New Zealand Association for Cooperative Education

2017 Conference Proceedings

Celebrating 25 Years with Lifelong Learning

26th – 27th of April, 2017, Queenstown, New Zealand

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Front cover: Lake Wakatipu, Queenstown, New Zealand
New Zealand Association for Cooperative Education
2017 Conference Proceedings

Refereed Proceedings of the 20th New Zealand Association for Cooperative Education Conference, held 26th – 28th April, 2017, at the St Moritz Hotel, Queenstown, New Zealand.

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All papers were double-blind peer reviewed and amended before accepted for publication

The New Zealand Association for Cooperative Education gratefully thank our sponsors: Ako Aotearoa, and Massey University.

Published by New Zealand Association for Cooperative Education
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Available online: www.nzace.ac.nz
CONTENTS

Developing a sustainable model for international sport-based work-integrated learning placements  
Deb Agnew, Elizabeth Abery, Shane Pill, Kerry Bissaker, Samantha Schulz, Jan Orrell, Daniel Mather 1

Double down on internship recruits: How do we enhance the work-integrated learning connection?  
Tina Blumenthal, Kathryn MacCallum 7

Strengthening work-integrated learning at the School of Business, Eastern Institute of Technology, Hawke’s Bay, New Zealand  
Regan Cotter 11

Implementation of a relationship-based strength and conditioning internship model to maximise the student learning experience  
Farzanah Desai 15

SharePoint: A bridge for work-integrated learning and data retention  
Thomas Hartley, Kathryn MacCallum 19

The impact of work-integrated learning on career planning among business students  
Denise Jackson 23

How do internships help students to enter the information technology industry?  
Brenda Lloyd, Susan Chard 27

Peer teaching: Applying interactive initiatives in preparation for the workplace in the culinary sector  
Chantal Pillay 31

An innovative university wide approach for evaluating work-integrated learning curriculum and pedagogy  
Anna Rowe, Kate Lloyd, Anna Powell 35

Emotional fallout of work-integrated learning: Triggers for positive and negative reactions in students  
Anna Rowe, Theresa Winchester-Seeto 39

Connecting the dots: Industry | academia | online  
Sarah Snell, Catherine Snell-Siddle* 43

Threesome, fivesome or more: Navigating stakeholder relationships in the delivery of work-integrated learning  
Theresa Winchester-Seeto, Jacqueline Mackaway 47

Cooperative education project - employers: Are they happy?  
Brent Wood, Deniss Yeung 51

* Winners of the Allister McLay Best Paper Award
Developing a sustainable model for international sport-based work-integrated learning placements

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Australian universities place significant priority on providing international opportunities for their students (Trede, Bowles & Bridges, 2013; Holmes, Bavieri, & Ganassin, 2015). This priority arises from the perception that graduates with international experience create value to prospective employers as interculturally competent and capable of interpreting and acting appropriately to cultural values (Trede et al., 2013). International experiences have numerous benefits for students including the development of intercultural competencies, increased independence, open-mindedness and confidence (Deardoff, 2006). Recognition for the importance of international opportunities by governments and institutions has led to an increase in scholarships and travel grants to enable student mobility (Molony, 2011).

However, the learning environment in international experiences can be solitary (Molony, 2011) and while students may participate in a basic pre-departure program, they are often then left to their own devices both during and following the international placement.

Byram and Dervin (2008), Bryam and Feng (2006), and Jackson (2008) suggest that in order to gain the most benefits from international study experiences, pre-departure education is vital. A common misconception regarding international placements is that students will develop intercultural awareness merely as a result of their international experience (Bridges, Trede & Bowles, 2009). However, Holmes et al., (2015) argue that intercultural competence is “unlikely to occur of its own accord” (p. 17). Therefore, it is important staff and students involved in mobility programs receive support from their universities with regard to intercultural learning activities (Bretag et al., 2016).

The opportunity to participate in a comprehensive pre-departure program has been shown to better prepare students for interacting in a culturally respectful manner in the placement country (Dharamsi, Osei-Twum, & Whiteman, 2013; Lowe & Hay, 2016; McAllister et al. 2006; Popplow, Sward, & Klinger, 2010). Lowe and Hay’s (2016) Good Practice Guide for international placements recommends that in order to adequately prepare students for overseas placement experiences the following components are needed: a rigorous application and interview process, an induction program prior to departure including workshops focusing on aspects of the country to which students are placed, risk management, and regular group meetings with students to address their questions about the placement to be undertaken.

As a result of a successful New Colombo Plan (NCP) Mobility Grant from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in 2015, Flinders University, Adelaide, Bachelor of Sport, Health and Physical Activity (B.SHAPA) students have had the opportunity to complete an international placement in sport development in India. A second successful NCP Mobility Grant in 2016 will enable students to complete a sport development project in Vanuatu in 2017.

Experiences in 2016 of the first cohort of students to go to India and of the supporting staff have highlighted the need for students to develop specific skills and knowledge prior to their departure from Australia. The need for skill development - including intercultural sensitivity development, cultural literacy and diplomacy, entrepreneurship, and travel planning and risk management emerged from the above discussed 2016 study tour of India as areas in
which pre-departure training is required. The 2016 debrief with the students suggested the absence of a pre-departure program may potentially compromise student experiences. Therefore, there is an identified need to incorporate additional international and culturally specific preparation components not currently included in the “Sport Industry Professional Experience Preparation Topic” undertaken by B.SHAPA students. This paper discusses the development of a proposed program that will be run as a specialised international module within the current placement preparation topic which is undertaken by all B.SHAPA students prior to the commencement of any Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) placement.

**UNIQUE FEATURES**

Molony (2011) suggests that programs which offer opportunities to develop intercultural competence and which assist in preparing the students for international study are a growing trend. These programs seek to improve the international experience for students. Currently the Flinders University International Centre hosts a formal Pre-Departure program for students undertaking a component of their studies abroad. University support for short term international activities, however, is ad hoc in its delivery. There is not currently a set, planed program with clear goals and there are not readily available resources for the delivery of an online program. There are few universities that offer pre-departure sessions for students going on short term programs or study tours and no universities offer an online pre-departure component for short term mobility programs (Aim Overseas, 2011). This new program, therefore, has instigated a project that sets out to use the B.SHAPA NCPs as a model for developing not only face-to-face preparation sessions but also online preparation and induction resources that can be applied across the University where similar short term international contexts apply. It will also be a catalyst for the development of cultural literacy, which is a key capability currently needed but lacking in the sports industry.

Deliberately preparing students for international placements and the possibility and realities of intercultural and international sporting experiences post-graduation both abroad and at home is important. Therefore, this innovative project will:

- Enable an explicit development of an evidence informed approach to preparing students and staff for international WIL placements,
- Attend to the unique feature of a sports based program and the opportunity it offers for deliberately developing and enhancing graduate capabilities in entrepreneurship and socio-cultural capability, and
- Ensure that the ‘wisdom of practice’ that is currently being developed in this initiative is articulated and transformed into principles, resources and practices that can be disseminated and utilised by other faculties across this University and inform practice for similar programs in other institutions.

Modules and a resource pack have been developed that are specific to the international placement destination to better prepare students for the experience. The program itself will devote sections to topics such as self-awareness, intercultural sensitivity development (Bennett & Bennett, 2004), etiquette and communication, country of placement orientation and successful entrepreneurship (Table 1). The program modules draw on key pedagogical learning approaches to support the implementation and are driven by clearly articulated learning outcomes. Inclusion of a “Flipped Curriculum” approach as outlined by Emeritus Professor Geoff Scott (Scott et al., 2012) is one such example. Students go online to prepare for their face-to-face their learning in activities that generate questions that will drive their engagement in each face-to-face encounter. Following the face-to-face each encounter students have activities to complete that produce authentic resources and learning. The aim is to ensure that their International Sport WIL experience is successful and produces mutual and reciprocal benefits for the student and their host community/organisation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Processes</th>
<th>Student Output</th>
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| 1. Intercultural community engagement | - Identification of own tacit cultural values & beliefs.  
- Explicit understanding of cultural diversity & its impact on practice in culturally diverse situations.  
- Orientation to Indian and Vanuatu cultures/practices. | Cultural literacy  
- Personal values and beliefs.  
- Cross cultural communication and behaviour.  
- Orientation to host country culture. | Flipped classroom Research led learning.  
Peer to peer learning.  
Online module activities. | Articulate personal cultural values & anticipated differences.  
Proposal for tactful professional behaviour for managing cultural differences.  
Generate questions for further investigation with host. |
| 2. Career development          | - Articulate own strengths, capabilities & limitations.  
- Clarify WIL expectations.  
- Establish personal learning goals to enhance career path.  
- Articulation of cross cultural dispositions & professional behaviour. | Career Literacy  
- Career planning and development to assist students to position their international placement as a unique feature of their career development and enhanced employability. | Flipped classroom including online activities, peer to peer learning. | A detailed CV. A career plan.  
WIL Learning goals for the International Sports Placement. |
| 3. Safety, survival and making the most of the experience | - Explicit description of boundaries for professional relations in placements.  
- Plan maintenance of personal physical, emotional & social well-being on placement. | The social cultural, economic, political and historical features within the host country and organisation. | Flipped classroom  
Peer to peer learning  
Workshop discussion.  
Online activities including watching & responding to video content, discussion questions, online forums. | Generate a plan and gather resources and information necessary for a successful and safe International placement. |
| 4. Entrepreneurship: ambassadors for Flinders University | - Draft a plan for eliciting support & engagement from communities & their leaders.  
- Draft a plan for sourcing and gaining funding support.  
- Identify & plan the infrastructure required to sustain the sport program. | This section will include a FUSA representative to inform students regarding access to events and promoting their fundraising. | Peer to peer learning.  
On-line activities.  
Event planning. Fundraising. | Plan deliver and report on a placement project in India or Vanuatu to promote community engagement & support. It will include fund raising & formative evaluation of the implementation and impact of the plan. |
The resource pack will include matters pertaining to international travel requirements such as immunisation, travel insurance, health and safety, and fact sheets on places of interest in the international destination which will value add to the cultural experience. The modules the students will complete will also be recorded in order to develop online resources for use by other faculties, which will enable the program to be more widely distributed.

**DISCUSSION**

In shaping these WIL programs and associated research studies that will follow, we recognise that, even for Australian academics whose concerns centre on domestic educational, social and sporting affairs, Australian issues are not excised from their larger regional contexts. Moving forward, it will be increasingly difficult to divorce our work as scholars and educators from wider regional concerns, or to ignore the widespread influence of postcolonial thinking that characterises social science research in a world context (Connell, 2015). We aim to take full advantage of the WIL programs by considering their location in broader social, historical and cultural relations, using our combined expertise in the areas of sociology, educational leadership, physical and health education, and critical approaches to qualitative research methods to carefully assess the challenges and opportunities for staff, students and members of host countries alike.

As we negotiate the intricacies of cross-cultural educational and sporting encounters, these are vital considerations when seeking to internationalise curriculum by enhancing students’ and educators’ capacity for socio-cultural encounter.

Building on the previous points for discussion, we believe that intercultural encounters through WIL placements will prove sustainable only insofar as they are mutually beneficial (to the extent this is possible). Our belief is that mutual benefits will arise if our efforts are informed by what has come before. Rather than reproducing the parochial purview that host destinations have something to gain from ‘developed’ Western knowledge systems and practitioners, we view these encounters in terms of being a two-way exchange, rich with opportunity for interchange, reflection and education. By adopting this stance and building critical, self-reflective mechanisms into the programs, we aim to develop a co-constructed approach across cultures that can be applied to mobility encounters. The research led approach informing the development of this program will enable the provision of evidence regarding the effectiveness of the program both in terms of the impact of the pre-departure program on students’ preparedness but also on the impact of the study tour on the communities the students visit abroad. The evidence provided will contribute to further development of the best practice model for WIL programs in universities that include an international placement option.

**IMPLICATIONS AND ISSUES**

This program will develop resources that will contribute to the development of B.SHAPA graduates who (1) have entrepreneurial dispositions skills and knowledge, (2) have an informed appreciation of the role sport can play in economically and socially challenged communities and (3) have identified and extended their own strengths and capabilities in regard to leading sporting activities in culturally diverse communities. Further, it will contribute to the continued development of a mature and authentic partnership model that represents best practice for WIL programs in sport in Australia that choose to include an international placement. Greater opportunities for more students to gain an international WIL experience may lead to more innovative and entrepreneurial students in the industry which can benefit current and future stakeholders and improve employment outcomes for students. Programs such as this also have the potential to support and develop ongoing international collaborations with WIL partner organisations. Therefore, deliberately preparing students for the possibility and realities of intercultural and international sporting experiences post-graduation both abroad and at home is important.

**REFERENCES**


Double down on internship recruits: How do we enhance the work-integrated learning connection?

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In 2011, the Eastern Institute of Technology (EIT) merged with Tairawhiti Polytechnic in Gisborne. As result of this merger, it meant that the Gisborne campus was able to extend the programme portfolio it offered students to include a number of degrees, which included the Bachelor of Computing Systems (BCS). Students who undertake the BCS programme commit themselves to a three year blended programme of study which includes a 45 credit work-integrated learning event, to be completed in their final year. This internship comprises of a 14 week placement usually undertaken in the last semester of the degree, where students assume an IT role within a company.

The value of this final internship has been an important focus of the qualification and, therefore, students are encouraged to think seriously about industry preferences as they progress through their degree. For this reason, collaboration between tertiary organisations and industry stakeholders is essential to successfully prepare undergraduate IT students for their professional journey (Burns & Chopra, 2017).

