

The WIL report

Work Integrated Learning A National Scoping Study

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Final report to the
Australian Learning and Teaching Council
(ALTC)

The WIL [Work Integrated
Learning] report:
A national scoping study

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Acronyms

ACEN	Australian Collaborative Education Network
ALTC	Australian Learning and Teaching Council
BIHECC	Business, Industry and Higher Education Collaboration Council
CIRM	Consortium for Integrated Resource Management
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
DEST	Department of Education Science and Training
ESOS	Educational Services for Overseas Students
HECS	Higher Education Contribution Scheme
IAESTE	International Association for Exchange of Students for Technical Experience
IBL	Industry-Based Learning
NAGCAS	National Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NZACE	New Zealand Association of Cooperative Education
RIN	Resource Identification and Networking
SME	Small-to-Medium Enterprises
WACE	World Association of Cooperative Education
WIL	Work Integrated Learning

Terms

In this report these terms are used:

Authentic learning

Authentic learning or ‘participation model’; where students participate in the actual work of a professional community, engaging directly in the target community itself (Radinsky et al., 1998, p. 407).

Industry, employers and the professions

Those who could or do employ graduates or university students. This includes not-for-profit organisations, peak and professional bodies, government and non government organisations.

Government

Federal, state and local government that legislate for policy and funding higher education.

Participatory action research

Participatory action research can be defined as ‘collective, self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order improve the rationality and justice of their own social ... practices’ (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988, p. 5).

Scoping study

To ‘map rapidly the key concepts underpinning a research area and the main sources and types of evidence available’ (Arksey & O’Malley, 2005, p. 5).

Stakeholder

Any individual or organisation that participates in or impacts on WIL (university staff, university students, employers and government).

Stakeholder approach

An approach that recognises different stakeholder perspectives and needs, is mutually beneficial, and has clear agreements and commitment between all parties.

University staff

This includes senior managers, academic and professional staff.

WIL

An umbrella term for a range of approaches and strategies that integrate theory with the practice of work within a purposefully designed curriculum.

WIL placement

A type of work integrated learning that requires the student to be situated in the workplace.

WIL staff

Academic and professional staff who organise, manage and enact WIL activities.

Work-ready

Graduates with a combination of content knowledge and employability skills, such as communication, team work and problem solving, which enables effective professional practice.

Executive summary

This report provides an account of the first large-scale scoping study of *work integrated learning* (WIL) in contemporary Australian higher education. The explicit aim of the project was to identify issues and map a broad and growing picture of WIL across Australia and to identify ways of improving the student learning experience in relation to WIL. The project was undertaken in response to high levels of interest in WIL, which is seen by universities both as a valid pedagogy and as a means to respond to demands by employers for work-ready graduates, and demands by students for employable knowledge and skills. Over a period of eight months of rapid data collection, 35 universities and almost 600 participants contributed to the project. Participants consistently reported the positive benefits of WIL and provided evidence of commitment and innovative practice in relation to enhancing student learning experiences. Participants provided evidence of strong partnerships between stakeholders and highlighted the importance of these relationships in facilitating effective learning outcomes for students. They also identified a range of issues and challenges that face the sector in growing WIL opportunities; these issues and challenges will shape the quality of WIL experiences. While the majority of comments focused on issues involved in ensuring quality placements, it was recognised that placements are just one way to ensure the integration of work with learning. Also, the WIL experience is highly contextualised and impacted by the expectations of students, employers, the professions, the university and government policy.

The project did not attempt to offer a unitary definition of WIL beyond recognising ‘work integrated learning’ as an umbrella term used for a range of approaches and strategies that integrate theory with the practice of work within a purposefully designed curriculum. Participants identified a range of terms used to describe WIL experiences and also identified models used across discipline areas. Whilst from the outset, as a scoping study the intent was not to produce a national audit of WIL practices, however examples of diverse practice have been documented and are available on the ACEN website: www.acen.edu.au (see Appendix A). In their endeavours to extend the range of opportunities for students, Australian universities are currently exploring a range of authentic learning experiences, both within and outside of university settings. Some universities use such WIL-related terms as ‘real world learning’ or ‘professional learning’. Others refer to ‘social engagement’ with the community, an engagement focused on building social capital and citizenship through curriculum design that incorporates opportunities for students to engage with the professions through a range of teaching approaches. Universities are, therefore, differentiating themselves in response to these emergent provisions of authentic learning and community engagement. They are realigning strategic goals with terminology linked not only to program key objectives, but also to differentiation and, hence, institutional branding and positioning.

The study identifies a broad range of stakeholders involved in providing or benefiting from WIL experiences, including students, university academic and professional staff, employers, professional associations, and government. The stakeholders consulted reported the need for collaborative and inclusive sector-wide engagement in initiatives that can support and sustain a broad range of WIL experiences, whether those experiences have a long WIL history or are more recent WIL initiatives. The project aim was to inform, rather than drive, policy change, and therefore provides a set of recommendations (Chapter 1) and an implementation framework (Chapter 9) as project outcomes. A summary of the key challenges identified by participants is provided below.

While recruitment needs and responding to the skills shortage were identified as key motivators for most employer involvement in WIL, it was also recognised that employers, universities and students derive other benefits through this engagement. For example, university staff consistently reported on the benefits of a stakeholder (or partnership) approach to improving student learning, engagement and retention, and described WIL as a link to the community that can also enhance opportunities for research partnerships.

Ensuring equity and access

The importance of ensuring equitable access for all students was a strong theme. Certainly, WIL provisions have helped to open up a broad range of opportunities for students to engage with the disciplines and professions. However, not all students have easy or equal access to WIL experiences even those for whom the experience is mandated by professional accreditation requirements. International students, for example, are constrained by visa restrictions and/or by language and cultural differences. Other students, including those from diverse backgrounds, can also face barriers that must be addressed.

Managing expectations and competing demands

The study identified that different stakeholder motivations and objectives for participating in WIL create an 'expectations gap'. For example, circumstances that create a perception by students that engaging with work placements is unjust, unfair, or too costly may overshadow the perceived benefits of the learning experience. Participants highlighted the need for a 'stakeholder integrated approach' to the planning and conduct of WIL based on formalised, sustainable relationships and a common understanding of the procedures and commitment required by all those involved.

Improving communication and coordination

Participants emphasised the importance of learning from others and having access to information about different approaches to WIL. The data indicate that improved communication and coordination are essential to the enhancement of a stakeholder approach that better reflects the working environment within universities and supports models of engagement that simplify communication between stakeholders.

