59 | In discussions I often find I am the realist, keeping people to the point and avoiding wild speculations |  |  |
| 60 | I like to ponder many alternatives before making up my mind |  |  |
| 61 | In discussions with people I often find I am the most dispassionate and objective |  |  |
| 62 | In discussions I'm more likely to adopt a "low profile" than to take the lead and do most of the talking |  |  |
| 63 | I like to be able to relate current actions to a longer-term bigger picture |  |  |
| 64 | When things go wrong, I am happy to shrug it off and "put it down to experience" |  |  |
| 65 | I tend to reject wild, spontaneous ideas as being impractical |  |  |
| 66 | It is best to think carefully before taking action |  |  |
| 67 | On balance I do the listening rather than the talking |  |  |
| 68 | I tend to be tough on people who find it difficult to adopt a logical approach |  |  |
| 69 | Most times I believe the end justifies the means |  |  |
| 70 | I don't mind hurting people's feelings so long as the job gets done |  |  |
| 71 | I find the formality of having specific objectives and plans stifling |  |  |
| 72 | I'm usually one of the people who puts life into a party |  |  |
| 73 | I do whatever is expedient to get the job done |  |  |
| 74 | I quickly get bored with methodical, detailed work |  |  |
| 75 | I am keen on exploring the basic assumptions, principles and theories underpinning things and events |  |  |
| 76 | I'm always interested to find out what people think |  |  |
| 77 | I like meetings to be run on methodical lines, sticking to laid down agenda, etc. |  |  |
| 78 | I steer clear of subjective or ambiguous topics |  |  |
| 79 | I enjoy the drama and excitement of a crisis situation |  |  |
| 80 | People often find me insensitive to their feelings |  |  |

**Scoring The Learning Styles Questionnaire**

The Questionnaire is scored by awarding one point for each ticked item you agree with. There are no points for items that you disagree with. Simply indicate on the lists below which items were ticked by checking the box next to the appropriate question number, then count up how many you identified in each column.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2 |  | 7 | ☐ | 1 | ☐ | 5 | ☐ |
| 4 |  | 13 |  | 3 |  | 9 |  |
| 6 |  | 15 |  | 8 |  | 11 |  |
| 10 |  | 16 |  | 12 |  | 19 |  |
| 17 |  | 25 |  | 14 |  | 21 |  |
| 23 |  | 28 |  | 18 |  | 27 |  |
| 24 |  | 29 |  | 20 |  | 35 |  |
| 32 |  | 31 |  | 22 |  | 37 |  |
| 34 |  | 33 |  | 26 |  | 44 |  |
| 38 |  | 36 |  | 30 |  | 49 |  |
| 40 |  | 39 |  | 42 |  | 50 |  |
| 43 |  | 41 |  | 47 |  | 53 |  |
| 45 |  | 46 |  | 51 |  | 54 |  |
| 48 |  | 52 |  | 57 |  | 56 |  |
| 58 |  | 55 |  | 61 |  | 59 |  |
| 64 |  | 60 |  | 63 |  | 65 |  |
| 71 |  | 62 |  | 68 |  | 69 |  |
| 72 |  | 66 |  | 75 |  | 70 |  |
| 74 |  | 67 |  | 77 |  | 73 |  |
| 79 |  | 76 |  | 78 |  | 80 |  |
|  | |  | |  | |  | |
| **Activist** | | **Reflector** | | **Theorist** | | **Pragmatist** | |

**Interpreting the Questionnaire**

**Activists**

Activists involve themselves fully and without bias in new experiences. They enjoy the here and now and are happy to be dominated by immediate experiences. They are open-minded, not sceptical, and this tends to make them enthusiastic about anything new. Their philosophy is: "I'll try anything once". They tend to act first and consider the consequences afterwards. Their days are filled with activity. They tackle problems by brainstorming. As soon as the excitement from one activity has died down they are busy looking for the next. They tend to thrive on the challenge of new experiences but are bored with implementation and longer-term consolidation. They are gregarious people constantly involving themselves with others but in doing so; they seek to centre all activities on themselves.