This paper explores two examples of how work-integrated learning (WIL) has been undertaken at the Gisborne campus; each case focuses on how the internships were able to enhance the relationship between student, industry sponsor and tertiary provider. Due to the relatively newness of the degree and internship at the campus it was important to understand the specific benefits and challenges associated with current industry needs, the role recruitment plays, and the influences emerging in the nature of work and employability within the Gisborne area.

CASE A: DEVELOPING STRONGER TIES WITH INDUSTRY BY EMBEDDING EXPERTS INTO THE PROGRAMME

The first example outlines how embedding industry within a programme will enhance future success of linking students with future industry sponsors. As Pillay (2015) discussed, it is vital that tertiary institutes engage more closely with industry to share knowledge and ensure that graduate profiles are well matched to industry requirements and that skill shortages are being addressed. By imbedding industry within a course can enhance the outcome for both student and industry.

In 2016, a global IT services provider approached EIT to find a suitable candidate to fill a current vacancy at their local branch in Gisborne. The company’s online recruitment process comprises of a variety of methods and web-based tools to fill position vacancies. Some of these include a dedicated job portal, advertisements on employment sites and posts through social networks like LinkedIn and Twitter. According to the company’s industry representative, the Gisborne IT position had been previously advertised, filtered to a short-list of qualified, experienced candidates from a global pool, however, the position remained vacant.

Since a suitable candidate could not be found within the current job market (both within Gisborne and further afield) the company turned to EIT possibly recommend suitable BCS internship-ready students for the vacancy.

Through a thorough selection process a suitable student was identified and although the company preferred a candidate with previous experience, he was successfully appointed into an Engineer role that would run simultaneously to a BCS internship. This was significant as the position was originally for an experienced engineer. Although much of what the student was doing within the internship was new, the student was able to draw on learnings from his study and apply it to a new environment.
Based on this experience it was identified by the company that it would be mutually beneficial to develop closer ties with EIT. This would enable the industry to early select and groom suitable future interns and also give back to BCS programme by providing industry relevant knowledge and specialisation. Therefore, it was decided that a representative from the company would come into one of the courses on the BCS (Data communications) on a weekly basis in the role as industry expert. Their role was to provide real industry experience, cases and expertise to the course, which would enrich, strengthen and provide valuable insight to the course. This approach was extremely positive and provided a beneficial experience for students, industry and tertiary educators alike. In particular it highlighted the following benefits:

- Students found that having an industry expert present was useful in terms of someone who can identify with what was asked for in the laboratory tasks, how to accomplish various configuration commands, reasons why and when one would want to do it that way; and real life examples,
- The company gained exposure as a potential employer, developed a rapport with BCS second year students as possible interns in final year of study, and had a platform to feedback on industry preferences or trends. Furthermore, the company had the potential, to gauge laboratory tasks to rate student’s content knowledge and skills in relation to the company’s expectation,
- The company was able to provide feedback to what was covered within the course; therefore, the students would be more familiar with real industry situations and technologies that they will be exposed to in industry, and
- EIT, through internship facilitation are able to build and support business relationship networks and also support students transitioning from tertiary study into industry.

CASE B: DEVELOPING WORK READY STUDENTS THAT ARE ABLE TO EXPAND THEIR OWN LEARNING

The second example illustrates how developing self-directed and lifelong learning skills are crucial in developing work ready and successful WIL programmes.

Due to the size of Gisborne not all courses are able to be offered at the EIT Gisborne campus. Therefore, this limits the range of skills and specialisations that students are able to undertake. This limitation is not solely an issue at a small campus but is an issue that all computing qualifications face. The specific course that any tertiary provider can offer are typically confined to the availability of suitably qualified and experienced staff, and industry needs within an area. However, despite only being able to provide a limited range of skills or training with specific technologies should not limit the possible industries that a student should be able to go into. By reinforcing transferable skills and encouraging them to further expose themselves and learn within the internship and beyond the qualification will enable students to widen potential opportunities for internship and work.

The second case involves a student internship with a NZ based company operating locally and overseas. The company enlisted IT contractor services to manage an enterprise content management (ECM) system upgrade. In addition, the company’s HR interviewed and appointed an intern to work at an analyst’s capacity between the IT contractor, management and key users of the system. The internship role included understanding the company’s ECM strategy, knowledge of ECM software, and, an ability to communicate with users to design custom workflows in the developer environment. However, this specific knowledge is not covered within the existing BCS offering at Gisborne and, therefore, the student had no specific background within ECM. Instead of rejecting this opportunity to expand the student’s experience, rather the student decided to take up the internship and use it as an opportunity to learn and grow in an area that would require additional informal learning. Furthermore, as Pilgrim (2012) points out, integration of theory and practical in WIL programs encourages students to utilise ‘softer’ skills such as teamwork, self-management, problem solving and communication that are not only valued by the employer but essential in a work environment.

Although the company operates without a dedicated IT department or on-site mentor, HR provided the intern with subscription access to Lynda.com courseware. Within this courseware are a series of instructional videos specifically designed and tailored for working with ECM software. To manage the supplementary learning,
transferable skills like initiative, self-discipline and adaptability are essential to succeed. Hence, this situation reflects how a unique blend of IT resources may underpin and support smaller business environments.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Though both cases are different in approach and underlying core concepts, they both illustrate the value of integrating industry relations within a programme and being flexible and innovative when meeting the needs of industry. Due to the nature of Gisborne being relatively isolated and having a small population finding suitable talent with suitable skills can be challenging. Although e-recruitment helps companies reach, filter and select candidates from anywhere, the system filters may limit graduates when trying to enter the job market, and also in the instance of Case A, a company attempting to employ the ideal, skilled and experienced local candidate. These cases highlight two specific ideas that are crucial to a successful WIL programme, the first supporting strong and early industry engagement and second promoting and supporting students to become self-directed and lifelong learners that actively develop their skills despite being exposed to new situations and skills within their internships.

Positive feedback from Case A highlighted the value of industry engagement in the data communications laboratory. This type of practitioner involvement clearly raises the bar for the students, therefore, drawing student learning closer to the IT experience. Similarly, guest speakers inspire students towards career development, by helping bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-life experiences. In addition, Case B refers to how instructional videos packaged as online courseware can be used within the workplace to manage personal and professional learning. Thus, multiple channels of industry engagement can provide a range of learning benefits to support the undergraduate transition into employment.

Rodrigues (2004) highlights the importance for lecturers to incorporate variety in teaching techniques to accommodate the diverse group of students, who don’t all learn the same way. Furthermore, Burns, & Chopra analysed the effect of industry engagement on student learning in undergraduate programmes. This research referred to two types of teaching techniques, active learning and passive learning. Active learning allows students to become engaged in the learning process, by using prior knowledge to accomplish a task, reflect on an experience or solve problems (Burns & Chopra, 2017). It also reflects the value of formal and informal learning. As highlighted by Choi and Jacobs (2011, p. 240), “formal learning may stimulate informal learning, because the tools or methods learned by attending formal learning programs may help individuals improve their ability to assimilate informal learning in the workplace”. The student should be prepared to develop their learning to cope within the industry. This might be supported by external tools such as Lynda.com as in Case B or within the interaction within the workplace, such as in Case A with the original intern student.

The cases raise awareness of the significance of ‘soft transferable skills’ in industry roles and how informal learning may be woven into industry projects, internships or as part of career development. Watts (2006) endorsed the benefits of career development learning or lifelong learning relative to “self-awareness, opportunity awareness, decision-making and transition learning”.

Tertiary providers and industry stakeholders have the potential and the means to embed industry experience into curriculum. This would help students build confidence through active learning experiences that provide value and support towards their transition into employment. Furthermore, this also provides a platform for industry stakeholders to inform lecturers about new and current practices, and also an opportunity to understand different methods or tools used either in the curriculum or industry.

REFERENCES


Strengthening work-integrated learning at the School of Business, Eastern Institute of Technology, Hawke’s Bay, New Zealand

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The Eastern Institute of Technology (EIT), School of Business, incorporates Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) as a compulsory course in its third year Bachelor of Business and Graduate Diploma programmes. This course (WIL) required a more cohesive and structured direction. In the last three years it has been managed by three different lecturers who have lacked the time and some the enthusiasm to develop the course. There was an opinion amongst some staff that it was an unnecessary nuisance and compromised the academic content of student work. The course would definitely benefit by having an assigned dedicated coordinator.

According to Haddara and Skanes (2007), there are three main benefactors of WIL: the student, the institution and the workplace. Due to the direct benefits to the institution, their students and also the opportunity to establish links with industry (Flinders University, 2016), this course was considered a priority to redevelop. In 2015 the course was assigned a 0.5FTE dedicated course co-ordinator. This is the first time that the EIT School of Business have given WIL such a high priority and investment.

UNIQUE FEATURES

The course consists of three options: 15, 30, and 45 credit which equates to 150, 300, or 450 learning hours and compliments the student’s major: marketing, management or accounting. The core feature of the course is a project undertaken by the student for an organisation that ultimately involves the following three stages; Investigation, analysis and recommendations (N. Corder personal communication, June, 2016).

The redevelopment of the course required the development/introduction of a broad array of resources:

- A marketing flyer sent to potential sponsors communicating the availability and what benefits the programme can offer to them;
- A scoping document to identify the project, clearly outlining the organisation, the mentor, required skills and desired outcomes;
- Articles promoting and discussing the programme in the Chamber of Commerce, Business Hawke’s Bay and Ice House publications and newsletters;
- Increasing the profile of the course and attaining credibility by being profiled in respected business publications. Ako Aotearoa booklets How to Make the Most of Work-Integrated Learning. The three booklets for Students, Workplace Supervisors and Academic Supervisors were printed off and given to the respective parties. This helps provide clarity and education as to expectations, mentoring, requirements and performance;
- An internship evening was held in partnership with The School of Computing showcasing student work to over 50 organisations through posters and student presentations and was attended by over 120 people. There was standing room only in Lecture Theatre 1; this was the first time this event had been staged and the turnout exceeded our expectations and created a positive profile for the WIL programme; and
- A Sponsor database and communication plan was introduced to allow quick identification of potential sponsors to suitable students; regular communication consistently reminding sponsors of WIL and the benefits, ultimately resulting in more sponsors than students.

In Semester 2, 2016 EIT School of Business had a record number of 44 students enrolled in the programme of which 25 were foreign students from China, Japan, The Philippines, India, Sri Lanka, Germany, and Nigeria.
The range of projects conducted by the students was very diverse, some examples are:

- An Indian student conducting a feasibility analysis of a pedestrian bridge for Te Matai Trust who governs the land between Hawke’s Bay and Taupō. This consists of an historical Māori trade route used to travel between Hawke’s Bay and Taupō. The highlights for the student were the access to Māori culture, firing a gun, staying at the lodge and the tramp in, the Helicopter ride, and the gifting of a Taonga;
- Conducting and evaluating a customer survey for New Zealand Chartered Accountants Association.
- A collaborative project between the Hawke’s Bay Airport and Business Hawke’s Bay establishing customer demand and communication platforms. Highlights were the actual implementation of the student designed signs for all to see;
- The New Zealand Natural Juice Company sponsored three Indian students who enjoyed the collaborative nature of their projects. Their projects ranged from new costing models/products to investigation of Indian export market opportunities;
- The investigation of sustainable features in horticultural employment programmes in conjunction with the Ministry of Social Development;
- A lifestyle adjustment manual for EIT students from South East Asia;
- Investigation into feasibility of micro educational tours for Chinese students;
- Health and safety policy rewrites;
- Social media strategy; and
- Software investigation, analysis and recommendations.

It was clear to see that the most successful projects were those which benefitted from professional supervision, both in the work place and from the EIT. This is essential to enable the student to process and critically reflect on their learning experiences and encourages ongoing development and learning (Davys & Beddoe, 2010).

The course was closely and enthusiastically managed. According to Gonsalvez (2013), a successful WIL course will have: excellent relationships with partners, monitored assessed placements, academic involvement, and high quality placements. These are all critical success factors that we are striving to improve and implement.

Proposed future developments are: Assessed learning contract, this will be a requirement at the start of the semester minimising late starters. Ongoing assessment throughout the semester for example a CV specific to the student’s placement and an ongoing reflective journal. This will encourage the student to be actively involved in their project throughout the semester. Introduction of a SharePoint software programme that will facilitate a project database, creating ease of access to sponsors and their previous projects. This will allow us to continue or add to previous projects, adding value to our sponsors and increasing our own efficiencies. The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) Project 1000 is an initiative to create 1,000 jobs in Hawke’s Bay in the next three years. The EIT School of Business are currently identifying career growth areas and endeavouring to place students within these areas ultimately resulting in vocational pathways for EIT graduates. “Speed dating”, an event to match sponsors and students to be held in partnership with our colleagues at The School of Computing, allowing students and sponsors a better opportunity to match a project to their own needs. International Association of Students in Economic and Commercial Sciences (AISEC) registration providing cross cultural global internship opportunities for our students, this will add to our profile and internationalise our programme.

**DISCUSSION**

The main benefit from this first semester have been the increased levels of engagement that EIT now have with industry, students and staff. WIL will be further strengthened over 2017 and extended to the post graduate programme. WIL is becoming increasingly popular in tertiary institutions, WACE or World Association of Cooperative Education (2016), currently has over 4000 colleagues worldwide. This course helps build a brand that is attractive to students and is an external relations tool that builds a community engagement profile (Crump & Johnson, 2011). WIL offers the EIT School of Business the opportunity to facilitate student learning through the development of praxis in a supportive and controlled environment. Crump and Johnson (2011), make the point that cooperative education adds meaning and understanding to student knowledge, and thus improves performance and enhanced self-esteem.
IMPLICATIONS

WIL requires a commitment by tertiary institutions, but has the potential to generate significant outcomes and benefits for the institution and its teaching staff, industry and students.

