

INTERDIAC PEDAGOGY

AN INTRODUCTION AND GUIDE

You are invited to a pedagogical journey with interdiac, through reading these pages and reflecting on your discoveries and challenges!



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FOREWORD

People involved with interdiac are used to calling our being and working together a 'journey'. It is a journey of walking together and of mutual accompaniment towards our vision which is underpinned by the values of dignity, justice and conviviality.

The book 'interdiac Pedagogy, An introduction and guide' is one of the fruits of our journey together.

The unique features of the Book represent some footprints left in the hearts and minds of many people involved in interdiac. At the same time, as the journey is continuing, there is a strong belief that as we develop, new footprints will be left in the future.

Let me now introduce you to some of the unique features of this book, which you have chosen because of your curiosity and interest. Each feature is a footprint along the interdiac learning journey

'interdiac Pedagogy, An introduction and guide' is deeply grounded in the learning processes of interdiac over a ten year period. This gives the book the footprint of its own *authenticity*.

'interdiac Pedagogy, An introduction and guide' expresses our self-understanding in the framework of organised learning processes. It underlines the interdiac self-understanding that the theory & practice should be integrated with theological reflection in value-based learning. This gives the book the footprint of its own *integrity*.

'interdiac Pedagogy, An introduction and guide' reflects our saying that 'people are most important resource', and in the book you will

hear the voices of diverse people engaged with interdiac learning processes. This gives the book the footprint of its own testimony to *participation and empowerment*.

'interdiac Pedagogy, An introduction and guide' is an open invitation to joint and shared learning with those who are interested in engagement with interdiac. Specifically it is a resource for developing and delivering the learning programmes and initiatives. This gives the book the footprint of its own character, which welcomes *curiosity and openness*.

'interdiac Pedagogy, An introduction and guide' expresses our deep desire for the personal and professional growth of all involved in interdiac. This gives the book the footprint of a focus on '*grace - sharing the unearned gift*'.

interdiac is called to be a learning community for Christian social action and for convivial living together. The authenticity, integrity, participation & empowerment, curiosity & openness and grace are footprints which mark interdiac pedagogy. We invite you to let this book be inspirational, while following the Biblical witness of the Prophet Micah who asserts that what God requires is that we should act justly, with compassion and that we should walk humbly with God in our life. That means walking humbly in compassionate action and in the struggle for justice.

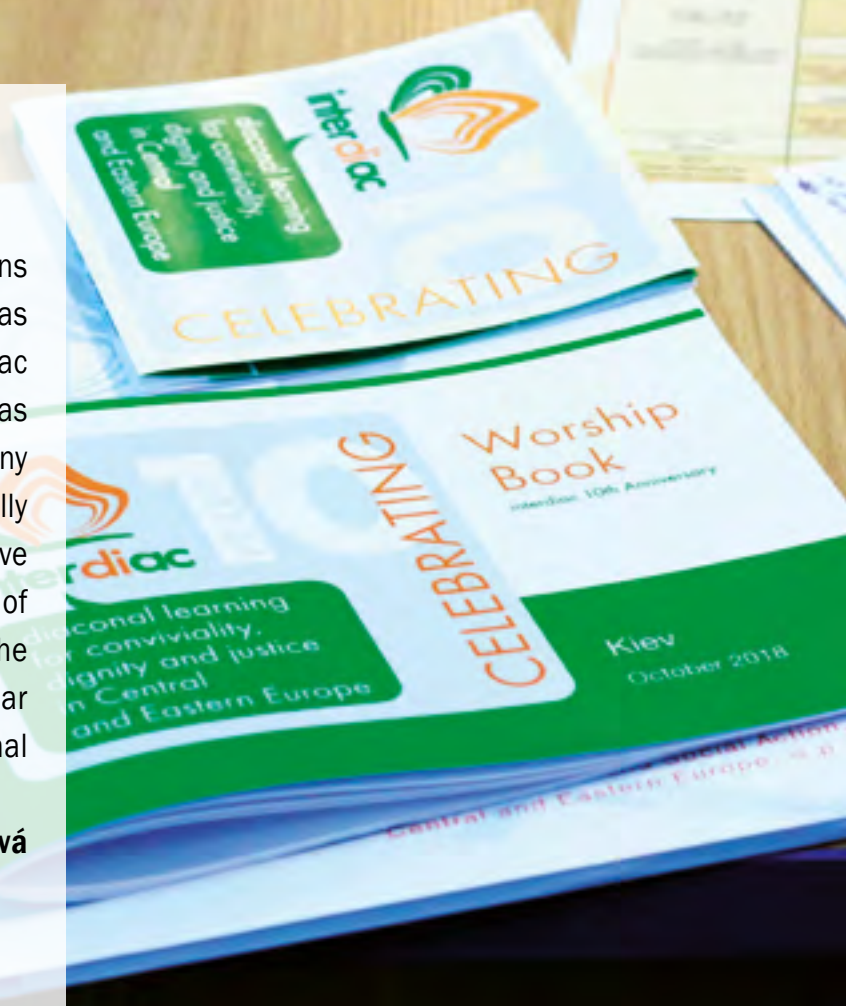
You are invited to add your footprints to this journey!

Janka Adameová

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book is the product of the contributions of many people who have been involved as participants or resource people in interdiac learning programmes! The main writer was Oksana Prosvirina with the support of Tony Addy. interdiac would also like to especially acknowledge and thank those who have read and commented on earlier drafts of the book, including some members of the interdiac Honorary Council and in particular Drea Fröchtling who commented on the final manuscript in detail.

Janka Adameová



INTRODUCTION



This book gives an overview of the learning model and learning process within interdiac. It offers guidance for all those involved and presents the essential points which underpin the interdiac vision, that learning is a dialogical, participative and reflective activity. The book has grown out of the first-hand experience by the participants in interdiac learning programmes and events over a ten-year period.

interdiac is an international academy which aims to promote learning, networking, research and development for diaconia and Christian social action. Its emphasis is on Christian social practice in Central and Eastern Europe and in a growing number of Central Asian countries.

interdiac focuses on learning as a two-way reciprocal process, where the professional practitioners, together with those they work with, seek to develop innovative and effective professional practice to fight marginalisation and social exclusion, to support mutual aid and provide social care. At the same time presence and practice with marginalised and vulnerable people contributes to the integrated development of practitioners themselves. Through its work interdiac generates and supports a learning community where people from many countries are welcome to share their experiences and the insights received in their engagement with 'forgotten people'. The learning community supports processes of learning together towards influencing realities in different local and national contexts and improving practice together with marginalised people and communities.

This book is intended for use by trainers and resource people in order to familiarise them with the interdiac approach to learning together. It may also be useful for participants in interdiac programmes as some of the learning activities are different from 'traditional' didactic education and may require an introduction and explanation. It could also helpfully inform a wider audience of the approach taken by interdiac and to stimulate further discussion about an appropriate pedagogy for learning in the field of Christian social practice.





TECHNOLOGICAL CHALLENGES

- Loss of jobs
- Privacy concerns
- Security risks
- Algorithm bias
- Surveillance
- Job displacement
- Loss of privacy
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- Job displacement
- Loss of privacy

TECHNOLOGICAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Increased productivity
- Improved quality of life
- Enhanced communication
- Improved healthcare
- Improved education
- Improved transportation
- Improved energy efficiency
- Improved environmental protection
- Improved disaster response
- Improved public safety
- Improved public health
- Improved public services
- Improved public infrastructure
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- Loss of freedom
- Loss of dignity
- Loss of respect
- Loss of honor
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- Improved public infrastructure



2 INTERDIAC VISION AND LEARNING MODEL

2.1 LEARNING

2.2 RESEARCH

2.3 DEVELOPMENT AND NETWORKING

2.4 INTEGRATING THE INTERDIAC APPROACH

Let us start this journey by learning about interdiac, our vision and how the approach to learning supports that vision.

At the end of each chapter, you will find some questions for your reflection. These will help you to relate our vision to your own personal viewpoint and reflect on your professional practice.



The three pillars of interdiac's work are learning, research and networking & development for diaconia and Christian social practice. These interlinked aspects of interdiac are developed and implemented in collaboration with interdiac partner organisations. These three pillars should not be seen as separate activities, but rather as connected and integrated processes, which rest on the basic principles outlined in the introduction and which are underpinned by the vision of interdiac.

2.1 Learning

The understanding and development of diaconal practice may vary significantly depending on the local context, professional training and engagement of the participants in each learning programme. However, the **vision of learning** which informs the work of interdiac starts with the participants' own motivation and is grounded in Christian diaconal values. Learning starts by exploring the motivation and approach to diaconia from the life perspective of the participant. interdiac recognises this as a key entry-point because the background ideas and practices which mark a practitioner's work and form a particular personal 'service model' usually lie in the biographical roots of personal vocation. Through various learning activities the participants bring into focus their expertise, knowledge of working life and local reality. Thus, the meaning and essence of diaconal practice is reconstructed from 'scratch', that is from the reality of everyday life and engagement

of the practitioner, rooting the idea of practice in personal vocation and reflection on Christian values.

Such learning about one's own 'self' often has an empowering effect for the practitioners, enabling them to find new personal resources and develop the practice of reflection. This process also builds a foundation for the skills of analysis and understanding of the local and wider realities with the aim of improving service for and with those in need. Furthermore, this approach opens the door to reciprocal and dialogical forms of professional practice with marginalised people and communities.

In practice and learning, theology and spirituality are integrated, working for life in dignity and peace with justice. This is a way of following the Christian call to be salt and light by working with people and touching every aspect of society. interdiac emphasizes the fact that all through grace, have gifts to share and the fruits of the spirit can be expressed in life and work. In integrating theology and values in its programmes interdiac gives expression to exploring & deepening our many connections, to self, God, and the 'other'. This understanding implies, inter alia:

- Walking and working with those in need and together seeking conviviality, rooted in our belonging to each other and to God.
- Safeguarding and promoting the human dignity of each person and considering people as the subject (not the object) of social, diaconal or community development work.
- Developing skills and strategies to support the participation and empowerment of excluded and marginalised people.

