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Early supported participation in humanities education: a governance architecture towards reciprocal translation

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Article

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Abstract

Public- and practice-facing humanities programmes combine scholarship, consequential tasks, shared authority, support and assessment. A remaining governance problem is how students may enter bounded tasks before a global readiness judgement while academic credit continues to depend on scholarly warrant. This article asks what design architecture can institutionalise early, supported participation while preserving non-compensable epistemic standards, critical independence and movement towards reciprocal translation. A critical integrative synthesis compared literature by function, decision right, boundary and risk, including close Public Humanities, work-integrated-learning and assessment configurations. The resulting programme theory separates a task- and risk-proportionate participation decision from the later credit decision. Six governance functions are organised into five implementation levels and reconnected through a provisional recursive learning and translation cycle. Six locally specified epistemic domains require material minima; organisational approval, employability and reach cannot compensate for a deficiency that defeats the academic inference. A separate four-dimensional programme-learning record has no total score. The contribution is an explicit, contestable allocation of authority and information when these functions conflict. Its value depends on whether it clarifies decisions at acceptable cost compared with simpler arrangements. This literature-derived governance proposal is empirically untested. Students, relevant communities and rights-holders, organisations and university actors must have resourced, role-specific opportunities to revise or reject it before any feasibility pilot.

Introduction

Humanities education develops practices of source interpretation, historical reconstruction, argument analysis and public communication of uncertainty. These become consequential in archives, museums, cultural organisations and civic institutions. Translational Humanities cautions against treating their circulation as delivery of a finished product: meaning, authority and responsibility may change across cultural, material and epistemic boundaries (Ødemark and Engebretsen 2022; Engebretsen et al. 2025). The educational problem concerns two decisions: who may begin a bounded public or practice-facing task, and what evidence warrants academic credit. Conflating them can restrict opportunity or allow external approval to substitute for scholarly justification.

Substantial prior art already connects these concerns. Public Humanities incorporates resourced course co-design, shared authority, accessible design, project phases and sustainability (Dush 2025; Cauvin and Dalal 2025; Wilson 2026). Work-integrated learning (WIL) connects preparation, authentic activity and subsequent synthesis (Ferns et al. 2025). Transdisciplinary environments combine external collaboration with assessment and institutional support (Gulikers et al. 2025); co-creative pedagogy accommodates uncertainty (Kennedy et al. 2026). Assessment models already negotiate academic and workplace validity or combine student-chosen artefacts with explanatory accounts and co-created criteria (van der Merwe et al. 2026; Meyer et al. 2025). An additional project cycle or collection of components would therefore contribute little.

The proposal instead makes potentially conflicting functions separately answerable. It specifies who decides, what evidence may travel, how disagreement is considered and which outcomes cannot

compensate for inadequate academic reasoning. Separation is coupled with explicit connections: relevant external knowledge must enter assessment, while support remains available without becoming a credential signal. Whether this allocation improves decisions beyond existing arrangements is a question to investigate, not a consequence of giving it a new name.

This question presupposes no theory–practice binary. Interpretation, source criticism and normative reasoning are practices in their own right. Their conditions change across settings, but neither public exposure nor immediate usefulness makes them valid. A consequential task can require critical distance, a changed question or justified non-application, rather than delivery of the result initially requested.

Access also depends on resources and institutional judgements. Employability discourse in museum, gallery and heritage education can position students as persistently deficient while relying on unequally available assets (Coffield et al. 2023). Yet widening participation does not establish academic quality: authenticity is context-dependent and cannot stand in for validity (Gulikers et al. 2004; Ashford-Rowe et al. 2014). Impact regimes can likewise privilege measurable uptake over criticism or ambiguity (Bulaitis 2017). Both access and judgement therefore need reasons that remain open to challenge.

This article asks: What humanities-accountable design architecture can be derived from a critical integrative synthesis to institutionalise early, supported participation in public or practice settings while preserving non-compensable epistemic standards, critical independence and movement towards reciprocal translation? The proposed answer concerns an advanced undergraduate track or capstone, potentially adaptable to early master's study. Early means before a global readiness judgement, not early in degree progression. The configuration is one revisable response to the problem. Its contribution is an argued relation among decisions, evidence and responsibilities; it establishes neither priority nor superiority, and it transfers no clinical effects to humanities education.

Methods

Review design and selection

A targeted critical integrative synthesis compared theoretical, empirical, methodological and programme sources. The label describes the work rather than claiming a systematic review or a full Critical Interpretive Synthesis. Integrative-review methods informed comparison of heterogeneous evidence, and Critical Interpretive Synthesis informed iterative category construction (Whittemore and Knafl 2005; Dixon-Woods et al. 2006). The approach identifies tensions and design implications; it cannot estimate effectiveness, prevalence or comparative superiority.

The initial English/German search ran on 23 August 2026, with no lower date limit for foundational work and priority given to 2010–2026. An update on 3 September added 30 query families concerning Public Humanities curricula and authority, WIL governance and equity, assessment and AI, and Supported Education/Individual Placement and Support (IPS). Routes included public and publisher interfaces, DOI resolution, PubMed/PMC, ERIC's public index, repositories and official sites. Scopus, Web of Science, PsycINFO and ProQuest were not searched directly. Supplementary Information S1 records 73 query families,

six bridge searches and 115 historical appraisals, including repeated-source and update entries; these are not independent publications or a systematic screening flow.

Selection concerned a source's function in the argument: construct definition, close prior art, mechanism, transfer boundary or counterposition. Peer-reviewed scholarship was prioritised, while official materials established definitions or programme arrangements. Clinical findings were used only to characterise source constructs and transfer limits. Unsupported promotional claims and efficacy findings without a relevant educational mechanism were excluded. Search combinations, exclusions and field definitions are detailed in S1 and S2.

Appraisal and conceptual derivation

Appraisal was specific to each claim, recording context, evidence type, access, limitations and relevance rather than imposing one quality score. Central claims were checked against the source appraisals; targeted verification on 4 October 2026 revisited key comparison and derivation sources and publication corrections. S1 records these separately in Verification searches and Source checks; they do not constitute a comprehensive literature update. Consulted full-text passages, author manuscripts, official guidance and metadata or abstracts were distinguished; restricted access did not justify claims about unexamined detail.