Institution Benefits

WIL was the most influential factor in student recruitment for tertiary institutions (Haddara & Skanes, 2007). WIL enhances student recruitment messaging and boosts enrolments (Crump & Johnson, 2011). Enhanced relationships with industry, curriculum and staff development (Weisz & Chapman, 2004 as cited in Haddara & Skanes, 2007). Provide contacts with professionals in their respective fields (Martin & Hughes, 2009). Produces flexible and work ready graduates, (University of Newcastle, 2007). Identifies research opportunities (Flinders University, 2016).

Student Benefits

Increased autonomy, development of soft or generic skills, for example, communication, teamwork, awareness of workplace culture and expectations (Flinders University, 2016). Career and vocational direction (Freudenberg, Brimble, & Cameron, 2011). Significantly more responsible jobs (Haddara & Skanes, 2007). Integrate knowledge, theory and understanding from academic courses to real life experiences (Martin & Hughes, 2007). Improved networking skills (Messum, Wilkes, & Peters, 2016).

Industry Benefits

Opportunity to survey and evaluate potential employees, increased knowledge and awareness of academia, new and innovative ideas (Hughes & Martin, 2009). The ability to set up, test or complete a new task/project, staff development/mentoring opportunities (Flinders University, 2016). Improve their corporate image, save on operations costings, and create a more dynamic work environment (Haddara & Skanes, 2007).

CONCLUSION

The coordination of WIL at the EIT School of Business has been a very enjoyable, interesting and challenging first semester. EIT shall strive to improve the course and strengthen our ties with Industry because WIL provides an opportunity to offer a better product that students will appreciate (Abeysekera, 2006). Martin, Rees, and Edwards (2011) have provided an excellent model for good practice pointing out that the essential elements of a successful WIL course are: Student preparation, skill development, supervision, assessment and pedagogy, professional standards and competencies, placement debriefing and organisation set-up. All significant areas that the EIT School of Business are focused on developing in taking the WIL course forward.

REFLECTION

After graduating from Palmerston North College of Education the Authors first job was working as a Sports Coordinator at Fraser High in Hamilton in 1994. To make up some extra hours they were given a part time role as a Transition Teacher. Twenty plus years on the role of Transition Teacher would be a career highlight and a field that they have aspired to become active in ever since.

Upon completion of the first semester the author is absolutely thrilled and incredibly passionate about this role that effectively creates a transitional bridge between the tertiary institution and the work place, ultimately creating vocational pathways for EIT graduates.
REFERENCES


Implementation of a relationship-based strength and conditioning internship model to maximise the student learning experience

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Strength and conditioning (S&C) coaches have been defined as professionals who primarily train athletes to improve performance through the application of their scientific knowledge. This is achieved through conducting sport-specific testing sessions; design and implement safe and effective strength-training and conditioning programs and provide guidance regarding nutrition and injury prevention. Thus far, S&C research has been conducted in the context of education, self-reflective practice and professional development (Chan & Mallett, 2011; Dorgo, 2009; Gilbert & Baldis, 2014; Jeffreys & Close, 2012; Kuklick & Gearing, 2015; Szadlak, Smith, Day, & Greenlees, 2015; Tod, Bond, & Lavallee, 2012). The characteristics and behaviour of effective S&C professionals, as suggested by academics, athletes, coaches, and interns include possessing advanced knowledge, foundational and applied practical knowledge and inter and intra-personal skills. It also involves possessing the social and higher order processes that accompany the social and cognitive process of being a teacher and mentor (emotional intelligence, relatedness, closeness, authenticity, sincerity and role modelling) (Chan & Mallett, 2011; Dorgo, 2009; Gilbert & Baldis, 2014; Szadlak et al., 2015). High-quality S&C internships are beneficial to students, because they bridge the gap between students’ theoretical knowledge and their work experience. S&C internships expose students to the intimate details of what the job entails. Students are often oblivious of the innumerable hours spent planning, networking and coordinating with coaches, administration staff and athletes (Murray, Zakrajsek, & Gearing, 2014). Students participating in S&C internships are provided with an opportunity to acquire a broad understanding supported by practice. It offers the opportunity to shape professional growth through reflective practice, and a mentoring relationship between practitioner and student (Gilbert & Trudel, 2001). Theoretical models of effective S&C internships proposed in the research are based on interns getting their hands dirty - “doing S&C”, developing a team-like environment to enhance learning, challenging interns to fill the gaps in their learning and producing professionals who are autonomous and self-directed through self-reflection (Murray et al., 2014). However, there is limited data describing interns’ experiences in an S&C internship. Furthermore, research describing an evidence-based S&C internship model is limited.

UNIQUE FEATURES

Seventeen interns (26.4 ± 7.1 years, 13 males, and 4 females) enrolled in the Bachelor of Exercise and Sport Science degree at the Universal College of Learning (UCOL), New Zealand participated in a semi-structured focus group discussion. The discussion guide for the focus group was divided into sections (personal development, the impact of supervision and feedback, self-reflective and S&C specific practice), was developed based on previous research focusing on effective behaviours and characteristics among S&C specialists (Gilbert & Baldis, 2014; Murray, Zakrajsek, & Gearing, 2014; Narayanan & Olk, 2010; Szadlak et al., 2015). Prior to data collection ethical approval was obtained from the UCOL Ethics Committee. The aim of the focus group was to describe the internship experience and the students’ development within a particular internship setting. Focus group sessions lasted 60-90 minutes and were recorded onto a standard Dictaphone before being transcribed verbatim. Using the six steps outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), focus group transcriptions were analysed using inductive thematic analysis. Similar approaches have been utilized in S&C research (Pritchard, Tod, Barnes, Keogh, & McGuigan, 2016; Szadlak et al., 2015; Tod et al., 2012). To ensure the research questions were answered, all the responses belonging to a particular area of impact (personal development, supervision, feedback, self-reflection and S&C specific practices) were grouped together. Data coding followed from within the responses received in their respective areas of
impact. Overall, four dimensions that summarized the internship experience were identified and labelled: relationship, satisfaction, ownership and professional specific skills.

DISCUSSION

The results from the focus group discussion aimed at describing the internship experience has been used to develop a relationship-based internship model to maximise the effectiveness of the internship experience (Table 1). The model, therefore, was not implemented in its entirety, however, components of it appeared in a range on different internship offerings. The four elements of the internship experience are: relationship, satisfaction, ownership and professional specific skills. The discussion will provide curriculum developers, tertiary teaching professionals and S&C coaches with practical methods through which the four elements can be developed and implemented within an internship context.

Table 1: The relationship-based internship model to maximise the effectiveness of the internship experience

| Relationship                      | • Foster a relationship with interns,  
|                                  | • Passive participation of supervisor during training sessions (internship activities) and  
|                                  | • Provide individualised feedback to interns |
| Ownership                        | Provide interns with opportunities to:  
|                                  | • Lead the internship,  
|                                  | • Mould their internship experience and  
|                                  | • Perform typical tasks of a S&C professional |
| Satisfaction                     | Supervisors can maximise intern satisfaction from the internship experience by:  
|                                  | • Allocating suitable time for supervision and feedback  
|                                  | • Offering systematic and formalised feedback  
|                                  | • Including interns in the decision-making process  
|                                  | • Communicating standards of success and benchmarking intern’s level of achievement  
|                                  | • Clarifying internship objectives  
|                                  | • Providing opportunities for interns to self-reflect on their S&C performance |
| Professional specific skills     | Interns need to understand the behaviours of an effective S&C professional  
|                                  | • Those behaviours and skills are taught by supervisor either by modelling or through facilitation  
|                                  | • Create opportunities for interns to take on responsibilities that are similar to that of an S&C professional  
|                                  | • Creating opportunities for interns to be reflective, data driven, intentional and purposeful as an S&C professional |

IMPLICATIONS

The above mentioned practical methods of developing and implementing a relationship-based internship model has applications to the exercise and sport science profession as well as other professional settings. Future research will focus on the evaluation of the effectiveness of the relationship-based internship model, the enhancement of the student learning experience and the value of such students to work-related placement stakeholders. Formalising ways to evaluate each of the components within the model is crucial to the development of an evidence-based approach to experiential and work-integrated learning.

REFERENCES


SharePoint: A bridge for work-integrated learning and data retention

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This paper explores the integration of the business application Microsoft SharePoint into the computing Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) program at Eastern Institute of Technology (EIT). The School of Computing (SOC) at EIT has always had a strong history of producing work ready students (Skelton, 2012). This approach has included the strong integration of WIL in the form of 1) embedded projects within courses and 2) the inclusion of courses where students go out to industry to work for course credit. Examples of these industry projects include the final internship project that comprises the last semester of the Bachelor of Computing Systems (BCS). The type of internships which these students go into, however, has started to vary greatly within the BCS. With an increasing number of internships no longer considered to be within typical computing businesses nor undertaking what would have been considered as a typical IT role. Due to the dynamic nature of IT industry, as a whole, and the continued challenges of meeting current industry demands, tertiary institutes (like EIT) need to continually examine and adapt their curriculums to ensure that the students’ and industries’ needs are being met. In particular, exposure to tools and systems that would be adopted and used in an industry (not just within an IT industry) is one such area that should be considered as important when developing students’ work readiness. Within the SOC at EIT, there has been a movement towards adopting tools and technologies that are cross discipline. The exposure to these business tools enable educators to give students a broader experience of business technology that they would encounter within a range of industries. One such example of this is was replacement of a traditional educational storage and communication tool (Moodle) with one that is commonly adopted in business (Microsoft SharePoint).

Moodle, is a Learning Management System (LMS) used by educators as a means to deliver course content and communication between students. Previously, within the internship project at EIT the LMS was used by the lecturing supervisors to provide documentation and communication announcements to students throughout the internship period. However, unless students were continuing with their studies or would be going into an educational role, it is unlikely that a tool such as Moodle would be the primary communication tool used in industry. It is much more likely that the businesses which these students will be going into would be using a business application, such as SharePoint, to support internal communication and sharing of documents. Microsoft SharePoint is one of the most popular collaboration systems in business (Rienzo & Han, 2009). SharePoint is an online collaboration workspace and content management system, often used within the Office365 business environment. This system is well adopted in industry as it enables its users to easily share information and documentation, supports collaboration with other users and provides a repository for important documents and policies accessible from one location. In particular, it provides the following key features (Malani, & Dwyer, 2005 p.7):

- Document check in/check out, versioning,
- Shared calendars, discussion surveys,
- Templated sites,
- Integration with Office 2003, which allows users to edit documents directly on the SharePoint server, and
- Granular security roles and access controls which enables documents to be public or private.
UNIQUE FEATURES

SharePoint is being increasingly adopted within the educational sector due to its ability as “internal information sharing solution that combines the best features of both intranets and cloud computing” (Diffin, Chirombo, & Nangle, 2010, p. 570). The adoption of SharePoint, in education, has largely been as a staff centered portal to facilitate and share institutional documents. However, there is an increasing number of researchers that have started to look at how SharePoint can support student interaction within a course or within a programme. For example SharePoint has been adopted as a way to support doctoral candidates (Maor, Ensor, & Fraser, 2016; Rockinson-Szapkiw, 2011). In particular one study with doctoral candidates showed that the use of SharePoint within the course, had increased students’ satisfaction and sense of community since it was able to facilitate communication and file sharing in the dissertation process (Rockinson-Szapkiw, 2011). Within the WIL literature, a small number of studies have discussed how SharePoint has been adopted to support the communication and interaction of students (McNamara, Cockburn, & Shirley, 2009; Shirley & Cockburn, 2009; Thomas, Graham, McCarthy, & Crowe, 2010). These studies largely reinforce the extensive qualities of this tool to support document management and interaction. However, most do not consider or address the feature that the use of this system help familiarising students with a tool that they are likely to be using in industry.

While Moodle and SharePoint share some common features that support WIL from an academic position, SharePoint has unique features that support business specific functions which students might not typically see in an academic environment. These include document creation and team collaboration in the web, and alignment for mobile devices. SharePoint can create subsites around business centred templates, create, sort by and work with metadata, and assure industry and government compliance of data. For WIL in tertiary institutes, SharePoint will archive data, create reports and dashboards for lecturers and school administrators. Integration of other business systems can also enhance the functionality of SharePoint. For example, the integration with the tertiary institute’s Active Directory will enable easier administration of students. In particular, as students complete the course and their accounts are removed, access to the SharePoint site is automatically removed. Students can be assigned to supervising lecturers, and the system can automatically link them and create the necessary environment, permissions, and templates.

DISCUSSION

At the SOC, SharePoint is being introduced to manage the administration of the Internship program to help expose students to this technology (due to its popular adoption within Industry), as well as provide document retention and reporting tool for the school (with a focus on data retention for historical benefit for staff, students and programme marketing). In the SOC, students have two basic academic functions throughout the WIL course which are to, upload reports and presentations for record, and provide weekly notes, reflection and communication with their supervising lecturer. In the past, students have used Moodle for course direction, Proposal, Poster and Final Report submissions, and Outlook email for weekly updates with Supervisors. Supervising lecturers no longer need to transition between Outlook for weekly email communication with students and Moodle for reports. The SharePoint portal acts as a business tool and streamlines the process. The layout is simple and easy to use (Figure 1).

Supervisors can manage all their students from one common page. They have access to student and sponsor information and latest uploaded documents. An advantage in communication comes to feedback to student’s weekly reports. Supervisor responses are automatically sent via email to the student. Supervisors do not have to weigh through a list of emails to find and reply to a student’s notes and queries. While more webparts can be incorporated, the current driver is on simplicity; sticking to the concepts of communication and document sharing and retention.
The student page gives students access to their documentation, weekly communication with their Supervisor, a course calendar and additional quick links (Figure 2).