Ensuring worthwhile WIL experiences

Ensuring worthwhile WIL experiences requires stakeholders to move towards a shared understanding of the purpose of the experience and how their different roles impact on the quality of the WIL experience. The study identifies the importance of designing WIL as an integral and integrated part of the curriculum, rather than as a 'bolt on' experience; that is, worthwhile WIL placement experiences are dependent on a shared understanding of purpose and role, quality supervision, appropriate task allocation, student preparedness, and authentic assessment practices.

Adequately resourcing WIL

As student numbers increase, more disciplines engage in WIL, and as universities include WIL in strategic planning and policy, there is a requirement for practical mechanisms to ensure movement beyond advocacy to successful implementation. The study raised a number of resourcing issues, including: workload and time constraints for staff of universities and employers, the financial cost of placements to employers, and the inflexibility of university timetables in enabling students to spend appropriate time in the workplace. Given the findings of this study, finding ways to better resource and develop more enabling policies to encourage WIL should be priorities.

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1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. University leaders, including WIL staff, consider implementing a systematic approach to resourcing the provision of a diverse WIL curriculum and, in collaboration with employers and the professions, identify and support successful strategies for future growth.
2. Stakeholders consider collaborative research into WIL curriculum and systems that enable sophisticated and sustainable partnerships.
3. Stakeholders consider ensuring equitable participation and access by all students by collaboratively developing WIL funding structures, policies and strategic approaches.

Refer to *Chapter 9: Framework for future WIL projects*.

* * * * *

2. CONTEXT

The Australian higher education sector generally is under growing pressure from government, industry and the community to demonstrate its ability to respond to skill shortages, the requirements of a professionalised workforce and the demand for work-ready graduates (AC Nielsen Research Services, 2000; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2004). Increasingly, universities are required to show how theory and practice combine in undergraduate and postgraduate degrees to generate graduates who are work-ready. Therefore, contemporary Australian universities need to develop highly informed and skilled graduates whose capacities extend to their own active generation of occupationally related knowledge, and also 'prepare a highly productive, professional labour force ... including the preparation of graduates in relevant fields for professional practice' (Bradley, Noonan, Nugent, & Scales, 2008, p. 2).

Significantly, four of the nine recommendations in the Business, Industry and Higher Education Collaboration Council (BIHECC) report on graduate employability (Cleary, Flynn, Thomasson, Alexander, & McDonald, 2007) propose WIL as a mechanism to develop graduate attributes and employability skills. This demand for well prepared graduates coincides with changes to the Higher Education Support Act 2003 that have made demands on universities wishing to access funding through the Commonwealth Grants Scheme. These demands include student work experience programs that contribute to producing the type of graduates demanded by employers and the professions.

In response to industry demands, and in 'recognition of the workplace as a unique and valuable learning environment for students' (McLennan, 2008, p. 4), many institutions have increased the emphasis on WIL curriculum with the inclusion of WIL goals in institutional strategic directions and the provision of internal structures and support that value WIL as 'a teaching and learning approach which has the potential to provide a rich, active and contextualised learning experience for students which contributes to their engagement in learning' (McLennan, 2008, p. 2). The growth and enhancement of WIL in universities is supported at the corporate strategic level, from within disciplines and from careers and employment elements. Industry is also increasingly prepared, as a response to skill shortages, to offer a variety of WIL experiences in an effort to access future employees prior to graduation.

Given such burgeoning interest in WIL, in late 2006 the Australian Collaborative Education Network (ACEN), including five state-based ACEN groups, was established to fill the need for a supportive network of WIL staff. The use of 'collaborative' in the title of ACEN was intentional both in terms of a word that could define the broad nature of the relationships involved in WIL, and also with the intention of the network being highly collaborative and responsive to the need for a national voice. ACEN is well positioned to access other international WIL organisations through its association with the World Association of Cooperative Education (WACE) and the well established New Zealand Association of Cooperative Education (NZACE). These international relationships are particularly important given the current focus on international benchmarking and the expectation that universities produce graduates who are global citizens.

Within the context of a growing interest in WIL, the project, co-managed by Griffith University, Queensland University of Technology and Swinburne University of Technology, in association with ACEN and funded by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) through the 'Discipline Based Initiatives Scheme', has endeavoured to identify and map key issues faced by university staff, students and employers. The project is seen as a means of contributing to the learning and teaching agenda in relation to WIL. This includes maximising an important opportunity to build strong capacity and capability across the higher education sector via a networked community of practice to extend the range of WIL approaches and promote 'good practice' across the sector. Although an emergent organisation, ACEN was able to use its network to quickly gain support from 19 partner institutions and secure 75 personal endorsements from academic and professional staff and senior managers working in the area — a reflection of the sector-wide commitment to, and support for, the project.

Since the commencement of this project there have been a number of discussion and position papers released concerning the desirability and directions for WIL.

In particular, these papers refer to utilising WIL as a mechanism to integrate discipline knowledge with the place and/or practice of work as a response to employers' expressed need for work-ready graduates. These include the BIHECC report on employability skills (Cleary et al., 2007), The Review of Australian Higher Education Discussion Paper (Bradley et al., 2008), Universities Australia National Internship Scheme (2008a) and the CIRM Report (Scoullar & CIRM Working Group, 2008). As well, another Australian Learning and Teaching Council project, conducted by the National Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (NAGCAS), is focused on career development through WIL. Consequently, *The WIL report: A national scoping study* is timely and well positioned to support developments within Australian higher education.

As the first large-scale scoping study of WIL curriculum in contemporary Australian higher education the project identified, examined and mapped key issues related to WIL curriculum and developed a framework for future projects that outlines a systematic approach to supporting good practice (see Appendix B for a summary of the project proposal).

A key priority of the project has been to facilitate partnerships and establish effective dialogue among the higher education sector, employers and the professions, and students by embedding representation of these groups in the consultation and dissemination processes. There was a need to identify approaches, conditions and models that enhance curriculum design in order to improve the quality of student learning experience and outcomes. The project has sought to be inclusive of the broadest interpretations and applications of WIL curriculum in order to forge new perspectives and establish an ongoing commitment to the improvement of WIL curricula. An important impetus for the project was to embrace all disciplines, including traditional approaches that embed WIL curriculum (that is, nursing, education, health, and engineering) and provide support and mentoring to others who are more recent implementers.

2.1 Objectives

The key objectives of the project as submitted and funded were to:

1. Identify key stakeholders and provide mechanisms by which they can identify and prioritise the key challenges and issues that currently face the sector.
2. Develop a national framework for future projects that will enable members of ACEN to work as a community of practice to develop resources and practices that will enable the sector to collectively respond to key challenges and issues as identified by the sector and key stakeholders, including students.
3. Develop an ACEN-based, sector-wide communications structure for collaborative knowledge building and embedded dissemination of ideas, good practice examples, information and resources. A website database will also be developed, in accordance with the Resource Identification and Networking (RIN) requirements, to post examples of best practice in WIL curriculum.
4. Prepare recommendations and a Phase 2 project plan that details key initiatives and research participants, timelines and project outcomes (including dissemination and evaluation strategies).

