Honours Education: Room to Move

-----Values-Driven Development, Self-directed Learning----

----assessors version----

"You gotta give me
'cause I can't give the best
Unless I got room to move"
[John Mayall]

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Honours in Educations: *what is the difference?*

Within our diverse student population, we recognize individuals who aspire to further develop themselves, to discover the values that guide their behaviour, and to make decisions that can have a meaningful impact. These students understand that working in a transdisciplinary way, and innovatively in co-creation with the professional field is the way forward. They seek to break down the boundaries between disciplines and domains of work, in order to collectively delve deeper into the complex challenges our society is facing. Such students, driven by either explicit or implicit personal values, aim to make informed choices for their education and future, and to consider their impact. They are willing and able to do so within the given timeframe of their studies. Honours education provides them with the space to pursue these aspirations. Hence, honours education exists for those who seek and are capable of more.

Honours education focuses on **three aspects** that are essential in the training of young professionals. Prerequisites are prioritised in the following order (see appendix 1:)

1. We target young individuals who are already **open to additional development**, change, growth and self-discovery in their personal and professional journey, grounded in their personal values:
   - These students explicitly seek both *professional and personal growth*, They are naturally curious, driven by passion for topics that concern them. They approach complex issues also from the perspective of their personal values. They are eager to take initiative, create impact, and delve into the details. They possess an open-minded perspective on the world, are socially engaged, and genuinely aspire to make a difference. Some may not always recognise these qualities within themselves and it is our responsibility to them realise them: *you can do this!*
2. To this end, we present them with '**complex professional critical situations**':
   - Complex professional critical situations encompass authentic real-life issues that are transdisciplinary, current societal challenges and other issues of global importance. These open, relevant problems/situations demand an innovative approach because there is no premade solution. These are of crucial importance within the professional context, and can only be understood or solved by including the perspectives, knowledge and tools from different disciplines. The high level of uncertainty inherent in these situations fosters creativity and innovation when developing solutions. Such a context-dependent collaboration takes place within a complex organisation that involves stakeholders from the professional field and domains. To find the optimal solution, teamwork, co-creation and the genuine integration of different disciplines is the only possible approach.
   Complex and critical challenges are strongly influenced by various societal developments, innovations and changes. The professional critical situation requires intensive effort from the professional themselves and the learning team; it involves hard work, it questions one's own performance, it challenges one's own knowledge, beliefs, and biases, and demands awareness of personal values and skills: *you do this!*
3. Therefore, we offer them **coaching** and support for their individual growth, assisting in the development they aspire to and often already envision to some extent:
   We tap into their motivation, urge and desire for self-discovery and, through coaching them, we aim to *make them aware* of their values that underlie their motivation. Whether confronting or supporting them, individually or in a group of like-minded individuals, we offer a framework for their ongoing development. We guide them towards self-direction, enabling continuous personal and professional growth. This coaching is tailored to focus on their professional identity, emphasizing the unique qualities of the person in front of us: *you are this!*

To become the professional described above, students employ various skills or competencies, many of which (although not all) are outlined in the 'values-driven, self-directed learning' model. As coaches, it is our responsibility to be aware of these and make our students aware of them too. We can use these as building blocks for their development.

Values-Driven Development, Self-directed Learning
Work on yourself, work on the world.

The core is
Learning from and with each other in connection with the world.
So that,

1) You are able to give form and substance to yourself as a professional and as a person from your own values.
2) You thereby steer your ongoing development in a self-determined direction.
3) You are guided by your values and you are connected to the world.
4) You are aware of your own possibilities, your potential and how you distinguish yourself from others.

Description
In developing yourself into a values-driven professional, you are aware of your personal values. From this awareness, you show the ability to learn, shape, and articulate your development. Guided by your values, you steer yourself, determining how you connect with the world around you and the potential impact of your actions.

Context Description
The world around us is changing rapidly. Challenges are becoming more complex, and collaboration across multiple disciplines, often transcending domains, is essential. What makes students care about this? Why do students make an (extra) effort to tackle critical professional challenges collaboratively and seek solutions across various disciplines? For some driven students, this is their method of self-development: working collaboratively with others to achieve both professional and personal growth. This drive is (partly) fuelled by 'values': underlying ideas and beliefs that, sometimes, unconsciously, guide choices or decisions in a particular direction. Consistently posing questions is part of the same drive. Once we can make students aware of one or more of these values and demonstrate how they can influence decisions in response to their questions, 'values' become less abstract and prove beneficial in their conscious, ongoing development. Values are deeply held beliefs that motivate and empower us in decision-making. Certain values cultivate openness to change, curiosity, a desire to learn before deciding, and awareness of the connections around us. Understanding our own values often comes through one or more of our 'Inner Development Goals' (IDGs), describing how we navigate the world and engage within the communities we belong to.

