



**Honoursprogramme**

Innovators Experience

ROTTERDAM UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

**2020-2021**

F i n a l A s s e s s m e n t

H o n o r s

I n s t r u c t i o n s f o r

P o r t f o l i o

‘free format’ or ‘fixed format’

## Table of contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>1. The Step-by-Step Plan You, the student, are essentially in charge of this process!</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>2. The Final Assessment Honors</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>3. Compiling your portfolio</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<i>Two possibilities: free format or fixed format?</i> .....	8
<i>Always in terms of the Learning to Innovate competences</i> .....	9
<i>Feedback creates opportunities</i> .....	9
<b>4. The structure of your portfolio</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>5. Explanation of structure:</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>6. The assessment procedure</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<i>Route 1:</i> .....	12
<i>Route 2:</i> .....	12
<i>Route 3 – A or B</i> .....	12
<b>8. Award of the Honors degree</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>9. Fraud</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>10. What you need to do</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>Appendix 1 Competence Profile for Learning to Innovate</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<i>Relationship between the five competences for Learning to Innovate</i> .....	17
<b>Appendix 2 - The competence profile</b> .....	<b>18</b>
1. <i>Innovation driven</i> .....	18
2. <i>Demand driven</i> .....	20
3. <i>Collaborative working</i> .....	22
4. <i>Demonstrating interactive learning</i> .....	24
5. <i>Knowledge creation</i> .....	26
<b>Appendix 3 The STARR method</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>Form to help you examine your STARR description</b> .....	<b>33</b>
<b>Appendix 4 – Professionally critical situation</b> .....	<b>34</b>

## Introduction

You have now come to the stage in your Honors programme when you can complete your Final Assessment Honors through the university-wide Honors Programme Team (HPteam). You have spent the last few years of your degree programme working on developing competences and compiling your portfolio under the supervision of your Honors Programme lecturer(s). You can now finalize your portfolio and be tested on it in the final assessment (FAH).

As you know, the Final Assessment Honors is based on the **Learning to Innovate** Competence Profile. Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences has developed this profile specifically to set more able students a challenge and to offer them scope to advance and strengthen their professional development beyond the boundaries of their own professional sector. This profile is partly based on research into the significance of the competences for students' 'professional behaviour' (and subsequently obviously: the professional) and the added value of Honors in the various areas of professional practice that form the focus of the university's study programmes.

The competence profile has guided and focused all the activities you have undertaken during your Honors programme. In completing them, you have worked to internalise the following five complementary competences:

1. Innovation driven
2. Demand driven
3. Collaborative working
4. Interactive learning
5. Demonstrating knowledge creation

You worked on assignments and took part in activities that challenged you to develop the competences defined in the profile as a professional. Your Honors Programme supervisor and fellow students, lecturers and external parties (feedback!) have challenged you to reflect on your activities and your own conduct. As a result, you can visualise the competences required and, all being well, you have learnt to link your activities to these competences and possibly give your own account now. You have developed your ability to reflect in terms of content, approach and your own actions which is a necessary condition for 'lifelong learning'. As such, you will be capable of reflecting on and improving your own performance in the future and continuing to develop as a professional.

### Why a portfolio?

Your portfolio shows which activities have led you to become the 'excellent professional' you now are. To demonstrate this, it is necessary to *justify the choices* you have made in your case studies and in your development. Your own experiences and the feedback you have asked for or been given are essential resources for this. Add evidence of your development in your professional actions to your portfolio. You will be given 10 minutes to give a presentation to the assessors in the final session. Following that, the assessors will ask you questions about your professional actions in a variety of 'professionally critical situations' in which you have had a role. Remember that the assessors have to use the information in your portfolio to get an idea of your development into an excellent professional, so consider which of your professional actions demonstrate that most effectively.

As a rule, the Final Assessments Honors are held university-wide in June and July each year and are organised by the Honors Programme Team (HPteam). Occasionally we make other arrangements with study programmes or departments. You will be able to sit your final assessment from the moment your portfolio shows exactly what you want to demonstrate as an

‘excellent professional’. Generally, your final assessment takes place after you have completed your final project/thesis or when it is almost finished

Assessors have received special training in conducting the final assessments. The interviews are always conducted by two assessors: one from your own department and one from a different department. This is because you are also expected to be able to convince people who are not exactly experts in your field that you have developed into an excellent professional.

In this handbook you will find:

1. Explanation of what the final assessment honors entails;
2. The state of affairs with regard to administering the Final Assessments Honors;
3. Guidelines and suggestions for compiling your portfolio.

If you still have questions after reading this handbook and the annual information provided, please contact the Honors program team: [hpteam@hr.nl](mailto:hpteam@hr.nl)

- Some parts of this **Handbook** are in textboxes, occasionally shaded in colour. These represent aspects which are important to remember when compiling your portfolio.

*Good luck in preparing for and taking your Final Assessment Honors!*

The Honors Program Team Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences

Ron Weerheijm  
Julianne de Leeuwe  
Buse Batbay

Correspondence address: [hpteam@hr.nl](mailto:hpteam@hr.nl)

## 1. The Step-by-Step Plan

You, the **student**, are essentially in charge of this process!

### Register

- Reply as quickly as possible to the invitation by email from HPteam saying that you wish to take part in the FAH

### Link-up

- HPteam will link you to two assessors before 1 May

### Planning

HPteam will send all three of you an email with instructions:

- You should contact the two assessors. **They** will do a suggestion for a date and time for your FAH (between 1 June and 16 July)
- When you came to an agreement, **student** emails this date and time to [HPteam@hr.nl](mailto:HPteam@hr.nl) no later than four weeks before your assessment

### Scheduling

- **HPteam** will plan the appointment you have made in Teams,  
Important: do **NOT** do this yourself

### Before FAH

- Send your portfolio to your two assessors and CC to HPteam 10 **WORKING** days (14 calendar days) before your FAH
- Send your GDPR form to HPteam before the FAH as well

### FAH

- Good luck with your FAH! You will immediately hear whether you have passed at the end
- One of the assessors will send you an email containing the report form within 14 days
- If you do not agree with the decision, lodge an appeal with HPteam within five working days

### Alumnus

- Completed and passed your FAH? Welcome to the Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences honours alumni. We look forward to seeing you at one of our events.

## 2. The Final Assessment Honors

The Final Assessment Honors (FAH) is based on your portfolio and your presentation and takes the form of an interview with two trained assessors (officially: examiners). These assessors are usually lecturers involved in the development and teaching of the Honors programme and in supervising the HP in their institute/study programme. They have received specialist training to become Honors assessors.

The final assessment takes one hour and proceeds as follows:

1. Welcome and a brief explanation of what will happen by the first assessor
2. 10 minutes: presentation by the candidate
3. 30 minutes: interview with the assessors
4. 10 minutes: the assessors confer and come to a decision (while the candidate is out of the room)
5. 10 minutes: the candidate is informed of the assessors' decision, the reasons for their decision and feedback.

### *1. Welcome*

The assessment is intended to give you the opportunity to demonstrate how you have become an 'excellent professional'. As far as possible, you will be judged on the things you can do, not what is missing.

### *2. The presentation – 10 minutes*

The presentation gives you the opportunity to demonstrate what makes (or will make) you an excellent professional. You will demonstrate how you have mastered the Learning to Innovate competence profile. You show how you distinguish yourself, which developed qualities characterize you and which experiences have been important for you in the process ('aha' moments). You are free to choose how to make this presentation – a talk, a short film, using objects, products, a game...

### *3. Interview with the assessors – 30 minutes*

You will have had your portfolio checked by your supervisor during your study programme.

PLEASE NOTE: your supervisor only checks that it is complete, not whether it is 'good'.

The two assessors will have examined your portfolio in detail before you take the final assessment. They will have formed an impression of you from your portfolio, not made a judgement, and will have noted down their questions. During the interview, they will ask you those questions and listen closely to your answers. They will often use the STARR methodology as a guide ([appendix 3](#)) during the interview as a means of comparing students' qualities.