- Influencing social change, working for a society in diversity and fighting against social exclusion and for environmental sustainability.

Learning, as interdiac understands it, is process-based and never separated from practice and the personal vocation of a practitioner. From this starting point, which uses diverse methodologies, the learning process begins to deepen participants' knowledge, skills and competence as well as strengthening their vocation. Very often, participants in interdiac learning programmes choose to name their learning with interdiac as a 'journey', where the ultimate destination is not pre-determined, even if the direction is clear and where every step of the way promises new findings.

2.2 Research

Research starts from the inquisitive look of participants at their everyday 'life world' and professional practice. This is a very meaningful step for the practitioner, because it implies the switch from the position of the 'expert' to the role of the 'learner', who starts asking questions about how s/he 'sees' the 'nature' of social reality and about the views which are communicated through professional practices and attitudes. Of course, research may be carried out within the organisation or taken further as an actual research project. However, it should be noted that for such research to be diaconal, it should be ethically committed to the cause of participation, empowerment and justice. This conviction implies that research should be dialogical in character, with the perspective of expressing the findings through advocacy and



I would like to explore this!

action towards social change with and on behalf of marginalised and vulnerable people.

2.3 Development and networking

Following the perspective on research and learning outlined above, the third pillar of interdiac – development and networking - should be viewed in a complex integrative manner. Development can have several dimensions. In learning programmes, it refers to the comprehensive development of practice and practice theory. It often refers to a double learning process whereby participants in a learning programme (i.e. practitioners) change whilst enabling change and transformation of those they work with in their respective settings.

'I was so happy to get a chance to become a part of interdiac even for one semester! As interdiac is more than educational programme, it's a community where I was grown up like Christian person, human being who is taking care about human beings without any stereotypes and excluding and student who is researching for new knowledge.'

Kate Khodak

The second meaning of development is the development of new and innovative forms of diaconia and Christian social practice. Whilst this is an implicit aim of all interdiac learning programmes, in some cases programmes are designed with a specific service development in mind.

Networking is one of the basic attributes of the interdiac approach. The Academy is built on a network of organisations which are developing the work through trusted collaboration. In most learning programmes there are workshops and learning exchanges which build up co-learning as an important aspect of developing knowledge and skills.

More recently, interdiac has increasingly seen itself as a 'learning community' and participants are invited to join in this community and contribute to its development. A platform for the learning community can be accessed through the interdiac web site. In the years to come, interdiac will also establish a number of regional hubs based on network members to strengthen networking and learning capacity.

2.4 Integrating the interdiac approach

Linking these three aspects of interdiac work is one of the guarantees for a holistic approach to building up knowledge and practice and for following this through into practice and work for development and change in church and society.

It should be noted that for these broad perspectives on learning and development there are no ready-made answers or answers that would 'fit' every context. Consequently, interdiac does not offer learning events each with a team of experts who can teach 'how to reach expected results efficiently with minimum expenditure'. Rather, interdiac provides space and a structure for those who want to learn from each other and share the common goal to work for change towards a just and caring society. In every learning event or programme, everyone is respected as a learner and everyone is a valuable resource of knowledge. Learning is thus perceived as a gift, which is shared with others for the common good of all. Knowledge is produced and innovative practices are shared within the network of interdiac partners, who form a learning community and enhance learning in local situations. In the vision of interdiac, promoting high professional standards and strategically relevant practice in the field of diaconia and Christian social action is of utmost importance. In this way, interdiac aims to strengthen the role of diaconia in society and promote meaningful changes in the lives of vulnerable or marginalised people and communities.

Questions for Reflection

What is attractive for you about the interdiac vision?

From your own knowledge and experience, what would you like to contribute to the interdiac learning community?

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INTERDIAC SUPPORTS INNOVATION BY INTEGRATING LEARNING, PRACTICE AND RESEARCH!



Diaconia
Handbook

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3 THE FOUNDATION OF INTERDIAC PEDAGOGY

3.1 THE INTERDIAC LEARNING PROCESS

3.2 INTERDIAC LEARNING PROGRAMMES



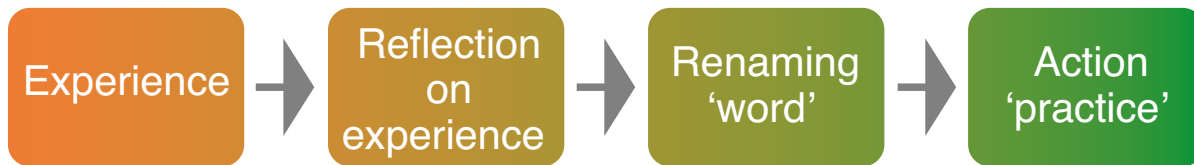
In this chapter you will look into foundation of our learning process. You will also see how this is implemented in the learning through the whole programme and how various methods of learning are used.

In this and each of the following chapters you will find several 'Boxes' which contain examples from practice that explain how in the learning process we implement our approach through various methods and forms of learning.

3.1 The interdiac learning process

interdiac follows the principles of **'liberating pedagogy'** first introduced by Paulo Freire, a Brazilian philosopher and educator (1921 -1997). Learning is understood as an emancipatory and liberating process. Freire's influential book 'Pedagogy of the Oppressed' created a big resonance by challenging traditional models of pedagogy which he sees as 'enslaving' people with the aim of preserving the status quo which is beneficial only for cultural, political and economic powerholders. Freire calls conventional education a 'banking' pedagogical system, because during their studies students are expected simply to store received information relayed to them by a lecturer and to repeat it. On the contrary, in his 'liberating' pedagogy, Freire places a student in the centre of the learning and builds education on critical, multicultural and inclusive terms. He claims that it is no use to fight against oppressors only to gain the right to oppress them in return! It is crucial that the oppressed fight their oppressors to regain their humanity, which was distorted in historical process. (Freire, 1993) Since then, in the following decades, pedagogy and research in social sciences have received a new impetus for the development of teaching for liberating students to be co-creators of social reality.

A learning process according to Freire would include the following steps:



This approach supports the pursuit of social justice and of transformative practice for reaching equality and inclusiveness in the 'classroom' as well as in the society.

Indeed, in the interdiac learning process, one of the first challenges participants often face is to overcome their previous rigid pedagogical experience and provoke them to dare to ask the previously 'unquestionable' expert knowledge such questions as: 'Whose owns this knowledge?', 'Whose experience is represented in it and whose practice and position does it preserve?', 'For whose benefit is it?' These questions reveal that 'social reality' is a process of naming things and that it is crucial to understand what or whose language we use to name certain phenomena. Through each act of naming we establish the connection between this phenomenon and others in our everyday social life. For instance, not so long ago, the term 'poor people' was connected to their personal situation and often to their moral failure and the remedy was marginal financial support and to force them into employment. However, our present view of 'poor people' sees their situation as having many causes which together force them to live in poverty. This implies a multidimensional approach poverty as having many causes, not least because among the causes may be rapid economic change or political decisions in terms of the level of social support. Poverty may also be a result of life changes, physical disability, learning difficulties, identity etc. This developed understanding of poverty is an achievement of social organisations and committed research. With a longer perspective, we can see the development which started with discussions



I would like to discuss it!

and the 'renaming' of the phenomenon of poverty from the perspective of life world of marginalised and vulnerable people who experience poverty. We therefore see that poverty has many 'faces' and needs a complex developed social, labour market and economic policy which supports social justice and creates an inclusive environment.

interdiac learning programmes apply a form of **'phenomenon-based' education**. For instance, the above-mentioned phenomenon of 'poverty' would be examined from different angles, especially starting with the experience of people 'in poverty' and experience of poverty in the lives of participants. These understandings and their interconnections with the wider social world and given meanings are an important foundation. The phenomenon of poverty would also be seen through Biblical readings, noting that different understandings are also related to the

context of the production of the texts. Furthermore, in interdiac we would deal with the fact that the Bible has several words which are translated as poverty (in English) and in the original each had a different connotation. Then, poverty would be examined in a historical context and structural context. The prevailing conditions of a particular country are studied through the existing analysis. The impact of laws, regulations and measures of social policy would also be taken into account. All these understandings are then ethically challenged in the relation between service user and diaconal practitioner. This implies a consideration of professional practice, asking which understandings of poverty are implicated and if the work is supporting to the eradication of poverty etc. It is crucial to include the perspective of people living in poverty in this study and also to build clear understanding of the role and motives of the professional practitioners in their engagement with them. Therefore, in its nature, this **transformative learning** aims to start with transformation of the professional practitioners in their understanding of and perspective on the phenomenon. It then proceeds to transformative work with people and for change in the environment.

3.2 interdiac Learning Programmes

On the basis of this approach, we would now like to give you a brief overview of interdiac learning programmes. In interdiac we have three kinds of learning programme:

- Long-term programmes – usually over a year. The educational process has a framework which

may be accredited by a university and be more demanding.

- Short-term programmes – a year and less. Organisation of this kind of programme is explained in the diagram below and such a programme may also be accredited. The programmes may be more or less demanding and this depends on the purpose and design.

- Tailor made programmes which are organised with and for a specific interdiac partner and which may last for between six months and two years.

In both long-term and short-term learning programmes the organisation of the learning process usually starts with biographical work, which then develops along the lines of the so-called CABLE approach developed by professionals through an international cooperation network. CABLE implies action based learning with focus on presence, participation and a community work style of engagement. (Addy, 2013)

interdiac also organises short-term workshops (up to one week) or one day events. Here, the main focus is on one phenomenon or a key aspect of intervention following an experience-based approach.