**Reflectors**

Reflectors like to stand back to ponder experiences and observe them from many different perspectives. They collect data, both first hand and from others, and prefer to think about it thoroughly before coming to any conclusion. The thorough collection and analysis of data about experiences and events is what counts so they tend to postpone reaching definitive conclusions for as long as possible. Their philosophy is to be cautious. They are thoughtful people who like to consider all possible angles and implications before making a move. They prefer to take a back seat in meetings and discussions. They enjoy observing other people in action. They listen to others and get the drift of the discussion before making their own points. They tend to adopt a low profile and have a slightly distant, tolerant unruffled air about them. When they act it is part of a wide picture which includes the past as well as the present and others' observations as well as their own.

**Theorists**

Theorists adapt and integrate observations into complex but logically sound theories. They think problems through in a vertical, step-by-step logical way. They assimilate disparate facts into coherent theories. They tend to be perfectionists who won't rest easy until things are tidy and fit into a rational scheme. They like to analyse and synthesise. They are keen on basic assumptions, principles, theories models and systems thinking. Their philosophy prizes rationality and logic. "If it's logical it's good". Questions they frequently ask are: "Does it make sense?" "How does this fit with that?" "What are the basic assumptions?" They tend to be detached, analytical and dedicated to rational objectivity rather than anything subjective or ambiguous. Their approach to problems is consistently logical. This is their "mental set" and they rigidly reject anything that doesn't fit with it. They prefer to maximise certainty and feel uncomfortable with subjective judgments, lateral thinking and anything flippant.

**Pragmatists**

Pragmatists are keen on trying out ideas, theories and techniques to see if they work in practice. They positively search out new ideas and take the first opportunity to experiment with applications. They are the sorts of people who return from management courses brimming with new ideas that they want to try out in practice. They like to get on with things and act quickly and confidently on ideas that attract them. They tend to be impatient with ruminating and open-ended discussions. They are essentially practical, down to earth people who like making practical decisions and solving problems. They respond to problems and opportunities "as a challenge". Their philosophy is: "There is always a better way" and "if it works it's good

**Neil Flemings (2006) VARK Questionnaire**

**Instructions**

Choose the answer which best explains your preference and tick the box to the most relevant letter(s). Please tick more than one if a single answer does not match your perception. Leave blank any question that does not apply. Alternatively you can complete the questionnaire on the VARK website if you prefer: <http://subscription.vark-learn.com/HelpsheetsPage.aspx>

1. You are helping someone who wants to go to your airport, the centre of town or railway station. You would:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a. | go with her. |  |
| b. | tell her the directions. |  |
| c. | write down the directions. |  |
| d. | draw, or show her a map, or give her a map. |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

1. A website has a video showing how to make a special graph. There is a person speaking, some lists and words describing what to do and some diagrams. You would learn most from:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a. | seeing the diagrams. |  |
| b. | listening. |  |
| c. | reading the words. |  |
| d. | watching the actions. |  |

1. You are planning a vacation for a group. You want some feedback from them about the plan. You would:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a. | describe some of the highlights they will experience. |  |
| b. | use a map to show them the places. |  |
| c. | give them a copy of the printed itinerary. |  |
| d. | phone, text or email them. |  |

1. You are going to cook something as a special treat. You would:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a. | cook something you know without the need for instructions. |  |
| b. | ask friends for suggestions. |  |
| c. | look on the Internet or in some cookbooks for ideas from the pictures. |  |
| d. | use a good recipe. |  |

1. A group of tourists want to learn about the parks or wildlife reserves in your area. You would:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a. | talk about or arrange a talk for them about parks or wildlife reserves. |  |
| b. | show them maps and internet pictures. |  |
| c. | take them to a park or wildlife reserve and walk with them. |  |
| d. | give them a book or pamphlets about the parks or wildlife reserves. |  |

1. You are about to purchase a digital camera or mobile phone. Other than price, what would most influence your decision?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a. | Trying or testing it. |  |
| b. | Reading the details or checking its features online. |  |
| c. | It is a modern design and looks good. |  |
| d. | The salesperson telling me about its features. |  |