Answer the questions on the basis of your own experiences. You can practise this type of interview with your lecturer or other students. STARR is a methodology, not a product: it helps you to work systematically, write your experiences down and explain them. Some study programmes work with Korthagen's reflections; STARR will also help you to structure your reflection.

### *4. The assessment – 10 minutes*

### *5. Feedback*

You will then be asked to leave the interview while the assessors discuss the additional information provided by means of your presentation and the interview. That will form the basis for their decision. When they are ready you will be invited to rejoin the conversation and they will tell you what their decision is, their reasoning behind the decision and will provide feedback.

You will receive a *Report Form* by email within 10 working days, containing the result of your final assessment and the supporting reasoning.

The HPteam will send your *record form* straight to your study programme once it has been completed. Your study programme will check that you have met all the conditions for obtaining an Honors degree and if so, your diploma supplement can be prepared and you will graduate with an Honors degree.

NB: The final assessment is recorded on video. The interviews will be recorded in case the final decision is negative and the student appeals against it – for more information, please see sections 6 and 7: the assessment procedure. Besides this, the recordings will be used for training purposes for assessors. The same applies to the use of your portfolio: we also use portfolios for training situations. To comply with the new privacy legislation, the HPteam will ask you to sign a GDPR form consenting to this (or not) before you start your final assessment.

**The assessment:**

*Beforehand:* complete GDPR forms: send to [HPteam@hr.nl](mailto:HPteam@hr.nl)

*Welcome*

10 minutes your presentation

30 minutes interview about your experiences

10 minutes the assessors arrive at a decision (without you being present)

10 minutes assessment and feedback

### 3. Compiling your portfolio

You need to compile a portfolio to take your final assessment. The purpose of your portfolio is to convince experienced professionals who are *not* necessarily experts in your field that you possess the five competences of the *Learning to Innovate* competence profile. You will find this profile further on in this handbook

#### Two possibilities: free format or fixed format?

Some study programmes give students scope to choose their own format for their portfolio. The central focus of this portfolio is that students are required to render account for the five competences in Learning to Innovate. That is always the basis for the final assessment! The assessment is the same regardless of the format of your portfolio, free or fixed.

This therefore always means:

- **Make sure that your portfolio makes it clear how you have developed in the five competences.**

This has the following consequences:

The **fixed format** gives you something to go on. This format has been recorded in a Word document (in HINT: <https://hint.hr.nl/nl/HR/english/study-information/choices-in-your-study-programme/> (under 'Final Assessment Honors') which you can use to help you compile your portfolio. You can also use elements of it to ask for feedback and to share descriptions of competences or elements of competences (behavioural elements) on which you would like feedback.

If you use the fixed format you can be fairly sure that you are going through the practical steps which will help you to justify yourself and which will enable you to demonstrate that you have mastered the competences.

*Some people prefer to be more creative:*

In that case, you can choose the **free format**: you decide for yourself what your portfolio will look like. This is possible in *some* study programmes.

*But:* there are some elements in the format which are **ALWAYS** mandatory, so be vigilant. The assessors will want to form a good impression of your qualities and your development into an 'excellent professional' as described in the five competences of *Learning to Innovate*. It is possible that your study programme puts an emphasis on other, usually comparable, competences but the assessors must be able to compare you with other students.

#### **PLEASE NOTE:**

**The 'free' format can only be used if your study programme allows this and you have discussed it with your HP supervisor!**

- **That is why we use the *Learning to Innovate* competence profile assessment in all cases, i.e. for each portfolio 'format' for the assessment, because the 'behaviour' of a professional focusing on innovation is the primary focus in a complex and professionally critical professional environment.**



### **Always in terms of the Learning to Innovate competences**

The descriptions of these competences further on in this handbook will help you to get a good idea of what is expected of you. In the Honors programme we subscribe to a comprehensive approach to these competences and so aspects of all the competences will crop up in every professionally critical situation. The emphasis may vary in different situations or even different areas of expertise; this is not a problem as long as you can clarify why that is and how you have dealt with it. The STARR method of answering questions can help you to introduce structure to your explanation and justification, and your behaviour for each competence.

- **The way in which you make it clear that you have mastered these competences is entirely up to you. As long as the assessors can form a good impression, the way you create that perception is unconstrained. Anything goes, in fact.**

### **Feedback creates opportunities**

Your portfolio contains a summary for each competence of the feedback you have received from various sources: fellow students, lecturers, external parties and experts you have collaborated with. Ask each of them to give relevant feedback, but make sure that you collect feedback on all the competences from at least three sources, one of which is an external party.

- **Make sure that you have collected feedback on each competence from at least three different sources, one of which is an external party.**

## **4. The structure of your portfolio**

In the interests of archiving, contact, etc. 1 and 2 must be submitted on paper:

1. Personal details
2. Table of contents of your portfolio, i.e. what you are submitting as a portfolio (brief description)

The format of the elements below is unconstrained!

3. *Guide to reading the portfolio*
4. *Optional: Final evaluation – reflecting*
5. *Professional positioning – looking ahead*
6. *The competences:*
  - Feedback on your own development(s) and on the competences (from a fellow student, your HP lecturer and/or someone from professional practice);
  - Your own experiences and justifications for your professional and other actions for each competence;
  - Your evidence: which pieces of evidence you have added and an explanation in a couple of sentences of why you have chosen to include this evidence. See also: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RpW9tutw7EA&t=4s>
7. *Osiris appendix: An up-to-date list of marks from Osiris (not necessary if you have already graduated).*

(see next page!)

- **The fixed format is available as a Word document in HINT. You can of course also use the elements it contains in a 'free format' portfolio, if you think that would help and is appropriate.**

Portfolio document: <https://hint.hr.nl/nl/HR/english/study-information/choices-in-your-study-programme/> under 'Final Assessment Honours'.

## 5. Explanation of structure:

1. We need your *Personal Details* to be able to 'account' for you properly and to be able to reach you when necessary.
2. The *Table of Contents* makes it easy for the assessors to see what you have submitted and ensures that they are able to form an impression of your portfolio.
3. *Guide to reading the portfolio*: this is your way of helping the assessors to read your portfolio. The free format of portfolios means that every portfolio is different – and that includes the way each one has to be read/listened to/looked at. You know in your own mind that the structure and order of items in your portfolio is logical, but this logic can disappear when someone else assesses it in a different order to the one you intended. That is why you have to guide the assessors:
  - Which elements does the portfolio contain?
  - What can the assessor expect of the various elements?
  - What is their relation to each other?
  - In which order should the assessor look at the various elements?That way you can ensure that the assessors see the portfolio in the way you intend them to see it! Keep the reading guide short and clear; the explanation is in the elements themselves and not in the reading guide (about one A4 in length).
4. *Final evaluation – reflecting: here you can describe where you started from, what you have learnt about yourself and how you have developed*. You can also indicate where you, in hindsight, went astray and the benefits that brought you (maximum of 750 words in length, or comparable).
5. *Professional positioning – looking ahead*: Describe yourself now as a professional in the way you have developed and become as a result of your activities, events and choices (maximum of 750 words, or comparable).
6. *Competences*: this is where you show how you have developed and how far you have come; how you look back at that (reflection) and what you still need or want to learn.
  - all sorts of items you have already collected can be used for this: feedback, products, experiences, short videos, etc.
  - 'adding evidence' is quite complicated; think carefully about this: use items that demonstrate or prove your behaviour. There is a short video on this on the RUAS Honors programme channel on YouTube (playlist): [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLwgPGGtvINrBN3eOZeQ5\\_5O\\_fnFLqkLXt](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLwgPGGtvINrBN3eOZeQ5_5O_fnFLqkLXt)
7. The Osiris appendix is an extra check to see whether you are 'eligible to graduate'; some unpleasant surprises in the past have led us to ask for this (sorry about the extra work this entails). It may be submitted as an appendix.