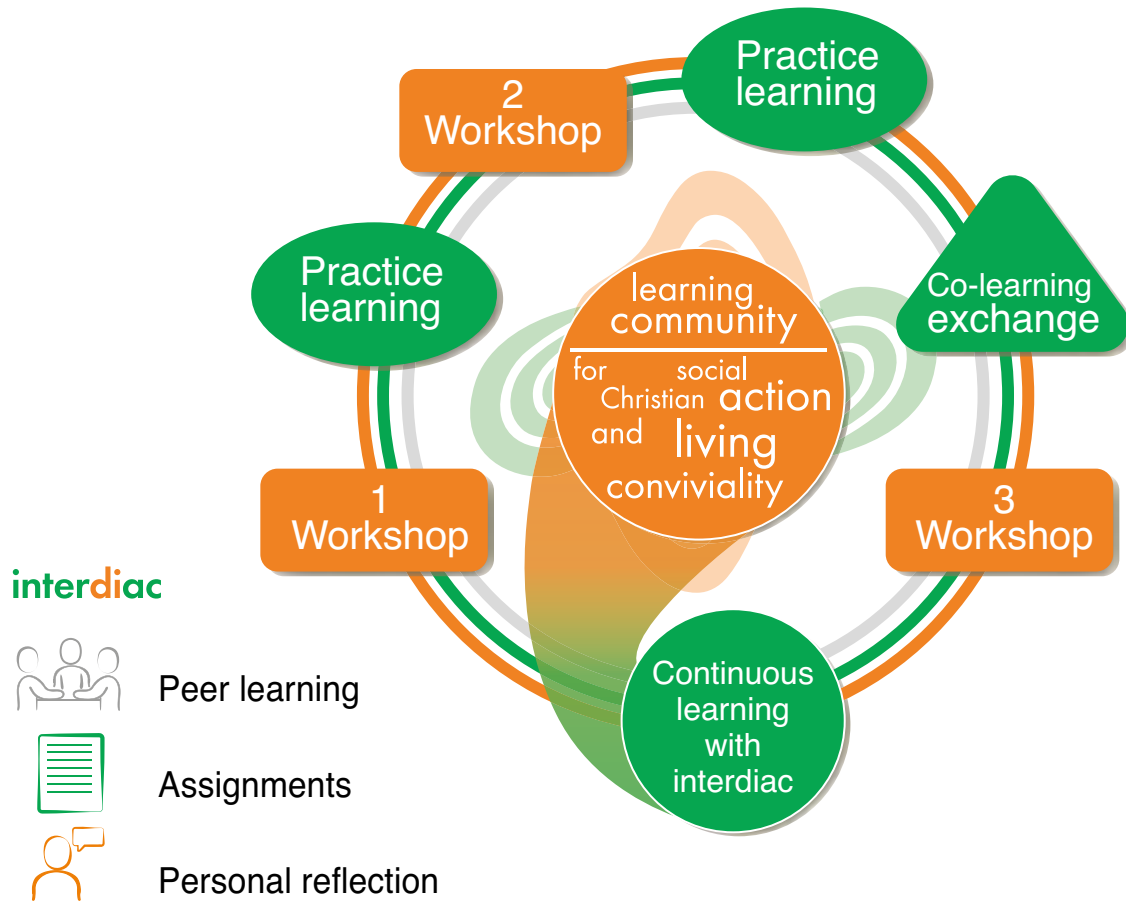
Normally, programmes are organised in a number of Study Units, each of which opens a different perspective on the subject. In accredited programmes, each Study Unit has an ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) rating which is related to the workload. The ‘workload’ includes all aspects of the learning process. This enables transferability within the ECTS system. Several Study Units usually run concurrently during the process, so that the learning

is integrated. Each learning programme is built on the integration of learning and practice and involves the usage of a blend of different methods of learning. These can include:

- Face to face workshops (so called 'contact teaching') based on a participatory pedagogy which may include, for example role play and group exercises
- Use of an online platform such as Moodle or Canvas which provides space for resources, online lectures and course materials, space for blogs and group work meetings, as well as supervision. Assignments can be uploaded on the platform
- Observation, analysis and reflection
- Experiential and practice-based learning
- Peer group learning
- Reflective and analytic report writing
- Assignments
- Research projects
- Reading
- Portfolio preparation to bring together the diverse aspects of learning
- Co-learning exchanges
- Worship in the context of practice and in the workshops
- Journaling and completing a regular learning journal



The learning process through the programme can be pictured in this way:



This diagram depicts a learning programme organised as a series of three international workshops. Each workshop is organised by the interdiac team and a partner organisation, in their own working context. These events usually include a study visit in order to reflect on the chosen phenomenon in the specific context. Workshops usually last five days starting Monday after lunch and finishing with lunch on Friday. The number of workshops in a programme can vary according to the needs and the complexity of the issue or practice.

Between the workshops, participants usually continue their **practical work** in their respective settings, be it a church or organisation. This 'in-between' period is for practice-based learning. The participants critically reflect on their practice and that of their organisation. The aim is to make immediate use of the workshop-based learning. To support this, various assignments are undertaken that will help to integrate theoretical knowledge in contextual analysis and practice. The workplace itself will, in this way, become a source of learning, as it is explored with a reflective and critical eye. Personal reflection on everyday practice and the work process of the organisation integrates the learning. As the learning is shared in the workplace, it may also contribute to wider learning and development.

As well as workplace learning, in some programmes '**co-learning exchanges**' between pairs of course participants are organised. This enables each participant in the learning programme to spend time with another participant in their workplace and vice versa. The aim is to learn from each other's practice in context and through dialogue to produce a constructive and critical mutual feedback. This is then shared in the workshop with the rest of the participants. This process supports peer group learning which goes deeper than usual project visits.

In most programmes, all the **learning materials**, online lectures and assignments are stored on a secure platform such as Moodle. This is also used for supporting distance learning between



I would like to explore this!

the workshops. Assignments are also uploaded to the platform and the evaluation is given personally to each participant in an individual secure space. Material for all interdiac programmes and themes is gradually being made available to the wider learning community on the dedicated learning community web site. During the programme and after the programme finishes, participants are welcome to join the interdiac learning community. All people involved with interdiac can contribute to the learning community and learn from the contents. The interdiac vision implies that we constantly learn through our gained experience by reflecting on our findings for improving professional and organisational practice. To put it in a nutshell, learning is in an attribute of 'living' and 'practice' thus learning towards change can be seen in a life-long perspective.

'To collaborate with interdiac I got one of the best experiences ever in my life. It gave me higher motivation, it motivated me to try, to do and to believe my goals. I got vision more about diaconia or Christian social engagement. My self-esteem and self-confidence were positively influenced. In my practical practice I got a lot of new knowledge, ideas, which I tried and young people was happy about new things. The work of my organisation also was influenced positively, I shared with my point of view, shared with my knowledge! I saw changes in myself, around me and I felt God's spirit in my work.'

Liene Celmina

Box 1. Role-play



The professions of 'deacon' or 'social practitioner' have traditionally understood their position in relation to the 'service user' as 'top-down'. This implies an inbuilt power relationship between them. Following this professional 'service model', the practitioner has implicit power to decide, or even explicit power to dictate decisions and courses of action for the life of the service-user. In this way social practitioners communicate a 'normative social order' However, such a 'service model' does not have potential for empowerment or for giving positive impetus to the life of a service-user. Accordingly, during the learning process interdiac is seeking ways to bring together life worlds of the service-user and professional practitioner. The keyword for this process would be empathy, not sympathy! Empathy is about curiosity about the other person and attends to another person on his or her own terms. It is more demanding because it requires that the listener has to get out of himself of herself (Sennett, 2012 pp.225,6). To achieve this, interdiac may opt to use a role-play or similar task, where a professional practitioner is 'put' in the place of the service-user and forced to assess the situation from this 'down-to-top' perspective. For many participants such an experience is really 'shaking'. They realise that the vulnerability of the person is often unconsciously supported by their oppressive attitude or treatment which people in need perceive even when they only enter premises of social organisation.

Questions for Reflection

After reading this text, could I identify key differences between interdiac learning and my own education or training? Or similarities?

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Are there any ideas about working and learning processes in this chapter which I could use in my own working context?

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LEARNING IN PRACTICE SUPPORTS PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION!



4

DIDACTICAL BASE AND KEY-PRINCIPLES OF PEDAGOGICAL THE PROCESS

4.1 DIALOGICAL LEARNING AND THE PARTICIPATORY LEARNING PROCESS

4.2 CONTEXT RELATED LEARNING IN THE LOCAL SITUATION

4.3 BLENDED THEORETICAL AND PRACTICE RELATED LEARNING

4.4 INTEGRATION OF PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICE IN LEARNING

In this chapter we will go more deeply into the way in which the basic principles of the interdiac learning process are implemented.

We invite you not only to look at the questions for reflection at the end of the chapter, but to write down any questions or ideas which come to your mind as you read! Then you may explore them further or discuss them with your colleagues. You will find specific places where you can write these thoughts down.

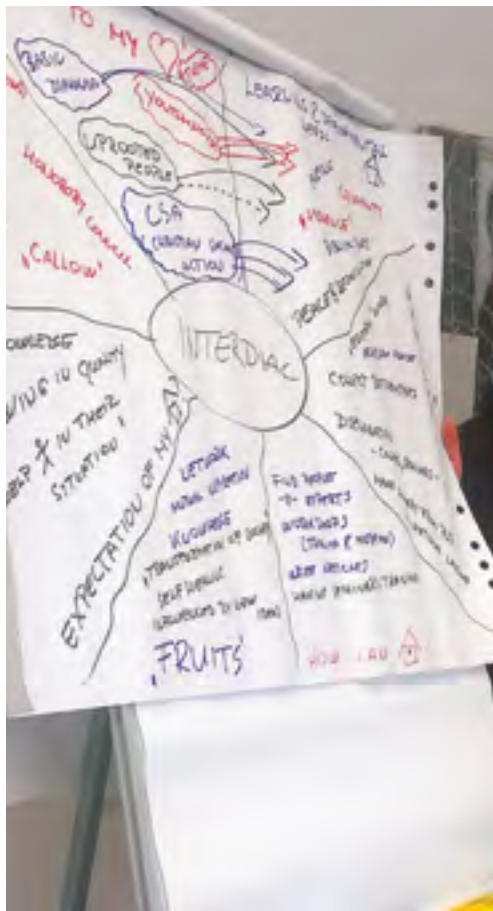


Let us now more closely review some of the main features of learning processes in interdiac, which are built on the main principles of liberating pedagogy and transformative lifelong learning. Our aim is to reveal the meaning of the components of pedagogical process, seek for their application in the learning process, suggest concrete examples as well as point out possible use of these components in professional practice.