Using the IDGs for student development
In essence, the five IDGs describe the professional behaviour of a specific professional considering the interaction between the professional and 'the world'; thus in connection with the (professional) context surrounding the student. This also include specific personal behaviour: who are you as a professional and as an individual? What do you bring? How do you relate to yourself and the world around you? This concept is also connected to Biesta's 'qualification, socialization, and subjectification'. The core descriptions of the five IDGs are presented in the diagram (p. 5), where 'being' ultimately converges from the other four, forming the essence of what we would like to see in honours students. In the end, it is about 'professional agency' and 'achieving results' in complex professional critical situations.
To recognise the four IDGs in these quadrants, practical guidelines have been added: recognisable behaviour indicators (NOTE that they are NOT exhaustive). Indicators such as 'seeking new knowledge' or 'being entrepreneurial' can be explored with the student. The student can demonstrate ownership of the IDG in *different* ways, showcasing how the IDG is recognisable through behaviour or competence. Thus, holistic development across the four IDGs leads to the centre, the BEING, and forms a portrait of the specific professional: *this* (honours) student.

From *Learning to Innovate* to *Professional Agency*

Since the start of honours education at RUAS, we have used the five competencies of 'Learning to Innovate' as a benchmark for students. By clearly describing the behavioural elements and the behavioural indicators, the profile has proven to be an excellent tool for both students and their coaches. It served as a guiding reference throughout the entire honours education journey, offering support in coaching, giving feedback and assessing.

In recent years, the profile has increasingly found application in the regular study programmes (in similar forms). The 'distinctiveness' of literally innovation-driven approaches has become common place, losing its uniqueness and lacking forward-looking perspectives for students and educators. This prompted the question: what new horizon can students aspire to?

In response, the combined profile *Values-Driven Development, Self-directed Learning* has now been developed: a comprehensive profile that, on one hand, questions students about their values-why do you dedicate yourself to this? What forms the basis for your decisions? On the other hand, it guides students on the path of Lifelong Learning (LLL) through the concept of self-directed learning, thereby encouraging self-reflection and self-direction for personal development. Each institute and study programme can introduce its own nuances to ensure optimal alignment with what their students need for maximum development.

But: does this mean that the five competencies have become obsolete with this new profile? No, certainly not. The five competencies still perfectly describe 'professional agency' of students: how does a professional who wants to maximise their talents and potential behave, act, work and develop? For this reason, the five competencies are included in this profile-not as a benchmark for students, but as a tool to better articulate professional agency, set expectations, and guide students accordingly.

Is there a connection between both profiles? Certainly, there is. If you explore the 'indicators' (again: not exhaustive) in the new profile alongside 'the four IDGs', you will recognise many elements from professional agency (also not exhaustive). Essentially, you can envision that beneath the Values-Driven Development, Self-directed Learning (VDIL) profile lies the 'Learning to Innovate' (LI) profile: VDIL introduces various complicating factors to the LI profile, enriching the possibilities for students. It aligns with societal developments and provides students with the space to showcase themselves from different perspectives, demonstrating how they approach their own agency and impact. We assume that you recognise this enrichment and can incorporate it into your teaching, coaching and assessment.

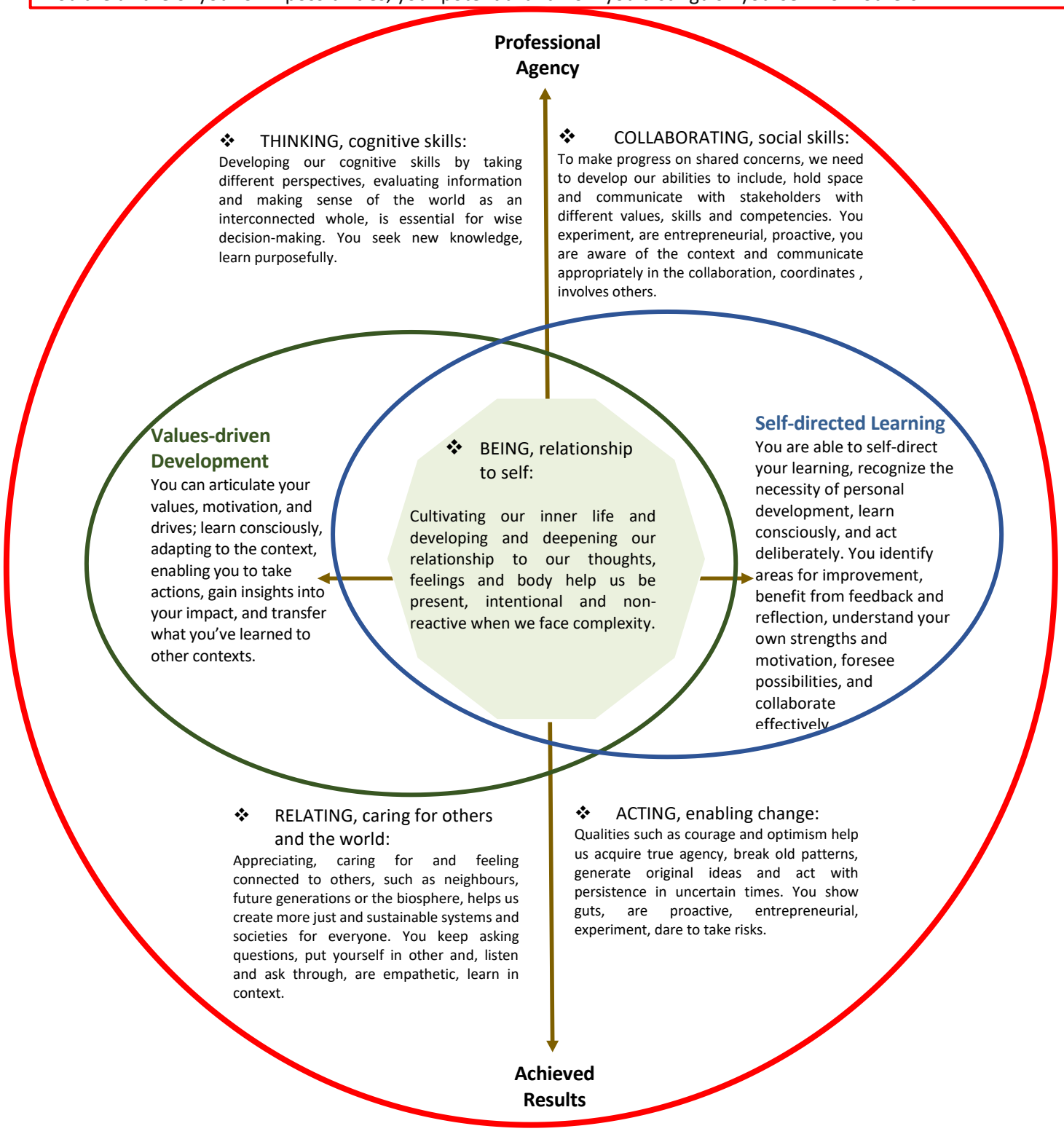
Here, too, study programmes are free to make specific choices for their students, enabling them to further develop based on what their regular programme already offers. After all, we aim for students to maximise their development into a values-driven professional who continues to evolve and innovate throughout their professional life.