Claims were differentiated as source findings, synthesis, normative design choices and prospective propositions. Sources were compared by function, decision right, boundary and risk. Recurrent tensions concerned entry to tasks, support, learning, external authority, credit and programme observation. These were grouped into six analytical functions (Table 1). The two decisions distinguish authorisation to participate from justification for credit. Five implementation levels organise the functions for delivery; the recursive cycle proposes how they might interact over time. The six epistemic domains address the adequacy of academic reasons, not six additional organisational functions. Neither these counts nor their arrangement constitutes an empirically discovered taxonomy.

Table 1
Audit trail from recurrent conflict to proposed architecture

Governance function	Evidence-supported antecedent	Recurrent conflict identified in synthesis	Proposed design response	Claim status	Principal reversal condition
Task access	WIL participation and inequality; Supported Education; task-specific responsibility	Readiness protection can become diffuse exclusion; early entry can create harm	Recorded task- and risk-specific participation decision with safeguards, alternatives and appeal (Level 2)	Synthetic relation plus normative rule	Trivial tasks, biased allocation, unsafe exposure or no equivalent route
Voluntary support	Supported Education; inclusive design and adjustment	Support can enable participation but disclosure, surveillance or grading linkage can stigmatise	Three support layers; no diagnosis, uptake or history to assessors; approved assessment conditions only (Level 2)	Evidence-informed normative rule	Scarcity, coercion, deficit labelling or support uptake becoming a credential signal
Whole-task learning	CA; bounded DP evidence	Tacit judgement can remain invisible; measurable fragments can displace complex inquiry	CA around the whole task; proposed eligibility screen and reintegration for micropractice (Level 3; moves 3–7)	CA evidence plus synthetic allocation and heuristic	Single authorised model, poor feedback, atomisation or no whole-task transfer
Plural public/community authority	Translational and Public Humanities; Critical Service Learning; shared-authority cases	A host may not represent affected publics; academic and organisational capture are possible	Actor-and-authority map; differentiated consent, cultural, data and representation rights; answerable dissent and stewardship (Levels 1 and 4)	Evidence-informed normative allocation	Token redesign, unresourced labour, rights breach or university appropriation

The functions are analytical reductions. Five levels organise delivery; two decisions distinguish participation and credit; a recursive cycle reconnects them. Stewardship crosses the categories. Responses and reversal conditions remain prospective.

Alt text. Six functions link antecedents and conflicts to proposed responses, claim status and reversal conditions.

Governance function	Evidence-supported antecedent	Recurrent conflict identified in synthesis	Proposed design response	Claim status	Principal reversal condition
Academic credentialling	Authentic assessment; negotiated WIL validity	Organisational verification can substitute for scholarship; academic criteria can erase contextual knowledge	Locally specified six-domain decision; role-labelled external evidence; reasoned assessment, moderation, revision and appeal (Levels 1 and 5)	Synthetic architecture plus normative non-compensation	Universalised rubric, unexplained academic monopoly or differential bias
Programme-level observation	SSH impact pathways; responsible metrics	Visibility may aid learning but can encourage gaming, surveillance and shadow totals	Four dimensions, no aggregation or ranking, co-interpretation, refusal, deletion and prohibited uses (Level 5)	Normative learning record constrained by prior art	Incentive attachment, partner ranking, hidden total or inability to remove an indicator
The functions are analytical reductions. Five levels organise delivery; two decisions distinguish participation and credit; a recursive cycle reconnects them. Stewardship crosses the categories. Responses and reversal conditions remain prospective.					
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Comparison with close configurations and alternative decision arrangements tested the rationale for separation, including circumstances favouring task-specific preparation, holistic judgement or shared assessment. Unreported features were not treated as absent in practice. Trust, care, historical obligation and stewardship cross the categories; other mappings remain possible. Supported Education and inclusive higher-education practice led the access analysis. IPS, Cognitive Apprenticeship (CA) and Deliberate Practice (DP) retained distinct origins and purposes. FRAME and ADAPT informed documentation of function, context, modification and uncertainty (Stirman et al. 2013; Wiltsey Stirman et al. 2019; Moore et al. 2021), without validating cross-domain transfer. The construct boundaries and IPS audit remain in S1.

Artificial intelligence declaration

Generative AI tools (Open AI; ChatGPT) were used during the early development of this manuscript for initial brainstorming and preliminary mapping of potentially relevant literature, and subsequently for English-language copy editing. The author independently evaluated all AI-assisted suggestions, developed the manuscript's arguments and conclusions, and reviewed and revised the final text. All cited sources,

bibliographic details, and their relevance to the claims for which they are cited were independently verified by the author. The author accepts full responsibility for the accuracy, integrity, and content of the manuscript.

Cross-domain findings

Humanities foundations for translation and critique

Critical work on knowledge translation questions the image of stable knowledge transported from expert producer to passive user. Knowledge is embodied, negotiated and changed through social relations (Greenhalgh and Wieringa 2011; Ødemark and Engebretsen 2022). Engebretsen et al. (2025) develop this argument for healthcare education through uncertainty, contested framings and attention to marginalised voices. Their setting differs from a general humanities curriculum, but the epistemic implication matters: context can alter what a question means and what counts as an adequate response.

For humanities education, translation may therefore involve identifying an archival silence, contesting a normative premise, slowing an intervention or explaining why application is unwarranted. These are educational possibilities derived here, not outcomes demonstrated by the cited work. Critical independence is compatible with engagement because answering another actor's question may require challenging its terms.

This does not presume academic epistemic superiority. Organisations, collaborating communities, affected people and rights-holders can contribute practical, experiential, interpretive and normative knowledge that changes the categories or method. A host is not automatically representative of those affected, and neither institutional affiliation nor lived experience settles every disagreement. Movement towards reciprocity requires opportunities for assumptions on all sides to change, alongside reasoned refusal and silence. Scholarly responsibility includes explaining why material external knowledge does or does not alter an interpretation.