Additionally, if a student needs to be reassigned to another Supervising Lecturer, the Program Coordinator can perform this in one step without the need for changes in Moodle or email. Searches and reports can be created based on any criteria or purpose. Multiple students may have been assigned to one Sponsor over time for one or more projects. Supervisors can search for established work history for a particular Sponsor or over a particular type of project. To provide flexibility, SharePoint can be accessed on and off campus for students and supervising lecturers. Access and restrictions can be placed on users and groups that support governance and privacy. At this time, Sponsors do not have access to the SharePoint portal, however, this would be something that could be incorporated within the system at a later date. Document Libraries can be populated with templates, manuals, contracts and more.

IMPLICATIONS AND ISSUES

The opportunity exists with the integration of Microsoft SharePoint into a WIL program to create a bridge between academics and real world experience for students. While some installation and setup is required to address the specific school needs, the long ranging inferences have been presented in this paper. Though this example relates specifically to the SOC, this tool could be used within any discipline and tertiary programme as many of these features would benefit any programme that has WIL curriculums. SharePoint provides tertiary institutions and their schools with a common data repository and reporting tool for programme development and marketing. Statistics can be drawn within a school against student success and failure; withdrawal and employment upon completion of internship, domestic vs international student completion for example and then shared across the institution or a wider body (as discussed in Akhir, Omar, Awadz, & Hamid, 2012).
Schools have access to historical information, and students gain exposure to software they may encounter in the real world. At the very least, it offers students the opportunity to develop technical skills they may not have experienced otherwise but will be exposed to within and after their internship. Microsoft SharePoint is a powerful and flexible tool and is proving to be invaluable to the School of Computing. As the WIL program matures, developments to the portal will be added or changed to support the students and school.

REFERENCES


The impact of work-integrated learning on career planning among business students

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Given competitive graduate labour markets and high levels of graduate underemployment and unemployment (Graduate Careers Australia [GCA], 2013), it is increasingly important for students to have a clearly defined career objective and direction in how to successfully achieve it (Segers & Inceoglu, 2012). Despite career management provision evolving far beyond individual counselling and sometimes being embedded in undergraduate curriculum (Watts, 2006), students are often undecided about where they are heading and what pathway to take post-graduation (McKeown & Lindorff, 2011).

Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) is one platform which may provide students with clarity on their career objective and the required action to achieve it. WIL can take many forms, such as internships, practicums, field work, industry-based projects and simulations. It is well established as a platform for students to gain a better understanding of the realities of their intended profession (Accenture, 2013) and experiment with their professional identity (Trede et al., 2012). It is also documented as influencing career choice (see Anderson et al., 2012) and assisting students with developing skills in career self-management (see, for example, Pegg et al., 2012; Smith et al., 2009). The study’s research objectives are to (i) examine the influence of WIL on career objectives; (ii) identify key factors which students learned about themselves, in relation to their intended career, during their WIL experience; and (iii) identify which strategies students consider important for improving themselves and their employment prospects.

METHOD

Fifty two students completing an elective 100-150 hour work placement in the latter stages of their undergraduate business degree in a Western Australian university participated in the study. Approximately three quarters were female and the majority were aged between 20 and 24 years. The majority were completing their placement in the private sector and were studying and working in a range of different business disciplines. Students were required to write an 800 word structured reflection in the final weeks of their placement, forming part of their assessed e-portfolio. Data were collected during May 2016. Students were asked to reflect on their career objective and how, if at all, this changed since during their work placement and the three main things they have learned about themselves, within the context of their intended career. Finally, they were asked to define five action points for improving themselves, and their chances of getting a graduate-level job, and to explain how these placement highlighted these and how they plan to address them in the next 12 months. The reflections were thematically analysed with themes identified and coded at the individual response level.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

First, in relation to personal career objectives, there were a number of underlying themes in student responses. Several students chose their career based on personal gratification and were drawn towards doing something in which they excelled at or had a passion for. A small number stated that financial rewards were most important in their choice of career, while others stated opportunity for promotion was pivotal. Being able to work in a team environment; finding a role which promotes well-being; and scope for professional development were also considered important to a very small number of students when deciding their career objective.

Approximately 40% of students believed WIL influenced their career objective. Some realised that they did not wish to pursue their original career objective as a result of the exposure they gained during their work placement. These students found the experience helpful in that it highlighted elements of their intended role which they did not enjoy or find rewarding, such as working in an office environment. A small number found the work placement
created uncertainty about where they were heading while several found the work placement strengthened and clarified their intentions. There was an overwhelming sense among these twenty students that, whichever category they fell into, the experience had been positive and taken them one step closer to making the right decision. This applied to even those where the work placement created uncertainty about their original career objective as the experienced highlighted the range of options open to them and the need to carefully consider each of these before making a firm decision on which pathway they wished to pursue.

In regards to what the students learned about themselves during their work placement, around 20% found it emphasised how committed they were to their intended career pathway and how it strengthened their desire to achieve employment in that particular area. Several felt it helped them to understand what they were capable of and better gauge their abilities in certain non-technical skills, attributes and/or competencies. In particular, they spoke of their ability to adapt to and work effectively in a culturally diverse environment and their levels of professionalism in relation to dressing appropriately, being respectful and managing confidentiality. Other areas were their ability to adhere to the ethical practices expected in their chosen profession; working effectively as part of a team; being accountable; operating autonomously; being able to give and receive feedback; conducting research; managing stress; listening to and following instructions; communicating within a business environment and being willing to try new things. In addition, approximately 30% of the students felt they learned they did not know as much as they thought they did prior to their placement and there were certain skill areas that need improving. Contrary to this, around half of the sample had underestimated their ability to function effectively in the workplace and found they actually did have the required capabilities for the role. As these students reflected on their emerging sense of their own capabilities, several reported on their enhanced confidence, more advanced technical and non-technical skills and newfound knowledge of the industry arising from the placement.

Students cited a number of action points for improving themselves and their chances of graduate-level employment. First, approximately one third stated they needed to become more self-confident. They cited several ways of achieving this, including trying not to overthink things; watching inspirational videos and reading strategies on developing confidence; attending more networking events and interacting more with clients; being more focused on the positive; aligning body language and signals with high levels of confidence; and practicing calming techniques in situations which place them outside of their comfort zone.

Second, several students noted the need for up-skilling in certain areas. Over half commented on the need to improve their communication skills with strategies for improvement including reading more books, articles and newspapers; making eye contact when conversing with others; practising ‘small talk’; attending workshops; proactively engaging in discussions and debates; practicing writing professional emails and public speaking; and enrolling in classes dedicated to business English. The emphasis on language capabilities may be due to 30% of the sample being international students. Approximately one half commented on the need to improve in discipline-related skills, achieved by obtaining more industry-related qualifications; reading literature relating to their intended profession; and researching skills relevant for their profession. Over one third felt they needed to improve their skills in information technology.

Improving on time management and organisation skills were noted by approximately 30% and strategies for improvement included breaking down tasks; setting goals and milestones; having regular progress reviews; establishing a routine; prioritising tasks; delegating tasks as needed; and managing sleep patterns. Two other key skill areas were team working and generating new ideas with strategies including learning to communicate new ideas effectively; engaging in continuous learning and development; gaining additional experience; staying current with best practice and trying to think outside the box.

Third, around 30% of students felt they needed to be more proactive and learn to show more initiative to improve their career prospects. Strategies identified to achieve enhanced initiative were fairly broad and included updating industry knowledge so one felt better equipped to take the lead in certain situations; working on finding solutions to problems without assistance; giving more attention to detail in future work; and requesting feedback more regularly to improve skills and capabilities in the long-term, thus being able to work more autonomously in the future.
Fourth, students noted the importance of gaining additional practical experience through paid employment, volunteering and more internships. Although only one third explicitly stated this as a key strategy, undertaking relevant work experience featured across in other themes, such as increasing self-awareness and improving on one’s skills. Fifth, several students realised the importance of developing their knowledge of the industry they intended to enter. Again, volunteering work was considered a key strategy, along with using the library and internet resources to research industry practices; attending relevant events; subscribing to industry news; and undertaking training to that particular industry.

Sixth, several students engaged with the importance of career self-management for improving their employment aspects. Just under 10% felt they needed to become more career-focused by setting goals and actively pursuing strategies to achieve them. Building professional networks and developing networking skills was noted by 50% as a key to improving employment prospects. Strategies included developing one’s personal brand; being more proactive in social media (such as LinkedIn); allocating more effort to connecting with other professionals through industry events, career fairs, volunteering work and professional association membership; and nurturing existing professional contacts. A small number of students felt it important to seek guidance from career counsellors through attending seminars and workshops and/or individual sessions to improve their interview skills, resume and cover letter writing techniques. An equal proportion noted the importance of having strong job search skills and wished to develop their understanding of different techniques, in particular using online platforms.

CONCLUSION

Findings confirm that WIL can play a valuable role in engaging students with meaningful career planning processes. It is important for practitioners to note, however, that WIL should be a complement to other initiatives - such as individual career counselling and/or embedded career development learning - as career planning should start early (Bridgstock, 2009) whereas WIL is often undertaken in the later stages of the degree. Further, career planning should not be imparted to students as an isolated event but something that is fluid and which requires ongoing consideration and adaption in line with environmental factors and personal preference. Career planning is confounded by the reality of resource limitations and environmental factors (Lent, 2013) and can be affected by unplanned events (Seibert et al., 2013). Rather than encouraging WIL students, and others at university, to focus narrowly on one particular career, the focus should be on what Lent refers to as ‘career preparedness’. This encourages individuals to be adaptable, resilient and be alert to opportunities upon which they can capitalise to reach their career goals, as well as factors which may cause a change in direction.

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How do internships help students to enter the information technology industry?

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We have been running Internships for a year both for Domestic and International Students. First impressions indicate that these help students find their place within industry in a number of ways. Hodges and Burchell (2003) investigated the factors determining the success of students once they enter the workforce. This identified that these are very difficult to address without exposure to a workplace. Work-integrated learning (WIL) can help in this context by placing the students into a workplace environment similar to that they will eventually work in.

AIM
This research investigated the various ways in which internships help students assimilate into industry on completion of their course. We have a mixture of international and domestic students, and also different academic levels of internship papers. These papers are available at Level 7 as part of the undergraduate degree and graduate diploma programmes, and at Level 8 as part of the postgraduate diplomas and Masters programmes in the School of IT. The design of the papers incorporates a number of factors to facilitate integrating learning into the experience for students. This research investigated the effect of these factors on the way that internships assisted students to find their place within industry.

METHOD
Literature shows that there are a number of possible ways internships affect a student’s entry into industry, as well as the effect of the level, and whether they are international or domestic students.

The availability of internships for students is also determined by criteria other than academic or the availability of positions. The main one being the possible effect of the various models used by employers, such as the timing of yearly intakes onto their graduate programs, which are becoming more common.

The data on IT internships have been gathered from Polytechnic campuses in Auckland and Wellington. Data has been gathered from staff, students, employers and the local internship coordination programme, Summer of Tech (SOT). Forty percent of the internships analysed in this study were arranged through the SOT programme, all the students involved participated in the orientation sessions provided through the Summer of Tech programme. SOT states on its website that it is “an industry led initiative focussed on meeting the real needs of students and employers looking for growth”.

Semi structured explorative interviews have been undertaken with students, employers and SOT representatives. There were five student interviews, five employer interviews and three SOT representative interviews. These interviews inform this research allowing input from all aspects of this research. They include interviews from three sides of the equation staff, students and employers allowing more in depth answers to be obtained (Burke & Miller, 2001). They also include information from the mentors involved in the internships, allowing a deeper understanding of the factors and issues from a smaller sample (Ambert, 1995).

Ethics approval for this study was sought and granted through the Polytechnic Research and Ethics committee.

RESULTS
Students have engaged in Internships through Summer of Tech and summer employment options since the Summer of Tech programme started in 2006 as Summer of Code, changing its name to Summer of Tech in 2010 to allow it to encompass a greater diversity of positions within the industry. However, the academic component was
only added in 2016 to allow students who gained internships from SOT to gain academic credit for their work. Since then we have had two groups of internship students enrol in the academic papers over two summers.

According to the Summer of Tech representative there is an 80% success rate for the Summer of Tech students from all tertiary institutes progressing into either full time, part time or contract work. To date we have had two iterations of the internship papers during the summer of 2016 and 2017. The total number of interns who took up the offer of academic credit over the two years was 13.

In 2016 there were nine students taking up the offer of academic credits, three of which were also on the Summer of Tech program. All these students gained further employment through the places where they did their Internship. This was full time, part time or contract.

In 2017 there were four students who undertook the internship paper two of which were also Summer of Tech interns. These two students were undergraduates not in their final year, and, therefore, were not available for continuing employment. Of the other two, one was already working for the company where they did their internship and so continued in their previous role and the other was a temporary unpaid position.

The feedback from stakeholders shows that the addition of the reflective component has not impacted the employment outcome for our interns. The students generally viewed this part of the assessment process as a chore and attempted to write it in such a way as to pass the assessment rather than using it as a tool to enhance their learning as observed by others (Dean, Sykes, Agostinho, & Clements, 2012). Our feedback has identified that entry level employment practice differs between small to medium size companies and multinational corporates. The large scale organisations are adopting / have adopted graduate recruitment programmes rather than directly employing junior IT staff. These programmes have a set start date and timetable for all new graduates. All of the organisations who have employed the students on completion of the internships have been smaller local organisations without graduate employment programmes.

The overall employment results were that 77% gained employment, 13% were undergraduates and so not eligible for further employment, and 8% were unpaid and did not lead to employment. There was a 100% academic success rate for our students over the last two year’s internship courses.