Part way through the project there were changes within ALTC (then the Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education) that made it necessary to renegotiate Objective 4. The project leaders were advised (see Appendix C) that as all funding for projects is determined through a competitive process ALTC funding should not be presumed to be available for Phase 2 and that the emphasis should be placed on Objective 2: the identification of possible future projects and encouragement of stakeholders to investigate a range of potential funding sources in addition to ALTC.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Approach

A scoping study aims to ‘map rapidly the key concepts underpinning a research area and the main sources and types of evidence available’ (Arksey & O’Malley, 2005, p. 5). Scoping studies are relatively quick mapping exercises that can assess whether or not a full systematic review is feasible, summarise and disseminate existing research findings, and identify gaps in research. The methodology adopted in this scoping study was appropriate in achieving the key aims of the investigation: to provide findings that will be useful to policy makers, researchers, academic and professional staff, and other stakeholders in decision making about WIL. From the outset, as a scoping study, the intent was not to produce a national audit of WIL practices. Rather the aim was to use available resources to identify issues and map a broad and growing picture of WIL across Australia.

The project used a broad-based networking strategy to engage with participants and gather data about WIL practices more widely than has been done previously. Through this process, it provides a rich description of the complexities faced by WIL staff from across the disciplines who work with a range of students, employers, professions and community partners. An intention of the study was to provide a good basis for further research and exploration of WIL in Australia. The project team encourages WIL staff, through reflective and evaluative scholarship and networking, to undertake a program of ongoing action research and action learning in relation to WIL based on the findings of this investigation. For further information about the participants, events, methodology and data collection tools, see Appendixes D, E, F and G.

3.2 Significance of the project

This project is significant as the first national scoping study of WIL to be undertaken in Australia that provides a broad overview of WIL in higher education at the present time. It both complements the Universities Australia position paper on internship (2008a) and augments it by identifying the issues and challenges currently being faced by the sector. Earlier Australian research has been focused predominantly on specific institutionally based WIL models, pedagogical or theoretical issues, or stakeholder perspectives such as those of employers and students. This project is important because whilst it recognises that many of these issues are already known, it also provides a national perspective of WIL and advances recommendations and identifies strategies and mechanisms for sharing and disseminating WIL practice in the future. By identifying the key issues and challenges in WIL, the project provides a foundation for future developments, provides the basis for future research, and informs the development of effective and innovative WIL curriculum to improve student learning.

3.3 Limitations and challenges faced by the project team

3.3.1 Sample size and distribution

The study’s sample was predominantly drawn from ACEN membership and contacts, apart from two conference events held at Queensland University of Technology (QUT) and an employer breakfast held at Swinburne University of Technology. Due to time constraints (data collection occurred between September 2007 and April 2008), access to stakeholders was uneven and some stakeholder perspectives were easier to capture than others. While university academic and professional staff were easy to access, engaging with students required the cooperation of participating university staff. Staff, especially those with substantive WIL experience, were to some extent able to represent students’ perspectives, but the project team recognises that this is ‘once removed’ and, hence, indirect and interpreted. Similarly, the project team did not have direct access to a comprehensive range of employers or community representatives. Within the time frame available the project team decided to seek out mostly employer and professional associations as respondents representing broad employer groups. It is acknowledged that these representatives may not reflect the full experience across the range and type of organisations involved in WIL.

The project team did not have access to high-level government input. This is a limitation, given the changing policy landscape resulting from a new federal government. However, participants were mainly those with direct experience of the implementation of WIL in Australian higher education and thus had firsthand knowledge of WIL.

The effectiveness of the data collection strategies differed according to the nature of the participants and events. For example, most staff involved in WIL are enthusiastic and passionate but time poor. In acknowledgement of this, the project team exploited existing networks as a way of collecting data. The symposia, meetings and conferences were effective in accessing staff with an interest in WIL, but were less effective in accessing other participants. Those who may not identify their practice as WIL, such as some of the more traditional areas like the health and teaching professions, were less likely to attend these events and, as such, may have limited representation in the data.

3.3.2 Recording data

Verbal data were recorded wherever and whenever possible. However, given the nature of the events, it was not always possible to capture spoken comments in all circumstances (see Appendix D). In addition, permission to use tape recorders was often not granted in many interviews as well as in a few of the focus group discussions. While note takers made careful entries, there cannot be the same level of confidence as with transcribed and verified recordings.

3.3.3 Researcher bias

Although specific actions were taken to minimise bias (see Appendix D), every researcher, regardless of their relationship to the research, brings preconceptions and biases. The project team juggled multiple roles, including researcher, academic, WIL staff, ACEN member and ACEN executive member. These multiple roles may have influenced the type of response that participants provided and the interpretations given by individual project team members in analysing data.

3.4 Lessons learned of value to other projects

3.4.1 Working across institutions

It takes effort and time to identify common problems, develop a shared language and articulate a shared vision (Southwell, Gannaway, Orrell, Chalmers, & Abraham, 2005). It was challenging to work collaboratively across large geographical distances when the project leaders had not worked together before. In response, the following strategies proved successful:

- using a range of communicative devices at the most appropriate time (regular and ongoing email, telephone, Skype and Elluminate meetings, as well as face-to-face meetings at critical points in the project's development)
- establishing a document storage site (Quickplace) for sharing information across different sites, reducing the risk of lost data and providing version control
- appointing a project leader within each host university who took responsibility for specific aspects of the project
- identifying the wide range of skills and backgrounds of project team members and taking these into account in the distribution of tasks
- retaining staff for the duration of the project
- recognising and respecting workload issues, especially for the project leaders (who had a small time allowance but took on considerable extra work)
- continuing support from the three host institutions
- building strong relationships through commitment to a cycle of reflection, consultation, and review
- scheduling regular project leader and project team meetings.

3.4.2 Project management

The importance of efficient and effective project management cannot be understated. This project:

- adapted the Queensland University of Technology 'Project Management Framework' tool to provide consistency in managing project processes
- appointed a Senior Project Officer to ensure continuity and stability.

3.4.3 Collaboration

The project team recognised that a key element to future success was collaboration with other relevant projects and, throughout the duration of the project, endeavoured to interact with other ALTC projects. The team communicated with the ALTC NAGCAS *Career Development Learning: maximising the contribution of Work integrated to the student experience* project through shared project updates. As well as these interactions the project team made contact with *Engaging with learning: understanding the impacts of practice-based learning exchange* project and the *Generic Graduate Attributes* project. In addition to these interactions the team maintained contact with ALTC Fellow Professor Stephen Billett who, as mentioned in Section 3.5, acted as a consultant to the project. The team also recognised the value of international interactions and attracted international interest through contact with the Surrey Centre for Excellence in Professional Training and Education, University of Surrey, and a Skype presentation at their conference on 'immersive experience' in January 2008, as well as a paper at the SOTL conference in London and a symposium presentation at the 2008 HERDSA conference in New Zealand.