## 6. The assessment procedure

The rules for the assessment are as follows:

- The assessment is based on the level of the *entire* competence; i.e. the five competences are assessed *as a whole* and in *the way they relate to each other*, not your proficiency in the individual behavioural indicators (holistic assessment).
- The Learning to Innovate competence profile is included in Appendix 1 and contains descriptions of the five competences and these behavioural indicators.
- Any deficiencies in one competence *cannot* be compensated for by a better performance in another competence, i.e. a '3' does not compensate for a '1'. However, differences in emphasis in your development may be visible.
- The three elements of your Final Assessment Honors, portfolio, presentation and assessment interview can strengthen or supplement each other.

To assess your 'mastery' of the competences you receive a score of 1, 2 or 3. What these scores mean is set out in the table below:

1	2	3
Demonstrates little or none of the required behaviour	Demonstrates some elements of the required behaviour, but overall ability in the competence is not fully convincing. There is still room for development.	Demonstrates full proficiency in the required behaviour; the candidate fits the competence description.

- Students must receive a score of **3** for the **Innovation driven** competence – Learning to Innovate. Being able to act in a way that leads to innovation is the core of the RUAS competence profile.
- Students must receive a score of **3** for at least **three** of the five competences.
- Students must **not** receive a score of **1 for any competence**.

## 7. Routes after assessment

### Route 1:

- You have had your portfolio *screened*<sup>1</sup> by an HP lecturer or HP coordinator attached to your study programme/institute – take note of the requirements for this set by your study programme/institute.
- You may now submit your portfolio digitally to the assessors assigned to you, with a cc to [hpteam@hr.nl](mailto:hpteam@hr.nl)
- In preparation for the interview, the assessors will study your portfolio and will individually get an idea of elements which are clear and those which are unclear: what they understand and what gives rise to further questions.
- The assessors prepare the interview together and jointly decide which topics to ask more in-depth questions about in the interview.
- The interview has reinforced the assessors' conviction and they jointly come to a unanimous decision: *pass*.
- Congratulations, you have passed your FAH; you can graduate with an Honors degree if you meet all the additional conditions set by your study programme and you have attained your Bachelor's degree!

### Route 2:

- You have had your portfolio *screened* by an HP lecturer or HP coordinator attached to your study programme/institute – take note of the requirements for this set by your study programme/institute.
- You may now submit your portfolio digitally to the assessors assigned to you, with a cc to [hpteam@hr.nl](mailto:hpteam@hr.nl)
- In preparation for the interview, the assessors will study your portfolio and individually get an idea of elements which are clear and those which are unclear: what they understand and what gives rise to further questions.
- The assessors prepare the interview and jointly decide which topics to ask more in-depth questions about in the interview.
- The content of your presentation and the content of the interview *ultimately* convince the assessors of your qualities.
- The assessors come to a unanimous final decision: *pass*.
- Congratulations, you have passed your FAH; you can graduate with an Honors degree if you meet all the additional conditions set by your study programme and you have attained your Bachelor's degree!

### Route 3 – A or B

- You have had your portfolio *screened* by an HP lecturer or HP coordinator attached to your study programme/institute – take note of the requirements for this set by your study programme/institute.
- You may now submit your portfolio digitally to the assessors assigned to you, with a cc to [hpteam@hr.nl](mailto:hpteam@hr.nl)

---

<sup>1</sup> 'screened' implies that you and your lecturer will check to see that all the elements you need to demonstrate that you have developed into an 'excellent professional' are present. If the elements in the fixed format are included, that should be sufficient. The lecturer will NOT assess the actual content of your portfolio! That is the assessors' job.

- In preparation for the interview, the assessors will study your portfolio and individually get an idea of elements which are clear and those which are unclear: what they understand and what gives rise to further questions.
- The assessors prepare the interview and jointly decide which topics to ask more in-depth questions about in the interview.
- *The assessors still have doubts about the quality of your portfolio, the quality of the interview and the quality of your presentation.*
- *You have not (yet) passed your Final Assessment Honors.*

The assessment process in route 3 can now be followed in **two ways**:

### Outcome 3A:

The assessors **CANNOT come to a unanimous decision, in other words they reach the decision *Undecided*.**

The HPteam will be informed and will call in a third assessor. The third assessor will reach a decision within **5 working days** *on the basis of your portfolio and the video of your assessment interview*. The third assessor will inform the HPteam of his/her decision.

If the third assessor's decision is *pass*, then the final decision will be *pass*.

If the third assessor's decision is *fail*, then the final decision will be *fail*.

The HPteam will inform the student of this final decision. Because you have not met all the conditions in this case, you cannot graduate with an Honors degree.

### Outcome 3B:

The assessors come to a **unanimous** final decision: **Fail**.

*You have failed your Final Assessment Honors and because you have not met all the conditions, you cannot graduate with an Honors degree.*

There is an option to lodge an *objection* to a unanimous decision that you have Failed. **However**, an objection can only be lodged if the student can provide evidence that the assessors did not give him/her sufficient opportunity to highlight their qualities, i.e. *that the assessors did not follow the **procedure** correctly*.

*If the student is convinced that he/she has not been given sufficient opportunity to demonstrate their qualities, a substantiated objection may be sent within 5 working days to [hpteam@hr.nl](mailto:hpteam@hr.nl)*

The assessors will send the Report Form to the student and HP team within **24 hours**. The student can submit an objection based on the report form. The objection must be submitted within **5 working days**.

The appeal will be assessed by the HPteam by watching the video:

- If the HPteam comes to the conclusion that the assessors performed the procedure properly, the appeal will be declared *inadmissible*.
- If the HPteam comes to the conclusion that the assessors did not perform the procedure properly, the appeal will be declared *admissible*.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The student will be given the opportunity to take a second assessment *on the basis of the existing portfolio* – the portfolio may *not* be altered in the meantime. The HPteam will bring in *two new* assessors for the second assessment who will be given no prior information other than the portfolio.

**The institute's Examination Board will be consulted in the event of an objection.**

## 8. Award of the Honors degree

The two assessors determine whether you have passed the final assessment and therefore satisfy the requirements of the Learning to Innovate competence profile.

In order to conclude the Honors Programme with the conferral of an Honors degree in addition to your diploma, you must satisfy the conditions set out below:

- You have participated in and met the conditions for the Honors programme as specified by your *study programme/institute*
- You have met all the conditions for the *Bachelor programme* in your own study programme and attained 240 EC.
- You have passed the university-wide *Final Assessment Honors*

The HP coordinator at your institute/study programme will check whether you have met the conditions set out above and will see to it that you receive an Honors degree as a supplement to your diploma through your own institute/study programme. A note will be added on the back of your diploma to say that you have passed the Honors Programme.

The supplement to your diploma will contain a note that makes it clear to outsiders what exactly an Honors degree entails.

The Honors degree can and will only be received when the note at the back of the diploma is present.

## 9. Fraud

Article 9.6 of the Education and Examination Regulations (OER) comes into effect in the event of fraud being detected.

## 10. What you need to do

Look out for email from [hpteam@hr.nl](mailto:hpteam@hr.nl) from the January of your 4<sup>th</sup> academic year.

To take the Final Assessment Honors you must follow the following procedure:

1. With the agreement of your HP supervisor, you can start compiling your portfolio for the Honors final assessment during your *third year of the programme at the latest*.
2. For this you must use the **Portfolio Format** which you can find on Hint <https://hint.hr.nl/nl/HR/english/study-information/choices-in-your-study-programme/honours-programme/> or create a 'free format' portfolio (only for certain study programmes!)
3. In December the HPteam will ask your Honors project coordinators for a list of the names of the students who are thinking of taking the Final Assessment Honors.
4. The HPteam will contact all these registered students by email, with the subject: **Application for Final Assessment Honors**. HPteam will want to hear from you personally whether you want to take a final assessment.
5. Within a week you must then inform HPteam **whether or not** you are applying to take the final assessment by sending an email to [hpteam@hr.nl](mailto:hpteam@hr.nl)  
If you decide not to go for Honors, we would like to know the reasons for your decision.
6. From then on, correspondence about final assessments will take place **directly between you and HPteam**.
7. HPteam will follow the Step-by-Step Plan in this handbook; **you are required to take action at regular times**.
8. The timetable will take account of the last meeting of the exam board in your institute/study programme before the summer holidays so that the paperwork can be done in time.
9. The assessments will be held as far as possible between *June and mid-July*.

