Facilitating and Supervising School Internships Abroad for Music Education Students

A Course for University Teacher Educators | TEAM Project OER Collection

Welcome to this open educational resource (OER) course, designed for university teacher educators who plan, facilitate, and supervise school internships abroad (SIAs) in music education.

A school internship abroad is an intensive and transformative experience for music education students— and one of the most complex to design and support well. Your student teacher is navigating a new educational system, a new musical culture, and a new language, often without their usual peer network or support system. The quality of the structures you put in place before, during, and after the placement makes a decisive difference to what they are able to learn from it.

This course brings together tools developed within the TEAM[1] project to support both mentor and student teachers at every phase of the school internship abroad. We recommend reading through all of them — not because you will necessarily use every tool directly, but because understanding what your student teachers and their mentor teachers are working with will help you facilitate and supervise the internship more effectively.

What This Course Is About

The course begins with the design principles that emerged from TEAM's pan-European Design-Based Research project. These principles capture the theoretical knowledge gained from the research, and serve as the empirical basis for the tools you find here. There are two sets of design principles: one covering the structuring of SIAs, and the other covering quality of mentoring within them. The remaining OERs are tools—practical resources that translate these principles into action.

The materials address core aspects of the university educator's role in an international placement context:

- Understanding the research-based principles that underpin well-designed SIAs and quality mentoring
- Preparing students and mentor teachers for the intercultural and professional demands of an SIA
- Facilitating interinstitutional collaboration between sending and receiving institutions
- Supporting student teachers' intercultural learning, reflective practice, and professional development during the placement
- Conducting a structured debrief and evaluation that makes the most of what students have experienced

Course Materials at a Glance

The course consists of the following open educational resources. We recommend beginning by reading the two sets of design principles, which provide the empirical and theoretical foundation for everything that follows. The remaining tools are intended for use with your student teachers and/or their mentor teachers.

[1] This OER was developed within the project TEAM – Teacher Education Academy for Music, Future-Making, Mobility and Networking in Europe. www.teacher-academy-music.eu. Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Title	What it offers you
Design Principles: Internship Formats	The research-based foundation for planning and structuring SIAs — covering clarity of expectations, inter-institutional collaboration, holistic cultural engagement, and multilingual communication. Start here to understand the principles that underpin the course.
Design Principles: Mentoring	The research-based foundation for quality mentoring within SIAs — from laying the groundwork and supporting intercultural learning to scaffolding teaching progression, reflective practice, and peer learning. Essential reading alongside Design Principles: Internship Formats.
Checklist for Mentor Teachers	A practical checklist covering all key mentoring tasks from preparation through to evaluation. Familiarity with this tool allows you to brief mentor teachers on their role and to understand what support structures are in place at the host school.
Introductory Conversation Guide	A structured worksheet for the first meeting between student teacher and mentor teacher, covering context, expectations, roles, language, and communication. You may wish to introduce this tool during pre-departure preparation and, where applicable, take part in that first meeting yourself.
Cultural Reflection Tree	A visual reflective exercise in which students examine their own cultural identity, musical background, and assumptions about music education. Introduce it during pre-departure preparation; it can also serve as a springboard for the debrief conversation.
Tips for Language-Sensitive Music Teaching	Practical tips for teaching music in a language that is not the student teacher's primary language. Share with students during pre-departure preparation and with mentor teachers as part of their briefing.
Photo Journal Prompts	Guidance for students on keeping a photo journal throughout the internship as a reflective and documentary practice. The selected photos can also be used as a starting point for the debrief conversation.
Voice Memo Prompts	A set of daily or near-daily reflective prompts for students during the placement. Share these before departure so that students can establish a regular reflection habit from the outset.
Debrief Conversation Guide (Extended)	A structured, three-layer interview guide for a final reflection conversation between student and university educator — covering narrative reflection, peer learning, photo reflection, mentoring, cultural dimensions, language, and professional next steps. The primary tool for your post-internship debrief.
Debrief Conversation Guide (Condensed)	A shorter version of the debrief guide for use when time is limited, or as a self-reflection tool for students. Can also serve as a basis for Erasmus reports or written evaluations.

How to Engage with These Materials

There is no single required sequence. Below is the suggested timeline for using the tools with student and mentor teachers:

- Preparation phase (pre-departure): the *Cultural Reflection Tree*, *Tips for Language-Sensitive Music Teaching*, *Photo Journal Prompts*, and *Voice Memo Prompts* will help students reflectively prepare for their SIA. Mentor teachers will also benefit from taking a look at *Tips for Language-Sensitive Music Teaching* as well as the *Checklist for Mentor Teachers* at this stage. The *Introductory Conversation Guide* can be used by both student and mentor teacher to prepare for the internship.
- Placement (during the internship): Students can use the *Voice Memo Prompts* and *Photo Journal Prompts* regularly; these can be useful tools for any required documented reflections. If language or intercultural challenges arise, the *Tips for Language-Sensitive Music Teaching* and *Cultural Reflection Tree* can serve as useful points of reference in your conversations with them.
- Debrief (post-placement): At the conclusion of the internship, use the extended or condensed *Debrief Conversation Guide* to conduct a structured final reflection with your student. If that is not possible, the conversation can also take place between the student and their mentor teacher, or the three of you may wish to conduct it together. Invite them to bring their *Cultural Reflection Tree* and a selection of photos from their *Photo Journal* to that conversation. The students may also use this guide to structure a documented reflection on their own, including an Erasmus report.

The tools are designed to be flexible and you should use them in ways that best suit your institutional context and the needs of your students. You may share these open educational resources freely — with proper attribution, of course!

Further Reading

All materials in this course emerged from the TEAM (Teacher Education Academy for Music) project, a pan-European research initiative that, among other things, studied school internships abroad in music education and developed practical tools grounded in that evidence. If you are interested in reading more, please visit the TEAM website and explore the literature and other practical offerings found there.

https://teacher-academy-music.eu/publications