4.1 Dialogical learning and participatory learning processes

The main form of learning in interdiac is dialogical. It should be noted that dialogue and dialogical learning from each other are not to be reduced to the mechanical sharing in the group about some subject, which later on can be 'put on the shelf' as if the discussion is finally over! According to Freire:

'In order to understand the meaning of dialogical practice, we have to put aside the simplistic understanding of dialogue as a mere technique. Dialogue does not represent a somewhat false path that I attempt to elaborate on and realize in the sense of involving the ingenuity of the other. On the contrary, dialogue characterizes an epistemological relationship. Thus, in this sense, dialogue is a way of knowing and should never be viewed as a mere tactic to involve students in a particular task. We have to make this point very clear. I engage in dialogue not necessarily because I like the other person. I engage in dialogue because I recognize the social and not merely the individualistic character of the process of knowing. In this sense, dialogue presents itself as an indispensable component of the process of both learning and knowing.' (Freire & Macedo 1995, p.379.)



Dialogical learning always implies the genuine interest of people in each other. It aims at revealing and affirming the relational nature of each person. An important condition for dialogical learning is bringing a holistic ecological view of the person into dialogue. Such a view challenges the model of social status which is reflected through profession, education, nationality or other social constructs. In learning programmes,

the door to this approach is usually opened by work on participants' own biography and the roots of their personal vocation. Moreover, close examination by the participants of the roots of their identity and the historical context that shaped them usually helps to unveil the way in which the past has a shaping effect on the way present realities are experienced and it opens the way to a new future perspectives. Under these conditions, dialogue helps to build up awareness of the phenomena in the context of biography and socialisation and related ideas, values and attitudes. It is in dialogue, as the open communication of equals and with an ethical consensus, that the 'power of a word' and the 'giving of a name' to a phenomenon creatively builds up knowledge and fosters an open exploration of the 'truth'. Participants usually feel that under the conditions of 'just' communication they create their own understanding of reality, free from oppressive formal structures, and that this allows them to discover 'being together' in a reciprocal way. Actually, this process has two interlinked layers: participants change their perception of reality, but they also change themselves, just as in the practice of working with people for change, practitioners themselves change. To make such joint work possible it is crucial to create a 'safe place' where the participants feel welcomed and safe to share their thoughts and insights. In a safe place trust and respect for diversity are the foundation for communication.

Participation is another underlying condition for transformative learning and should be embodied in the relations from the beginning of the learning process. In interdiac programmes, this implies, inter alia:



I would like to explore this!

- In the group, an atmosphere of mutual respect should be ensured. Any prejudice or bias in the language or attitude or patterns of domination expressed verbally or otherwise between the participants should be addressed and overcome;
- Confidentiality of what is shared during the learning session should be kept;
- Attentive listening and willingness to learn from each other should be emphasised and carried out through the different forms of the learning activities;
- Clear rules for the group should be set, so that a voice is given to every participant, respecting their expertise concerning their own reality;
- 'Horizontal' power relations and communication between all participants (including lecturers and resource people) in the learning process should be

established and maintained during the programme.

With regard to the organisation and implementation of a learning programme, participation can be ensured through following these practices:

- Regulations which are 'normative' for the learning in the programme should be transparent, communicated to every participant and followed throughout the programme;
- Any relevant information about the programme should be communicated in good time to all participants;
- The grading and feedback on participants personal work should be given by the lecturer confidentially and in a timely manner;
- Issues and behaviour related to the life and work of the participant group and which affect everyone should be 'put on the table' and discussed openly.

Box 2. Convivial evenings



In almost every workshop interdiac organises at least one 'convivial evening' to enhance the building of reciprocal relations between the participants, including the lecturers, local hosts and members of local organisations and churches, as appropriate. A convivial evening takes place after the working day and invites participants to gather at the common table to share food and stories about themselves, their realities, culture, etc. This strengthens mutual recognition and appreciation across diversities. Participants are also often requested to organise the event themselves ensuring the participative character of it with various activities, such as games, dances, quizzes, etc.

'interdiac opens doors to new understanding and approaches in community development; diaconia isn't done to others anymore but with them. Diversity, readiness to understand the realities of the participants, flexibility, open mindedness, desire for change (inner and external too), empowering are key.'

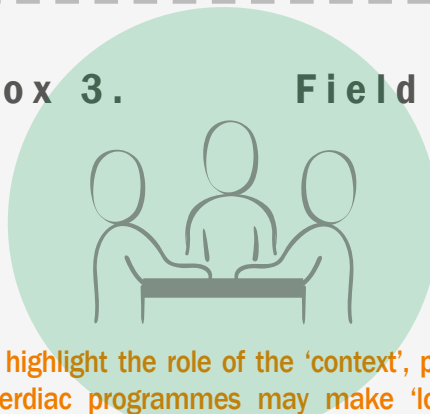
Zuzana Onasoga

4.2 Context-related learning in the local situation

In interdiac programmes, learning on the local level is prioritised for many reasons. Most significantly, interdiac believes that professional practitioners' engagement with people in need should maintain a 'low profile'. This means that practitioners refrain from a 'top-down' perspective of 'power over' the people with whom they work. This is implied by a commitment to presence with marginalised people in their reality. This view of practice tends not to coincide with the normative expectation of mainstream society. In fact, very often practitioners find themselves in a tricky position between the conventional 'top down' view of practice and the view of practice as 'presence with people' and 'working for change'. The internal logic of these opposing views often presses on the practitioner. However, if we want to challenge marginalisation and social exclusion and achieve sustainable and positive changes with and for marginalised people, 'power over' should be converted to 'power with'. In professional practice, this implies aiming to create the potential for empowerment and involvement of people in participative processes towards transformation in their lives and change in their environment! Therefore, in the learning process interdiac questions the link between professional practice and the actual outcomes of this practice for the service-users in their lives. A low profile for the practitioner gives a perspective for the assessment of practice with several important layers:

- Learning about the actual needs of marginalised and vulnerable people through presence with them in their surroundings. This layer can be explored further through a questioning ethical perspective on relations with the service-users or participants. The ethical character of practice is rooted in the Biblical view of humankind, underpinned by a human rights perspective. This implies that practitioners should review whether their relations with the service-users are built on the basis of an anti-oppressive attitude, preserving dignity and respecting diversity;

Box 3. Field Visits



To highlight the role of the 'context', participants in interdiac programmes may make 'local visits' in different places, for example, where a workshop is held. This has been developed as a useful exercise, supported by a specific methodology which avoids 'social tourism'. The participants are invited to go out, discover a locality, hear the stories of the people living there, and get acquainted with social and diaconal services. Participants may discover contrasts to or similarities with their work and context and this provides an opportunity for 'learning through difference', so providing a rich ground for reflection and assessment of the diverse 'responses' to the experience of these visits.

- Questioning the professional practice of the practitioner and agency with a focus on interdependence, solidarity and convivial living together. In this approach not only the professional practices are re-visited with scrupulous attention to the means and aims, but the whole working culture of the organisation or church is examined in the light of taking responsibility with and for the 'other'. Instead of seeing the 'other' as problematic, vulnerable and helpless, rather the whole person with their strengths and resources should be considered and favourable conditions for empowerment and emancipation should be created. It may happen that supporting the community can be more beneficial than helping the individual. In this way, the 'other' may also have a contribution to make to the whole, thus fostering mutuality and sustainability;

- Improving the skills for organising, advocacy and campaigning as relevant practices in shaping the strategies towards meaningful changes in the lives of vulnerable people. To put it in a nutshell, it can be said that the aim of the social and diaconal work, in this respect, is to bring the 'voice' of the 'voiceless' to the mainstream society and that this cannot be done on 'behalf of them', but only together with them in joint action towards justice and peace.

Thus context-related learning on the grass-root level prompts the need for research in and through practice. In this process, learners can discover new ways to be among the people as well as raising critical questions about the changes and transformation needed for supporting a vibrant civil society and working towards justice and peace.

Box 4. Co-learning



interdiac has developed the concept of co-learning (a form of job-shadowing) as a learning method. In co-learning, pairs of participants share a reciprocal process of following each other's work in context. This two-way learning is summarised by each participant in an analytic and reflective report. Learning from each other and also with the other actors in their local context has proved itself as a very effective approach. It should be noted that in this co-learning, interdiac focusses on two aspects of social and diaconal work: firstly, the ways in which practitioners perform their service and its roots in both their personal vocation and professional training. Secondly the organisation and context in which the work is embedded which has its own analysis of the context and concept of 'service'. In this way the programme develops 'learning through experience' by the participants and all are involved in producing new knowledge. Co-learning is organised either as a stand-alone programme or as part of a longer programme. It can also be tailor made for specific groups.



I would like to discuss it!

'During the times of 'post-truth', it is important to see beyond different discourses. For example, it is important to give tools to discuss in a constructive way with those who have a lot of hate against people different from them. For me this is one of the most challenging tasks and I would like to learn more ways to create a more convivial and peaceful society. In a convivial society it is easier to see the dignity of everyone. I also see it important to create places for participation, since many people are alone or feel they are alone. Also new ways to live spirituality are important.'