3.4.4 Sustainability of project outcomes

A major concern across most teaching and learning projects is the sustainability of project outcomes (Southwell, Gannaway, Orrell, Chalmers, & Abraham, 2005). To address this, engaging with ACEN was a pivotal aspect because:

- ACEN provided access to a range of stakeholders and, by conducting the project under the auspices of ACEN rather than under a particular university or group of universities, the majority of stakeholders engaged easily and enthusiastically
- the regular reports and updates made to the ACEN Executive helped inform both the project team and the ACEN membership of progress and developments.

The continued engagement of ACEN is critical to the take up of the recommendations, future projects framework and communications plan, including further strengthening of the national network through professional development and the ongoing development and maintenance of the web-based vignettes. Throughout the study participants have shown a strong interest in sharing practice with others. Participants clearly articulated an interest in gaining insight into how other practitioners and universities deal with issues such as curriculum design, assessment, program management, course credit, financial payment, pedagogy, supervision, recruitment, sustainability, staff-student ratios and evaluation. Participants are also interested in developing a network of contacts across the sector for future collaboration and curriculum development. The ACEN executive will continue to collect and publish these vignettes on an ongoing basis, and stakeholders are urged to continue to add to this capacity and capability building work.

3.5 Evaluation of the project

Throughout the study participants have shown a strong interest in sharing practice with others. Participants clearly articulated an interest in gaining insight into how other practitioners and universities deal with issues such as curriculum design, assessment, program management, course credit, financial payment, pedagogy, supervision, recruitment, sustainability, staff-student ratios and evaluation. Participants are also interested in developing a network of contacts across the sector for future collaboration and curriculum development. The ACEN executive will continue to collect and publish these vignettes on an ongoing basis; stakeholders are urged to continue to add to this capacity and capability building work.

Four processes were set in place for evaluating the project:

- participatory action research methodology
- project consultant
- project reference group
- external evaluation.

Participatory action research methodology requires evaluation as an integral part of the data collection process. It is characterised by collaboration between team members and project stakeholders in a cyclical process of data gathering, review and reflection. Project team review and reflection took place in scheduled, structured meetings, less formal conversations, and via email communications.

Issues covered included discussion of framing questions, approaches and techniques for consultation and data gathering and managing, project scope and limitations. As Greenwood and Levin (1998, p. 94) state: 'As the research process continues and the research partners gain understanding, the goals of the process are constantly being redefined, and even altered completely'.

The project consultant for the first six months, Professor Stephen Billett, was selected for his expertise in this field of study and his availability for consultation throughout the duration of the project. The *terms of reference* for the project consultant consist of support with the conceptualising and mapping of the project rationale, aims and scope; framing questions to inform the inquiry; identification of relevant literature; ongoing analysis of data, including the identification of themes and key issues; critical review of the report; and advice on international developments in the area and publishing opportunities. In his role as consultant to the project, Professor Billett was integral in guiding the team in the identification of emergent themes.

The primary role of the reference group was to assist the project team in achieving the outcomes of the study in accordance with the project plan and to advocate support for the project with various individuals, institutions and organisations. The advice received from the reference group highlighted that the project did not have to drive policy change but should inform it.

It also emphasised that sustainability was a key thread of the project and that effective dissemination is essential to achieving this outcome. Mentors provided additional support and guidance in both the research and management aspects of the project. The terms of reference and list of reference group members can be found in Appendix H. The project team appointed an ALTC approved external evaluator, Dr Paul Chesterton, to serve as an investigator to evaluate the project and whether the nominated project outcomes identified in the proposal were achieved. Terms of reference can be found in Appendix I.

4. TERMINOLOGY, STAKEHOLDERS AND APPROACHES

4.1 Terminology

This section considers the range of terminology used to describe WIL as well as stakeholders involved; and different approaches to implementation. Defining terms is important in any field, and perhaps even more so in an endeavour such as WIL, which is relevant to curriculum and pedagogy across all disciplines. However, it was recommended that the project team avoid placing too much emphasis on terminology for purposes of inclusion or exclusion from the enquiry. That is, this report does not distinguish attributes such as paid and unpaid, compulsory and elective, and credit and non-credit bearing programs (although the vignettes www.acen.edu.au include these details). For the purposes of this study, the project team settled on 'work integrated learning' (WIL) as an umbrella term for a range of approaches and strategies that integrate theory with the practice of work within a purposefully designed curriculum.

As shown in Table 4.1, a range of terms and definitions are in use across the practice of WIL and while these terms and definitions reflect breadth and depth, they also reflect a range of institutional purposes. For example, academic staff tend to use both theoretical and practical definitions of WIL that reflect the broad nature of WIL and emphasise integration of WIL in the curriculum, engagement with employers and the professions, real-life experiences, and integration of theory and practice.

Workplace learning as a term doesn't have a meaning for us as a discipline... people will use WIL and that sort of thing and tell us that is what we are doing but it doesn't have meaning for us. We call it internships, summer placement ... we need to work with the sector. We have only just talked about the issues so far. We look at each other and shake our heads.

(University senior management interview, WA)

Nevertheless, WIL ranked third in terms of frequency and appears to be the current catch-all term adopted or recognised across many disciplines and used in recent government and industry reports.

Table 4.1: WIL terminology: frequency of use

Rank	Term/s (frequency)	Rank	Term/s (frequency)
1	practicum (35)	13	work experience (3)
2	professional practice (32)	14	clinical practice, clinical education, doctoral supervision with industry partners, work based learning (2)
3	internship, workplace learning, work integrated learning (31)	15	academic service learning, adult learning, androgogy, clinical attachments, clinical experience, competency assessment, corporate business management, employment experience, engaged learning, experiential placements, faculty internships, field placements, industrial experience, industry experience, industry links, industry placement, learning in the workplace, operational performance, practical projects, practical training, practice based education, practice-based learning, problem-based learning, professional experience, professional learning, sandwich, site visits structured workplace learning, student employability, volunteering (1)
4	industry-based learning (25)		
5	project-based learning (24)		
6	cooperative education, fieldwork education (20)		
7	service learning (12)		
8	real world learning (9)		
9	university engaged learning (7)		
10	placements (6)		
11	experiential learning (5)		
12	clinical placements, professional placement (4)		

The most frequently used terms identified in the data were practicum (35), professional practice (32), internship, workplace learning, work integrated learning (31), industry-based learning (25), project-based learning (24), cooperative education and fieldwork education (20). Participants often reported a variety of terms used within a university and new terms and definitions coined, not only in recognition of disciplinary style but also for institutional purposes, with motives ranging from pedagogical to administrative expediency and consistency, to marketing purposes such as branding and positioning. Within some institutions terms may be recognised to hold different meanings.