Reciprocity requires rights and resources

Critical Service Learning foregrounds social change, redistribution of power and authentic relationships (Mitchell 2008). Later case work illustrates the reflection, institutional support and relational labour involved (Maddox and Trost 2025). Partnership presence or a public product cannot by itself establish reciprocity. Historical analysis of asymmetric museum co-curation likewise shows that shared labour may coexist with unequal authority over classification, display and publication (Chan 2026). This is a warning about authority, not evidence that all contemporary partnerships reproduce the same pattern.

The normative response proposed here is to differentiate roles and attach resources and contestable rights to them. Communities must be able to influence questions and representation; rights-holders must control specified uses; students need protection from coerced disclosure and replacement of paid labour. Payment is the ordinary response to substantial external labour, expertise, supervision or access. Recognition alone does not discharge that obligation. Agreements and remuneration are necessary design commitments in this proposal, but cannot prove reciprocity or remove the time and conflict through which relationships develop.

WIL as curriculum and institutional precedent

WIL supplies a mature account of preparation, meaningful activity with an external stakeholder and synthesis during or after experience (Ferns et al. 2025). Kennedy et al. (2026) show how community-based co-creation can engage uncertainty without predetermining the product. In eleven Dutch transdisciplinary environments, Gulikers et al. (2025) examine collaboration alongside support, assessment and institutional conditions. These precedents constrain any claim to have newly connected theory, participation and reflection.

Employment outcomes provide a different kind of evidence. Jackson and Cook (2025) associate work-based WIL with short-term employment outcomes among Australian humanities, arts and social sciences graduates, but selection, confounding and the absence of field-specific epistemic measures limit transfer to this question. Equity-deserving co-op students also identify needs for clearer information, accessible accommodations, reporting routes and protection against reprisals (Ademuyiwa et al. 2026). Participation and employment cannot establish either academic warrant or equitable burden.

German dual study adds a structural analogy: curricular, organisational and contractual links connect learning sites (Hofmann et al. 2025). Its institutional classification and voluntary registry do not establish conceptual novelty or authorise a dual-degree claim. The relevant design questions concern explicit roles, resources, time and agreements. They remain open within WIL itself, rather than requiring a new label to become visible.

Whole-task learning and bounded practice

CA makes normally tacit judgement accessible through modelling, coaching, scaffolding, articulation, reflection and exploration in meaningful tasks (Collins et al. 1991). A review of graduate STEM applications found incomplete reporting of methods and sequencing (Minshew et al. 2021), cautioning against treating the label as an adequate intervention description. In a humanities task, modelling might expose how provenance is checked, textual detail supports an interpretation or a normative premise differs from an empirical claim.

Whole-task guidance need not occur in a workplace or turn a mentor's judgement into an authorised interpretation. Multiple models and countermodels allow students to compare reasons. Scaffolding can recede without requiring conformity, and exploration may include rejecting the brief. The design use of CA is to make judgement discussable while preserving the complexity that gives a task its educational value.

DP has a narrower role. Cross-domain evidence associates practice with performance to varying degrees and is sensitive to definitions and measures (Macnamara et al. 2014). A psychotherapy review similarly describes an early evidence base with limited guidance on delivery (Nurse et al. 2025). Neither licenses an expertise guarantee or a humanities effect estimate. The proposed CA–DP relation is an allocation of learning activities, not a validated sequence or a novel pairing.

A provenance check may permit repeated attempts and informative correction. The final meaning of a poem or weighting of historical causes does not become a suitable practice target merely because a rubric can be

written. The eligibility screen at Level 3 therefore limits micropractice to tractable subskills and requires return to the whole artefact. Local improvement without that return would challenge the proposed mechanism.

Educational support and the limited IPS analogy

Supported Education is the education-facing comparator. Galvaan et al.'s (2026) review of 17 papers identifies heterogeneous definitions and programmes organised around educational goals, context-specific support and co-production. Jain et al. (2026) report limited, heterogeneous transition-intervention evidence, commonly dependent on disclosure. These mental-health-focused literatures do not validate a universal humanities support model. Inclusive course design, confidential adjustments, Supported Education and referral to specialist services remain distinct arrangements.

Standard IPS concerns supported employment for people with serious mental illness; young-adult services can integrate education and training within mental-health provision (IPS Employment Center n.d.; Jäckel et al. 2025). Its relevance here is dispensable and heuristic. Rapid pursuit of preferred employment prompts a question about diffuse readiness delays; preference, opportunity development and continuing support prompt questions already visible in inclusive education and WIL. Zero exclusion concerns access to an eligible service, not removal of task-specific consent or safety conditions. Clinical populations, treatment structures, fidelity criteria and effects are not transferred.

CA has also been used for staff development in behavioural-health career services drawing on IPS-related principles (Dolce et al. 2025), ruling out a generic component-pairing claim. Deleting the IPS label leaves the proposed functions intact. Its use is justified only where the comparison makes an access assumption more explicit, not where it imports clinical authority.

Contribution relative to strong alternatives

Table 2 compares the strongest relevant contributions of close models. The residual question is whether explicit authority and information rules improve deliberation when opportunity, support, public use and credit pull in different directions. Absence of the proposal's exact combination in a published account establishes neither a practical gap nor its necessity.

Table 2
Prior-art contributions and questions for the proposed arrangement

Prior art	Established contribution	Question for the proposed arrangement
Integrated Public Humanities (Wilson, 2026)	Upskilling, universal design, shared authority, project phases and sustainability are already integrated.	Does explicitly separating participation, credit and information rights improve decisions beyond this existing integration?
Participatory public history (Cauvin and Dalal, 2025)	Participation and authority vary by task and phase; scholarly responsibility remains explicit.	Can additional support and credit rules protect relevant rights without displacing shared authority?
Resourced co-design and partnerships (Dush, 2025; Cho et al., 2025)	Dush describes course release, community grants and paid student fellows; Cho foregrounds relational labour and risk redistribution.	Do separate decision roles clarify accountability at acceptable administrative and relational cost?
WIL curriculum and co-creation (Ferns et al., 2025; Gulikers et al., 2025; Kennedy et al., 2026)	Ferns specifies curriculum phases; Gulikers examines institutional conditions; Kennedy emphasises co-creation through productive uncertainty without predetermined outcomes.	Does the proposed arrangement add useful safeguards without imposing fixed learning sequences?
Negotiated WIL assessment (van der Merwe et al., 2026)	Academic validity and workplace evidence require negotiated interpretation through communication between employers and academic coordinators.	Can accountable credit decisions answer material external evidence without giving academic actors an epistemic monopoly?
Student-devised assessment (Meyer et al., 2025)	Flexible artefacts, explanatory accounts, co-created criteria and moderation already support attribution and agency.	Does material non-compensation improve defensibility without narrowing legitimate interpretation or increasing bias?
The comparison states open questions, not established deficiencies. Unreported features are not evidence of absence. The full comparison appears in the Prior art sheet of Supplementary Information S1, linked to source appraisals and access limits.		
Alt text. Six comparisons identify substantial overlap and ask whether the proposed allocation adds value.		