Advice:

1. Make sure that the feedback forms are distributed **in good time**, preferably immediately after the project/event in question. External parties, clients and your fellow students may need more time or be difficult to contact, certainly if you have studied abroad.
2. Make sure that you agree **which** HP lecturer/coordinator will screen your portfolio and **when!** He or she will evaluate your portfolio with you to decide jointly whether it demonstrates that you are an excellent professional (NB this lecturer will not be involved in your final assessment).
3. You can only take the FAH if your portfolio has been screened by your study programme and you have decided to submit it as it is (remember you only have one chance!)
4. In line with the *Step-by-step plan* (see **page 5**) you will receive an invitation to plan your assessment with two assessors.
5. As soon as you have managed to find a date that suits you all, inform [hpteam@hr.nl](mailto:hpteam@hr.nl) and a Teams appointment will be planned for you and the assessors (do not do this yourself).

Before and after the Final Assessment:

1. Send your portfolio by email to your appointed assessors and cc to [hpteam@hr.nl](mailto:hpteam@hr.nl) **at least 10 working days** before the date of your final assessment.
2. The HPteam files all portfolios in a secure digital environment to ensure privacy.
3. Send your portfolio preferably by email or send a link (and please **check that the link works** first!); compress any pictures or diagrams.

4. Remember, you can only take the final assessment if your portfolio is received 10 working days before the date of the assessment. Assessors need time to look at it.
5. Prepare a presentation lasting **no more than 10 minutes** which demonstrates in a refreshing manner that you are developing or have developed into an excellent professional. Make it clear what your distinguishing features are.
6. Make sure you turn up for your final assessment at the right place and on time or log in to the Teams meeting on time. FAHs done in person take place at **Rochussenstraat 198** at the intersection with 's Gravendijkwal.
7. Your FAH will be filmed/recorded.
8. The HPteam will ask you to sign a form indicating whether or not you give permission for this film to be used for training purposes. You will be asked the same question about the use of your portfolio for training purposes.  
NB: the video recording, your portfolio and your assessment will be stored in a secure section of the HR website to which only authorised colleagues have access (only a few).
9. Your FAH will take place at the agreed time and you will be told whether or not you have passed at the end.
10. Your study programme will receive your assessment form within *24 hours* and will check whether you have met all the conditions to be eligible to graduate with an Honors degree.
11. If everything is in order, you will receive an *Honors degree* supplement with your diploma.
12. You will receive a report by email containing feedback on the main findings of your assessment within **10 working days** of taking the FAH.



## Appendix 1 Competence Profile for Learning to Innovate

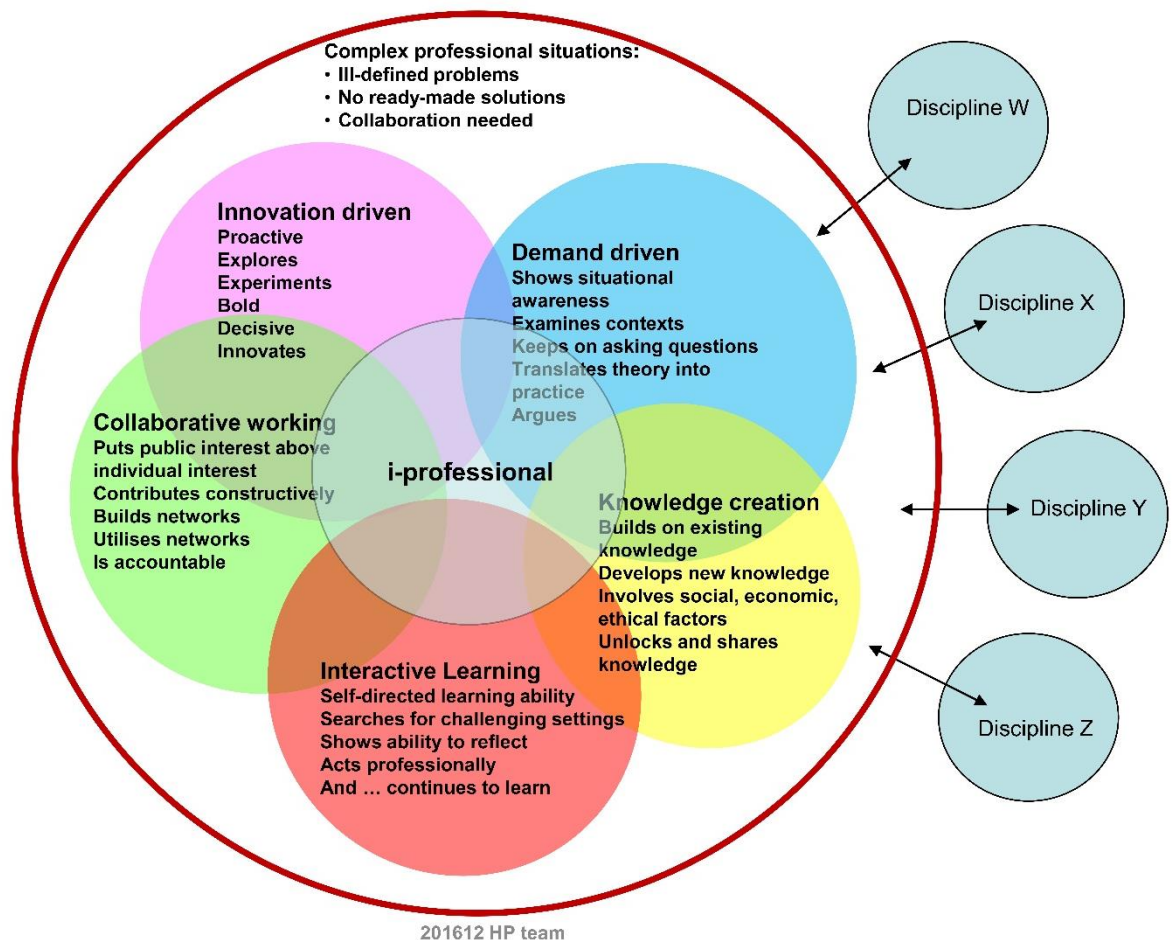
### Relationship between the five competences for Learning to Innovate

The five competences described in the Competence Profile Learning to Innovate are interdependent: they are distinguishable but cannot be separated. Because you are working on professionally critical situations, you go and investigate: which knowledge is already available, which ideas have already been thought of, what would ...

Because it concerns professionally critical situations, you have had to seek cross-disciplinary cooperation and consider whether you are doing the right thing in the context in which you operate. What does this teach you about the issues themselves, about your approaches and about yourself, about your own development?

Finally, new insights emerge and new knowledge is obtained. The knowledge domains are outside the circle because the final assessment focuses on your innovative *actions*, knowledge is in fact indirectly tested.

### The Relationship between Competences for Innovative Working and Different Disciplines



## Appendix 2 - The competence profile

The competence profile for Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences is described below. Besides the final qualifications for your bachelor's profile in your own study programme, after participating in the Honors programme, you will be assessed in terms of Learning to Innovate, as defined in the following five competences:

1. Innovation driven
2. Demand driven
3. Collaborative working
4. Interactive learning
5. Knowledge creation

The five competencies have been expanded on by means of descriptions of roles and placed in a professional context. Behavioural indicators, which are broken down into behavioural elements, are then defined.

As a participant in the Honors programme, you are expected to demonstrate that you have mastered these five competences.

### 1. Innovation driven

**Role:** Innovator  
**Domain:** Professional practice  
**Specification:** Innovation and research

#### Competence

In contributing to the development of an innovative professional product, the student shows an enquiring attitude and identifies and exploits opportunities to introduce innovations into professional practice.