These results are expanded and explained using the information collected from the interviews.

DISCUSSION

Reflection is valuable within WIL but to maximise its benefit it needs to be social, practice and material based or “reflection in the midst of action” which allows the assessment of a situation and help determine what to do next (Sykes & Dean, 2013). The internship papers include the assessments in the form of: report, presentation and journals. The journals are completed weekly, the report and presentation is completed at the end of the internship. The Level 7 paper focuses on the employers’ practices and asks the students to relate these to course work. The Level 8 paper encourages students to reflect on the workplace practices in relation to current research literature.

CONCLUSION

The students identified factors that assisted them to gain employment of some kind via internships, although not all of them wanted to continue in the field where they did their internships. This indicates that the contacts made using this experience were invaluable, as was the opportunity to try a field within industry. There appears to be little or no difference within levels in regard to the resulting employment outcomes, but international students remarked on the fact that it was a good opportunity to assess the New Zealand work environment, thus giving them an advantage when applying for permanent positions.

The current assessments were useful for our purposes, as they gave information on the current practices and tools within the industry, they did not, however, appear to be as useful to either the students or the employers. This means that in order for internships to become useful to all of the stakeholders, the assessments need to be examined and refocused. Possible ways to achieve this are outlined by Dean et al. (2012) these include a more holistic and individualistic approach to align with the individual student and their workplace.
Further research and development in this area is necessary to ensure that the maximum benefit can be obtained by all parties. There is also a need to investigate further the moving trends within organisations to allow our students to stand the best possible chance of success. These trends are within processes, tools and employment methods.

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Peer teaching: Applying interactive initiatives in preparation for the workplace in the culinary sector

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This study investigates the effectiveness of peer teaching initiatives in preparing students for the culinary industry. The study focuses on students from first and second year, studying for a degree in culinary arts and business. The purpose for using peer teaching was to provide second year students with opportunities to practice their leadership and food service skills, whilst teaching first year students. This required second year students to apply their previously acquired knowledge and skills in both leadership and food service. It also provided first year students individual training in food services. Many first-year students find the practical work challenging and whilst they are given practical training, they often feel unsure and under pressure when they are required to perform with real guests. The peer teaching was designed to give these students the support not only during training but also during their food service shifts in the school restaurant.

Teaching and leadership are essential skills for those entering the hospitality industry. It is expected that managers and supervisors in hospitality at some stage of their career will need to provide some training for staff. Having this skill as well as knowing how to motivate and encourage their staff to perform tasks would be beneficial. So, it is fitting that students gain some of these skills during their own learning experiences.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There has been increased recognition that teaching and learning needs to evolve to meet the changing demands of our world (Boud, 2005). Different teaching practices have been adopted to engage students in their own learning. Although peer teaching is not a new strategy, it has become increasingly popular over the years. There are several ways in which peer teaching has been used depending on the context and requirements. Much of the research focuses on near-peer teaching whereby senior students, (one or more level ahead) who are more experienced, teach junior students. Same-level peer teaching is another widely-used form of peer teaching. This is where advanced students from the same class teaches classmates who may not understand a concept (Bulte, Betts, Garner, & During, 2007; Goh, 2006).

The peer tutoring system allows students to interact with their peers which enhances the social dynamic in the educational context (Mynard & Almarzouqi, 2006). More importantly, the students benefit from the shared experience by putting their theoretical knowledge into practice which also allows them to internalize their knowledge through the experience (Wang, 2014). According to Topping (2005) both tutor and tutee benefit as the teaching helps them to gain more self-confidence, improve their communication and social skills. It may be that a tutor has not completely understood a concept until she must teach another student. It encourages students to take a more active role in acquiring knowledge. For the learner, peer tutoring may offer a less intimidating medium for learning. The peer teacher may be closer to the students than the faculty and may understand the student problems and the challenges better.

Some weaknesses that have been highlighted in other research is that sometimes the peer tutor is less knowledgeable than expected which gives the learner a negative or limited experience. In some cases, students are not confident and learners tend to see them as having no real power or authority which results in disengagement from the learners. In other cases, peer tutors were overconfident and provided all the answers which did not allow the learners to find some answers for themselves (Bulte, Betts, Garner, & During, 2007).
CONTEXT

In this study, students from the second-year were required to teach the first-year students, food and beverage practical skills. The first-year students were previously taught the theory of service but needed to gain more practical training. The second-year students were previously taught the theory of mentorship, leadership and management principles. The peer teaching strategy would allow the second-year students to put their mentorship, leadership and management skills into practice by teaching the first-year students. The set sessions were held over the semesters at allocated timetable sessions as well as during the restaurant service times where the peer tutors had to mentor and tutor the first-year students. The peer teaching is compulsory for all second-year students. Peer teaching also continues into the restaurant service where first and second year students must work together to provide food and beverage service to guests whilst working in the institution restaurant. In this context both dyads would benefit from the activities. This study was conducted during two semesters over a one year period between 2015 and 2016.

METHODOLOGY

An interpretive approach was used to gain insight into students’ views of the peer teaching experience. This was a qualitative study using a multi-method approach to collect data from three different sources to complete and triangulate the findings. Students were asked to complete a questionnaire from which themes were derived. Students’ reports were analysed to consider students’ viewpoints on peer teaching both from teaching and learning perspectives. As the researcher was part of the programme, participant observation was also used to help triangulate the findings. The aim was not to test any theory or generalize the findings, but to explore the benefits and challenges of the students’ experiences.

Whilst thirty-five questionnaires were sent out, twelve students responded to the research questions so only those student reports were analysed. To ensure the course was effectively evaluated, the researcher documented comments, events and activities of participants in the peer teaching sessions.

The data from the questionnaires were analysed for themes. As there was no pre-existing framework, the data was read and key themes were extracted. These themes were then used to collect further information in the reports and participant observations.

The students’ permission was sort to be able use their responses for the research and students were made aware that their responses would be anonymous as data was collated through an electronic system and identification was not required. Students’ responses were collected during the semester break after their experience, and they were given assurance that their responses would not be linked to their academic performance.

FINDINGS

In the questionnaire, all students from both dyads were asked how much they understood of nine learning outcomes because of the peer teaching experience. For most of the peer teachers (Figure 1) the responses were predominantly positive across all learning outcomes and it was interesting to see that 67% of the students felt they had learnt ‘quite a bit’ about learning to make decisions. Other areas of high levels of learning was teamwork and technical skills. One student consistently responded that very little learning occurred because of the peer teaching.

Students were also asked to provide feedback about what they liked and did not like about the peer teaching experience. Some of the peer tutors felt it was rewarding to see their peers succeed and improve their skills. Other tutors felt they held a special role which required greater responsibility. They felt their ability to communicate improved and they gained more experience in building human relations and training experience. One tutor mentioned “It's easier to understand peers’ cause they understand and know how to explain better as they understand and learn like us.” They felt it was an interactive and they could develop closer relationships with the peer tutors. Sharing of experiences also led to positive experiences.
Figure 1: Peer teachers’ responses to questionnaire of what was learnt

In Figure 2, it was interesting to see that more than 80% of the peer learners felt they learnt ‘quite a bit’ about management and over 60% felt they learnt most about the technical skills from their peers. There were also high responses for teamwork, decision making, planning and time management. These are some of the skills the hospitality industry values and seeks in employees (Johanson et al, 2010).

Figure 2: Peer learners’ responses

The negatives highlighted were that peer tutors tended to be “too bossy”. Some peer tutors didn’t seem to care about the team and did not contribute to the work that need to be done. Another felt the peer tutors did not have sufficient experience and some just did not teach them but gave commands and stepped back. One first year student thought they should be taught by professionals with extensive experience in the hospitality industry. One student also felt a collaborative approach would be better learners should be allowed to learn for themselves rather than being instructed.

Peer tutors felt they had to invest too much time and put their own timetable on hold. Some felt they were taken for granted by their peers. Peer tutors felt they were not taken seriously because they are peers and first years refused to learn from the second-year peers. Some peer tutors felt that they did not understand the concept of peer teaching and thought that it was the lecturer’s role to teach the first year. A suggestion was made that peer tutors should be given more training in how to peer teach and how to handle difficult students.

REPORT AND PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION FEEDBACK

Student reports provided further insight into peer tutors’ misunderstanding of their role as peer tutors. Tutors wanted the learners to listen and obey instructions. Some peer tutors also felt it was difficult for them to teach their peers because they were their friends.

From the participant observation, it was noted that those who lacked confidence but were willing participants in first year, gained the most from the peer teaching. There were a few students who were in first year, who had prior...
experience and did not need the training but rather mentoring. Some peer tutors were not able to discern the difference despite having been taught theoretical concepts. It is clear this was hard to put into practice.

Recommendations:

- Peer learners need some background into why peer teaching will take place and how they can benefit from the strategy.
- Peer tutors require more structured practical training on how to guide their learners, handle difficult situations and maintain control of peer teaching sessions.
- The peer teaching process requires structure and good understanding of expectations before the course commences.
- Regular feedback and ongoing training sessions for peer tutors allows them to discuss problems and seek solutions.
- Learners of different levels and experience need to be identified and relevant peer support to be provided.

CONCLUSION

It is clear there have been struggles throughout this programme, however, the positives should not be overshadowed by the negatives. Peer teaching is a powerful interactive educational strategy that lends itself to developing skills when applied with enough preparation for both learners and tutors.

REFERENCES


An innovative university wide approach for evaluating work-integrated learning curriculum and pedagogy

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PACE (Professional and Community Engagement) is an institution wide program at Macquarie University, Australia which aims to provide work-integrated learning (WIL), service learning and other experiential/practice based learning opportunities to students. A central review of all PACE units (courses) at the institution was recently initiated, involving collection and analysis of information on curriculum and teaching practices, and categorization of delivery models to inform ongoing evaluation and learning. This was prompted in part by previous research which has established that curriculum design/pedagogical strategies are as important as the WIL activity (e.g., internship, simulation, project work) for achieving learning outcomes (Billett, 2015). Other drivers included a commitment to being accountable to stakeholders (including students, partner organisations and the University), recommendations from an earlier audit, management directives to evaluate the program for quality enhancement, and a strong commitment to continue increasing the overall quality and impact of the program.

This paper will describe the unit review project and its staged and iterative implementation, focusing on the process for evaluation and learning at the unit level, specifically through the use of the unit review survey tool. The unit review is one component of a broader evaluation framework for PACE (the PACE Evaluation and Impact Assessment) which aims to understand, learn from and ultimately improve its contribution to student employability. Other survey tools are being developed and piloted simultaneously to evaluate both student and partner experiences and outcomes of PACE, reflecting recent developments in the evaluation of WIL (e.g., Marlow & Saunders, 2016). The PACE evaluation framework is informed by a Theory of Change methodology which embeds an action learning ‘cycle of enquiry’ (Figure 1) and aligns closely to developmental evaluation (Patton, 2011). This paper discusses and reflects on how this process cycle of observe, action, reflect, plan and act (Wadsworth, 2010) has influenced the unit review process and resulted in changes to both the underlying Theory of Change and the design of PACE units and systems.

Figure 1: Cycle of enquiry

1 We adopt Oliver’s definition of employability, that is, “students and graduates can discern, acquire, adapt and continually enhance the skills, understandings and personal attributes that make them more likely to find and create meaningful paid and unpaid work that benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy” (Oliver, 2015, p. 59).

2 The PACE model of adaptive design, implementation, evaluation and learning is informed by Wadsworth’s (2010) cycle of enquiry.
UNIQUE FEATURES - A STAGED ITERATIVE IMPLEMENTATION

The Theory of Change methodology which informs the PACE evaluation framework is particularly useful for iterative design and evaluation of programs. It enables robust consideration of the external context, relationships and other factors that influence desired long-term outcomes, and provides a process to understand and measure the required organizational, cultural and systems level change needed to increase the employability of students (Weiss, 1995). Underpinning this are developmental evaluation processes that enable the iterative design, implementation, learning and adaptation of PACE through real-time data, enabling an ongoing cycle of inquiry, that is, plan, act, analyse, reflect (Patton, 2011; Wadsworth, 2010). Accordingly, the PACE Unit Review has been implemented over several stages to allow for learning and adaptation as feedback is given on the process and data is analysed.

Stage 1: The first phase of the project involved thinking through what questions to ask, identifying what data already existed and what data to collect. The focus of these questions were informed by the PACE Theory of Change, specifically the desired long-term outcomes of building active citizenship and employability capabilities of students. An online survey tool ‘PURE’ (PACE Unit Resource Evaluation) was then developed collaboratively between a range of stakeholders including an evaluation consultant, central/faculty teams and unit convenors. The survey tool is unique in that it serves multiple purposes, including identification of: staff needs around resources and processes (thereby informing budget/resourcing); curriculum/pedagogical strategies being used to deliver PACE; and evidence of how each PACE unit impacts on students.

Examples of the types of information collected by the survey include (see Figure 2 for a screenshot):

- Demographic information relating to the unit, for example, mode of delivery, pre-requisites, details of previous reviews undertaken, how the unit meets various criteria (i.e., learning and teaching criteria, criteria for being a WIL course), the types of WIL activities students typically undertake (individual vs group, short vs long, university vs student sourced), assessment tasks, the lecture schedule and so on;
- Extent to which the unit covers employability and active citizenship outcomes (units can focus on one or both of these), and various topics/content within induction/orientation and debriefing sessions;
- Strategies for monitoring students whilst they are undertaking their WIL activity, and methods for teaching reflective practice and ethical practice/research ethics;
- Risk assessment and work/health and safety issues; and
- Any support required by the unit convenor, for example, learning and teaching, IT, administrative/resourcing.

