Honors Diploma: Field Experience

Ohio’s Honors Diploma program recognizes students who exceed minimum graduation requirements through taking rigorous coursework and engaging in robust, real-world experiences. The International Baccalaureate, Career Tech, STEM, Arts and Social Science and Civic Engagement Honors Diplomas each include a field experience criterion.

To fulfill the field experience criterion, a student must complete a learning experience that is pertinent to his or her honors diploma area of focus. Experiential learning is focused on the application of academic and technical skills within a student’s program of study. Experiential learning includes lab-based activities, co-ops, simulated workplace, mentorships, internships, pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships. Lab-based experiential learning should simulate real-work worksites and expectations. Students should receive regular supervision and follow-up that is documented. If a student’s field experience is a Work-Based Learning experience, the student may use the resources that the Office of Career Technical Education provides.

Below are examples of field experiences.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Examples of Field Experiences</th>
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<tr>
<td>International Baccalaureate</td>
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<td>Foreign exchange or study abroad program (semester/summer).</td>
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<td>Internship with non-governmental organization or nonprofit with international focus.</td>
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<td>Volunteer experience at a fine arts institution (ex: museum, concert/symphony hall, film institute).</td>
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A student is required to document his or her field experience in a portfolio. This portfolio is not required to be evaluated by external experts unless the student is using the portfolio to satisfy the portfolio component of the Honors Diploma criteria.

Components of a Quality Field Experience

An Honors Diploma field experience should include some combination of the following:

1. **Field Experience Training Agreement** is in place – An adult school field experience coordinator, an adult employer/experience supervisor, the student and parent agree upon an experience plan with the following:
   a. Student goals are clearly defined.
   b. Student responsibilities are clearly defined.
      i. These responsibilities translate to the competencies in which a student will be learning through this experience.
2. **Aligns with student career aspirations** – An experience allows a student an opportunity to explore career interests in the honors diploma area of focus.

3. **Documentation in a portfolio**
   a. Journal entries reflecting on those tasks or responsibilities.
   b. Check in process with field experience coordinator.
   c. Presentation to the school and/or local community.

4. **Evaluations**
   a. Student self-evaluation.
   b. Supervisor evaluation and observations.
   c. Field experience coordinator evaluations and observations.

**Notes:**
Having the student go through [career awareness exercises](#) before deciding on a field experience could be valuable in identifying an appropriate, worthwhile experience for the student.

The student also may complete work to meet the field experience criterion through [Credit Flexibility](#). The work will count toward unit requirements of other honors diploma criteria.

Districts should/may define processes for students to participate in field experiences and define procedures for students to receive updates as they move through the process.