Values-Driven Development – Self-directed Learning

Learning from and with each other in connection with the world.

So that,

You are able to give form and substance to yourself as a professional and as a person from your own values.
You thereby steer your ongoing development in a self-determined direction.
You are guided by your values and you are connected to the world.
You are aware of your own possibilities, your potential and how you distinguish yourself from others.



Complex Critical Professional Situations:

Authentic, open, multidisciplinary, and societal challenges. For these challenges, where no known solution exists, co-creation and multidisciplinarity are required. Multiple domains and disciplines collaborate to find solutions. An inquisitive and curious attitude is essential.

The profile Values-Driven Development, Self-directed Learning

What does the profile aim to encourage?

We use the **Inner Development Goals** (IDG: IDG Framework — Inner Development Goals or: https://transitionmakers.nl/) because they provide a comprehensive description of how a professional, driven by values in their professional actions, can further develop and achieve results based on learning, actions, and values. This framework offers a coherent description of the aspects involved in professional and personal development. By linking indicators of that behaviour to four IDGs, we make them recognizable and manageable. These descriptions assist in discussing the exhibited behaviour of the student, coaching them, and making the behaviour explicit, contributing to a more effective learning experience.

The IDGs include:

1. BEING, the relationship to self. In honours education, this relates to how students work on their professional and personal development, and what values they recognise in that process.
2. THINKING, the development of cognitive skills. Do students broaden their knowledge, their perspectives on issues, and their holistic view of the challenges arounf them?
3. RELATING, caring for others and the world. How are students connected to others, their future or that of others? How do they perceive their influence on changes?
4. COLLABORATING, developing the ability to engage stakeholders. How do students collaborate, how do they develop that collaboration, and what values, competencies, and skills do they use for it?
5. ACTING, translating into concrete behaviour. What qualities do students employ, how do they think about what they want to achieve? How do they involve others?

The 'BEING' is located at the intersection of the axis of professional agency and achieved results on the one hand, and the axis of values-driven development and interactive learning on the other hand. Both axes provide insights into how and based on what values honours students have developed as professionals and through which professional actions students have achieved the result. The question of which values played a role (values-driven) and how experiences have influenced their own learning (interactive learning) are crucial considerations in this context. The questions to the student thus move back and forth between both axis and across the IDGs. This ultimately results in a comprehensive understanding of the honours student.

COLLABORATING and ACTING are placed on the side of self-directed learning. Here, the emphasis is on your ability to collaborate and act professionally while continuously assessing whether both contribute sufficiently to the issue and whether it aligns with the team or challenge in which the student is actively involved.

THINKING and RELATING are placed on the side of values-driven development. On this side, the question is always about the reason for making certain decisions, the knowledge involved, and, more importantly, the values underlying them. How does the student handle their values, and what role do they play in the results they achieve?

The IDGs thus describe growth opportunities for the professional, encompassing not only content, knowledge, and skills but also professional and personal aspects while working in teams and collaborating with others. Ultimately, and that is why it is central, students 'become' the person they would like to be. We aim to coach students to balance as many aspects as possible and thereby support them in 'becoming' who they 'are.'

Coaching with the framework as a tool

The four IDGs—Thinking, Collaborating, Relating, and Acting—can be translated into behaviour or are recognizable by certain behavioural indicators. The diagram includes some indicators (please note again: these listings are NOT exhaustive; you can also use or work with other attitudes and behaviours for these IDGs). We perceive 'BEING' as the result of these four. The 'BEING' is a description of who and what the 'honours student' is or is growing towards, and how, and equally important, consciously the honours student is aware of their own development (has learned self-direction). Only from that awareness can self-direction emerge.