The data reflect Connor and MacFarlane's (2007, p. 7) observation about the lack of 'consistency or consensus' regarding the type of activities and words used to describe WIL. This lack of consistency reflects different perspectives and imperatives and can cause confusion. For example, confusion over different definitions of WIL has funding implications, as Commonwealth funding supports programs that 'guide the learning experience' in the workplace but does not provide support for programs based on work experience alone. Different terminology can also affect university senior management engagement with WIL as a concept and as a process, with responses varying from confusion or enthusiastic adoption, through to effectively ignoring it and adopting a 'steady as she goes' approach. The 2008 Flinders Practicum Audit (Smiegel & Harris, 2008) highlights the dilemma for institutions when the same WIL experiences are called by different names and when different experiences are called by the same name. Yet, whatever the terminology used, participants highlighted the importance of ensuring that students have a clear understanding of the objectives and expectations of the WIL curriculum in which they engage.

4.2 Identification of stakeholders

For the purposes of this discussion, a stakeholder is defined as any individual or organisation that participates in or impacts on WIL. Using this definition, this study identified the following four key stakeholders:

- university staff
- university students
- employers
- government.

This section discusses each of the identified stakeholder groups, the intersections between the different communities or 'worlds', and the extent to which the research captured their perceptions. The diverse circumstances and perspectives of these stakeholders create dynamics through which key issues emerge.

As previously stated, the aim of this project is to improve the educational experience of students across the sector. As illustrated in Figure 4.1, while students are a discrete stakeholder group, their WIL experience results in multiple intersections between their private world, university world and the employer world. Depending on how WIL is organised and enacted within their institution (see Section 4.3), at certain periods students may be almost entirely within the workplace or practice settings while still part of the university world as enrolled students. They may also, at times, be almost entirely part of the university world with little direct involvement with the employer world.

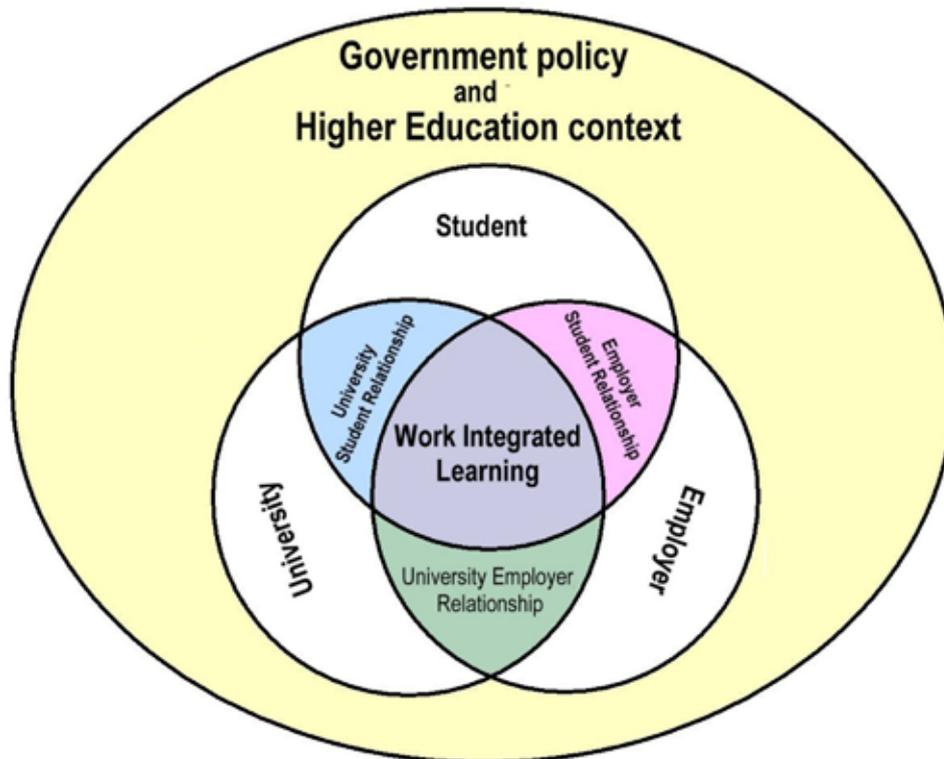


Figure 4.1: WIL stakeholders

The project team sought to understand the perspectives, emphases and interests of each stakeholder group and came to refer to them as having particular voices. It was recognised that it is not easy to neatly categorise voices because within each voice there are competing interests vying to be heard. For instance, within the university voice, the focus of many senior managers is to increase opportunities for students to engage in WIL, while university WIL staff are mostly concerned with juggling the demands of associated workload and student diversity. Moreover, as the discussion below reveals, the voices were not heard with equal clarity or emphasis, and some important stakeholders were heard through publicly available data, not through direct data collection strategies (despite the efforts outlined in Appendix D). It should be acknowledged that, as illustrated, the WIL experience is contextualised and impacted by federal government and higher education policy, in particular, higher education funding models. The following section provides an overview of the voices of the university community — including staff and students.

4.2.1 University community

The university community, through its relationship with other stakeholders, plays a central role in facilitating and enhancing student WIL experiences.

Staff

Staff who organise and enact WIL have the potential to gain greater currency with employers and professions through extended relationships and this can have a considerable impact on the quality of learning experiences for students. The project team defined the ‘staff university community voice’ as individuals in academic, administrative and leadership roles because these voices were most frequently heard in the study. Within these voices, the project team distinguished between the university as ‘the institution’, university senior management and academic and professional staff; that is, staff who manage WIL activities. Respondents often identified themselves as fulfilling multiple roles within universities. A total of 371 university staff voices were heard, as shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Stakeholder participation strategies in data gathering

	Participation strategies				Total
	Interview (n)	Focus group	Large group	Survey (n)	
		Discussions (n)			
University staff	23	10	216	122	371
University students	0	16	0	42	58
Employer community	6	6	78	0	90
Total	29	32	294	164	519

The perspective presented by university staff often depended upon their particular role. An individual’s role within an institution shapes their ability to understand perspectives of students and/or employers. It also shapes their understanding of other issues of concern such as managing conflicting priorities. University staff understandings of client perspectives informed the project greatly, enabling triangulation with data provided by student and employer respondents. More importantly, the extent to which individuals working across the university understand the needs of WIL student and employer partners is critical to the effectiveness of WIL activities.