1. Remember a time when you learned how to do something new. Avoid choosing a physical skill, eg. riding a bike. You learned best by:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a. | watching a demonstration. |  |
| b. | listening to somebody explaining it and asking questions. |  |
| c. | diagrams, maps, and charts - visual clues. |  |
| d. | written instructions – e.g. a manual or book. |  |

1. You have a problem with your heart. You would prefer that the doctor:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a. | gave you a something to read to explain what was wrong. |  |
| b. | used a plastic model to show what was wrong. |  |
| c. | described what was wrong. |  |
| d. | showed you a diagram of what was wrong. |  |

1. You want to learn a new program, skill or game on a computer. You would:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a. | read the written instructions that came with the program. |  |
| b. | talk with people who know about the program. |  |
| c. | use the controls or keyboard. |  |
| d. | follow the diagrams in the book that came with it. |  |

1. I like websites that have:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a. | Things I can click on, shift or try. |  |
| b. | Interesting design and visual features. |  |
| c. | Interesting written descriptions, lists and explanations. |  |
| d. | audio channels where I can hear music, radio programs or interviews. |  |

1. Other than price, what would most influence your decision to buy a new non-fiction book?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a. | The way it looks is appealing. |  |
| b. | Quickly reading parts of it. |  |
| c. | A friend talks about it and recommends it. |  |
| d. | It has real-life stories, experiences and examples. |  |

1. You are using a book, CD or website to learn how to take photos with your new digital camera. You would like to have:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a. | a chance to ask questions and talk about the camera and its features. |  |
| b. | clear written instructions with lists and bullet points about what to do. |  |
| c. | diagrams showing the camera and what each part does. |  |
| d. | many examples of good and poor photos and how to improve them. |  |

1. Do you prefer a teacher or a presenter who uses:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a. | demonstrations, models or practical sessions. |  |
| b. | question and answer, talk, group discussion, or guest speakers. |  |
| c. | handouts, books, or readings. |  |
| d. | diagrams, charts or graphs. |  |

1. You have finished a competition or test and would like some feedback. You would like to have feedback:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a. | using examples from what you have done. |  |
| b. | using a written description of your results. |  |
| c. | from somebody who talks it through with you. |  |
| d. | using graphs showing what you had achieved. |  |

1. You are going to choose food at a restaurant or cafe. You would:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a. | choose something that you have had there before. |  |
| b. | listen to the waiter or ask friends to recommend choices. |  |
| c. | choose from the descriptions in the menu. |  |
| d. | look at what others are eating or look at pictures of each dish. |  |

1. You have to make an important speech at a conference or special occasion. You would:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a. | make diagrams or get graphs to help explain things. |  |
| b. | write a few key words and practice saying your speech over and over. |  |
| c. | write out your speech and learn from reading it over several times. |  |
| d. | gather many examples and stories to make the talk real and practical. |  |

**The VARK Questionnaire Scoring Chart**

Use the following scoring chart to find the VARK category that each of your answers corresponds to. Check the box next to the letters that correspond to your answers e.g. If you answered b and c for question 3, check V and R in the question 3 row as shown below.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Question | A category | | B category | | C category | | D category | |
| 3 | K |  | V |  | R |  | A |  |

**Scoring Chart**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Question** | **a. category** | | **b. category** | | **c. category** | | **d. category** | |
| **1** | **K** |  | **A** |  | **R** |  | **V** |  |
| **2** | **V** |  | **A** |  | **R** |  | **K** |  |
| **3** | **K** |  | **V** |  | **R** |  | **A** |  |
| **4** | **K** |  | **A** |  | **V** |  | **R** |  |
| **5** | **A** |  | **V** |  | **K** |  | **R** |  |
| **6** | **K** |  | **R** |  | **V** |  | **A** |  |
| **7** | **K** |  | **A** |  | **V** |  | **R** |  |
| **8** | **R** |  | **K** |  | **A** |  | **V** |  |
| **9** | **R** |  | **A** |  | **K** |  | **V** |  |
| **10** | **K** |  | **V** |  | **R** |  | **A** |  |
| **11** | **V** |  | **R** |  | **A** |  | **K** |  |
| **12** | **A** |  | **R** |  | **V** |  | **K** |  |
| **13** | **K** |  | **A** |  | **R** |  | **V** |  |
| **14** | **K** |  | **R** |  | **A** |  | **V** |  |
| **15** | **K** |  | **A** |  | **R** |  | **V** |  |
| **16** | **V** |  | **A** |  | **R** |  | **K** |  |