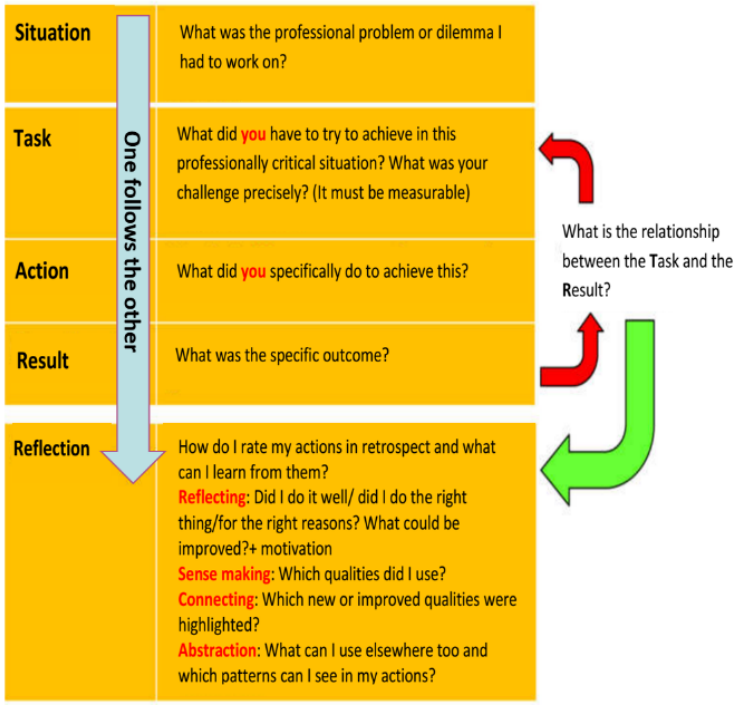
Coaching (see Appendix 2) is intended to prompt students to experience, feel, and think: to reflect on what has been done and experienced, and what can be learned from it for the next situation and for their own development. Coaching is also meant to make students aware of their own learning process and the choices they have consciously or sometimes unconsciously made:

1. What experience have I gone through, and how did they unfold? What events took place, and what was my role in them (reflecting on experiences)?
2. What went well, what can I learn from it? What went less well, can I improve on that, and what do I need for that (reflecting on development, acquiring self-direction)?
3. How can I consciously apply these reflections in the next situation (transfer, professional development)?

You can make this explicit for the student by asking, among other things, the following questions:

- In which *complex critical professional situation*s did something happen from which you learned (what was challenging, what did you struggle with, what made you break a sweat, etc.)?
- Which tasks or possibly individuals helped you in the learning process?
- What professional actions did you deploy?
- What did it yield? How did it change the situation?
- Did this prove to be the right thing to do? (Did you do it correctly? Did you do the right thing? Did you do it for the right reasons?)
- How did this assist in your further development or in new situations?

The discerning reader will recognize the sequence of situation-task-action-result-reflection-transfer, the STARR(T), which remains a widely used (professional field, Competency-Based Interview) and an excellent analytical tool for coaching students, promoting their awareness, and ultimately questioning their achieved results and reflections on them.



Formative feedback
What we ultimately want to know is whether and how the student has developed into the professional potential within them and how consciously the student is or can become aware of it.

Structure:
As benchmark (criterion) for that development, we primarily use the following description:

- The student shows how he/she/they has developed through their attitude, behaviour, and actions, and he/she/they illustrates it through the presentation, the evidence, and/or the argumentation.

As a standard, we adopt a holistic and coherent image presented by the student:

- The student is capable of making connections between their professionalism and the undergone development. The actions taken and choices made by the student can be linked to their own values and to various described Inner Development Goals (IDGs) and corresponding indicators in 'values-driven development, self-directed learning.' Preferably, the student can also make the transfer from this development to their own future in their professional field (or intended profession). This complexity of 'accounting' for one's own behaviour is described in SOLO 5.

As evidence, the student is able to provide examples:

- The student can describe and illustrate the professionalism described above using complex critical professional situations. The student provides evidence that shows and supports the exhibited behaviour, actions (e.g., through feedback), or showcases it (e.g., through a video).

As support for that development:

- We offer the student coaching and feedback that seeks awareness of their own development, makes connections with values (in development), their own professional identity, and a wide range of development opportunities so that the student can genuinely optimize their development.

As assessors, we have the following duties:

- We assess the student holistically: from the whole we look at the interpretation or concretization as performed by the student.
- Through *'you can do this - you are this - you can make it happen'* the student is questioned about his own professional behavior.
- This means that after studying the available material, the first step is to look at the student's characteristics: do the characteristics shown or demonstrated lead to a value-driven professional? The "holistic" view. Then we ask through to hear that awareness (Appendix 2).
- As 'standard' we use the way SOLO 5 (see appendix 3) describes this: "In SOLO 5 the student can (coherently) argue on almost all points what has been helpful for his own development in the professional and personal area, can reflect on it effectively (developmentally) and can use it for further professional and personal development. The student is also able to use that for developments in and communication with the outside world situations".

Ensuring the value of the HP certificate

As assessors, we have the following tasks:

- Holistically assessing the student: we examine the fulfilment or concretization carried out by the student as a whole.
- Through 'you can do this - you do this - you are this' and indicators related to the Inner Development Goals (IDGs), the student is questioned about their exhibited professional behaviour: do we recognize in this the specific professional we are aiming for?