#### Context

In working life we come up against stubborn problems, problems for which there are no ready-made solutions. There can be various reasons for this: the complexity of the issue, a lack of sufficient, wide-ranging and up-to-date expertise, and sometimes simply the speed at which developments take place. In such situations innovative capacity is needed to produce creative solutions.

As an innovator, you recognise this complexity and experience it as an opportunity, as a challenge to reflect on and discuss potential solutions with professional colleagues from your own and other disciplines. You dare to put your neck on the line and share your ideas with others. You know how important a solution is and also that it is no good trying to avoid difficult situations. You investigate the problem using your own particular expertise, always looking for ways to uncover new knowledge, for example by combining existing concepts to create new solutions. You are bold and decisive and as an innovator you are enterprising and pro-active. You actively look for opportunities, know how to turn them into effective actions, and experiment with new methods and scenarios – always working from a well informed and well thought-through vision. Your insight, attitude and work are valued. You are increasingly involved in innovation. You notice that you can be an equal and critical discussion partner.

#### To

Contribute to innovation,

#### You must

1. be pro-active and resourceful in complex professional situations;
2. investigate problems and potential solutions;
3. be bold and dare to experiment;
4. be creative when looking at both the issue and the solution

### **So that**

Your innovation driven approach leads to the development of innovative answers/solutions/professional products.

### **Behavioural indicators and behavioural elements**

Behavioural indicator: Being pro-active and resourceful in complex professional situations

*Behavioural elements:*

- You think and act proactively. You show initiative and do not wait for others; you go and investigate. You come up with possible innovative ideas and solutions of your own accord.
- You are decisive. You familiarise yourself with the situation and take quick, well-considered and reasoned decisions about which steps are necessary.
- You are able to convert opportunities into targeted actions. You are able to identify effective routes to achieve goals.

*Behavioural indicator: Investigating the problem and potential solutions*

*Behavioural elements:*

- You prefer to explore *other* ideas as well as traditional methods because there is evidence that the traditional methods no longer suffice
- You come up with *new* perspectives on problems
- You translate developments and trends in your own area of expertise into future scenarios.
- You make responsible use of relevant practical research methods and techniques

*Behavioural indicator: Being bold and daring to experiment*

*Behavioural elements:*

- You experiment
- You take action, even if the outcome is uncertain
- You dare to stick your neck out; you don't avoid risks

*Behavioural indicator: Being creative when looking at both the issue and the solution*

*Behavioural elements:*

- You demonstrate the ability to depart from the existing conceptual framework
- You demonstrate that you can make use of approaches from other disciplines to come up with new findings and combinations of solution strategies
- You show that you can think out-of-the-box
- You demonstrate originality, "playfulness" and ingenuity
- You come up with new scenarios if circumstances change
- You are able to think of several solutions, unexpected approaches or perspectives for a problem that bring solutions closer.

## 2. Demand driven

**Role:** Critical observer  
**Domain:** Professional practice  
**Specification:** Awareness of professional environment

### Competence

In working innovatively, the student demonstrates an awareness of the professional environment in which he or she operates and identifies opportunities to introduce innovations into professional practice.

### Context

As a developing professional you will learn as much as you can about working practice. You will follow developments in your field. You are interested in why certain developments take place and what forces drive them, enabling you to place trends and developments in practice within a broader context. You notice that this allows you to identify cause and effect more easily. You also see that certainties are fast disappearing. You realise that change is sometimes so rapid it makes tasks more complex, raising the bar for professionals.

At the same time, you see great potential in this dynamic environment and actively seek opportunities to contribute, with others, to making a difference. You want to make a worthwhile contribution to social issues. You explore the possibilities and discuss these with relevant stakeholders and other groups, but without jumping straight to the solution. You show your worth as a well-informed and equal discussion partner. Your preparation has given you a thorough grounding in the dynamics of the situation and you can explain and justify why you think the situation is promising. At the same time, you listen closely to what your discussion partners say. You maintain a dialogue and make sure the problem is clearly defined by asking critical questions of the client and other stakeholders, equipping you to assess the context in even greater depth. You know this exploratory phase is essential if you are going to help deliver feasible solutions or, if necessary, come up with good arguments for abandoning them.

### To

Cultivate an awareness of what is going on around you, both generally and in innovative professional practice in particular,

### You must

- demonstrate that you are aware of your environment
- be able to inquire further
- identify and describe issues relevant to professional practice
- be able to translate theory into practical action

### So that

Your analysis of the situation leads to the identification of issues recognised as important to professional practice, and practical steps that can be taken towards solving them.

## **Behavioural indicators and descriptions**

*Behavioural indicator: Demonstrating awareness of surroundings – social context*

*Behavioural elements:*

- You know or explore the trends and developments in a wider context than your own area of expertise and you are able to connect their significance to the problems you are working on
- You are able to see further than the end of your nose; you see changes coming (earlier than others) and anticipate them
- You look actively for practical situations that might provide new evidence and you make use of them in discussions.
- You see opportunities / chances and make use of them
- You recognise that external factors affect or may affect the problems you are working on
- You demonstrate social engagement and you can account for your professional actions

*Behavioural indicator: Being able to identify and specify questions relevant to the profession*

*Behavioural elements:*

- You investigate the problem at hand in dialogue with the client and other relevant stakeholders
- You delve more deeply into the definition of the problem outlined; is this really the problem, is more preliminary research needed, will that lead to a different definition of the problem?
- You explore what is already known about the problem; you are able to revise it and present it
- You are able to make the question explicit and adjust it
- You demonstrate knowledge of the social climate that plays a role in finding and accepting solutions

*Behavioural indicator: The ability to convert solutions into practical applications*

*Behavioural elements:*

- You come up with unexpected and yet feasible solutions
- You are able to convert solutions discovered through a combination of knowledge and experience of various areas of expertise into practical results

### 3. Collaborative working

**Role:** Team player  
**Domain:** Innovative professional practice  
**Specification:** Communication and collaborative working

#### Competence

In participating in innovative processes, the student becomes a team player who can draw on communicative, collaborative and networking skills to work effectively and efficiently with other professionals to achieve results.

#### Context

Working effectively in a team on solutions to real problems demands a broad range of competences. In effect, they are tools that enable you to understand the innovative context and make you an equal discussion partner. Innovative professionals are real team players; they learn from each other and share ideas.

Learning and working in real-life situations is a social process in which cooperating and networking with others is essential. Not only does it spread knowledge and experience, but it gets people more involved. As a team player you know how important collaborative working is. You are not out to 'steal the limelight'. The real value of collaborative working is that you can contribute to each other's ideas, 'spar' with each other, discuss your ideas and suggestions for strategies and solutions, and scrutinise them critically – to say nothing of the added value of being open to possibilities for giving and receiving feedback. Effective professional communication prevents any unnecessary 'noise' from clouding the collaborative working process.

#### To

Work effectively with others on improvements, new developments and innovations

#### You must

- be willing to work with others and let shared goals take precedence over individual ones
- contribute to developing a network of experts and make strategic use of this network
- make correct and well-timed use of a variety of communication skills

#### So that

Team players with complementary personal and professional skills can work together and communicate with each other during a development or innovation process.