**Calculating Your Scores**

Count the number of each of the VARK letters you have checked to get your score for each VARK category

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Total number of **V’**s checked | Enter Score. |
| Total number of **A’**s checked | Enter Score. |
| Total number of **R’**s checked | Enter Score. |
| Total number of **K’**s checked | Enter Score. |

**VARK Learning Styles Interpretation**

**Visual**

Those with a preference for visual communication strategies are holistic and want to see the big picture first. Visual learners like to use strategies such as:

* Symbols, graphs, maps, logos and free-drawn plans.
* Different colours and highlighters.
* Pictures, videos, posters and slides where the emphasis is on the design (not the sound, or words, or the content).
* Different fonts, upper and lower case letters and underlining.
* Different spatial arrangements on the page including white space; the clear spaces between text and diagrams, say in your newsletter.
* Brochures and newsletters with diagrams and charts or graphs.
* Charts, decision trees and flow diagrams.
* Books and business reports with diagrams and flow charts.
* drawing things such as plans and diagrams.
* Working with logos, branding and designing e.g. marketing your resources.
* Reports filled with graphs, charts and diagrams.
* People who use gestures and picturesque language.
* **Feedback** is based on graphs of targets and goals.

**Aural**

Those with a preference for aural communication strategies prefer the use of listening and talking and like strategies such as:

* Paying attention when others are speaking.
* Join or set-up discussion and focus groups.
* Shift any pictures and graphs into talk and chat.
* Ask people to repeat back what you have said or to say it again so you can hear it differently.
* Have conversations with themselves.
* Repeat information to others and use your voice to show emphases.
* Use voice recorders.
* Discuss topics with others. Argue your case.
* Attend training sessions.
* Explain new ideas to other people. Check out their ideas with their own.
* Present findings orally.
* Talk things over, even if they have not got things sorted out before they start.
* To explain things by talking.
* Putting forward a case - for and against.
* Debates and arguments and *'deep'* discussions with colleagues.
* To listen to those who know a lot and who have authority.

**Read/Write**

Those with a preference for reading and writing communication strategies prefer the use of reading and writing and like strategies such as:

* Lists
* Dictionaries and glossaries of business terms.
* Handouts
* Books, Business magazines and journals.
* Manuals with instructions.
* Definitions, constitutions, legal documents, minutes and rules.
* Reading lists.
* Writing titles and headings that clearly explain what follows.
* Biographies of successful business operators – *'The seven important strategies of ...'*
* Bullet points and numbered paragraphs.
* Articles about trends.
* Correcting language errors. Spell-checking emails.
* To use lists (*a, b, c, d,* and *1, 2, 3, 4*) and to order things into your categories.
* To arrange your words into hierarchies and points.
* Order and structure in anything presented.
* SWOT analyses showing **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities and **T**hreats.
* Strategic and management plans.
* Clarity in what has been written.
* **Feedback** based on written comments and a table of figures showing detailed results.

**Kinaesthetic**

Those with a preference for kinaesthetic communication strategies prefer application and practice and like strategies such as:

* Use of all of the senses - sight, touch, taste, smell, hearing
* Real-life examples that explain and simplify principles.
* Hands-on approaches.
* Trial and error.
* Solutions to problems. Finishing tasks.
* Role-plays.
* On-site visits, "walk-arounds", and displays.
* Collecting exhibits, samples, photographs, examples
* Videos, photos and pictures of real action, especially your own.
* Trials and pilot schemes.
* Talking about real things in your life.
* Practical problems.
* Outcomes that can be measured.
* Demonstrations followed by application of what has been learned.
* Being part of a work team.
* Being valued for your experiences.
* **Feedback** based on face-to-face discussions with examples of projects showing successes (or failures).

(VARK learn limited 2016. Available from: <http://subscription.vark-learn.com/HelpsheetsPage.aspx>)