The starting point for coaching and assessment is the content of the 'concluding evaluation' and 'professional positioning' of the student, which ultimately find their place in the student's portfolio and presentation(s) over their entire study.

This means that after studying the available material, the first step is to look at the characteristics of the student: do the displayed or demonstrated characteristics lead to a values-driven professional? The 'holistic' picture. Then, we inquire to find that awareness.

- **Intended complexity and coherence**: As a 'norm', we adhere to the SOLO 5 (see attachment 3) description: "*In SOLO 5, the student is able to name different aspects of their solution in their context and also to make a connection with the outside world or new situations*."
- **Evidence**: To refine the assessment, assessors check what the student has demonstrated (achieved results, presentations, conversations, evidence, etc.) and thus decide whether 'values-driven development, self-directed learning' has been adequately demonstrated. In doing so, they can use the IDGs, and indicators and evidence that demonstrate the student's mastery of the IDGs. This is noted based on the concrete behaviour of the individual student (observed, evidence, coherence, etc.).

In the final assessment, the task of the assessors is:

- To **argument** whether the student fits with the profile 'values-driven development, self-directed learning' and the behavioural indicators of the IDGs based on the professional behaviour of the student that they have observed, and the student has substantiate it with described behaviour.
- The written assessment is recorded in a **feedback/feedforward document** that is part of the student's file.
- Assessors regularly **calibrate** on this holistic aspect based on performed assessments.

Implementation: the assessment interview

To assess based on inter-subjectivity, both from both assessors and students in mutual comparison, it is advisable to use:

- An artifact that forms the student's portfolio;
- A presentation by the student that can take different formats;
- The Criterion-Guided Interview (CGI) based on the material presented by the student.

The starting point for this conversation is the development presented by the student (results, portfolio, presentation, possibly STARRs, received feedback, evidence, etc.). We expect that students can explain their actions, skills, and development on various aspects of 'values-driven development, self-directed learning.

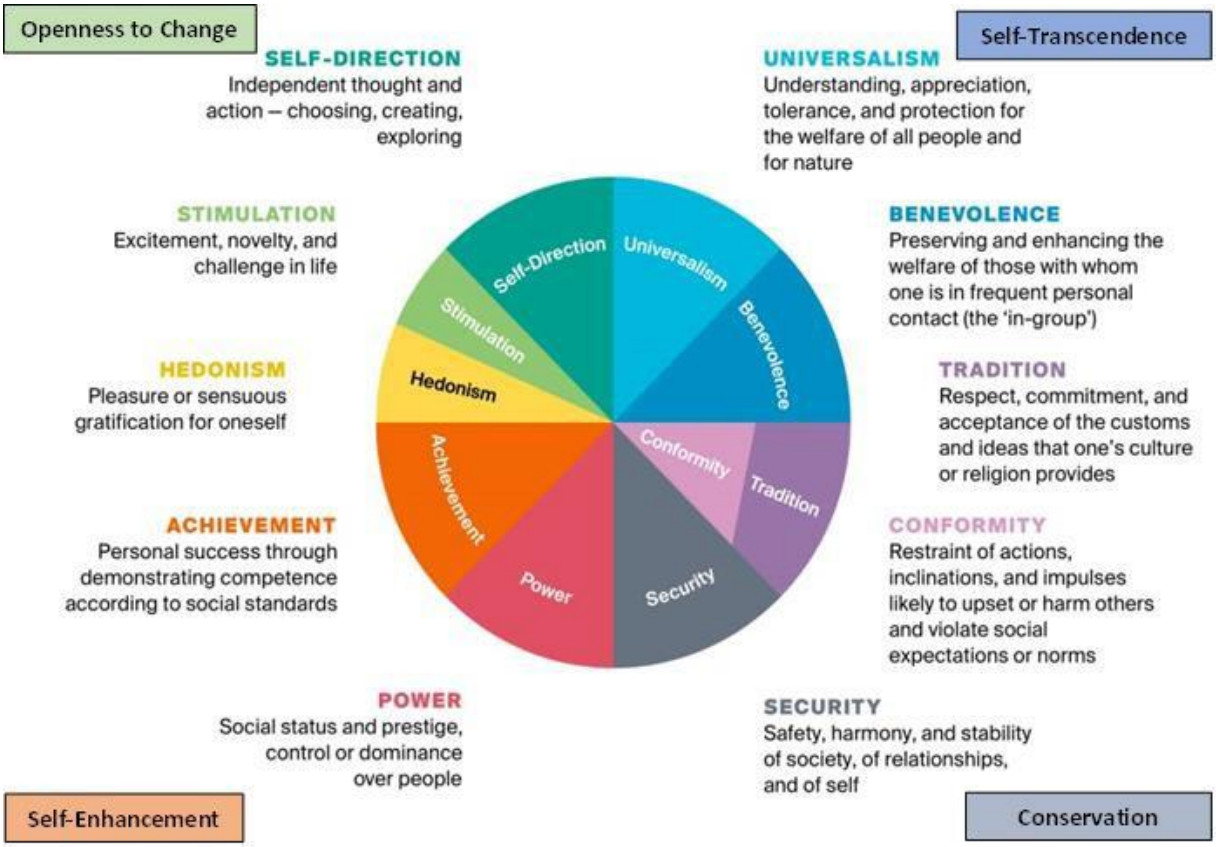
Quality Assurance

How do we safeguard the 'value' of the RUAS Honours Degree?