A preparation-first arrangement can legitimately postpone a task when requirements are transparent, specific, proportionate and time-limited. The objection concerns diffuse person-level prediction, not preparation. Holistic assessment can already enforce essential minima and give reasons; it need not permit arbitrary compensation. Shared partner–university assessment can likewise specify validity claims, conflicts and appeals. It is not inherently less accountable than a university credit decision. Conversely, reserving credit to academics does not justify ignoring external knowledge.

The proposed configuration makes these obligations explicit while distinguishing authority over credit from authority over representation and use. Its rationale is strongest where the same person's support history, a commissioner's approval or a programme indicator could silently determine a student's result. Separation

can nevertheless fragment responsibility, delay help and increase administrative or relational labour. If a simpler Public Humanities or WIL arrangement handles the same conflicts, rights and evidence equally well at lower cost, the additional architecture has no demonstrated advantage.

This is a literature-derived governance proposal for humanities curricula. Its acceptability and burden have not been tested. Relevant actors must be able to change its terminology, functions and rules, or reject implementation; the proposed redesign process below gives that requirement practical meaning.

Governance architecture and programme theory

Participation and credit as distinct decisions

The participation decision asks whether a particular task is accessible, permissible, authorised by relevant actors and supported in proportion to contextual risk. It does not certify a person as globally practice-ready. The credit decision concerns individually attributable academic reasoning under published, field-specific requirements. Early participation grants neither unrestricted responsibility nor exemption from necessary preparation. Equally, demanding credit criteria need not justify withholding every bounded opportunity to learn.

Both decisions belong to one credit-bearing curriculum. Professional entrustment provides a limited analogy for distinguishing supervised participation from authorised responsibility (ten Cate and Taylor 2021), but its activities and standards are not a humanities template. Here, a gate means a recorded, reasoned and appealable decision. It is neither an objective measure of a student trait nor a universal rubric. Academic minima concern material deficiencies in warrant, not error-free performance.

Separating participation and credit, protecting voluntary support from grading, differentiating external authority and preventing compensation by uptake are commitments of this particular configuration. They may be revised or rejected during redesign; doing so changes the proposal being evaluated. Duration, credit volume, task form, terminology and learning sequence are locally adaptable. The five levels organise implementation, while the functions identify responsibilities that can conflict across those levels. For example, external authority shapes both the initial task and subsequent interpretation; stewardship continues across the whole arrangement.

Level 1 Epistemic basis and protection

An actor-and-authority map distinguishes the host or commissioner, collaborating communities, affected people and rights-holders, audiences and university roles. Relevant actors develop a brief specifying the question, sources, field practices, foreseeable harms, cultural and legal protocols, and decision rights. Community-held knowledge may change the question or criteria rather than merely supply contextual detail. Protected theory time and source access continue throughout participation.

The university is answerable for credit and the scholarly judgement in a restricted academic submission. Rights-holders control agreed uses of names, protected materials, data and cultural expressions. Public

release must satisfy consent, confidentiality, cultural protocols and foreseeable-harm safeguards as well as law; legality alone is insufficient. Representation and use disputes require an agreed joint or genuinely independent process. Restricted submission or an equivalent task should preserve assessability where possible.

Before students commit, the programme approves a versioned local assessment specification connecting module outcomes to field practices, task opportunities and accessible evidence. Relevant actors contribute within their responsibilities. The specification makes the inference to credit inspectable, including its limits and possible unintended consequences. Later changes cannot operate retrospectively against a student.

Level 2 Access and adaptive support

Matching considers interests, functional access requirements, task conditions, host capacity, risk, prior learning and alternatives. Its recorded outcome is eligibility now, eligibility with safeguards, an alternative task or re-matching. Written reasons and rapid review by someone outside the original decision are available. Every student needs an academically equivalent consequential route when an external task is inaccessible, unsafe or dependent on unwanted disclosure. Equivalent outcomes and epistemic requirements must be accompanied by comparable resources, recognition, contextual response and progression opportunity; allocation and prestige remain open to audit.

The derivation of the support rule illustrates the reasoning from source to design. Galvaan et al. (2026) describe heterogeneous, contextualised educational support; Jain et al. (2026) identify disclosure dependence in transition provision. The synthesis locates a tension between obtaining timely help and preserving autonomy within assessment. The normative choice is to share necessary functional conditions without transferring diagnosis, support history or uptake to graders. The proposed mechanism is continuity of help without turning help-seeking into evidence of competence. Scarcity, delay, stigma, coercion or information leakage would count against it. An integrated service achieving the same protections with fewer handovers could be preferable.

Three layers implement that choice: universally available inclusive design and practical support, confidential needs-based adjustment through a designated support function, and optional student-directed referral to ordinary specialist services. Mentors and hosts receive only authorised functional information, subject to specific legal or immediate safety duties. A confidential university contact outside the host and assessment chain can receive complaints and pause work. Protection against retaliation covers grades, references and re-matching. Support continues through pause and re-entry; declining support or optional data collection is never a credential signal.

Level 3 Whole-task learning and bounded micropractice

A mentor models the whole task, including uncertainty, failed approaches and competing interpretations. Coaching addresses the student's work; scaffolds reduce unnecessary complexity while preserving the epistemic problem. Articulation makes reasons available for discussion, reflection compares alternatives

and exploration widens responsibility. Community and practitioner mentors can model interpretive, experiential and normative knowledge as well as contextual expertise. Multiple models are intended to keep academic jurisdiction over credit from becoming an epistemic hierarchy.