Students

How the WIL experience is conceptualised and implemented by the university has a definite impact on how it will be interpreted by students. Conversely, how students experience WIL will impact on how universities approach WIL. Therefore, it is important to capture something of the perspectives that students bring to these arrangements. However, accessing the student voice was not easy because the event-based data gathering methods did not attract significant numbers of students. Access to students was hindered by timing (several of the symposia, conferences and meetings were necessarily scheduled between teaching semesters) and university sensitivities to having qualitative data concerning student experiences with WIL being collected by an outside party. The student voice was represented by a few students who participated in WIL showcase presentations during the symposia and 16 who were involved in focus group discussions. A survey strategy was also used with 42 respondents. A total of 58 student voices were captured (see Table 4.2). As well, the student voice was also captured indirectly and interpretively through reports and reflections of program administrators, senior university managers and academic staff.

4.2.2 Employer community

Employers, including professional bodies, senior management, human resource personnel and other staff are important partners in the broad range of WIL experiences because they can provide the real-world learning context both on and off campus. Their contribution impacts on the WIL experience for students in terms of the experiences that are provided, including the guidance and direct support they are afforded. The extent to which WIL is successful also impacts on this community in terms of the preparation of graduates and their capacities to contribute to their chosen profession. The voices of employers of graduates are heard through peak bodies (aggregated interests) and individual organisations.

The employer voice was also heard through industry sponsored research such as the BIHECC Report (Cleary et al., 2007). This voice is an aggregation of representatives of peak/accrediting bodies and employer participants. During their WIL experience students are a legitimate part of the employer community. Their time with employers will impact on their approaches to their discipline, their views of the profession and their perspective on employment in general. Conversely, how they approach and respond to the WIL experience will impact on whether or not employers offer WIL in the future. Involvement by employers in a range of types of WIL is critical to ensuring the authenticity of the broad range of WIL experiences, and their voice in this study is especially important because of their role in the provision of WIL placements.

4.2.3 Government

The federal government is considered a key stakeholder in this study because it has national responsibility for higher education policy and funding. It also has economic interests in work-readiness and this clearly impacts on WIL, as evidenced in such documents as the BIHECC Report (Cleary et al., 2007). In turn, at the time of writing, government is investigating the potential of WIL to assist as it strives to meet the economic challenges and fulfill its stated commitment 'to skill Australians for the jobs of tomorrow and close existing skills gaps' (Gillard, 2008). In an address to a conference of WIL staff, The Hon. Brendan O'Connor, Minister for employment participation has publicly referred to the 'immeasurable value of integrating real work experience into academic programs' (O'Connor, 2008, p. 1). Federal government's support of WIL is further evidenced by such as initiatives as the recent introduction of a Vacation Employment Program by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, in response to Universities Australia's (2007) National Internship Scheme.

4.3 WIL approaches

Although there was a tendency for participants to refer to WIL as 'work placement', they emphasised that WIL is about more than 'just placements' and this is reflected in the broad range of approaches adopted, including placements, project work, simulations and virtual WIL. The curriculum vignettes (case studies) developed by practitioners and published on the ALTC Exchange and the ACEN website represent a snapshot of this broad range of practice in WIL. These curriculum approaches are similar to those described in the outline of the different disciplines' approaches to WIL programs in Universities Australia's (2007) discussion paper, *A national internship scheme*.

What this scoping study found was numerous and diverse models of WIL available across the sector. This diversity and flexibility of approach should be recognised, articulated and celebrated as testament to how individual universities and disciplines innovate and adapt to meet the specialised needs of their partners and their disciplines. However, further systematic work needs to be undertaken to identify the full range and breadth of programs available, their educational purpose and the learning outcomes achieved by students who participate. Strategies for linking the significant body of knowledge in traditional disciplines such as education, nursing, allied health and medicine, to new and evolving programs also need to be made. This will require extensive effort, as many of the more traditional disciplines do not readily identify themselves with terminology such as 'WIL', 'cooperative education' and 'placements', which are terms associated with newer models of WIL. Much could be learnt from bringing these two traditions together.

Much of the literature on WIL outlines the benefits associated for employers, students and the university (Brown, 2002; Murphy & Calway, 2006; Weisz & Smith, 2005). WIL is generally accepted as a powerful vehicle for developing generic or professional skills and provides students with the opportunity to improve their employability and work readiness (Harvey, Geall, & Moon, 1998; Knight, 2007). Workplaces, as learning environments, provide students with the opportunity to apply theory to practice and experience the world of work while gaining a cultural awareness of their discipline. Billett (2001, p. 2) observes that 'Social situations, such as workplaces, are not just one-off sources of learning and knowing. Instead, they constitute environments in which knowing and learning are co-constructed through ongoing and reciprocal processes'. He suggests that there 'is long-standing evidence of the efficacy of learning in the workplace' (Billett, 2001, p. 19). Workplace learning provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding in authentic and meaningful contexts.

Although still predominantly seen as being situated in a workplace environment, the WIL experience is now viewed as much more than just a work placement. Many universities are looking to incorporate WIL into core curriculum to provide a range of meaningful learning opportunities relevant to the real world. The learning affordances that were traditionally situated in the workplace are now being replicated in university settings through approaches such as those discussed in the rest of this section of Chapter 4. An emerging area of research is effective WIL pedagogy that provides a transformative learning experience (Mezirow, 1997) for students and crosses university and workplace boundaries. Many of the universities involved in this study are actively seeking ways to integrate WIL across the whole of curriculum and incorporating sequential teaching and assessment approaches from first to final year.

The following sections provide further detail on some of these approaches, including placements, project work, simulated work environments and virtual WIL.

4.3.1 Placements

Long, Larsen, Hussey and Travis (2001) identify three essential aspects of a successful placement preparation: organisation, communication and documentation. Good preparation establishes a solid foundation for ongoing sustainable relationships and effective WIL placement programs. However, the difficulty in finding sufficient placements in a growing WIL environment (see Section 6.4) underpins the concern of many of the respondents about 'quality' placements rather than 'token placements'. As Harvey et al. (1998, p. 10) state:

Ultimately work experience must be a 'quality' process. The quality of the work experience is thus intrinsically tied to its relevance, structure, organisation and intentionality ... It is not just a matter of 'placing' students but ensuring that students recognise their learning experience.

Academic staff identified adequate preparation and appropriate supervision and mentoring arrangements as crucial components of effective placement strategies. Adequate supervision has to be integrated into both design and implementation of curricula. Fundamentally, preparation means ensuring that adequate resources and opportunities are available to implement WIL programs. It also means clearly defining expectations and checking that all stakeholders (students, supervisors and employers/placement providers) share the same understanding of what to expect. As one academic put it, *There is a need for pre-placement, during placement and post placement coherence so that students are adequately prepared for placement, with supervisors also considering these various phases and the skills and preparation needed* (Survey, QLD). Harvey et al. (1998, p. 10) point out that a 'prior briefing or period of familiarisation is essential to ensure that all parties are clear [regarding] what is expected of them, and the objectives of the work experience, so that students are not just "thrown in at the deep end"'. Participants also highlighted the importance of clarifying expectations, and linked this with effective supervision:

Ensuring the match between the student expectations and the workplace expectations. Making sure both [are] prepared for the WIL so [the] relationship [is] positive.