The survey instrument is also unique in that it is aligned with, and designed to feed into accreditation and other formal university processes such as cyclical institution led unit reviews.

Stage 2: The survey was initially piloted with four PACE units run by Faculty WIL Directors to iron out any issues. Feedback from faculty indicated that a lack of resources, specifically time to collect the data was an issue. As a result, a dedicated member of the Research and Evaluation (R&E) team located within the central PACE office pulled together existing data and contacted each of the Faculty WIL Directors to determine the most appropriate approach for collecting data in their particular faculty. The overall process would consist of two parts; Unit Convenors would be asked to complete an online survey via Qualtrics3 and attend an interview with the R&E staff member and Faculty WIL Director. The purpose of the interview was to update prefilled data, gather additional data, and unpack nuances of the unit in more detail, thereby identifying examples of good practice (where units were running well) and where improvements could be made (if there were issues). It was also an opportunity to find out if/where convenors required assistance (e.g., resources, professional development).

3 To make completion of the survey less time consuming for academics, most demographic information is prefilled by an administrative staff member drawing on information provided in the university handbook, unit guide, accreditation and review documentation.
Stage 3: It was decided that the Faculty of Arts would be the first faculty to engage with as it has the largest number of units (33 of the 77) and the most diverse modes of delivery, ranging from internships, project work, industry panels and fieldwork with a partnership component. Preliminary findings have already provided valuable insights. For example, unit convenors have emphasised the important role and contribution of Faculty PACE teams (mostly non-academic) in delivering WIL courses. Further, while the diversity of WIL experiences offered by the Faculty of Arts is a strength in terms of catering for a range of student needs and preferences, it can also make it difficult to ‘streamline’ procedures (thereby adding to staff workload). Findings have also pointed to a number of resources that are needed, for example, videos to support teaching of ethics modules and a variety of topics covered in induction/orientation sessions. In addition, the review process has promoted communication between faculty and central staff by providing a space for academics to give feedback to the central PACE office (from a department/faculty perspective) as well as find out about services available to support them in delivering their WIL course.

Stage 4: At the time of writing we are in a phase of reflection. Data and insights gathered through Stages 2 and 3, amongst other evaluation and research projects, are informing the next iteration of the Theory of Change and the revision of the survey/implementation process before rolling out to the other four faculties. Changes to the PACE Theory of Change have meant that some of the questions in the survey are now not applicable. As part of this process we are revisiting questions asked in Stage 1: are the questions we are asking giving us the data we need? Is it serving the purpose of all stakeholders? Are we asking for too much or too little data? Is the process of getting the information too draining on unit convenors and PACE faculty teams? As we reflect these questions we will learn and adapt our processes and tools before moving into a new phase of action.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Evaluating WIL across a diverse breadth of faculties, each with specific models of delivering units, is challenging, and we place emphasis on establishing adaptive processes for evaluation given the importance of balancing the need for consistent data and also for adapting practice through learning from real-time data. Reflecting on the process we have identified a number of lessons. Firstly, despite our efforts to minimize the time taken to collect data (i.e., by prefilling sections of the survey), feedback from unit convenors is that the survey instrument is too long, and completing the survey as well as attending an interview can be time consuming. Secondly, as WIL related...
nomenclature varies widely across disciplines and professions, the wording of some survey items has not always been universally understood. Developing a data collection tool that spans disciplinary boundaries, as well as administrative and academic sections of the university, has been perhaps one of the more challenging aspects of this project. Thirdly, while it is intended to be a university wide review, we have learned that there is no one size fits all – the review needs to be tailored to an extent. However, the survey tool could potentially enable cross-institutional comparison of WIL pedagogy, and in turn assist with benchmarking and/or identifying the most effective strategies (including learning and teaching strategies) for delivering WIL courses. Finally, with insights gained from Stage 1 & 2, we saw the need to reconceptualise our Theory of Change away from a binary distinction between employability and active citizenship. These insights are important ones, have wide implications for the design and delivery of PACE units and can be addressed constructively through the iterative cycle of enquiry.

The R&E team is currently working to incorporate these strategic insights and specific feedback into the next iteration of the cycle. This discussion provides insights into how our developmental evaluation approach drives the review both as a method but also underpins our values and principles. The process of constantly listening to stakeholders (through workshops, feedback, interviews, consultation), and reflecting on the feedback is an essential process which feeds into the capability and competence of those involved (Patton, 2011). As part of a broader evaluation framework, the unit review project aims to promote a coordinated and reflective approach to building understanding and connecting what’s happening at department, faculty and central levels within an institution wide WIL program. The project is ongoing but a key achievement of note is the engagement and collaboration among a range of stakeholders who would otherwise have little contact, thereby facilitating cooperation, exchange and learning across sections of the university.

REFERENCES

Emotional fallout of work-integrated learning: Triggers for positive and negative reactions in students

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Work-integrated learning (WIL), service learning and other forms of experiential education can be an emotional and sometimes daunting experience for university students. Students may be entering the workplace for first time (in the case of placements/internships), and experiences such as receiving feedback, facing setbacks/failure and having beliefs and assumptions challenged can potentially evoke strong feelings (Bender & Walker, 2013; Carson & Domangue, 2013; Willen, 2013). Available literature is limited and heavily situated within nursing, medicine and other practice based health sciences (e.g. Freshwater & Stickley, 2004; Willen, 2013), although now starting to appear in a broader range of areas including service learning (Carson & Domangue, 2013).

It is thought that strategies such as debriefing and reflection may be useful approaches for mediating students’ emotional responses in WIL (Bender & Walker, 2013; Overstreet, 2010). Negative emotions such as anxiety and guilt, form the focus of much of the WIL reflection and debriefing literature (e.g., Willen, 2013), with less mention of positive feelings (Zeviots, 2016 is an exception). As Janssen, de Hullu, and Tigelaar (2008) point out, there is a tendency within existing scholarship to frame teaching strategies around managing emotions arising from challenging or confronting experiences. Yet recent scholarship shows that positive emotional experiences are also key to understanding learning in experiential learning contexts (Zeviots, 2016), and focusing on both positive and negative experiences may lead to better teaching/learning outcomes (Janssen et al., 2008).

Our research aims to extend existing literature by exploring and identifying the range of emotions experienced in WIL (i.e., both negative and positive), and the triggers for such responses. While references are made to the underlying causes of emotional reactions in existing scholarship, much of this evidence is anecdotal. More recently, Zeviots (2016) has identified several triggers to “emotional highs” in experiential learning including facing the unknown, experiencing something meaningful for the first time, discovering something unexpected, having a sense of being on a journey, change, and meaningful learning.

AIMS

A small exploratory study was undertaken to examine the varied uses of debriefing in WIL (Winchester-Seeto & Rowe, 2016). This paper reports preliminary findings from one aspect of the research, that is, the identification of emotions experienced by students in WIL contexts, as well as the triggers for these reactions (i.e., the types of situations they are associated with), based on reporting of academic and host supervisors. Some implications for practice are also explored.

METHODS

Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with 23 WIL supervisors, located in both universities (n=18) and partner/host organisations (n=5). Participants were situated across a range of disciplines (e.g., education, health sciences, business) and institutions/organisations within Australia and NZ. This analysis reports on participant’s responses to the following questions: Have you used debriefing to assist students process emotions? If so, in relation to what kinds of situations/circumstances? What emotions did the students experience? The relevant interview segments were subject to a thematic analysis using QSR NVivo 11 software. Each researcher independently coded data relating to allocated sections of the data, then met to discuss and agree on final codes.

4 Ethics approval from the researcher’s institution was obtained (Ref No: 5201400821).
RESULTS

Preliminary analysis reveals that students’ experience a range of emotions in WIL, both positive and negative. University and host supervisors report that WIL is often associated with anxiety, embarrassment, frustration, guilt, sadness and anger amongst others.

if the experience was great and it's over, there was a bit of sadness. If the experience wasn't good, there's a bit of frustration and anger. (Participant 8, University Professional Staff)

there's anxiety, trepidation, not being sure of themselves as to whether or not they're capable, and fear of failure. (Participant 15, Academic Supervisor)

However, WIL can also be a source of excitement, passion, confidence and curiosity.

The emotions that the students expressed after placements is it was a fantastic experience, it was elating, it was exhilarating, all of those superlatives… the only extreme emotion I've had has actually been positive emotions. (Participant 2, Academic Supervisor)

If, mainly, the experience has been good…[it] actually makes the learner more curious to find out more and to explore more; so it prompts that curiosity aspect. (Participant 8, University Professional Staff)

There was recognition and appreciation by some supervisors that emotions directly impacted on learning, in particular, the view that highly charged emotional experiences could lead to more “intense” learning.

Often it’s when people are unbalanced that they actually learn the most. When I mean unbalanced I mean times where they felt a little bit uncertain or a little bit challenged by a situation where they're not quite comfortable. (Participant 16, Academic Supervisor)

Triggers of emotional responses were found to centre around five key areas: interpersonal, personal, the placement, performance and the unexpected/unfamiliar nature of WIL (Table 1).

### Table 1: Triggers of emotional responses in WIL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trigger</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>Conflict (particularly around team/groupwork), the student’s relationship with their workplace supervisor, and interaction with others (e.g., co-workers, clients, patients).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Having cherished beliefs/values challenged, experiencing transformation and change, and issues that might affect students outside the placement (e.g., family breakdowns, illness). Transformation could include changes in the student’s perceptions of their career trajectory, a sense of becoming a professional (e.g., a social worker or lawyer), and their views about university.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement</td>
<td>The nature of the placement/activity, the student’s overall experience (i.e., whether it was positive or negative), going through trauma or confronting situations (e.g., illness, death, working with traumatized/disadvantaged clients and communities).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>Fear of failure, receiving criticism from supervisors or co-workers, and student’s ensuing sense of competence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unexpected/</td>
<td>A range of situations including culture shock, ethical dilemmas, being in unknown territory, or experiencing an unexpected event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unfamiliar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Understanding the triggers for students’ emotional reactions, both negative and positive can help inform strategies to assist students to process and manage such responses in WIL, particularly those which may impede learning. A number of supervisors commented on how important it was “to create a safe environment so students feel comfortable” (Participant 10, Academic Supervisor). Specifically, students need an environment where they can...
safely ask questions, identify and name the emotions they are experiencing, express frustrations, make mistakes and openly discuss failure. As noted by one Academic Supervisor (Participant 23):

It's about learning how to develop a story and express it in a way that is meaningful to them and meaningful to others and to get that response back….building the confidence that they can disclose difficult things in a way that is still safe.

A small number of supervisors even used prompts/materials to intentionally trigger emotional responses as a strategy to facilitate learning:

I've also used things like kind of graphical stuff, to use images to trigger responses…we've done debriefs around how we felt the community felt, by people picking particular pictures or words that might be indicative of what that meeting or that conversation was about…Then exploring that from a kind of more feelings perspective and then tying that back to some of that theory around good communication including stuff like body language and listening skills and active cueing and that kind of stuff. (Participant 1, Host Supervisor)

The specific approaches employed to support students in processing and managing emotions will likely depend on the nature of the WIL activities being undertaken, characteristics of the student cohort, and the supervisor’s knowledge/understanding of emotions and/or confidence in facilitating such discussions. It is important that, whatever approaches are employed, they are appropriately scaffolded; this includes adequate preparation, and support for students during and after their WIL activity/placement. Further, in order for such strategies to be an effective mechanism for processing emotions, there needs to be “a high amount of trust…to get to those real situations” (Participant 21, Academic Supervisor).

CONCLUSIONS

Preliminary findings suggest that WIL is an emotional experience for students, at least enough to be observed by the supervisors. There may indeed be more emotional responses that are hidden from external view. Within WIL and experiential learning more broadly, emotions appear to be involved in the processing of negative or traumatic events; managing experiences; development of emotional intelligence; personal growth/self-awareness and challenging assumptions (e.g., Carson & Domangue, 2013; Freshwater & Stickley, 2004; Willen, 2013).

The reporting of both positive and negative emotions by university and workplace supervisors lends support to previous research advocating a balanced approach to debriefing, reflection and related teaching strategies, that is, considering the spectrum of emotional responses and/or events may be more beneficial than focusing on challenging/confronting experiences (Janssen et al., 2008). Understanding the types of emotions experienced and triggers for such reactions is crucial for informing teaching strategies such as debriefing and reflection which are intended to assist students’ processing of emotions and reactions to events, as well as enabling WIL practitioners to develop more effective supervisory practices. Dreifuerst (2009) cautions that while facilitating the release of emotions is important, it can also inhibit learning if it distracts from engagement in the experience. Therefore, a critical element of debriefing (in clinical experiences at least) is the accommodation and assimilation of emotions with knowledge acquired in previous experiences and other courses (Dreifurst, 2009).

A further question to consider, particularly in relation to transformative learning, is “is whether students are mentally and emotionally prepared for this type of learning and whether the academic institution (and professors)…[have] the ability to foster and nurture these kinds of experiences” (Moore, 2005, p. 86). A deeper understanding is also needed of how the triggers of emotions interact (Zeviots, 2016), with such questions informing the next stages of our data analysis which include unpacking the strategies being used both to help students process emotions as well as contribute to other learning outcomes in WIL.