Optional micropractice requires five affirmative answers: is the target specific, observable, repeatable without manufacturing a false problem, open to feedback that identifies correction rather than preference, and capable of reintegration into the whole task? Otherwise learning remains within dialogue, extended inquiry or reflective comparison. An eligible cycle records the target and baseline attempt, the model or feedback provider, evidence for correction, revision, variation and return to the whole artefact. It never independently establishes general judgement. These questions and their sequence are prospective heuristics; a useful but non-repeatable interpretive encounter need not be forced into them.

Level 4 Reciprocal translation

External relationships become epistemically productive when relevant actors can co-define questions, correct verifiable errors, contest interpretations and contribute evidence that changes the work. The student's scholarly warrant explains how material external input altered, failed to alter or sharpened the argument, including unresolved disagreement. Academic conclusions may remain critical while legitimate rights or consent conditions prevent public use.

Reciprocity is neither symmetry nor satisfaction, and a log cannot prove it. An agreed minimum record can make influence, disagreement and refusal inspectable without treating silence or protected non-recording as failure. Its purpose, burden ceiling, access and annotation rights are settled in advance. Substantial evaluation labour is paid. Agreements cover student costs, external labour, attribution, custody, complaint, pause and exit. If affected actors cannot revise these terms within their authority, the arrangement fails its feasibility condition. Refusal may protect a relationship or expose an unjust demand rather than indicate unsuccessful learning.

Level 5 Assessment governance and programme learning

Programme coordination is responsible for matching, due diligence, accessibility, complaints and re-matching. Assessment governance connects the local specification to external evidence, individual warrant, moderation, revision and appeal. It also keeps the purposes and access rights of information distinct. These are operational responsibilities, not merely assurances that data are confidential. A mentor's conflict must not follow a student into the final appeal, and the programme must resource genuinely independent judgement. The assessment procedure and data rules below specify how this level relates to the other four; a programme that assigns incompatible roles to one person cannot claim to have implemented the separation.

A recursive learning and translation cycle

Figure 1 connects the levels through a provisional ten-move heuristic: matching and framing; bounded participation; modelling and theory; diagnosis of a learning gap; eligible micropractice; a consequential contribution; articulation and reflection; external interpretation or challenge; critical return to theory; and revision, justified non-use, handover and stewardship. External input and support can enter throughout. Moves may recur, overlap or be omitted; micropractice is omitted when specification would distort the task. The cycle is not a causal dose or fixed chronology.

Early contact may reveal questions that general readiness prediction misses. It does not displace theory or supervised approximation. The programme theory connects situated experience with explicit reasoning and reconsideration, while retaining productive uncertainty about the question, interpretation and eventual use.

Disciplinary contrast cases

A feasibility pilot requires costed capacity for student access, external labour, coordination, independent assessment and stewardship before recruitment. Students may collaborate, but credit requires identifiable individual reasoning and responsibility, not individual ownership of a jointly created artefact. The S2 subsection Prospective implementation assumptions details the illustrative costing scenario and start conditions. The following cases specify differences the architecture must accommodate.

In public history, a provenance investigation or exhibition segment could begin with a bounded object biography. Source criticism and archival silence must meet oral, collection-based and community-held knowledge. Risk depends on people, histories, rights and downstream use, not the task label alone. A collecting institution cannot stand for every living, originating or marginalised community. Relevant cultural authority and consent may require restricted use or refusal. The credit decision concerns the historical warrant rather than visitor numbers (Cauvin and Dalal 2025; International Council of Museums 2026).

In philosophy or ethics, a briefing or deliberative resource requires distinctions among facts, values, principles and counterarguments. Field-based philosophy shows how disadvantaged people's lived experience can challenge descriptions and conceptions of injustice (Halldenius and Petersén 2025). Experience can thus alter conceptual adequacy without automatically settling the normative conclusion. Micropractice might address an invalid inference, while the complete judgement remains open to argument. A student may conclude that a requested policy lacks warrant.

Literary and cultural interpretation provides a limiting case. A public essay, dialogue or account of contested representation may be useful precisely because it retains ambiguity. Modelling can show several defensible readings; practice can address textual evidence or audience explanation without selecting one correct meaning. Dialogue, refusal, preserved tension and non-application must remain legitimate outcomes. An architecture requiring convergence on a usable product would cease to serve this kind of humanities inquiry.

Shared questions and field-specific evidence

The six epistemic domains organise reasons needed to defend a humanities judgement. Provenance identifies the evidence; method and context govern its interpretation; claim–evidence fit limits inference; counterpositions test reasoning; reflexivity examines dependence on interests and assumptions; integrity governs responsible knowledge-making. This is a normative grouping of possible failures, not a claim that the domains are exclusive or statistically independent. Table 3 shows how their evidence differs across fields. Non-canonical, multilingual and community-generated forms may meet local requirements. Warranted disagreement can pass, and agreement can fail. The question is whether these distinctions improve accountable judgement without standardising legitimate interpretation away.

Table 3
Field-specific evidence profiles for the six non-compensable domains

Domain	Public history example	Philosophy/ethics example	Literary/cultural interpretation example	Example of failure despite external success
1. Accuracy and provenance	Custody, dating, source context, archival silence, oral/community-held knowledge and access restrictions	Faithful account of positions and status of factual premises	Edition, textual location, language and attribution	Popular output relies on a misdated object, straw position or misquotation
2. Method, context and limits	Source criticism and justified inference from incomplete records	Conceptual or normative method and scope of a case	Close reading or contextual method appropriate to form and genre	Partner approves a result reached by an unsuitable or undisclosed method
3. Claim–evidence fit and uncertainty	Claims calibrated to corroboration and gaps	Empirical and normative claims distinguished; uncertainty stated	Interpretive claims tied to textual and contextual evidence	High reach or satisfaction masks overclaiming
4. Interpretive/normative reasoning	Rival narratives and consequences of selection considered	Counterpositions, premises and implications addressed	Multiple defensible readings and ambiguity considered	A persuasive product suppresses a serious counter-reading
5. Critical independence and reflexivity	Institution's preferred heritage story can be revised or refused	Requested policy conclusion can be rejected with reasons	Promotional framing can be resisted; non-use can be justified	Student reproduces partner or personal assumptions without examination
The domains guide local specification, not scoring. Only a material deficiency blocks credit. Field-specific evidence and thresholds require redesign, moderation, reasons, revision and appeal; any subsequent grade is holistic.				
Alt text. History, ethics and literary interpretation require different evidence; external success cannot repair material scholarly failures.				