#### Behavioural indicators and descriptions

*Behavioural indicator: Being prepared to collaborate and have general goals prevail over individual goals*

*Behavioural elements:*

- You acknowledge that co-creation from professional disciplines contributes to arriving at innovative solutions
- You look for opportunities and ways to work cooperatively on answers to problems

- You are able to work in a multidisciplinary/interdisciplinary/trans-disciplinary context; i.e. you work closely with people from other areas of expertise by making constructive contributions and gaining recognition for your own area of expertise
- You contribute to the best possible alignment between contributing your own knowledge, experience and qualities and that of team members
- You put the interests of the team above your own personal interests and you hold your fellow team members accountable for their behaviour and responsibility. You are also accountable yourself
- You are capable of making concessions in order to arrive at a common goal or result. You are able to substantiate these concessions

*Behavioural indicator: Being able to make a contribution to the development of a network of experts and able to consult this network in a targeted fashion.*

*Behavioural elements:*

- You build up a functional network
- You use networks in a targeted fashion
- You can make connections

*Behavioural indicator: Being able to make use of a variety of communication skills in the right way and at the right moment.*

*Behavioural elements:*

- You kindle enthusiasm and stimulate others
- You have effective and efficient discussions
- You share your work with others
- You contribute constructively to the collaboration

#### 4. Demonstrating interactive learning

**Role:** Learning  
**Domain:** Communities of practice in innovative professional practice  
**Specification:** Interactive learning

##### Competence

To be able to steer your professional *development*, you acknowledge the need for lifelong learning and you work to gain the necessary *learning skills*.

##### Context

The world of work is changing rapidly. Many different demands will be made of you and you run the risk of not keeping pace with events. Education faces the same problem. Despite doing our best to keep your vocational course as up-to-date as possible, it is not always possible to cover the latest developments. This means you have to prepare yourself for work in a rapidly changing professional environment. You will not just be expected to solve problems you have prepared for in your degree and which you know well enough to be able to implement real solutions; you will also encounter problems that are new to you, problems that cannot be solved using current know-how. These new problems may require new knowledge, knowledge yet to be acquired and new contexts within which existing knowledge has to be used in different ways.

You will also increasingly collaborate with people qualified in other subjects. In such a working and learning setting you will be challenged to learn with and from each other, actively, effectively and focused on getting results. As you work jointly in this innovative process, your desire to learn will often come from within – you come across problems you really want to solve. This makes you the one with a desire to learn ‘something’, or even to ‘unlearn’ something.

The complexity of the situation does not scare you. You see a challenge, and you take it up. You throw yourself into it, and don’t give up. You know you will regularly hit a wall and have to pick yourself up again – but you will soon discover that you are learning more than you thought possible, that what at first seemed a confusing jumble now makes sense. You are much more capable of seeing the big picture.

##### To

Learn from and with each other

##### You must

- show self-directed learning ability
- be willing to learn in varied and challenging settings
- be able to reflect on the effectiveness of your learning goal, method and result

##### So that

You are capable of shaping and adding substance to the continuous development of your learning capacity: ‘lifelong learning’.



## **Behavioural indicators and descriptions**

*Behavioural indicator: Demonstrating self-directing learning ability*

*Behavioural elements:*

- You give your own learning process substance and direction; in other words, you are able to set yourself developmental and learning goals and act accordingly.

*Behavioural indicator: Readiness and a will to learn in various challenging settings*

*Behavioural elements:*

- You reflect on your own actions and naturally ask others for feedback; you weigh up tips for improving your actions and then apply them immediately and effectively
- You are aware of how your personal standards and values affect your actions and you demonstrate a willingness to discuss them
- You can be held to account for your actions
- You are prepared to change your ways
- You surrender obsolete knowledge if there are good arguments for doing so
- You have the courage to push back your own boundaries in order to develop personally and professionally

*Behavioural indicator: The ability to reflect on the effectiveness of your professional actions*

*Behavioural elements:*

- You demonstrate the ability to reflect and you are able to analyse your own actions in terms of
  - content
  - approach
  - group dynamics – this might include the actions of all those involved
  - social and ethical considerations when coming up with new solutions
  - your own development with regard to the points above
- You have learnt what your strengths and weaknesses are (or gained a better understanding of them) and you are able to make improvements to both

## 5. Knowledge creation

**Role:** Knowledge producer  
**Domain:** Innovative professional practice  
**Specification:** Knowledge creation

### Competence

As you continually improve your knowledge and keep up to date, you not only learn within a formal context (like school), but also expand your expertise by learning in a workplace setting.

### Context

With the rapid development of new information technologies, knowledge is expanding at an increasing rate and is available virtually on demand, and new knowledge can be disseminated just as fast. It is no longer enough to know your facts and know how to apply them. The knowledge you need most in an innovation setting is often called 'broad knowledge'. It is all about knowing the causes of many different phenomena, how things work, and understanding principles and processes (knowing who can provide ideas or specific know-how). This is particularly important because factual knowledge can become outdated (especially concrete findings), whereas knowledge of first principles (underlying these findings) does not date so quickly.

You are expected to develop a 'what if...' approach to learning. This means that you are not afraid to ask critical questions about cause and effect. You learn to comprehend the connections and patterns in what happens in professional practice, but also to have a critical, enquiring and learning attitude. You want to uncover these cause-effect relationships and are a critical user of knowledge. Above all, you measure the value of a theory by its usefulness in solving problems you encounter in your work. You do not blindly follow any particular set of ideas. You find out, working with and in dialogue with other professionals, whether something will work and how it actually works in practice. In the process, you learn how to combine your knowledge and experience with those of others and discover what works, creating new knowledge which can be put to use in professional practice. In addition, you are able to critically assess what the 'active ingredients' are, discovering the value of the chosen approach and the driving principles (which determine how it works). You quickly learn to play with your knowledge. You discover that theories and ideas from other disciplines can also be useful or made suitable for another context. You will also discover that knowledge you acquired for another purpose can also be of practical use in your work. In short, you discover, experiment, apply your knowledge, test how it works, and so generate new knowledge. This is officially called 'productive learning' and 'far transfer'.

You realise how important it is to share knowledge with others. You are also aware that others have knowledge you can benefit from. And so you look for effective and efficient ways to find the knowledge and experience others are willing to share or exchange. You already know how IT quickly and easily opens doors to a rich knowledge environment. Social media will become an increasingly useful platform for staying informed and sharing recently acquired new knowledge.

### To

Continually work on growing your knowledge within an innovative learning environment

### You must

- be able to learn within an application context
- be able to use knowledge and skills at various levels of application and contexts so that new knowledge emerges

- have the ability to share and access knowledge

### **So that**

You can make a real contribution to furthering knowledge.

### **Behavioural indicators and descriptions**

*Behavioural indicator: Being able to develop knowledge within an application context*

*Behavioural elements:*

- You are able to make use of other people's knowledge and practical experience to strengthen your own so that you develop new knowledge that takes the professional practice further; you innovate
- You are open to the contribution of other people's expertise and you actively invite them to contribute
- You build on existing knowledge and are able to connect the newly developed knowledge to the 'old'

*Behavioural indicator: Being able to apply knowledge and skills at various levels and in various contexts*

*Behavioural elements:*

- You make use of knowledge from different areas of expertise in order to discover patterns in problems
- You apply the knowledge and information thus acquired to develop or design new solutions
- You demonstrate awareness of the effect of social, economic, technical, ethical and/or psychological factors that could help to find the answers to problems you are working on

*Behavioural indicator: The ability to share and access knowledge*

*Behavioural elements:*

- You actively share the knowledge and experience you have gained in practice with other people
- You actively look for new knowledge and for effective ways of accessing and sharing new knowledge. You do this in a way that is appropriate for your professional practice and you are able to substantiate your choices in this matter
- You look for connections that go beyond the shared knowledge and experience of team members and help them to understand these connections

## Appendix 3 The STARR method

**The interview you have with the assessors during your Final Assessment Honors will be conducted according to the STARR method. Because of this, we ask you to compile your portfolio by means of the STARR method too.**

STARR stands for **S**ituation, **T**ask, **A**ction, **R**esult and **R**eflection. The STARR method is mainly used to convey and analyse an experience in a learning or work environment, to demonstrate your qualities, to learn from the experience by setting new development goals and practice with it.

Applying the STARR method in a way that professionally and convincingly demonstrates the quality of your own actions is not easy. You need to first understand the method very precisely and most of all get lots of practice in compiling STARRs. You can ask other people for feedback about the quality of your STARRs, but you can also test yourself. A form has been added at the end of this section to enable you to check whether you have compiled your STARR properly.