REFERENCES


Most tertiary institutions strive to incorporate work-integrated learning opportunities alongside theoretical teaching in order to provide students with experiences that allow practical application of theories to real world scenarios, as well as enhancing networking connections that can potentially lead to employment opportunities (Burns & Chopra, 2017). It is, therefore, important that academia forms strong collaborative relationships with industry and as Chandrasekaran, Stojevski, Littlefair, and Joordens (2013) point out, efforts to improve students’ analytical thinking (linking theory and practice) and their transition to industry, requires a joint venture by both the learning institution and industry partners. Partnerships with industry are also key to providing an authentic and inclusive learning experience as well as maintaining currency and relevance of course content (Ferns & Moore, 2012; Hodges, 2011). Ferns, Campbell, & Zegwaard (2014) believes that such partnerships are central to facilitating academic integrity, industry credibility and the assurance of graduates with skills transferable across different contexts.

The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand (Open Polytechnic) is the institution under discussion in this paper. It delivers its programmes solely through an Online Distance Flexible Learning (ODFL) model, and is an internationally recognised specialist provider in distance learning. Past awards include: joint winner of the Vancouver based Commonwealth of Learning top award for institutional excellence in distance learning; Mellon Award for e-learning capability from the US-based Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; and Award of Excellence for Distance Education Materials by the Commonwealth of Learning. Nationally, awards have included the Education Provider Award in the Vero Excellence in Business Support Awards, and winner of the Innovation section at the 2013 Westpac Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce Business Awards (Open Polytechnic, 2015). These awards demonstrate the Open Polytechnic’s expertise in distance education and their commitment to a digital and networked future that caters for students who are seeking the flexibility associated with an open, distance and flexible style of learning.

A new Bachelor of Information Technology degree is to be delivered by the Open Polytechnic in July 2017 via the ODFL model and one of the challenges is to provide ways to enrich the online learning experience with real world connections and networking opportunities. Strategies for ensuring online students are provided with cooperative education opportunities, enabling them to engage with industry, require some creative pedagogical approaches to foster industry stakeholder engagement.

**UNIQUE FEATURES**

The Open Polytechnic is unique to most other institutes of technology and polytechnics (ITPs) in New Zealand with a core constituency of vocational adult learners, 70% of whom are already in employment, and 95% studying part-time. The demographics also differ too many other ITPs, in that students are 60% female, and the largest age group is between 25-34 years of age. Most programmes are delivered entirely online to students located throughout New Zealand. The digital learning platform used by Open Polytechnic is iQualify, a platform developed specifically for an online-only learning experience. It has been designed and developed to align to the user experience of the adult student. iQualify removes the necessity for print and textbook resources and ensures that all courses are deliberately prepared to leverage a digitally enriched, highly interactive, online experience (Open Polytechnic, 2015).

The style of teaching and learning in an online environment has distinctly different characteristics to the traditional teaching and learning environment. Online learning is defined as a system and process that connects learners with distributed and online learning materials. The learning in this environment is characterised by separation of place
and time between the teacher and learner, between learners, and between learners and learning resources and activities (Chang & Fisher, 2003). The delivery of online learning, therefore, creates challenges in providing students with opportunities to connect with industry, and to gain a real world understanding of the IT work environment.

**DISCUSSION**

There are a range of ways to enrich the learning experience for online students with real-world connections and networking opportunities. One of the most well-known types of industry engagement is through a cooperative education or internship arrangement whereby the student gains experience in the workplace. A study by Fleming and Eames (2005) found that while in the workplace, students learned a range of skills including communication, time management, reflective thinking, problem solving, and a greater understanding of the workplace and its environment. The Open Polytechnic’s BIT students will undertake an industry project in their third year of study as a capstone for their three years of study. Prior to this however, it is highly desirable that they gain exposure to the IT workplace and have the opportunity to connect and form networks with the IT industry. The following discussion provides some strategies that will be instrumental in connecting students with industry stakeholders. These include industry presentations, discussions forums, and blogs.

It is proposed that an industry presentation in the context of online delivery would consist of prerecorded interviews with industry champions that are loaded into the digital learning platform - iQualify. Where a traditional delivery approach has guest speakers from industry come into the classroom and students gather together in one room at one time, this online delivery approach means students have flexibility as to when they wish to engage and how many times they wish to view the guest speaker interview or presentation. The industry presentation could also include a virtual field trip, thus providing an alternative for an actual field trip - a common way of allowing the traditional learners to view and understand the work environment (Kisiel, 2006).

Each of the guest speaker interviews/presentations will be followed up with the opportunity for students to engage in a discussion forum facilitated by their lecturer. Activities in discussion forums help learners to share and gain knowledge from each other, and in fully online courses, discussion forums are often the only medium of interaction (Nandi, Hamilton, Harland, & Warburton, 2011). The timing of these forums needs to be considered, as many students are part time and in work, so ensuring the discussion forums are available at multiple times is vital.

The Open Polytechnic currently has an online community that includes blogs (Figure 1). A blog, specifically designed for the BIT students, to provide updates of national and international current industry events and topical news, will encourage students, regardless of their geographic location, to keep up with industry trends and take advantage of any networking opportunities occurring in their region. This will not only alert students to upcoming events, but will also be an opportunity to share information and to connect with a wider community thus enabling their online learning to be more collaborative and interactive.

**IMPLICATIONS**

As digital technologies are accelerating the globalisation of education and reshaping educational institutions and systems, they are enabling more traditional institutions to move towards flexible means of delivery. Chang and Fisher (2003) view the shift in the teaching and learning mode away from the traditional face-to-face environment towards online learning as presenting new challenges for teaching and learning for both teachers and students. Abbey (2000) supports this view and sees online instruction as being very different from traditional teaching in that knowledge is often contextualised to make it real, more interesting and attention gaining.
Figure 1: Open Polytechnic’s Online Community Blogs

While online students can study in their own time and at their own pace, one of the pedagogic challenges of online learning revolves around isolation and the lack of face-to-face contact. By providing online students with opportunities to connect with industry, to take part in discussion forums, and attend networking events, not only will their learning experience be enhanced, they will also have a greater awareness of the current IT environment and be more well-equipped to move into their IT career.

The demand for more flexibility in education and improvements in digital technologies means that traditional institutions will be increasingly looking to offer these viable and cost effective online educational opportunities. The growth of this digitally created learning environment needs to be matched with similar growth in educational research. An interesting suggestion for further research is to investigate how the strategies discussed in this paper enhanced the online learning environment, and whether they improved the students’ level of industry engagement and career outcomes upon graduation.

REFERENCES

Threesome, fivesome or more: Navigating stakeholder relationships in the delivery of work-integrated learning

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Work-Integrated Learning is a unique pedagogy involving multiple stakeholders, which may include: universities/Higher Education (HE) institutions; host organisations, for example, business, industry and community organisations; academic and professional staff; workplace or host supervisors; and students. These stakeholders do not operate in isolation and, as Cooper and colleagues highlight, “without strong and effective relationships between the university and workplaces there can be no WIL” (2010, p. 177). Recognition of the importance of such relationships has risen in recent years, with many studies and projects suggesting that strong, mutually beneficial partnerships between the relevant stakeholders are needed for the long-term viability of WIL and best outcomes for students (e.g., Jeffries & Milne 2014; Orrell, 2011; Patrick et al., 2009; Winchester-Seeto et al., 2015).

Since the 1980s the concept of strong partnerships has been advocated in the UK and Australia for an array of government activities, including educational endeavours (Cardini, 2006; Reeve & Gallacher, 2006). While many partnerships provide substantial and positive outcomes for stakeholders, the nature and workings of partnerships remains a “problematic concept” (Reeve & Gallacher, 2006, p. 219). Cardini suggests that while educational partnerships are presented as “straightforward” they are really “an arena of complexities, tensions and power” (2006, p. 393).

There are many reasons for tensions and complexities in WIL partnerships, despite their apparent capacity for delivering quality WIL. These include inter alia: that effective partnerships are difficult to achieve, can be costly; need a long lead time to establish; one partner may be marginalised in the process (Cardini, 2006); and differences in cultures such as decision making procedures, language and values (Huxham & Vangen, 2000). One under explored issue is the question of exactly who is involved in the WIL relationship or partnership, and the consequent layers of complexity for those at the operational level.

This paper explores three related questions:

1. What are partnerships in the WIL context?
2. Do partnerships exist between institutions, individuals, or a combination? And does this matter?
3. What implications does this have for delivery of WIL and the stakeholders involved?

STUDY APPROACH

This is a topical paper, intended to explore ideas and insights gleaned from related research studies published over the past five years, and the first-hand experience of the authors in teaching WIL subjects in an Australian university.

One study incorporated empirical research on the role of academic and host supervisors in WIL (Winchester-Seeto et al 2013; 2016) which involved 51 semi-structured interviews with supervisors from universities and host organisations. The second set of studies encompassed the question of inclusive practice in WIL, exploring equality of access to WIL experiences. 54 semi-structured interviews were conducted with students, university and workplace supervisors, and individuals in organisations with responsibilities for the management of WIL programs (Mackaway et al., 2014; Mackaway, in press).

None of the participants in these studies were directly asked about partnerships or relationships with other stakeholders, but many made relevant comments, shared insights or raised questions that have informed the ideas...
presented here. Although we acknowledge students as stakeholders in WIL, for the purposes of this short paper, the role of the student is not examined.

To further explore the ideas presented herein, and illustrate how relationships and partnerships affect everyday practice, three short case studies have been drawn from the interviews in the studies described above. Fleming and Hickey (2012) maintain that case studies are commonly used in research on WIL as this approach “draws the researcher to what is important about that case within its own world and aims to develop what are perceived as issues, contexts and interpretations of that specific case” (p. 211).

PARTNERSHIPS

Many HE institutions are now seeking partnerships in the very formal sense of the word, that is, a legal agreement with obligations and responsibilities of all parties, for example, health and safety, induction, intellectual property etc (Cooper et al., 2010). Varty suggested that in the US “cooperative education, properly practiced, is also a very sophisticated strategy that requires a fully developed business-education partnership as its foundation” (1996, p. 132). As WIL becomes more common and involves more students, this kind of partnership is vital in ensuring the smooth operation of WIL, and for safeguarding all parties. Used in this way a partnership is predominantly between two institutions and usually the student as well – the classic threesome or triad model.

Partnership, however, can also mean a relationship characterised by mutual cooperation and responsibility, in this case for the successful delivery of WIL, and education of students. These relationships are often described with terms such as “cooperation, participation, flexibility, trust, and confidence” (Cardini, 2006, p. 395) and based on “reciprocity, efficiency, legitimacy and synergy” (Fleming & Hickey, 2012, p. 219). The parties involved in this kind of partnership could be organisations and institutions, or individuals, or a combination.

Delivery of WIL is commonly understood to be based on a three-way relationship or partnership. The parties differ depending on the study, including either a university, host organisations and student; or an academic supervisor, host supervisor and the student (e.g., Fleming, 2013; Winchester-Seeto et al., 2016). In reality, all five parties are involved and potentially have relationships with each other. Some WIL models also involve others, for example, preceptor, assessor, nurse educator, administrators.

Figure 1a depicts the most common stakeholders and the six relationships that can ensue. Figure 1b shows where the student might fit, and the four triad relationships they may need to navigate (these vary depending on the model of WIL). Failure to understand and allow for these complexities can have implications for implementation, practice and the wellbeing of those involved.

CASE STUDIES

Three case studies are examined to tease out some of the nuances of these relationships in practice.

Case Study 1 involves an experienced academic supervisor, who convenes a subject with project-based placements. This academic manages all negotiation and administration for placements and relationships with the host supervisors. Her main concern is the level of support from the HE institution.

It would actually be nice to have some support for just the flow of paperwork. …There are formal agreements that have to be signed, things to photocopy, things to send out electrically or by mail to the student, to the workplace (Academic supervisor).

Not only is there little help with the administrative load, there is limited assistance with locating and securing placements, and no realistic workload allowed for the many tasks associated with WIL. The HE institution here is taking a fairly passive, and apparently indifferent, role in this relationship between themselves and the academic.
Case Study 2 explores the perspective of an experienced host supervisor from a local government organisation. As manager of the section she has a dual role in representing the organisation. She describes direct relationships with academic supervisors and with the university itself via assessment and any difficulties with students.

In her managerial position she has instituted several initiatives. The host supervisors in her section are directly supported in tasks related to liaising with universities, sourcing students and any administrative tasks via a volunteer coordinator. The organisation also supports the staff directly with staff development.

this particular council has instigated a leadership program, where they’ve selected people who either are leaders or are potential leaders in the future [and] for people who supervise (Host supervisor)

In this example the host organisation has adopted an active and enabling relationship, at least for some aspects.

Case Study 3 examines this question from the viewpoint of a particular issue, that of providing quality WIL placements for all students. There are challenges in locating suitable placements for some students, for example, international students, those with disability, etc (Mackaway et al., 2014). Although some HE institutions and disciplines manage this well and have policies and practices in place, many leave this to the individual academic supervisors (or administrative assistants) (Winchester-Seeto et al., 2015). This leads to additional, often unrecognised workload, and a reliance on pre-existing relationships and favours between academic and host supervisor to secure placement for student (Mackaway, in press).

We once got a vision impaired student...she was qualified and keen...it required some extra work to make sure she was safe, but it was worth it (Host supervisor).

This is a highly individual solution relying on trusting relationships between academic and host supervisors. It also assumes a willingness by individual host supervisors, and that they will be, if not directly supported by their own organisation, at least will not face difficulties/sanctions resulting from taking the student, for example, extra time needed to support them.

In Case Study 3 the degree of involvement by the host organisation and HE institution in operational matters, and level of support offered to the individuals varies enormously. Signing a formal agreement is only one part of the deal. Failure to provide enough assistance to host and academic supervisors to adequately carry out their duties can undermine the intentions of offering WIL to all students, even if this is due to ignorance or indifference.
As seen in these three case studies, the relationships between the parties involved can be active or passive, and can enable, be indifferent to, or even directly undermine the actions or intentions of others. Fleming and Hickey (2012) found “interpersonal connections and individual factors as playing a key role in the formation of cooperative education partnerships” (p. 219), as seen in these examples. Individuals at the coalface may be working on partnerships underpinned by trust and confidence in each other, that are supported or undermined by the decisions, actions or indifference of the organisation or HE institution. Conversely, undertakings agreed to by organisations and HE institutions may be supported, ignored, or undermined by the individuals who are supposed to operationalise them.