To achieve this, we follow several principles central to the assessment of honours 'RUAS-wide':

1. Honours is consistently assessed by trained assessors who regularly calibrate with each other.
2. Assessors are interchangeable between institutions to optimize the 4-eyes principle and intersubjectivity.
3. Honours focuses on the professional and personal development of individual students based on the Values-Driven, Self-directed Learning model.
4. We provide students with appropriate coaching focused in their professional and personal development as well as their awareness of values from which they develop.
5. Honours involves critical professional situations (rather than teacher-based case studies) that can vary in content depending on the context. The choice of the 'situation' is flexible, as long as it represents a professional and critical situation (see precondition 2: strongly context-dependent in terms of content, featuring authentic challenges, geographically impactful, topical, socially relevant, genuinely critical, and important within the profession).
6. The assessment route is flexible if the final standard is demonstrably met. The demonstration format is also flexible (student journey, any form of portfolio, presentation, etc.), as long as it remains validly assessable by trained assessors.
7. We consider the above points as prerequisites for honours education.

Appendix 1: Values



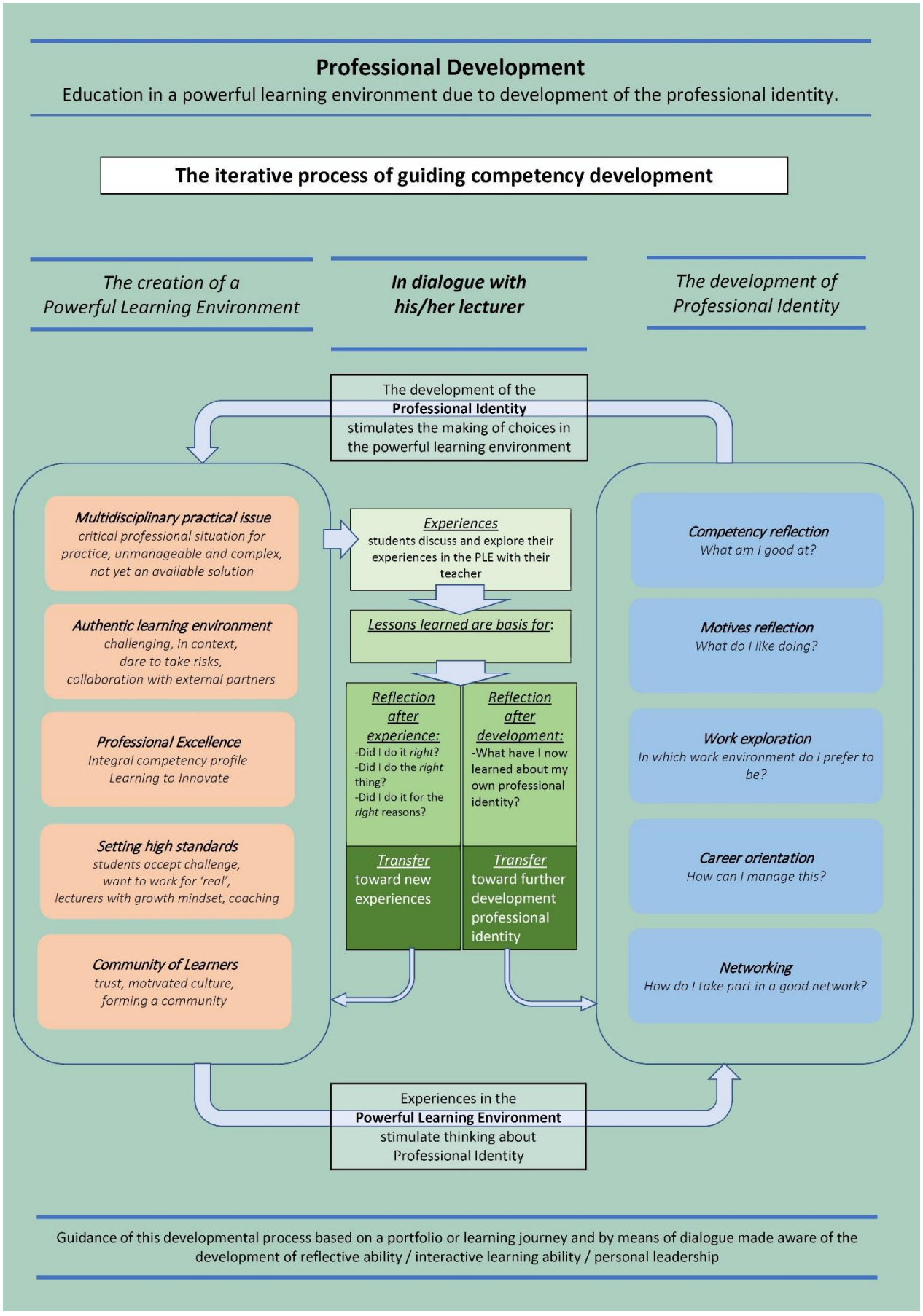
Schwartz's Circle of Values

Every person has certain values that are essential to that person. Not every person is exactly aware of those values. You notice them most easily in a situation where you experience friction. Values often unconsciously determine whether you can go for something, in the event that those values are met, or whether you go through life stressed in the event that those values are compromised. So what gives you inner satisfaction has a lot to do with what is important to you in life, with your values. You often notice this inner satisfaction by the kind of reward you experience when justice is done to your values. Schwartz (1994) researched people's values in a large number of different countries and compiled them into a model with 10 values.