Ulla Siirto

4.3 Blended theoretical and practice-related learning

The importance of accepting the complex nature of knowledge in social work is recognised by the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) and outlined in their definition of social work developed together with the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW):

'Social work bases its methodology in a systematic body of evidence-based knowledge derived from research and practice evaluation, including local and indigenous knowledge specific to its context. It recognizes the complexity of interactions between human beings and their environment, and the capacity of people both to be affected by and to alter the multiple influences upon them including bio-psychological factors. The social work profession draws on theories of human development and behaviour and social systems to analyse complex situations and to facilitate individual, organisational and cultural changes.' (Global Social Work Statement of Ethical Principles, ISSW, 2018)

What is more, the objective of making an impact and bringing sustainable change in the lives of people needs a close examination of the existing practice of social and community work in diverse organisations and this should be analysed and reflected on in relation to an awareness of the rapid social shifts and dynamics which impact on contexts and are related to global changes.

Furthermore, in terms of practice, the IFSW emphasizes an important point about social work as charity pointing out that:

'Charity does not bring change, can create dependency. Social protection is a community responsibility, but it also should lead to inclusion and social cohesion in our societies. Social workers have skills, knowledge and expertise to work alongside people and support them on that journey through change so that they can achieve individual and collective well-being.' ('What is Social Work', IFSW)

For these reasons, interdiac concentrates on learning programmes that are informed by social analysis and theoretical learning which is related to developing practice through practice related learning. This learning process is best supported by blended learning which uses a variety of learning approaches including workshops, online learning, practice and reflection on practice, essay and report writing and research.

Another reason for using blended learning is that in all programmes, interdiac aims to integrate Biblical and theological studies and spirituality with practice and practice learning. This integrated approach is emphasised in a recent draft World Council of Churches report on diaconia:

'What is distinct for diaconal actors is that they refer to religious concepts, in addition to secular, when explaining their action and its objective. This is an expression of the interdisciplinary nature of diakonia; it is social action rooted in socio-political knowledge and analysis, and, at the same time, it is faith-based and rights-based action. Its practice is guided by the norms and values of this basis. Diakonia thus requires the ability to express itself accordingly, using the kind

of secular terminology that is required of disciplined social action as well as the language of faith in the form of disciplined theological language. Only then is it possible to communicate the distinctive nature of diaconal work properly, internally as well as externally, and, in addition, to carry out a broad and critical reflection on diaconal praxis.' ('Ecumenical Diakonia: Called to Transformative Action', unpublished draft, 2018, p.70.)

In most interdiac learning programmes there are two starting points, the prior learning and experience of the participants and the analysis of their context in relation to the specific phenomenon which is the topic of the programme. As the learning process unfolds, the phenomenon is scrutinised through multiple theories and analyses in order to reveal the various layers constituting its complex nature. Alongside this, Biblical and theological study offers other perspectives on the same phenomenon. Because most participants are also engaged in practice, they can reflect on the theoretical and theological knowledge and the new skills gained in the shaping of their participatory practice and their active engagement in social action with the service-users or local community. Integration of theory and practice in learning contributes to enriching the professional expertise and competence of the participants. This developed practice leads to building trust and transparency, co-operation and partnership and enhances the accountability of the organisation and the potential for change. Subsequently, it leads to strengthening the profile of diaconia and Christian social action as responsible and reliable social actors in shaping the future.

Box 5.

Case Studies

A good tool for pursuing blended learning is a 'case-study' assignment. The participant selects and analyses a particular 'case' taken from the persons professional practice using a framework for analysis. A 'case' may, for example, be a practice situation with a person, group or community, a specific incident or a work process. The 'case' is analysed using different specified methods and often implies using theoretical perspectives. A case may be analysed on different levels even if it is reflecting a 'one to one' incident. It can reflect on contextual, institutional or organisational factors and micro level processes as they influence the 'case' and the reflected practice. A case study brings a critical perspective and reflection on professional practice considered in the light of the new theoretical and practice learning from the programme.

'interdiac is not merely about passing on and disseminating 'disembodied knowledge' but about internal and external resource building (attitude and practice of self-awareness, compassion, non-judgment, peace, inclusion, active spiritual practice / spiritual journey, community building, participation, etc.): where students learn to see and build resources and based on this experience can in turn foster resource building and sustainability in their communities they work in. It is a community of care and an expression of the courage to care.'

Aiva Rozenberga-Drummond



4.4 Integration of personal and professional service learning

The pedagogical process, which integrates personal and professional components in the learning, has the possibility of embedding the idea that learning is a lifelong process and supporting the emancipatory character of the learning. As previously mentioned, the knowledge of their own roots and personal motivation allows practitioners to clarify their own motives and the initial 'calling' that brought them to work with people. At the same time this perspective incorporates a holistic approach to a person, building up through their **personal story** a sense of self-worth and dignity, which lies in the 'being' of a person, not the 'doing'. Thus, the work for change begins

with work on a person's own 'self' as a resource for unconditional presence in the world and co-relations with other human beings. Another important issue is that awareness of one's own roots and biography reveals the core ideas of value-based concepts, such as justice, empowerment and conviviality. These should be reflected and clarified as resources for successful work. Social work practitioners usually bring these ideas into their professional practice unconsciously and sometimes the basic ideas they hold as a resource for their work are in contradiction to those of the church or organisation that employs them. Unless this is dealt with, growing stress levels might lead to a burn out.

Looking more deeply, it can be seen that service users, project participants, volunteers and activists all have their biographically rooted ideas, expectations and fundamental presuppositions which impact on practice. This presents a rather complicated picture through which learners can see that the values and expectations of the practitioner may or may not coincide with those of their employing organisation. Through this picture, participants can see that the service model of the person and their employing organisation may or may not be aligned. Furthermore, the practitioner is working with people from different background experiences and with different expectations. Therefore, there are three corners of a complex triangle – the practitioner with their own expectations and service model, their employing organisation with its expectations and the people with whom the practitioner is engaged, who also have their own (diverse) expectations. To complicate the matter further, people are not only



I would like to explore this!

influenced by the society in which they grew up and from which they often unthinkingly absorb culture and values, there are also 'mainstream values' in every society which form an overarching framework. Social work funding may be related to reinforcing these values and practitioners may be expected to transmit rather than challenge them. Therefore, during the learning, interdiac aims to embrace the following issues of practitioner's performance concurrently:

- The presence and influence of society and relationships on the practitioner in forming their identity, attitudes, ideas of what is right or wrong, etc;
- The connection between certain virtues and values and personal biography and motivation;
- How personal attitudes enter professional performance and make an impact in the relations with people;
- How these issues relate to the lifeworld of service users and the practice of organisations which employ social and diaconal practitioners.

Different learning activities to work on these questions are introduced both in personal and group work. In group work, in a safe atmosphere of sharing and discussion, new insights can be gained through listening to other participants and though openly discussing key issues. A variety of activities for developing personal skills for good practice, such as resilience, assertive behaviour, cultural sensitivity, active listening, etc. are used in active learning. However, for continuous improvement and learning through practice, it is also important to underpin the learning with constant personal

work on participants' own 'self'. Most of the time practitioners act on the basis of tacit hidden knowledge which only comes to the surface through careful, focused reflection. Because of this, in the learning process with interdiac it is recommended that a participant regularly writes notes about the situations which appeared during the working day and which provoked some questions about a participant's own reactions, attitudes, stress or confusion. Such **learning through personal experience** encourages the development of self-analysis and critical thinking as a professional, which in the long run contributes to professional growth. This is often in the form of a personal learning journal provided as a resource for the programme. The reflection on the roots of personal development and professional service and its development in practice also contributes to growth in competence and confidence.



I would like to discuss it!

Regular work with the programme learning journal helps to recognise the lifelong learning perspective as an immanent need for mindful responsible practice, while a strong link to the personal value base in biography feeds the resourcefulness of the practitioner in carrying out an open and sensitive approach to people. Keeping a **spiritual journal** opens the way to developing new insights and resources for the integration of spirituality in everyday practice. These two skills are discussed below in separate chapters with explications on practical use in pedagogical process.

Box 6.

Evaluation



Evaluation of the learning in the light of the personal and professional relevance of the presented learning material and personal responses is carried out at the end of each day during a residential workshop or seminar and not only at the end of workshop or programme. The tasks for evaluation always aim to cover the double-perspective of personal and professional learning as well as of the learning process itself. Evaluation is conducted in an atmosphere of trust and open sharing. It is worth to discuss or clarify some points from the participants and at the end of the activity, to express gratitude for the day of joint work, thus enhancing the feeling of togetherness and cohesion in a group.

'The idea of 'personal and professional service model' was new for me, I have never thought about my service as a model, more like a duty I felt motivation to do. But developing ideas about the importance of identity and personal biography repowered in me my original motivation. Reflecting about my service with this approach I could understand the correlations, my values, my motivations and how all these influence my everyday work and the way the organisation where I work developed, including my colleagues, how we shape each other.'

Andrea Ingrid Sarbu Lorintz

Questions for Reflection

Do I have examples of integrating theory and practice in my own work and in my working context?

Thinking about this chapter, how is learning organised in the place where you work? Can you find some inspiration from what you have read?

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INTERDIAC PROGRAMMES ARE BASED ON THIS INTEGRATED APPROACH TO PRACTICE AND LEARNING!

CULTURE

Indonesia 🇮🇩

- INSECURITIES OF MAJORITY
- DOMINANT RELIGION
- DISCRIMINATION

FACE
(ARABIAN)

UKRAINE

- DISCRIMINATION
OF U...

MIGRATION

- ✓ - Resources in f...
- ✓ - Unemployment
- Industri...

5

SKILLS FOR PRACTICE IN EFFECTIVE LEARNING



- 5.1 REFLECTIVE LEARNING
- 5.2 SPIRITUAL REFLECTION

As you read through the book, you will find the 'voices' of some people who participated in interdiac learning programmes. Through these comments you can also see how reflective practice, which is explained in this chapter, enriches the experience of learning and contributes to personal and professional development.





I would like to explore this!



I would like to discuss it!

5.1. Reflective learning

Reflective practice is a constituent part of lifelong learning which is based on the integration of the personal and professional components during the learning process. Developing skills of reflective practice is a primary method for embedding the knowledge in the practice with the aim of developing professionalism.