Writing a STARR starts with the description of an event you have experienced: the **Situation**, a *professionally critical* situation. It's best to take a situation in which you had to resolve something, a problem or a dilemma. It needs to be clear that you had to *do* something. An example might be that you present your client with a solution in which he/she has little confidence but which you are sure is the right one. Despite being nervous, you nonetheless present your solution because you are absolutely sure it is the right one. Another example might be that someone in a project group is not pulling their weight even though the rest of you really need that person. The problem is then the fact that the person is *not cooperating*. The difficult aspect of this situation is that you have to persuade someone to cooperate, with the risk that the person walks out and leaves you. That is why we call this situation *professionally critical*. There is a risk that you'll be even worse off if it doesn't work. So always start your STARR by describing a situation in which you had to make sure that a result was achieved and in which you really had to act. If you are working in total harmony with others in a project group, you are working as a team, but you don't have to demonstrate your *collaborative ability*. That collaboration already exists!

To demonstrate your collaborative qualities, you therefore need to take an example of a situation in which there was a lack of collaboration or it wasn't good enough and describe what you did to improve that collaboration. The 'difficulty' you have to try to tackle needs to become clear in the task. Show, for example, that you drew the person's attention to their behaviour, and what the effects of that behaviour were on the effectiveness of your project group; you asked why this has come about and you describe how you entered into a dialogue with the person in question about what was needed to improve the situation and what sort of agreements were made without disrupting the relationship with that person. Afterwards, you can decide whether each of the elements in this description of the task were successful. The task can therefore be measured. It is important to write the task down in a way that enables you to decide later on what was successful and what was not (if applicable).

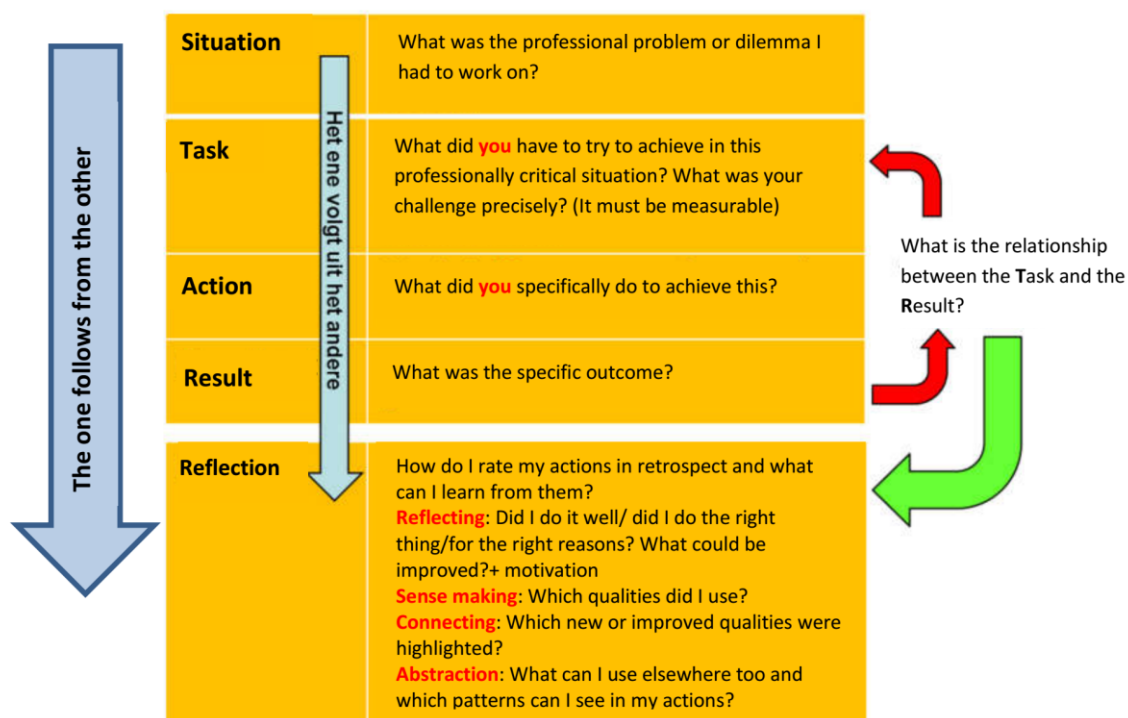


Illustration of the STARR method and how its elements are interrelated

An example of a complete STARR description:

**Situation:** I work as a sales assistant in a phone shop where I have to deal with customers on a daily basis. One day, an angry customer came up to me with a broken phone. She couldn't phone people and no one could phone her, but it was vital that people could get in touch with her since her child was in hospital and she needed to be able to be contacted in case anything happened to her child. Her subscription unfortunately didn't include service whereby she could be given a replacement phone and we didn't have any spare phones available in the shop. There was in fact nothing to offer the customer and yet something had to be done to ensure that she left the shop satisfied.

The task is your challenge in this situation or the aim you had to try and achieve.

In this example:

**Task** It was my task to solve the customer's problem and ensure that she could leave the shop satisfied and be able to be contacted by phone

Action describes specifically how you set to work. Specifically means that you write down exactly what you did. If, for example, you write: "I tackled the problem by making creative use of my network", that isn't specific enough because your actions haven't been highlighted. You need to write it all down clearly to make what you did in this situation to achieve your aim as perceptible as it would be if it had been filmed.

In this example:

**Action:** I told the customer that I found it a very unpleasant situation too. I explained that she hadn't included a replacement phone service in her subscription and that we did not have any spare phones in our shops. After that, I phoned customer service

to ask if they could activate the service for the replacement phone. Meanwhile the customer was becoming very angry and upset because she hadn't expected to need the service and she didn't know anyone who had a spare phone. In the end, I consulted my friends and asked if one of them perhaps still had an old phone that wasn't being used. I discovered that a girlfriend had an old iPhone she wasn't using that still worked. I explained the situation to her and went to collect the phone from her during my break. I sent the customer's phone away to be repaired.

The outcome of the conversation appears under the R for Result.

In this example:

**Result:** The customer was waiting for me in the shop and was delighted when she saw I had my friend's old phone with me when I returned. People could contact her again. When her phone had been repaired, she brought my friend's phone back and returned it to me. She said she was very pleased that there were assistants like me. I achieved my aim. I solved her problem and ensured that she left the shop satisfied and that other people could contact her by phone.

Under the R for **Reflection**, you indicate what you think about the way you acted by comparing the results of the conversation with what you had to achieve as specified in the task. It makes it very professional if you reflect on your task, on the process and on the underlying reasons for your actions. The same applies if you then indicate which qualities were highlighted in your actions and what you have learnt from this experience to apply in other similar situations in the future.

The various elements in reflection are explained below: did you conduct the conversation with the customer well and did it lead to the result you intended? The question is: *did you do it well?*

The example above clearly shows that the specified task was successfully completed.

**Reflection:** I would have liked to have solved the problem through the phone shop's customer service, so that the customer didn't have to wait so long. I decided to take things into my own hands to ensure that the customer could be contacted about her child.

The process: was the way in which you handled the issue correct? The question is: did you do the **right thing**? *And did you do it for the right reasons?*

To answer that you need to look critically at your own performance and think about what exactly you did, what in retrospect you could have done differently or even what you ought to have done differently.

In this example:

The sales assistant offers a solution by resorting to personal sources. This battle was won by so doing, but with a form of service that neither the company nor the sales assistant can justify. You could ask yourself whether this form of service is actually the right one. Viewed from the profession of sales assistant, it is not. If this sort of thing happens often, it would be better to raise the matter with management and suggest how it might be handled better in future. Such a case leads you to conclude that you cannot carry out the task within the limits the company sets on the possibilities you can offer.

Conferring significance: which qualities were highlighted in your actions?

Here you describe which qualities could be seen in your actions. This does not just mean the name of the quality but also by showing *where* in your behaviour it was highlighted.