Values that are in "conflict" with each other are opposite each other in the circle, values that fit together are next to each other in the circle.

You can sometimes try to determine in advance and sometimes during the 'experience' what your essential values are.

Appendix 2: coaching based on 'Professional Development': how to work on yourself as professional? (powerful learning environment) and how to develop your professional identity?

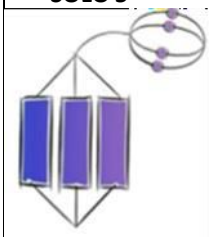


Appendix 3: Assessing description with SOLO 5

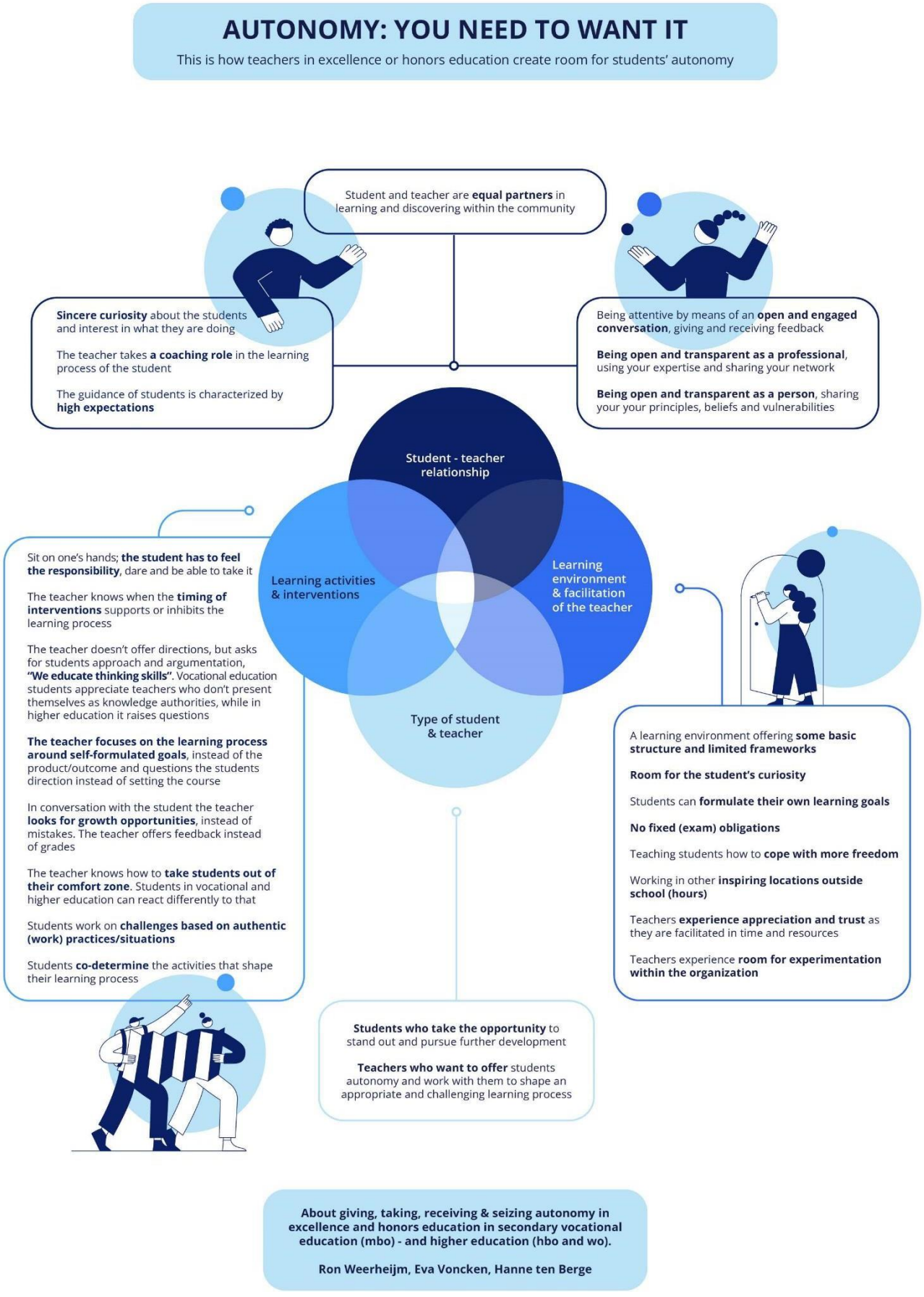
De *Structure of Observed Learning Outcomes* (SOLO) taxonomy (Biggs & Tang, 2007) is focused on the level of (knowledge) development in the context. The highest two levels of SOLO are typical of the intended final level of the college professional and thus the intended professional behavior.

SOLO 4: Relational level: The student's given answer is consistent within itself, as a system (relational: interrelationships in the answer). That is, the answer forms a clear whole, where relationships between aspects are clear and complete. The components in the task are addressed in a coherent way and the meaning of the whole is made clear.
(Note: we actually expect this level at graduation for students).