Reflection is often understood as a process that helps the practitioner to get better understanding of themselves. Therefore, in learning it supports the principles of the integration of personal and professional service as well as the articulation between theory and practice. In other words, interdiac understands the aim of reflection as achieving clear harmony and cohesion between our theoretical and spiritual approach, what people say, how they act and to the important aspects of the work to which they relate themselves. Reflection is a key to responsible practice, which helps to answer the questions about the self as a practitioner: What kind of practitioner am I? What do I want to achieve with my practice and how can I develop it? Do I act in a 'just' way towards other people? Here is a definition which grasps the aim of reflective practice in the light of the incorporation of learning with practical experience:

'Reflection enables individuals to make sense of their lived experiences through examining such experiences in context... reflective practice is the process of turning thoughtful practice into a potential learning situation which may help to modify and change approaches to practice... it entails the

synthesis of self-awareness, reflection and critical thinking.' (Brechin et al. 2000, p.52).

Reflection is a skill and needs development like any other skill. In the previous chapter, ways of organising reflection through group work or by personal learning were mentioned. Let us look deeper in the personal learning here. In each learning programme of interdiac, the practice of keeping a personal learning journal is applied and supported through the whole learning process. It can be started with leading questions from the trainers or topics for reflection which change over certain periods. It is important to give time for reflection right after the learning or working day when the impressions from the learning or work are still vivid and resonate with the participant. However, it is also recommended that participants should reflect on the same experience within some days, then a week, a month and which sometimes uses the different viewpoints of those who were involved in the situation.

The table below displays the characteristics of, on the one hand the 'learning identity' and on the other hand, 'fixed identity' which are on a continuum. In interdiac programmes the aim is to foster a 'learning identity'.

Plotting your learning identity (Kolb and Kolb in Wood et.al., 2014 p.154)

Learning identity	↔	Fixed identity
Believes they can incrementally learn and change themselves	↔	Believes that people are smart or they are not
Embraces challenge	↔	Avoids challenge
Persists in the face of obstacles	↔	Gives up easily in the face of obstacles
Learns from criticism	↔	Avoids criticism
Inspired by and learns from others	↔	Feels threatened by the success of others
Positive self-talk ('I always try to do my best')	↔	Negative self-talk ('I am no good at this')

There is a wealth of literature on reflective practice with many ideas and approaches which can be supportive for the participants in developing reflective skills and from which they can choose the optimal model for themselves. Usually the course learning platform contains links to relevant material or material interdiac has produced for the particular programme. However, to learn to practice and develop reflection skills is not that easy. It is always a struggle with the participants to make this practice habitual, to find time for it and for them to develop a self-critical eye. In the learning process these issues can be raised in a group discussion, where the barriers to reflective practice can be introduced and possible solutions may be suggested by both participants and resource people. Personal support for participants is offered whenever needed.

The **learning journal** is an important tool which is used for reflective learning in interdiac

programmes. It is a confidential document and participants do not have to share it with others, unless they wish to. However, it usually has to be recorded in a form that is accessible to a named lecturer, usually the responsible lecturer for the programme and it may be used in personal discussions with them. This requirement helps to get the full potential from the learning through reflection because in the beginning the participant may need some guidance on the use of reflection and later on the lecturer can suggest some points for other angles on reflective thinking or reveal some tacit knowledge that was not consciously grasped by the participant. It should be noted, that developing competence in reflective practice takes time and demands special attention and work from the participants and lecturers. Nevertheless, some participants later opt for using reflection in their professional practice personally and in a team for the regular assessment of their work.



Box 7. Introducing reflection



A simple way to introduce the reflection is to start the workshop with discussing the expectations of the participants, then to follow the expectations through the learning process, in the evaluation of the impact of learning. The achievements should then be summed up at the end of the workshop. Various questions prompting reflection on the content and process of the learning should be brought forward each day in a group evaluation also recorded in the form of a learning journal which can be developed for use each day by the participants.

'Combined with academic studies and taking part in practical activity supported my development in terms of viewing the challenges; indeed, I've stopped to avoid them and started to exercise the skill of looking for solutions. As a matter of fact, I came to realise that avoiding the problem doesn't help to solve it; contrary, the process of looking for solution encourages the people surrounding me for both my and their development. Surprisingly, I am not afraid to make a mistake anymore; still, I try to learn how to avoid it in the future. In the contrast with previous practice experience, now I am able to use the reflection and intuition as the tools for analysing the issues within the placement context, and the country in general.'

Ihor Kornii

5.2 Spiritual reflection

Spirituality lies at the heart of Christian social action and diaconia. However, now there are very diverse understandings of diaconia as practice and on how spirituality is expressed in Christian social practice. Learning with interdiac is also marked by discussions about the role of the church in society today and the 'place' of diaconia within the structure of the church as well as content of Christian 'service' to people in the present context. interdiac is actively seeking answers to these questions together with its members and the participants in the programmes, through sharing their experiences and insights about Christian identity and their views on how to strengthen Christian witness and diaconal culture in work with people in need. That is why the symbiotic relationship between spirituality and diaconia, faith and works comes into focus during the learning.

Spirituality, when seen as living life in the way of openness to the spirit of God, embraces the whole of life in all its diversity. For nurturing relations with God and in seeking the fullness of life for all, in interdiac we focus on regular devotions and spiritual reflection. The spiritual journal is a key tool for it in personal work. It is suggested that participants use a spiritual journal to record their 'personal', inner thoughts, feelings, physical and bodily sensations, events, memories, dreams, reflections on scripture or other readings and prayers. It is also suggested that participants look for the signs of God's

presence and love in their daily life and write them down. Participants can also refer to recommended biblical readings, meditations and questions and answers on theological and spiritual topics. Putting things on paper is one way of gaining greater awareness of self, presence with others and of God's presence. This process is important in keeping a critical awareness not only on professional practice but on everyday life and the ways in which consumerism and an individualistic culture is imposed on people. The spiritual journal differs from the learning journal because it is focused on personal self-awareness and aims to foster mindful compassionate living 'in the present moment'. This document is personal and confidential to each participant, but it is possible to discuss issues arising from it with others in the programme, including with the lecturers. Keeping the journal will be an impulse for a further group discussion.

In the learning programme the participants also invited to celebrate faith and spirituality in common presence. Under this condition learning itself is seen as unearned gift which should be shared with others across the borders. (Addy, 2013) That is why every event held by interdiac brings added value of joyful time spent together in mutual acceptance across diversity. Sharing common humanity with each other in reciprocal co-relational way is an art which practitioners have to discover on the way towards transformation of our present life for the better life of everyone and common good of all.

Box 8. Devotional life in interdiac

To enhance the awareness of the presence of God in each person with each other, during the workshops the morning and evening devotions are held. Sometimes these may include a critical reflection on Scripture related to the topic, other times a meditation. Participants and staff are invited to prepare and lead the devotions. No formal framework for devotions is introduced and no one is required to lead a devotion unless they want to. Everyone can bring into it the living content of their own insights or traditions of their church. Ecumenical diversity is accepted with mutual appreciation and in order to be inclusive, the gift of shared insights and the shared grace of God should be emphasised, however interdiac does not practice communion or the Eucharist in its programmes. It goes without saying that no one is forced to attend the devotion time.

The rich history of diakonia in the world reveals a diverse ministry which has been shaped by each context, and which is striving to be relevant to the particular circumstances or needs in the society surrounding. Therefore, a service model is constantly changing and developing aiming for relevancy to the particular context and time. Thus, a personal service model should be a convivial one, open to lifelong learning and development of the service provider together with the service users. A convivial approach will bring challenge to power imbalances between the marginalised and service providers and promote a healthy relationship of interdependency through joint responsibility.'

Ilona Veres

Questions for Reflection

Do you have any experience of keeping a spiritual journal? Or do you use another resource for daily reflection?

In your working place how is reflection on practice organised? What resources do you use to support your conscious everyday practice and professional development?

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YOUR RESOURCES AND RESULTS CAN BE SHARED IN THE INTERDIAC LEARNING COMMUNITY!



Empowering + connecting
Entrepreneurial + community
Digital + traditional
Organizational + board
Management

KNOWLEDGE

Confidence

SKILLS

10 years leading
marketing
production + management
running 2 businesses
on behalf of SKRS - 1 hour mentoring
utensile + business tools in
+ Forum
running H&B in UK + India