In the example: I demonstrated that I recognise the feelings and needs of other people and that I can put myself in someone else's position by recognising that I was dealing with a mother whose child was ill in hospital and who therefore wanted to be able to be contacted. By making use of my own network to ultimately find a solution, I demonstrated that I understood the customer's needs and interests and took them into account (customer focus).

Connecting: Try to establish whether these qualities are new for you and how you can connect them to the qualities you already possess.

Connecting in this example:

This is not new for me. My friends also say that I always want to help people. They always come to me with their problems because I can empathise with them, they say. What is new is that I've never done it just like that for a stranger. I've also never used my personal network to provide a professional service before.

Abstraction on the basis of this example:

Here you look to see whether there is a pattern in your actions; something that you see yourself doing over and over again. That can be something positive, but it can also be something you want to improve. You are then learning for the future: what could you take from this experience to use in other situations and what could you do even better another time in a similar situation? This discovery enables you to learn from your own actions and to consciously manage your actions. If you can do this, you can even use a description of a situation in which you did something completely wrong to demonstrate how effectively you have learnt from your experiences!

Abstraction in this example:

A thread that continually runs through my other experiences is that I am a person who goes to extremes to be of service to other people. In retrospect, I thought I had taken things to extremes in providing service in the shop by offering something privately that I couldn't provide as part of my work. I can't keep on doing that sort of thing. I can't continue thinking up personal solutions to commercial problems in my work. I now think that I would only consider something like this in future if the situation was an emergency, if I could really prevent a disaster happening. That wasn't really the case here. I didn't do it for entirely the right reasons. I acted mainly on the basis of my sympathy for that lady. I could totally imagine how she felt, ...and... the feeling it gives me when someone appreciates me. In a future professional context, I will stick to the limits my work sets for providing service and I will inform and advise management if I think that something could be improved in the service we provide.

NB. This text is a translation and adaptation of 'Hoe vang je een ervaring' – Capturing an experience – by Martin Reekers (2017)

*A number of comments and questions that may help you to compile your STARR-situations are provided below. These are the types of questions you can expect during your assessment interview.*

Situation:

- The sample situations you describe are professionally critical situations (see [appendix 4](#)). Critical here means that a situation could not be routinely resolved and did not happen in a conventional manner: you had to make a considerable effort; you needed to be courageous; you needed to try things out; you needed to confront fellow students; you needed to ... and it was difficult, required energy (nervousness), perhaps doubts and yet you still did it.
- Choose a sample situation and describe the *context* under **S** so that assessors understand the background.

Task:

- Which task or tasks did you take on in order to resolve the issue in the given context?
- Be careful not to confuse task with role. Being chair of a project group, for example, is a *role*; which *tasks* do you assign yourself in order to perform the role well?
- What did you want to achieve by carrying out these tasks? What did you expect to learn?

Action:

- What did you do next? What was the substance of your task? It is quite possible that you had to act differently to the way you had envisaged
- What was your individual contribution to finding answers/solutions and the approach taken?
- What was your contribution to the success of the collaborative effort?

Result:

- Did you (possibly through collaborating with other people) come up with answers/solutions/new ideas?
- Did all those involved, especially external partners, welcome the answers/solutions/ideas as being effective and innovative?
- Did you do the *right* thing?

Reflection: on content, process and own development

- Did you do the right thing in the right manner?
- Did you do it for the right reasons? Which societal, social, economic, ethical or other considerations partly determined how the situation was dealt with?
- What have you learnt about your own capabilities in terms of
  - i. Your specific expertise?
  - ii. Your approach, your contribution to the process?
  - iii. Your own development here: your qualities?



**Form to help you examine your STARR description**

	Requirements your STARR description must meet	Yes	Don't know	No	
S	Is the <b>situation</b> you have chosen professionally critical?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There was a dilemma</li> <li>It was an issue for which no standard answer was available</li> </ul>			
T	Is the <b>task</b> a challenge for the person in question?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The task shows clearly what the person in question had to try to achieve in this situation or with this issue</li> </ul>			
A	Have you described your <b>actions</b> with respect to the challenge?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It refers to actions that address the task described</li> <li>It is described in terms of specifically observable behaviour</li> </ul>			
R	Have you described what the <b>result</b> was/results were in terms of the challenge?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have made it clear which specific effect or which specific results your own specific actions had <i>in relation to the task</i> you were facing</li> <li>You have made it clear what your actions led to and compared your results with your aim</li> </ul>			
R	<b>Reflection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have established the extent to which you performed the task <i>correctly</i></li> <li>You have established the extent to which you did <i>well</i></li> <li>You have made it clear which part of your actions effectively contributed to the result achieved</li> <li>You have made it clear what you could improve or change to achieve a better result</li> </ul>			
	Conferring significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have made it clear which qualities in the behaviour you have described were highlighted effectively</li> </ul>			
	Connecting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have made it clear which new qualities were highlighted in your actions and/or which qualities strengthened those already present</li> </ul>			
	Abstraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have made it clear which aspects of a unique situation could also be used in other situations in the future and how that could be done</li> <li>You have made it clear what certainly ought to be tackled differently in future situations</li> <li>You have made it clear whether a pattern can be seen in your actions that can be identified in other situations and if so, which. You have indicated whether or not that was effective and if not, what you are going to do to break that pattern</li> </ul>			
	Interrelationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a clear interrelated line in the STARR elements</li> </ul>			

## Appendix 4 – Professionally critical situation

*What actually is a ‘professionally critical situation’?*

At the top of the diagram in [appendix 1](#) you can see a number of observations:

1. Ill-defined problems
2. No ready-made solutions
3. Collaboration needed.

*What do these observations mean?*

### **Ill-defined problems**

An ‘issue’ can also be described as a problem that needs to be solved, but by calling it an issue, there is scope for the possibility that it might be so difficult that a ‘solution’ could be far off. An example might be all sorts of sustainability issues: if you take a simplistic view, they can easily be solved: “introducing a deposit on cans will ensure more are returned”. That may be true, but it’s actually about far more waste streams than that: plastics, glass, batteries, cartridges, etc. The list can be added to endlessly. So the issue is perhaps not ‘cans’ but ‘recycling’ or ‘circular economy’, which is much more complicated. That leads us to consider whether we can reuse all the waste from production processes as raw materials for another production process. Difficult? Of course, but there are already plenty of bakers who collaborate with brewers because they can reuse each other’s waste streams back and forth.

Conclusion: there is almost always a much bigger dilemma, or issue, behind a relatively simple question or problem (the question behind the question). The trick is to find that particular issue and tackle it.

### **No ready-made solutions**

The example of ‘a deposit on cans’ was given above. That could be a solution, if it weren’t for the fact that a back and forth stream could be devised for all sorts of things. That would mean a tremendous range and especially a huge number of different streams. That would be impossible to realise (just imagine: instead of four refuse containers in the street, there would have to be ten, or thereabouts). So the one ‘solution’ is not actually a solution and apparently waste will have to be picked up earlier in the whole production process. Then it becomes extremely complex, because who would do it? How do you do it? What is the alternative? What are the possibilities? Where in the whole process do you intervene or could you do it another way? The answers to these questions make it essential to know exactly how processes work, but that also gives you the opportunity to devise good (or permanent) long-term solutions.

### **Collaboration needed**

Your knowledge is important, but knowledge from other specialist areas can certainly also be valuable for the issue facing you. Professionals often find it complicated to collaborate with professionals from other knowledge areas or disciplines. But it is essential to do so. Issues are so complex that no one discipline has all the answers. You see that increasingly in the medical world: multidisciplinary teams examine the complex workings of the human body. The same happens in professional practice: the waste stream for cans requires knowledge of costs, logistics, production processes, opportunities for reusing waste, recycling, materials, etc. And ultimately: how do we ensure that all our knowledge is put to use in the right place at the right time?

There is a good short video about an apparently simple issue, multidisciplinary collaboration and finding the ‘question behind the question’: the ‘redesign’ of the shopping cart that is not or no longer standard. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M66ZU2PCicM> (or Google: ‘VIDEO shopping cart’).