**IMPLICATIONS**

This discussion paper has only scratched the surface of this multi-faceted and complex issue. There are many other examples and nuances that could and should be further explored. It is, however, beyond the capacity and scope of this short paper. Whilst the formal and legal sense of partnership is almost inevitable as WIL becomes institutionalised, the cooperative relationship sense of partnerships is more problematic as it relies on the attitudes, needs, motives and actions not only of organisations, but of individuals. Things can quickly become complicated and compromised due to lack of communication, different agendas and lack of support. Failure to understand the true nature and manifestation of relationships and how these impinge of the delivery of WIL can derail well intentioned initiatives and threaten sustainability of WIL in the long-term.

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Cooperative education project - employers: Are they happy?

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Business New Zealand listed the top 10 skills the employers look for are: communication skills, customer service skills, ability to work well in a team, literacy and numeracy skills, confidence learning about and using computers and technology, planning and organisational skills, initiative and a can-do attitude, problem-solving skills, good work habits and independence, and health and safety skills. (Career New Zealand, n.d., para 2). It is essential for education institutes like Wintec to provide graduates with these skills to be employable and productive for businesses and society.

It is not uncommon that in job applications, employers require applicants to have some kind of relevant experience and for fresh graduates it is often a challenge. Volunteering work might be useful but as suggested by Hodges and Burchill that employers want “well-rounded” graduates with a broad range of competencies (Hodges & Burchill, 2003, p. 19).

Eastern Nazarene College (ENC, 2015, para 2) in United States found that internship in college provides students with well-rounded experience, resume and reference building, confidence, and a chance of getting hired.

The term "cooperative education" means “the provision of alternating or parallel periods of academic study and public or private employment to give students work experiences related to their academic or occupational objectives and an opportunity to earn the funds necessary for continuing and completing their education” (USLegal, n.d., para. 1).

In 2015, Wintec offered a cooperative education project in the Bachelor of Applied Management programme for the first time. It is essential to obtain feedback from employers at an early stage for a performance check and continuous improvement to deliver quality education.

RESEARCH QUESTION

As a tertiary education provider, we need to know whether the graduates are meeting employers’ needs and expectations. If not, what, are the issues and the reasons and what we should do to improve student performance?

This research focused on the following student skills:

- Organisational skills,
- Technical skills, and
- Interpersonal skills.

Furthermore, employers were given the chance to provide general comment about the student and about the programme, and the intention to host a Wintec business student in the future.

METHODOLOGY

Questionnaires with closed and open-ended questions were posted to fifty-six employers who hosted Wintec students. All fifty-six questionnaires were returned with some minor discrepancies but still usable.

There were three parts in the closed questions. The first part looked at organisational skills including, planning, problem solving, creative thinking, critical thinking and time management skills. The second part focused on technical skills consists of knowledge of practices, accuracy, speed of performance and adherence to directions provided. The third part addressed interpersonal skills including communication, cooperation, initiative, assertiveness, motivation, reliability, and punctuality.
For each of these skills employers were asked to choose whether the student had exceeded expectations, met expectations, partly met expectations or did not meet expectation.

Ethical approval was obtained from Human Ethics Research Group, Waikato Institute of Technology prior to actual research.

**FINDINGS**

*Quantitative*

The results below are a combined total for the Bachelor of Applied Management and Graduate Diploma students. There are five skills under the ‘Organisational Skills’ category, namely: planning, problem solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, and time management.

- For planning, 20 (35.7%) of the respondents said the student exceeded expectations, 30 (53.6%) met expectations and 6 (10.7%) partly met expectation.
- Seventeen students (30.5%) exceeded expectations in problem solving, 37 (66.1%) met expectations, 1 (1.7%) partly met expectation and 1 (1.7%) did not meet expectation.
- For creative thinking, 21 (37.5%) students exceeded expectations, 29 (51.8%) met expectations, 4 (7.1%) partly met expectation and 2 (3.6%) did not meet expectation.
- Eighteen (32.1%) students exceeded expectations in critical thinking, 32 (57.2%) met expectations and 5 (9%) partly met expectation and 1 (1.7%) did not meet expectation.
- For time management, 25 (44.7%) students exceeded expectations, 20 (35.7%) met expectations, 11 (19.6%) partly met expectation.

In the ‘Technical Skills’ area, the four elements are: knowledge of practice’s, accuracy, speed of performance, and adherence to directions provided.

- Sixteen students (28.6%) exceeded expectations in knowledge of practice’s, 32 (57.1%) met expectations and 8 (14.3%) met expectations.
- For accuracy, 18 (32.1%) students exceeded expectations, 34 (60.7%) met expectations, 3 (5.5%) partly met expectation and 1 (1.7%) did not meet expectation.
- Twenty-five (44.6%) students exceeded expectations in speed of performance, 25 (44.6%) met expectations and 6 (10.8%) met expectations.
- For adherence to directions provided, 27 (48.2%) students exceeded expectations, 23 (41%) met expectations and 6 (10.8%) partly met expectation.

Under **Interpersonal Skills**, the seven components are: communication, cooperation, initiative, assertiveness, motivation, reliability, and punctuality.

- For communication, 25 (46.4%) students exceeded expectations, 24 (41.1%) met expectations, 5 (8.9%) partly met expectation and 2 (3.6%) did not meet expectation.
- Thirty-four (60.7%) students exceeded expectations in cooperation and 22 (39.3%) met expectations.
- For Initiative, 25 (44.6%) students exceeded expectations, 23 (41.1%) met expectations, 7 (12.5%) partly met expectation and 1 (1.8%) did not meet expectation.
- Nineteen (33.9%) students exceeded expectations in assertiveness, 27 (48.2%) met expectations and 10 (17.9%) partly met expectations.
- For motivation, 27 (48.2%) students exceeded expectations, 27 (48.2%) met expectations and 2 (3.6%) partly met expectation.
- Thirty (53.6%) students exceeded expectations in reliability, 24 (42.8%) met expectations and 2 (3.6%) partly met expectations.
- For punctuality, 31 (55.4%) students exceeded expectations, 19 (33.9%) met expectations and 6 (10.7%) partly met expectation.
As shown in Table 1, students were rated best in cooperation with everyone exceeded or met expectations followed by reliability and motivation.

Table 1: Student rating of skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Exceeded expectations (%)</th>
<th>Met expectations (%)</th>
<th>Partly met expectations (%)</th>
<th>Did not meet expectations (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuality</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed of performance</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adherence to directions</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of practice</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time management</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative thinking</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Qualitative

1. Cooperative Education Project Students (Bachelor of Applied Management)
   a) Feedback regarding the student

In many cases, the employers used the prompts from the quantitative questions to provide qualitative feedback.

Personal skills – The employers placed a lot of emphasis on this aspect of the work placement. Overall, the comments are positive and focusing on the soft skills that the student possessed and in many cases repeating the wording of the qualitative categories (Initiative, motivation etc). Additional words to describe the student used such as enthusiastic, commitment, effort, time management, organisational skills, teamwork and communication.

Improvements needed – The improvements again related mostly to the soft skills that the employers felt were lacking. It comes down to a lack of work readiness of that student from the employer’s perspective. Whilst lack of product knowledge in the field is mentioned, it comes down to areas such as communication, motivation and initiative. This is particularly the case where English is a second language. The student’s expectations and the employer’s expectations perhaps do not meet.

b) Comments and suggestions for improvements of the programme

Not every employer responded to this section, but for the ones that did approximately 55% felt that there needed to be a number of changes to the overall programme. The key comment was around the expectations of the business
and the expectations of Wintec. To explain, many businesses would like to have more communication from Wintec and a visit from the supervisor for that student. This is to make clear to all parties how the placement will be conducted, plus ongoing checks that it is going according to plan.

c) Will or will not host again

Not all employers completed this section, but for those that did 58% indicated that they would host gain.

2. Graduate Diploma Students

a) Feedback regarding the student

Personal skills – It is clear that the employers were looking for the same soft skills as shown above, however, the feedback in this section shows that these students lack some of the skills of the Bachelor students mentioned above.

Improvements needed – The same areas for improvement are required as for the BAM students, only this time the need for improvement came across stronger. These students are primarily English as a second language and lack of communication was a major issue for many of the employers. It would seem that the students often did not understand the requirements asked by the employer. In addition, the student would not always communicate his/her need or confusion often due to English language and an understanding of expectations.

b) Comments and suggestions for improvements of the programme

This section again echoes the comments from the degree students as above, but there is a stronger emphasis on the fit of the student for the placement. The employers are asking that we (Wintec) more closely vet each student’s suitability for the role. The same themes continue with a request for a visit from a Wintec tutor, with a clear plan for what is required of the student and the business.

c) Will or will not host again

Not all employers completed this section, but for those that did 44% indicated that they would host gain. This must be read in context, as 35% of the employers did not answer this section at all.

DISCUSSION

Quantitative

As shown in Table 1 in the Findings section, there is room to improve in initiative, accuracy, problem solving, critical thinking and, in particular, creative thinking and communication skills.

Further analysis shows that Bachelor programme students were rated better than Graduate Diploma students were. Possible reason might be most of the Graduate Diploma students were from overseas (mostly Asian countries) and their previous study/learning styles might not be the same as here in New Zealand. Chuah (2010, Teaching East-Asian Students, para 3 & 5) found that a lot of Asian students were quiet, passive and more dependent on their lecturers, therefore, they tend to struggle to take complete responsibility for their own learning. (Acadsoc, 2014, para. 2) also pointed out that ‘smart students would never dare to correct their teacher’s errors’ and Asian students are expected to memorise lessons, facts and concepts then recite them in the examination in order to score high marks. The fact that these overseas students joined the programme and had been with Wintec for just a few months there was not enough time for them to pick up the skills that the New Zealand employers were expecting.

Qualitative

1. Cooperative Education Project Students (Bachelor of Applied Management)

a) Feedback regarding the student

Personal skills - It is interesting to note that the bulk of the comments are related to the soft skills of students. This is consistent with what comments from employers over the last number of years.
Improvements needed - It would seem that the employer wants the student more work ready and this strongly relates to the soft skills that the student does or does not possess. There is confusion between the minimum 120 hours that the student must do in the business and the benefits to that business. Therefore, the question to be asked is “Do the academic requirements of the placement (Assessments required by Wintec) and the needs of the business match up?”

b) Comments and suggestions for improvements of the programme.

It is clear that Wintec needs to have more communication with the employer and give the employer direction regarding the expectations for hosting the student. It looks like that a number of employers felt abandoned by Wintec and that there was no direct benefit for that specific business. The other key area is for Wintec (and other providers of this programme) to be careful, to align academic requirements and any benefit for the business.

2. Graduate Diploma Students

a) Feedback regarding the student

Personal skills – The tertiary provider has less time with this cohort (compared to the BAM students) prior to the student engaging in the student project. Therefore, it is more difficult to facilitate the skills required for placement. This, however, must be attempted, and consequently Wintec has made changes to the programme for the Graduate Diploma in their first Semester with us. There is now an increased emphasis on the skills needed for success in the student placement.

Improvements needed – This area would have to be the most critical for the future success of the programme. The tertiary provider has less time to develop the skills for those students with English as a second language. Typically, this is the Semester of study before the project in the following Semester. The programme in the first Semester of study has been changed in order to address the areas of concern. The question needs be asked if these students are ready for placement in a New Zealand Context or perhaps a “desktop” study could be used for some of the students.

b) Comments and suggestions for improvement of the programme

The suggestion regarding closer communication between Wintec and the employer has not been fully addressed. Perhaps due to lack of resources (staff and time) there is currently no plan for staff to visit the placements of the students. Concerning the expectations of the employer, we have made incremental changes, but it would seem that we have not fully addressed this issue. Each individual supervisor currently works with each student to assess the appropriateness of the project.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall students rated better in interpersonal skills followed by technical skills and not as good in organisational skills.

The Bachelor of Applied Management (BAM) industry feedback was satisfactory except for one or two weak areas. Overall, the BAM student cohort seemed better able in all areas than the Graduate Diploma students. The recommendations below are largely generic, other than recommendation for the Graduate Diploma students in number 1 below.

1. The educational providers should consider putting more effort in assisting the Graduate Diploma, students to have them work ready. These may include skills such as communication, creative thinking, initiative, accuracy, problem solving, and reliability.
   - A revised programme of study for the Graduate Diploma students in the semester prior to the placement.
   - Additional English language testing and coaching.
   - A suggestion that it may be desirable to limit those Graduate Diploma students who are going to placement to those with a B or B+ average. This will depend on a number of issues, in particular
that the tertiary provider meets the requirements of the graduate profile (Graduate profile, 2013) and the promise made to the student on enrolment.

2. More communication is required from the teaching provider to the employer hosting the student. This is particularly in the following areas:
   - Matching of the student to the requirements of the business
   - Clear expectations of the role of the business in the placement.
   - Clear expectations of the student in that placement
   - At least one visit from the supervisor of the student during the placement.
   - An attempt to match the academic requirements of Wintec and the needs of the business.
   - The use of online interaction on a regular basis with the employers. The form that this will take has not yet been decided.

3. Wintec needs to carry out a new survey to compare the results of the current study and determine the feeling of the employers in 2017. For this study, it is recommended to use of an online survey tool such as Qualtrics.

REFERENCE