CONCLUSION

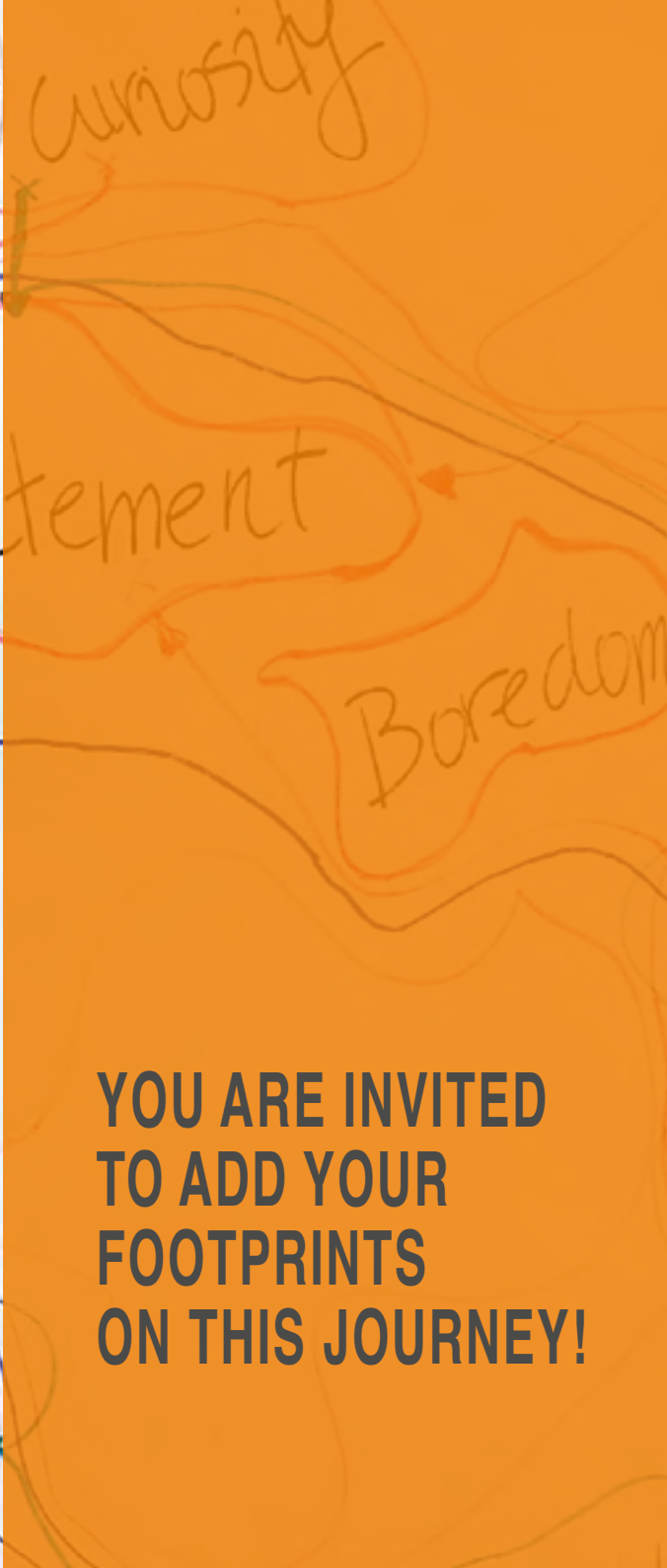
Working with people on a new vision towards common living in mutual respect should be seen as a strategic step towards building safe environments where life together can be explored anew. And, hopefully, this will change the role of social or diaconal practitioners and their organisation in line with IASSW/IFSW Code and the draft publication, 'Ecumenical Diakonia – Called to Transformative Action'. There should be a shift in social and diaconal work organisations, where appropriate, away from being a 'supporter' and 'provider' towards being a 'facilitator' and 'enabler'. To achieve this in the professional field, steps should be taken towards assessment of existing professional practice and facilitating sharing of good practice, developing networking and providing training in innovative methods of diaconal work. In interdiac we recognise a need to enhance training, research and development in the field of diakonia and social action in

Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. interdiac training is participatory and is rooted in diaconal values of preserving human dignity and common well-being as well as establishing just and peaceful relations and working to address environmental challenges.

This book is an attempt to introduce the pedagogical principles and methods for those who might be interested to support the strengthening of diaconal action by developing and delivering relevant learning programmes. interdiac invites you to join in the enrichment of this pedagogical basis for the development of diakonia and Christian social action as a strategic activity, which answers to the needs of today's' challenges in different contexts and gives new expression to God's mission in the world. The interdiac team looks forward to your involvement with us and to your suggestions and ideas as to how we can improve the pedagogical model in our journey together.

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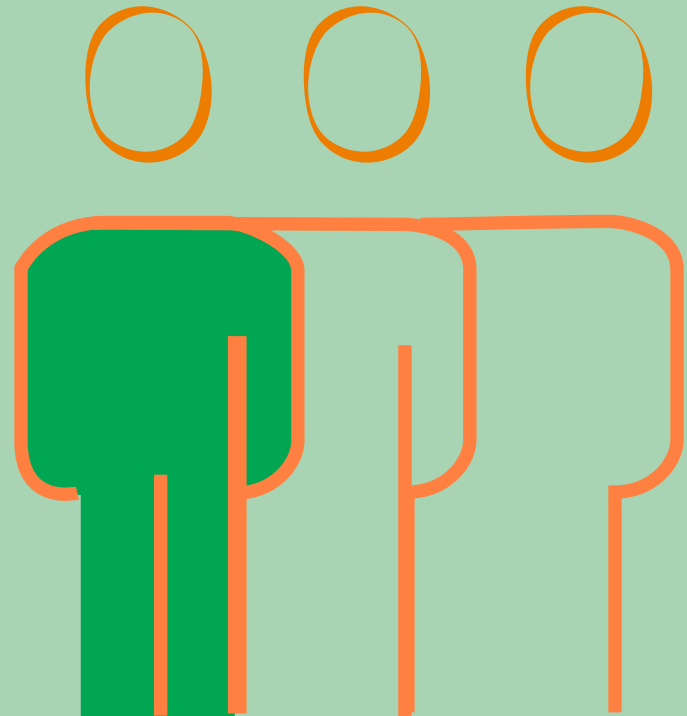
APPENDIXES

**APPENDIX 1
CODE OF CONDUCT**

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These pages give you a lot of practical information for the development and implementation of learning programmes based on the interdiac approach to learning

APPENDIX 1

Code of conduct

interdiac wishes to create a foundation for pedagogy which aims to touch the life of every participant, regardless of their position. It believes that the ethical principles given below should be followed in the course of every learning programme.

- Safe Place – the learning space is a space where people may be present ‘as they are’ regardless of their gender, race, faith or family background. Any biases, stereotypes or mistreatment on the basis of cultural/religious/gender other domination is prohibited in the learning programme. The safeguarding of the learning space as open, non-judgemental and anti-oppressive is the responsibility of each participant.
- Equality – within the learning process all are ‘learners’ and no one has an upper position in it. Experience sharing and work together during the learning process should be carried out in a positive manner and involve everyone in the process.
- Confidentiality – student records and grades are confidential and should be displayed individually to each student. A student’s records can only be made public after receiving her or his permission.
- Transparency and Accountability – the learning process should be organised and run responsibly in terms of power. The organisers are responsible for establishing and delivering the commitments and for sharing relevant information in a timely way with all participants.
- Preserve the quality of time spent together – the quality of learning depends on the quality of common presence. It is a mutual responsibility and commitment towards getting the best outcome from the learning. It starts already when people show respect to each other by switching off the sound of mobile phones and similar devices and includes active engagement in learning activities, completing assignments and beyond. Organisers are responsible for developing the plan, ensuring staff competency and delivering the programme.
- Empowerment – work together should be based on the empowering methods of mutual learning. Negative personal criticism, neglecting others’ opinions, unconstructive argumentation or any other manifestation of disrespect are forbidden and will be stopped when they appear.
- Keeping Boundaries – striving for a horizontal or dialogical approach is important but care should be taken with leadership in developing friendships with participants, one reason is that this can be misinterpreted or lead to allegations of favouritism.
- Authority - in terms of evaluating the quality of participant’s work and grading assignments as well as ensuring all tasks are completed, the programme responsible lecturer has the duty to carry this out in an even handed, just and timely manner. The course lecturer is also responsible in the first instance to ensure this code of conduct is adhered to.

APPENDIX 2

Roles in the Learning Process

The Steering Group for Learning Programmes (built up by the Director, Head of Education, Senior Lecturer and appointed Lecturers, Senior Experts & Experts):

- designs and prepares the overall Curriculum Handbook, the content of the Study Units and Operational Plan of the Learning Programme;
- ensures the accreditation of the Learning Programme at the relevant university (if appropriate);
- develops the relevant learning & support material in cooperation with the Senior Lecturer, including list of books & resources;
- prepares material for the recruitment of participants (content) and select the Participants.
- designs the content and prepare the programme of the specific learning events and processes;
- organises the lecturers and experts for residential learning events (building the teams); and
- oversees and evaluates the working & learning process and evaluates content of the operational documents.

The Director

- ensures the implementation of the Operational Plan;
- ensures the involvement of the co-operating partner organisation & the availability of the venue;
- ensures the communication with lecturers & experts for the learning events (first contact).
- organises the Team meetings;
- oversees and with the Steering Group evaluates the processes (according to the Operational Plan);
- prepares & monitors the budget and ensures that the financial matters are implemented as defined in the project application and the cooperation agreement;
- ensures that the staff involved have access to the on-line work sheet;
- ensures the payments for honoraria of the lecturers and resource people according to the on-line work sheet as well as ensuring other payments related to learning process;
- ensures the Invitation letters for the lecturers and participants as required for visa purposes; and
- ensures logistical arrangements in co-operation with the local coordinator (in case the event takes place in the country of a partner organisation).

The Head of Education, Programme Consultant:

- provides consultation and advice on the training concept - content, methods and resources and the production of the Curriculum Handbook and the Operational Plan;
- where required, carries out the production and checking of conceptual and operational documents;
- consults about the learning process as required; and
- implements process and content of the learning by teaching & facilitation and by recording evaluation where agreed.

The Senior Lecturer / Responsible Lecturer:*

- develops the learning programme concept - content, methods and resources and ensures the production of the Curriculum Handbook;
- ensures the integration of concepts and their embedding into the various aspects of the learning process;
- ensures that practice-based learning integrates the relevant curriculum content;
- produces the conceptual and operational documents including the Operational Plan;
- ensures the production and updating of the relevant on-line learning platforms;
- ensures the training of the lecturers and steers their learning processes;

- ensures that the relevant material is sent to appropriate persons, including sending all required documents to lecturers and participants;
- ensures the continuous communication with the participants on learning and organisational matters;
- is responsible for the learning process and its evaluation (assignments) and for the criteria for evaluating learning assignments, with the team and the relevant University or other partner;
- supervises preparation of the learning sessions (especially with external lecturers) dealing with the contents and the process;
- implements the process and content of the learning by teaching & facilitation and ensures and records the evaluation;
- where required, records or organises the recording of the lectures and ensures that they are available on the Learning Platform;
- mentors & coaches the individual & group learning;
- ensures the feedback from learning during in-between periods and the evaluation, as described in the Learning & Support material;
- has access to the participant's Learning Journal while mentoring & coaching the learning process;
- regularly monitors participants performance and identifies problems in the programme and ensure the management of any issues which may arise where counselling is needed. ensures reporting on the learning processes;

- monitors the attendance at contact teaching sessions (Students & Lecturers);
 - builds up the content of the learning platform & ensures that it is updated;
 - ensures that the contents, including handouts and PowerPoints from residential sessions are placed regularly on the learning platform;
 - gives advice and supports the users of the on-line learning platform or other resources needed for following the Operational Plan;
 - is responsible for ensuring the operation of any blogs or discussion for a linked with the Operational Plan (if not decided otherwise);
 - is responsible for grading or ensuring the grading of the course assignments by other lecturers;
 - produces and maintains grading tables which correspond, where required, to the formal criteria of university partners; and
 - ensures the production of the Transcript of Records & Certificates where appropriate.
- where agreed, records the lectures and ensures that they are available on the Learning Platform;
 - mentors & coaches the individual & group learning according to the Operational Plan;
 - ensures the feedback from learning during an in-between period and the evaluation of learning and/or assignments as agreed and, as described in the Operational Plan and any supporting material;
 - regularly monitors participants' performance and identifies problems in the programme in relation to the lecturer's specific contribution and including counselling issues which may need addressing;
 - ensures reporting on the learning processes; and
 - grades the assignments according to the agreed scheme.