Domain	Public history example	Philosophy/ethics example	Literary/cultural interpretation example	Example of failure despite external success
6. Integrity, ethics, rights and attribution	Consent, cultural authority, privacy, collective/data rights, IP and responsible representation	Conflicts, affected parties and accountable use of sources/tools	Rights, cultural sensitivity, voice and transparent transformations	Attractive artefact breaches protocol, confidentiality, rights or attribution; unaccountable AI use is one possible instance
The domains guide local specification, not scoring. Only a material deficiency blocks credit. Field-specific evidence and thresholds require redesign, moderation, reasons, revision and appeal; any subsequent grade is holistic.				
Alt text. History, ethics and literary interpretation require different evidence; external success cannot repair material scholarly failures.				

Safeguards and assessment

Material epistemic minima

Credit requires an artefact or documented non-use decision, an individually attributable scholarly warrant, selected process evidence and a construct-equivalent defence. The local specification addresses six domains separately: (1) factual or source accuracy and provenance; (2) field-appropriate method, context and transparent limits; (3) claim–evidence fit and uncertainty; (4) interpretive or normative reasoning with counterpositions; (5) critical independence and reflexivity; and (6) integrity, ethics, privacy, rights and accountable attribution. Generative AI can affect evidence in all six; declaration, verification and attribution of material transformations belong particularly to domain 6.

Non-compensation applies when a material deficiency defeats the academic inference for a domain, not whenever an error occurs. Assessors record meets or not yet with reasons. Weights and averages cannot allow organisational praise, reach, employability or polish to repair inadequate warrant. Once all minima are met, any required grade is holistic under published field rules. Plural exemplars, collaboration and tool conditions, roles, revision and appeal are specified prospectively.

The defence samples reasons, source decisions and counterpositions. It cannot introduce undisclosed requirements, rescue an inadequate warrant or fail sufficient work for presentation style. Live, recorded, written or mixed formats must support the same inference; spontaneous eloquence is not the construct. These are normative assessment commitments, not a validated psychometric instrument.

Independent judgement with answerable external evidence

The workflow has six stages. First, approve the specification and opportunity to produce evidence. Second, invite role-labelled external statements on facts, context, interpretation, consequences, rights and unresolved concerns, excluding personality and employability ratings. Third, receive the student's warrant, contribution and transformation account, and response. Fourth, make reasoned domain decisions that answer material external evidence, including conflicts among statements. Fifth, independently moderate every initial not yet, borderline or conflicted case and a purposive sample of meets decisions. Sixth, permit feedback-informed revision and student appeal. Moderation records disagreement rather than manufacturing consensus.

One resubmission is available within a published window; ordinary adjustment and exceptional-circumstances routes remain. Academic appeal, rights or representation challenge and programme complaint have separate standing, timeframes and recusal rules. External actors can contest misrepresentation or use without awarding credit. Delayed responses cannot indefinitely block submission. If restricted assessment cannot preserve both rights and sufficient evidence, work stops and an equivalent route is offered.

Assessors receive approved conditions, never diagnoses or support histories. Adjustments may change timing, modality, setting or communication support while preserving the intended inference. Supervised peer review offers another source of assessment evidence (Valencia-Forrester 2026), but cannot replace individual warrant or independent moderation in this proposal. A mentor or participant in a disputed event cannot decide the final appeal. Such independence has costs that must enter the feasibility judgement.

Programme learning without aggregation

Four dimensions are read alongside one another: learning; translation and reciprocity; critical and public value; and equity, autonomy and sustainability. Evidence can include artefact trajectories, changed questions, dissent, use and non-use, access, costs and stewardship. SSH impact research identifies heterogeneous pathways and attribution limits (Muhonen et al. 2020; Reale et al. 2018); responsible-metrics guidance subordinates indicators to interpretation (Hicks et al. 2015; Wilsdon et al. 2015).

No total score is permitted. Programme information cannot determine student selection, grades, staff performance judgements, partner rankings or funding formulae. Students and relevant external actors interpret each dimension with academic staff and may refuse an indicator or quantitative representation. They review prohibited uses and tool conditions at least annually. Wellbeing is not a standing outcome; any optional harm monitoring requires a separate, time-limited purpose and appropriate consent and review. Missing observations cannot establish absence of value or harm.

Power and information safeguards

Indicators and narratives require scrutiny of who defines success, who benefits, who bears unpaid work or exposure, what values are displaced and what incentives might induce. An indicator can be revised or deleted. Agreements must also assign custody, maintenance or sunset, future access and relationship closure: community archives can become precarious when institutional and technical support recedes

(Wingo and Anderson 2025). Critical analysis does not override consent, confidentiality or cultural protocols. Student access costs and external labour need separate budgets; a record of participation cannot excuse extraction.

Five data streams have separate purposes, access rights and deletion events: credential, limited learning-process, partnership/translation, operational support/adjustment, and voluntary programme-equity data. Support records cannot feed equity evaluation. Three attribution checkpoints suffice as the proposed minimum: an initial source or method decision, one consequential revision and the final warrant or equivalent defence. These checkpoints are intended to limit surveillance and must not be used for cumulative grading. AI-detection scores, prompt histories, browser logs and keystroke capture are prohibited. Non-collection is the default; a steward specifies lawful basis, retention, deletion and breach response. Identifiable narratives and small cells require suppression or specific consent. Protected material cannot enter external generative-AI systems without relevant authority, contractual protection and permission. Refusal of optional data collection carries no penalty.