(Survey, NSW)

Lack of training of preceptors and concern that requiring training will further deplete available placements.

(Conference, QLD)

Delegates at a state symposium commented that host organisations and students should to be aware of the limitations on both sides during placements (University focus group, SA). Both need to be realistic regarding what can be achieved in the time frame available. They both also have to be aware of new practices and teaching approaches, and the specific discipline training students receive while at university. Host organisations must be aware of a student's level of workplace knowledge; for example, if they have worked before and their knowledge of work ethics. Some students may require an induction and/or 'refresher' on the basics before getting fully involved in their placement tasks.

Participants highlighted the workload involved in preparing WIL placements for students. Preparation was seen as much more than just identifying and arranging work placements. Prior to placement, preparation includes planning the pathway through the placement, identifying and managing the diversity of pathways post-placement, and building options and understanding right at the start. It was noted by some respondents that it is important to *treat the student/graduate as hard working, even if a part time, member of an integrated team/business* (Employer focus group, VIC). One participant, in response to the employer's role in WIL, stated that they should *provide a workplace experience and a good first impression of the workplace. [They should] motivate students into fields other than profit industry* (Employer focus group, VIC). Certainly, the activities should be meaningful:

The best placements are when you have something specific to do ... not just there to observe or something ... you have a specific job to do which helps.

(University student focus group, SA)

Putting unprepared and inadequately supervised students in the workplace was seen as a potentially risky and counter-productive process. However, determining who the 'best' students are is rather subjective. As one participant observed, judging whether a student is prepared involves more than just academic results and includes *communication skills, interpersonal skills, and a good attitude because a lot of the technical skills are learned on the job*. If, as was claimed, *[The] main thing you need is to be able to interact with other people* (Peak Body interview, WA), universities may need to take this into account when selecting students for placements, as often this is done on the basis of academic achievement. This means those possibly with most to benefit from the learning stimulation provided by WIL are limited in their opportunities to participate.

Placements can enhance learning in creative ways. A number of innovative approaches were identified in this study. For example, the International Occupational Therapy placements program at Curtin University combines the aspects of a study tour and cross-cultural experience with a more formal multidisciplinary clinical placement. It involves partners across the higher education, non-government organisation (NGO), private and community sectors. The same host site is returned to and previous project work undertaken is built on:

so that the previous project work forms part of the student orientation and in the debrief process students are increasingly involved in the orientation of future groups. In this way, these overseas placements move beyond educational tourism, delivering sustainable health care interventions through project work

(Occupational Therapy Abroad vignette, www.acen.edu.au, 14/08/08)

Some universities provide specific work-oriented programs, which can range from short courses to graduate certificate courses. For example, nursing students at Murdoch University in the last two years of their program 'have the opportunity to do an additional graduate certificate. This certificate means students who are graduating can take summer or winter units in professional practice ... combined with postgraduate subjects from other courses' (University senior management interview, WA).

4.3.2 Project work

Project work seems to be particularly popular as a WIL strategy. Project-based work retains its educational/academic emphasis, while exposing the students to workplace environments and interactions. A university staff member emphasised that:

The international business internship/practicum is a learning-oriented activity that is linked to specific areas of an Intern's study/academic program and is NOT a work experience exercise. Learning from the holistic internship experience is sought, and the use of action learning, synchronous learning, and reflective learning form the foundation for the course.

(International Business Internship/Practicum vignette, www.acen.edu.au, 14/08/08)

Other participants reflected on the academic and curriculum motivations for the use of project work.

Project work is good for transitioning in - give them a project now that really motivates students. First year students did better projects than some final years do.

(University senior management interview, VIC)

Projects for research students encourage student continuation by demonstrating relevance of [their] degree, creat[ing] uni/industry partnership in keeping [with the] degree [by] providing projects research, [and] employing [the] students.

(Symposium, NSW)

Because our degree program is not specifically professionally oriented (unlike courses in physiotherapy or medical technology) we use a project-based unit as a form of work experience for our students so they can have a taste for independent work, research and other graduate skills embodied in our research project unit. Some of these projects involve outside labs or associations but not usually.

(Conference, QLD)

These statements indicate that project work can be utilised to provide learning experiences that highlight the relevance of the degree to the particular industry.

4.3.3 Simulating the work environment

Simulating the work environment enables students to experience some aspects of the workplace within an educational framework. Approaches to simulations differ, from some employer involvement, to the development and use of DVDs focusing on work–place interactions, from web–based programs through to well–developed simulated environments. Examples of effective work simulations include The Design Centre at Swinburne University of Technology:

The studio forms the context for Professional Practice courses for Honours and Masters students in Industrial, Communication and Multimedia Design. Designed to simulate a working design studio, undertaking commercial, pro bono and internal design projects, the Design Centre has been in operation for more than two decades. At the beginning of 2004 it was substantially restructured to meet the changing needs of students and to acknowledge contemporary working methods in design.

(Design Centre, Honours and Masters Program, Faculty of Design vignette, www.acen.edu.au, 14/08/08)

Effective workplace simulation strategies, like other WIL strategies, must be designed into the curriculum. As the below senior university managers observed:

Universities need to devise workplace simulations within the curriculum, such as getting people in from business to give students a project brief – so there is a flavour of it being generated in an authentic way. But – still need internal infrastructure or it can go down in a screaming heap. That includes managing the student group dynamics and problems of learning in groups etc. So whole range of complex issues – but not to say we won't move down that track.

(University senior management interview, WA)

WIL can include real life projects into the classroom but in that case there needs to be quality assurance of the authenticity and relevance of that professional work to the work they will experience upon graduation.

(University senior management, NSW)

These comments emphasise the importance of having an element of authenticity, as well as planning and support, to enhance the student learning experience.

4.3.4 Virtual WIL

A further example of diverse practice is the virtual placement model being piloted by the Faculty of Law at the Queensland University of Technology. The Virtual Placement Project (VPP) piloted in 2008 involves students 'applying legal knowledge and skills to complete a real world workplace project in a team using online communication technologies to enable students to be virtually, rather than physically present at the workplace' (Virtual Placement Project (VPP) vignette, www.acen.edu.au, 14/08/08).