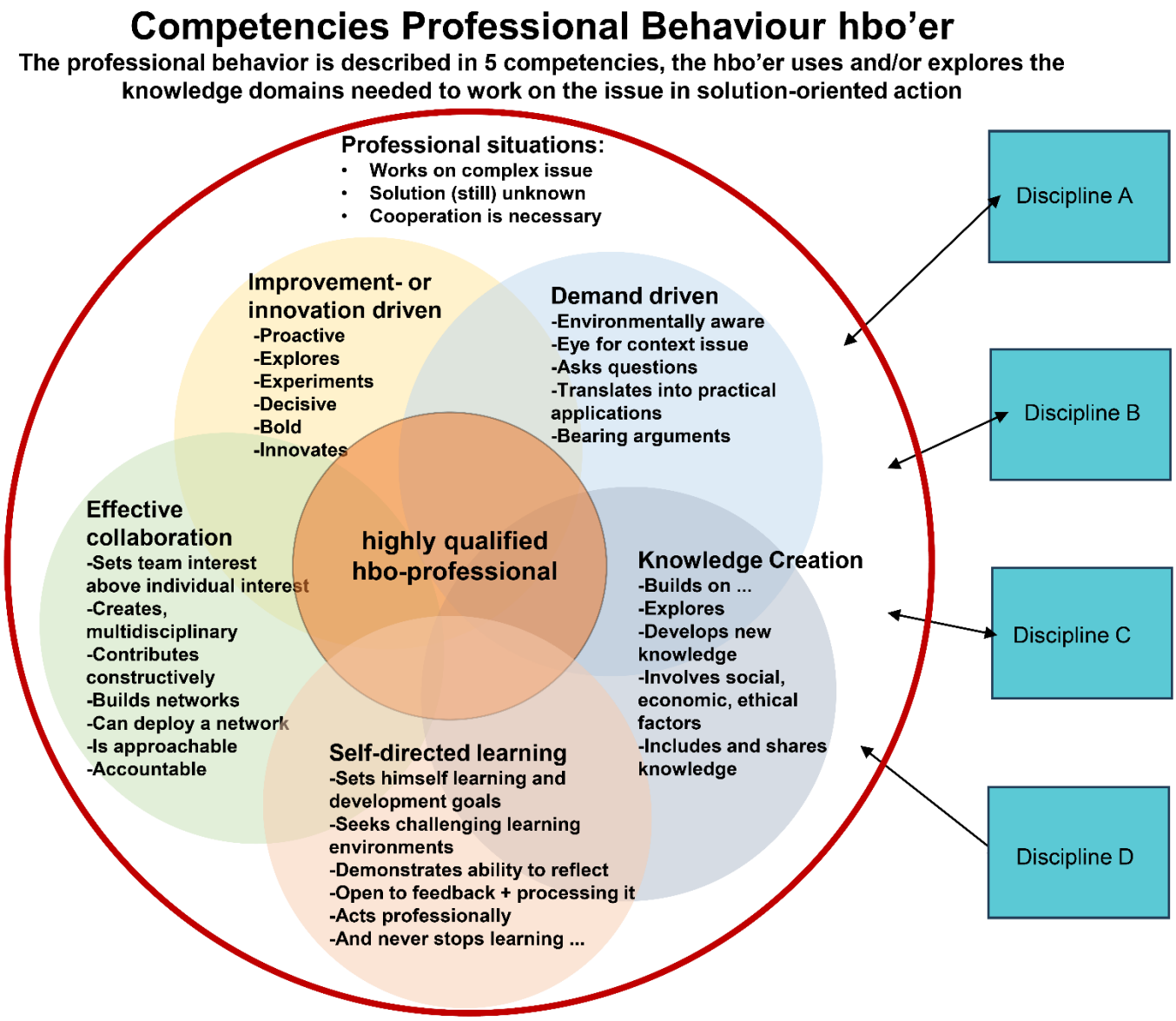
SOLO 5: Extended Abstract level: This can be translated as "extended abstract" and this indicates that it involves an answer beyond the actual topic. This means that SOLO 4 is surpassed by the student because the student is able to transpose ('connect to the world') the solutions found or also the (previously) exhibited or learned behavior to other, new or existing situations. In doing so, the student demonstrates (in aspects relevant to the discipline or issue) the ability to transfer this behavior to other, unfamiliar situations: the 'learning to learn' effect.

SOLO 1	**SOLO 2**	**SOLO 3**	**SOLO 4**	**SOLO 5**
				
Student shows no awareness of what has been helpful in their own development as a professional.	Student can argue some points that have been helpful to their own development as a professional.	Student can argue many points that have been helpful for their own development professionally and personally and can reflect on them effectively (developmentally).	Student can argue (coherently) what has been helpful in their own development professionally and personally at almost all points and can reflect on it effectively (developmentally) and reuse that for further professional and personal development.	The student can (coherently) argue on almost all points what has been helpful for his own development in the professional and personal area, can reflect on it effectively (developmentally) and can use it for further professional and personal development. Student is also able to use that for developments in and communication with the outside world.

Appendix 4: Teacher guide for teaching, coaching and encouraging autonomy development in students.



Appendix 5: Professional Behaviour



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