Testable propositions and pilot pathway

Six propositions express possible mechanisms and reversal conditions, one per governance function. S1 maps their prospective evidence traces and failures.

P1. Task-specific access may enable earlier consequential participation without changing final epistemic criteria. Replacing diffuse readiness prediction with a risk- and support-specific decision is the proposed mechanism. Trivial tasks, unfair allocation, inadequate partner capacity or harm would reverse it.

P2. Visible, voluntary and continuing support may reduce avoidable interruption while preserving autonomy. The mechanism is timely problem-solving without diagnostic disclosure to teaching or assessment. Scarcity, stigma, surveillance, coercion or overprotection would reverse it.

P3. Whole-task CA with only eligible, reintegrated micropractice may make a learning gap more tractable without atomising judgement. Evidence must connect a named target and feedback source to change in the whole artefact. Template compliance, inconsistent feedback or local improvement without reintegration counts against the proposition.

P4. Resourced co-definition and structured external response may make traces of reciprocal influence, disagreement and refusal inspectable. Documentation alone neither proves reciprocity nor requires either party to change its view. Token consultation, overload, extraction, compulsory recording or suppressed dissent would reverse it.

P5. A separate, reason-giving epistemic decision may prevent external success from substituting for scholarly warrant while still incorporating role-labelled external evidence. Local criteria, moderation, revision and appeal are necessary conditions. Unexplained dismissal of material external knowledge, cultural narrowing or differential gate bias would count against it.

P6. A non-aggregated, co-interpreted programme-learning record may keep plural value and harm visible. Shadow ranking, incentive attachment, missing negative cases or inability to delete a harmful indicator would count against the claimed separation.

These propositions distinguish partial mechanisms from overall success. Earlier participation with unequal costs could support an access pathway while challenging its equity conditions. Better provenance exercises without better source use in the capstone would challenge reintegration. A well-received artefact with weak warrant illustrates the decision problem; it cannot establish that this exact configuration is necessary. Alternative explanations include additional resources, mentor attention and selection of unusually capable partners. Evaluation must examine these before attributing any change to the arrangement itself.

An initial paid or credited, accessible redesign phase would involve humanities students, including disabled students and varied support experiences, relevant communities and rights-holders, organisations, academics, support staff and assessment specialists. Participation must not compel personal narrative. Actors may revise or reject terminology, functions, criteria, rights, budgets and indicators within their responsibilities, record dissent or reject the pilot. The resulting protocol identifies which commitments it retains or changes, making redesign substantive rather than retrospective endorsement.

A formative pilot would ask whether decisions and data remain distinct, whether pause, complaint, revision and appeal are usable, and whether equivalent routes avoid unequal burdens or lower status. Minimal evidence could include access and decision records, task distribution, workload, pauses, domain reasons, moderation disagreements and consented interviews. Negative cases and reasons for non-participation matter without requiring disclosure. Comparison with less administratively demanding arrangements should examine whether the same protections can be maintained. No effectiveness endpoint is warranted at this stage.

Implementation research identifies contextual policy interpretation, collaboration, leadership relationships and institutional barriers in WIL (Raza 2026; Ruskin et al. 2026; Dalrymple 2026). It does not establish optimal staffing for this proposal. Recruitment requires resourced coordination, equivalent routes, independent assessment and appeal, stewardship, and prospective ethics and data-protection review for any personal-data collection. No-go conditions include missing consent or rights authority for the relevant use, unresolved safety, unpaid substitution, suppression of an internally assessable conclusion, lack of an equivalent route or independent credit decision, and data systems unable to separate and delete. Students and external actors must be able to pause or leave without academic retaliation.

Limitations and positionality

The searches to 3 September 2026 and targeted verification on 4 October were not exhaustive. They did not directly search several proprietary databases, reconstruct a systematic screening flow or capture every locally described curriculum. English/German terms and publicly reachable routes favour sources legible to academic search systems. Practitioner protocols, community archives, oral knowledge and other languages are underrepresented. Earlier access records and current retrieval limits are distinguished in the supporting documentation. Close configurations are concentrated in North American, European and Australian contexts;

a South African WIL comparator and the broader Supported Education synthesis do not remove that limitation.

The choice of neighbouring traditions and function boundaries is interpretative. Other mappings could privilege inclusive pedagogy, community-engaged scholarship or disciplinary assessment. The proposal best fits bounded collaborations with identifiable responsibilities; it cannot be assumed to travel to diffuse publics, grassroots formations, Indigenous governance or contested representation. Tables make an allocation inspectable without rendering it neutral. No students, community members or organisational actors participated empirically in developing this article. Acceptability, language, authority and burden therefore require prospective redesign, not a claim of stakeholder validation.

Cross-domain analogies carry further limits. IPS remains a population-bound mental-health and vocational service; Supported Education has heterogeneous rehabilitation origins and educational settings. Neither validates a general humanities curriculum. CA and DP have different genealogies and uneven evidence, while professional entrustment and German dual study rely on institutions that do not transfer automatically. The architecture is unvalidated, resource-intensive and sensitive to field, organisation and community. Separating roles may be infeasible or obstruct necessary communication. The term epistemic gate may imply more determinacy than judgement permits. Local exemplars, moderation and appeal are proposed responses to that risk, not a prior solution to it.

The synthesis foregrounds supported participation, focused practice and outcome governance; that starting point does not confer disciplinary authority over humanities curricula. Internal simulated criticism, disclosed in the AI declaration, supplies neither independent expertise nor empirical evidence. Explicit non-analogies and claim calibration help expose choices but cannot replace substantive engagement with those whose knowledge, work and rights implementation would affect.

Conclusion

The synthesis answers the research question with a provisional allocation of authority and evidence. A bounded opportunity to participate is distinguished from the later judgement that a student's academic warrant meets locally specified requirements. Learning and reciprocal translation connect those decisions. Differentiated rights and information rules prohibit substituting organisational success or support history for academic warrant. The architecture's contribution lies in making conflicts and their proposed resolution contestable.

Conceptual coherence does not establish effectiveness, fairness or reciprocity. Resourced redesign must precede any feasibility pilot, with dissent, non-use, unequal burden, assessment bias and failed transfer treated as evidence. Relevant actors retain authority to reject uses and arrangements that affect their rights; academics remain answerable for how external knowledge enters credit decisions.