The Lecturer:

- prepares the topic and process of the learning sessions s/he is responsible for and consults the content & process of the learning sessions with the Responsible Lecturer;
- implements the learning session content teaching & facilitation;

The Local coordinator:

- ensures logistic & administrative arrangements in conjunction with the Director (relevant when the event takes place in the country of a partner organisation).

The Senior Advisor: Spirituality:

- elaborates relevant conceptual documents on theology and spirituality.

The Senior Expert:

- contributes to the development & implementation of the learning programme, according the required field of expertise. (Minimum of 5 years' experience).

The Expert

- contributes to the development & implementation of learning programme according to the required field of expertise. (Minimum of 2 years' experience).

**The Responsible Lecturer post concerns the delivery of the learning programme. Only a Senior Lecturer can be appointed as the Responsible Lecturer.*

APPENDIX 3

ECTS SYSTEM AND WORKLOAD

Introduction

interdiac programmes normally follow the European Credit Transfer System. This system is based on the workload for the learner. For example, a normal full-time academic year has workload of 60ECTS, so a three-year bachelor's degree programme has a workload of 180ECTS. It is important to distinguish this workload measure from the grading system. A learner can complete a programme with a given number of credits (ECTS) and with grades varying from 1 – 5 for different aspects of the programme. Therefore, it is possible to distinguish workload from the assessment of performance. The grading system interdiac normally uses is described in Appendix 4

Basic Framework for Workload Calculation

The calculation of the workload usually includes time allowed for:

- Contact Teaching: total hours plus learning journal completion (not including the time for travel to and from the venue of the teaching);
- Preparation of Assignments or a written or oral examination: total hours, including collecting material, reading, study, independent work etc.;
- Research Tasks as required: total hours including collecting material, reading, study, designing the research, carrying out data collection, analysis, writing up the research, organising and carrying out any participatory or dissemination processes etc);
- Group Work: as required to complete an assignment or project;
- Supervision: as in the study plan for academic support or in a placement or workplace;

- Co-learning (job shadowing):

the time spent on job shadowing is counted according to the contact time (i.e. not including travel)

time for reflection and writing the basic assignments is included in the workload assessment;

- Practice Placement:

if the placement is required by the course design to be outside the normal workplace (for example in a full time programme), the practice working time is included in the calculation and the time for analysis and reflection on practice, or for other extra tasks such as attending supervision or presenting results of the work to colleagues or others is included, plus time for the learning journal completion; and

- Practice in the Normal Workplace:

if the programme participants are normally in their own workplace, the working time is not counted but the time for analysis and reflection on practice, or for other extra tasks such as attending supervision or presenting results of the work to colleagues or others is included plus time for the learning journal completion.

NOTE: The above list is an indicator of what is normally included in calculating the workload. The actual calculation depends therefore on the programme design.

Some examples

The ECTS system relates the credits to workload and across Europe and across programmes the number of hours worked (workload) per credit varies and it can be up to 30 hours per ECTS. Usually, interdiac counts 28 hours on average per

credit. This means a learning programme which is 30ECTS requires $28 \times 30 = 840$ hours (which is equivalent to one full time university semester). A 10ECTS programme on the other hand requires just 280 hours.

More concretely a week of contact teaching is approximately one ECTS credit or reading 200 pages is about 1.4 ECTS credits. Job shadowing is 1.5 ECTS credits per visit (the exact number of credits may be more if more complex tasks are required). A full-time placement week including reflection etc is about 1.4 ECTS. Please note that these figures are only a guide because some reading for example may be easier than others and some people may write an assignment more quickly than others.

Programme Design

A longer interdiac programme is structured into Study Units which relate to different aspects of the phenomenon being studied and to relevant practice knowledge and skills. In terms of workload a Study Unit is usually 5 or 10ECTS. Each Study Unit describes the overall competence that will be achieved if the learner is successful and defines the relevant knowledge and skills. It also specifies the resources which will be used. The Study Units are delivered in an integrated way so that theory, practice and theological reflection are linked. The transcript of records relates together the Credits (workload) and the Grades (evaluation of performance) and the course descriptor indicates, among other things, the knowledge, skills and competence covered by the programme.

APPENDIX 4

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND GRADING

The grading system in interdiac follows the criteria of complex assessment, suggested by the Diaconia University of Applied Sciences, which is a partner of interdiac. It includes the assessment of learner's performance in the following spheres: professional performance related to task-solving, goal setting and group work, learning related to acquiring information, concepts in the field and ethical learning. The various aspects of evaluation are utilised, depending on the learning process being evaluated. This means the evaluation of a written assignment may include related processes such as peer group learning, participation in group work, making a presentation and contact teaching

The scale of grades ranges from '1' to '5', where '1' is the lowest acceptable grade and '5' is the highest. Some assignments are also graded as 'pass/fail' but these are usually of limited range or preparatory to other complex assignments. Below in the table you may find the detailed description of the grades and related criteria for each sphere. The tables present criteria for grades '1', '3' and '5'. The grades '2' and '4' are between those criteria. Grade 5 includes the achievement of the goals included in grades 1 and 3 and Grade 3 includes the goals included in Grade 1. The grading table shows the increasing competence of the learner from 1 to 5.

It should be noted that each Study Unit of a Learning Programme may include several grades for different tasks and then an average grade for the Study Unit will be calculated.

The grading is confidential to each learner, or in the case of a group assignment, to the members of the group. Each grade is provided with the short feedback from the mentor to the particular assignment. The feedback should focus on highlighting the strong and weak sides of the assignment in a constructive manner. For a mentor it is important to set assessment of the assignments in the perspective of the overall learning progress of the participant, following how the learning influences service-model, motivation and goal setting

in particular. Preserving interdiac pedagogy principles, it is important to underline again the importance of open, horizontal communication between the participants, even though one of those is in a position of a mentor. If needed, additional tutorial sessions on skype or in person may be arranged for the support and guidance of the learning.

NOTE: Depending on the programme academic level slight modifications in this assessment table may be made. If the programme is accredited by a University which has a different grading system, then this will be applied. It is therefore important to consult the relevant study guide for the programme in every case.



LEARNING LEVELS	AREAS OF LEARNING				
	LEARNING RELATED TO THE CONCEPTS AND PHENOMENA IN ONE'S OWN FIELD AND IN RELATED FIELDS (INCLUDING COMMUNICATIONS)	LEARNING RELATED TO ACQUIRING INFORMATION	LEARNING RELATED TO FUNCTIONING IN EXPERT POSITIONS AND TO PROBLEM-SOLVING	PROFESSIONAL INTERACION (LEARNING RELATED TO GROUP WORK AND MANAGEMENT)	SOCIETAL AND ETHICAL LEARNING
5 IS ABLE TO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use the concepts of the field fluently and professionally - use the most common concepts of the related fields systematically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - systematically acquire information from domestic and international sources - justify one's information acquisition skills - develop one's information literacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - function (as a work group member) in complex work contexts in the field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cooperate in different types of work contexts and working communities - organise goal-oriented work of different types of groups and take responsibility for it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - participate in discussions on professional ethics - analyse social and social-ethical problem aggregates from a wide perspective - participate in developing sustainable activities
3 IS ABLE TO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use the concepts of the field systematically - discuss the issues and phenomena of the field with representatives of related fields - communicate with different target groups concerning issues and phenomena of the field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - search for, use and evaluate information central to the field - take into account the responsibilities and duties involved with the use of information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - solve problems in unpredictable, central professional contexts - function in a professional manner in essential work contexts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - instruct individuals and groups in different contexts in the field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - analyse the professional ethics of the field - work to promote social justice in the field - describe the opportunities and means available in the field for influencing society from the viewpoints of social justice and value ethics - function in accordance with the principles of sustainable development
1 IS ABLE TO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use the key concepts in different contexts and tasks - discuss the issues and phenomena of the field with a selected target group - present the issues and phenomena of the field visually to selected target groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - evaluate sources of information - use databases and key sources of information - define the need of information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - anticipate action in professional contexts - in professional contexts, act in accordance with existing models/ work methods - make observations in professional contexts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - work in a goal-oriented manner in different tasks in many types of groups - listen to other group members - act with awareness of the group situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - function in accordance with basic values and requirements of professional ethics - recognize societal decision-making Processes and the means of impacting them professionally - from the viewpoints of social justice and value ethics, describe the results and impacts of actions completed in the field as well as some opportunities available in the field for influencing society - identify the principles of sustainable development in one's work



interdiac

‘interdiac Pedagogy, An introduction and guide’ is an expression of a deep desire for the personal and professional growth of all involved in interdiac. It is deeply grounded in the experience of running learning programmes over more than ten years. It is intended to be both a resource and an invitation.

The guide is a resource for all involved in interdiac programmes and hopefully for others who are interested in learning for diaconia and Christian social action. It is also an invitation to join the ongoing process of developing and delivering learning by interdiac and other similarly committed organisations.

As a learning community for Christian social action, interdiac also welcomes suggestions and new ideas for the further development of pedagogical processes in this field.