If these distinctions cannot be sustained, or a simpler arrangement achieves the same protections at lower cost, revision or rejection is warranted. Reciprocal translation includes changes to the educational design itself, rather than requiring others to accommodate its categories.

Data availability

The source records and analytical materials supporting this conceptual synthesis are provided as Supplementary Information S1 (HSSC_Supplementary_Information_S1.xlsx) and S2 (HSSC_Supplementary_Information_S2.docx). S1 contains the historical search documentation and evidence ledger, separately dated source-verification searches and checks, the full prior-art comparison, and the derivation, construct-boundary, transfer, epistemic-profile and proposition matrices. S2 explains selection, appraisal fields, relevance questions, conceptual derivation and prospective implementation assumptions. Source publications are identified by references, DOIs or URLs; their full texts are not redistributed. The supplementary materials are available to editors and referees without access restrictions. No participant-level or experimental data were generated, and no statistical analyses were performed; statistical analysis code is therefore not applicable.

Declarations

Competing interests

The author declares no competing interests.

Author Contribution

E.N. is only author.

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Generative AI tools (Open AI; ChatGPT) were used during the early development of this manuscript for initial brainstorming and preliminary mapping of potentially relevant literature, and subsequently for English-language copy editing. The author independently evaluated all AI-assisted suggestions, developed the manuscript's arguments and conclusions, and reviewed and revised the final text. All cited sources, bibliographic details, and their relevance to the claims for which they are cited were independently verified by the author. The author accepts full responsibility for the accuracy, integrity, and content of the manuscript.

Data Availability

The source records and analytical materials supporting this conceptual synthesis are provided as Supplementary Information S1 (HSSC_Supplementary_Information_S1.xlsx) and S2 (HSSC_Supplementary_Information_S2.docx). S1 contains the historical search documentation and evidence ledger, separately dated source-verification searches and checks, the full prior-art comparison, and the derivation, construct-boundary, transfer, epistemic-profile and proposition matrices. S2 explains selection, appraisal fields, relevance questions, conceptual derivation and prospective implementation assumptions.

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Figures

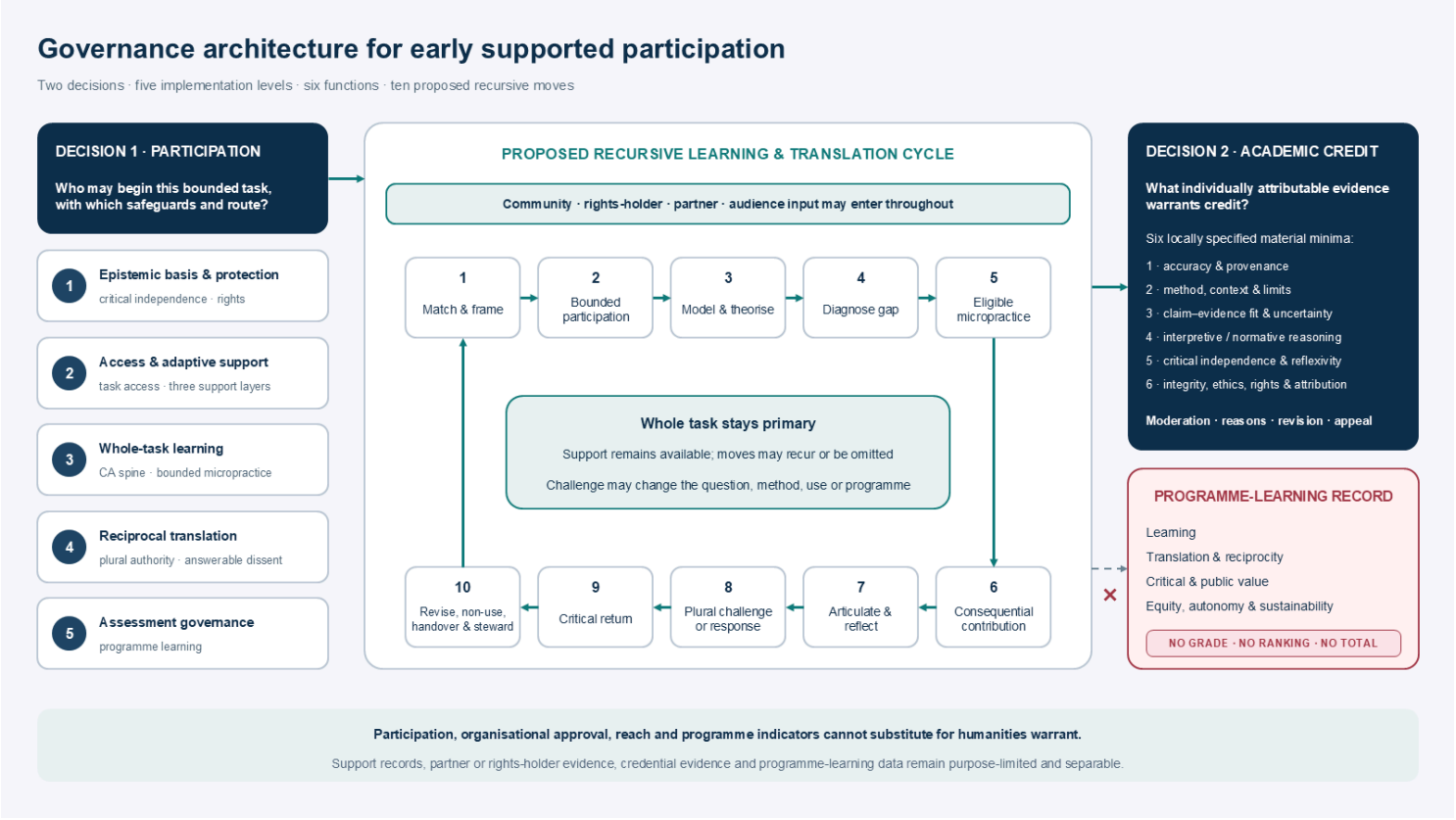


Figure 1

Legend not included with this version.

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