5. MOTIVATION

Participants clearly identified that motivations for engaging with WIL are strongly centred on the educational benefits for students. This includes the development of graduate attributes or generic skills and opportunities for students to engage with the professional identity of their discipline. The need for university education to ensure the opportunity for generic skills development has been recognised for some time (AC Neilsen Research Services, 2000; Cleary et al., 2007) and several senior managers in this study identified that WIL has grown out of the generic skills agenda because generic skills can be effectively developed within the professional context of the workplace.

Senior university managers and academics identified the potential for promoting other more broadly defined educational goals — such as community participation and citizenship — rather than just employability through WIL. In general, tensions arise from the tendency of stakeholders to have different motivations, objectives and understanding of the intended purpose of WIL. This tension is exemplified by one academic's identification of competition between *employer objectives and academic objectives and generic skills objectives within the curriculum and more discipline specific skills* (Survey, WA).

Amongst some academic staff, there was the sense of a potential mismatch of objectives and motivations between *academe and workplace, that is, learning versus working; holistic care versus task based care; altruism versus economics* (Meeting, TAS). However, other university senior management and academic staff emphasised the importance of balancing complementary objectives. One academic proposed WIL as playing a role in *adequately preparing students for the experience of a balance of academia and work skills* (Survey, QLD), another that WIL provided *students with an opportunity to integrate theory and practice and ease their transition into the workforce* (Survey, QLD). Although these tensions exist, increased dialogue between stakeholders, including students, has the potential to provide greater understanding of different perspectives and reciprocity of obligations and will, it is hoped, lead to increased diversity of WIL experiences.

It is important also to recognise that universities, employers and professions create opportunities for reciprocal learning when they widen access to learning and information in their respective contexts. At a practical level WIL can make degree programs more attractive to prospective students and provide a relatively straightforward mechanism to form productive partnerships (Gibson, Brodie, Sharpe, Wong, Deane, & Fraser, 2002; Weisz & Smith, 2005). Of concern would be a dominance of one stakeholder in the partnership leading to a disjuncture of expectations. If mutually beneficial sustainable programs are to be achieved, mature and sophisticated relationships must be fostered and supported by all parties concerned so that the university learning environment and workplace are successfully merged.

5.1 University staff

University staff (including senior managers, academic and professional staff) all spoke of a need for stronger, more mature relationships with employers and professions to provide authentic learning environments for students. The majority of participants thought that the workplace was an ideal environment in which students could learn professional skills while acquiring more transferable graduate attributes. This perception corresponds with Radinsky, Bouillion, Hanson, Gomez, Vermeer and Fishman's (1998) description of authentic learning, 'where students participate in the actual work of a professional community, engaging directly in the target community itself'.

University staff participants in this project consistently reported the benefits of WIL and highlighted the importance of a partnership approach based on *deeper consultation with host organisations and much greater commitment from industry and professions to participate* (University senior management interview, VIC). However, mature relationships were seen from the university staff perspective as increased understanding by employers and the professions of the importance of guiding the learning experience of students. The BIHECC investigation (Cleary et al., 2007, p. 5) also found widespread recognition of the benefits for business and higher education working together to identify, promote, teach, assess and report employability skills.

Motivation for universities to engage in this way was explained by participants:

Improvement of graduate outcomes, especially in areas where students and the community can't always see the employment outcomes of the degree yet the graduate skills and qualities match the predictions for industry and business future needs.

(Survey, NSW)

It [WIL] addresses a lot of the concerns that are expressed about universities. Whether we prepare grads properly for employment, linkages between employers and unis in the broad sense, it promotes research, it addresses skills shortages, not just by giving work experience but by making it easier to recruit and retain people in hard to fill places and engages unis for key stakeholders for social and economic advancement of the country they are in.

(University senior management interview, NSW)

To walk away from WIL would not be considered.... Employment rates are good too - because students who go out have close to 100% employment. It has social value in terms of producing graduates, improves employment rates, has a positive impact on how students study. Giving kids experience builds confidence.

(University senior management interview, VIC)

These responses suggest that university staff see mature relationships between universities, employers and the professions as the key to the development of work-ready graduates. However, some professional groups such as nursing reported that employer groups already had a clear understanding of the learning transition from university to workplace. Others felt there was more interest by employers in simply accessing students from universities as potential future employees, rather than engaging fully with mutually developing capable professionals. There was also, in some instances, a perceived gap: on the one hand between the professional mandates for inclusion of placement experiences within educational qualifications and on the other hand, the necessary capacity and willingness of professional members to work with universities to provide those placements.

For some universities, WIL programs promote community engagement, social participation and community-university research. University managers interviewed spoke about WIL as part of a broader strategy focused on increasing community engagement: a priority clearly identified in most universities strategic plans. One senior manager explained:

The university looks to involvement in the community to improve the teaching learning nexus. Community engagement is the best strategy we have for achieving the university's mission.

(University senior management interview, WA)

In this context, WIL is seen as one way to strengthen engagement with the community, as well as a technique to differentiate the university's profile in a competitive market:

WIL experiences are central to the role of the University, which prides itself on being practical, and having a focus on community services.

(University senior management interview, WA)

As one participant observed, developing strong relationships not only has practical and personal rewards, it also enhances opportunities to develop research partnerships and *provides opportunities for 360-degree feedback between uni and industry for research to inform industry practice and for research to remain relevant to current industry need* (Survey, NSW).

For others, a strong motivation to incorporate WIL is a strategy for encouraging student engagement and retention:

Getting students experience in the work place is often very motivating - especially for students who aren't necessarily the highest achievers. That's why we have seen more courses taking up WIL ... as a mechanism to retain and let students see they are going somewhere.

(University senior management interview, TAS)

Not surprisingly, learning was also identified by participants as an important motivator for providing WIL experiences for students:

Working to learn not just learning to work it can be a good thing, almost essential for young undergraduates and older people seeking a career change.

(University senior management interview; VIC)

Our university wants to go as far as we can with it we want to our vision is to improve teaching and learning through engagement with the community.

(University senior management interview, WA)

Learning experiences in an applied context in community. More broadly enhance graduate attributes in an employment setting.

(University senior management interview, WA)

These statements are reflected by Billett (1994, p. 21) who notes that ‘when learning was disembedded from authentic activities and social relations it was perceived to be markedly less effective’. Essentially, these statements reflect the imperatives of university staff members who acknowledge that building partnerships to support and improve teaching and research endeavours can be achieved through engaging with organisations beyond the university and by providing learning experiences that augment those provided in the university classroom.

5.2 Employers

Given the importance of employers’ engagement to successful WIL experiences, it is important to understand the perspectives and motivations of employers in supporting these experiences. It was found that motivations and expected outcomes from engaging with WIL differ amongst small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs), global corporations and NGOs and to government agencies. For example, different industry sectors have varying capacity for coordination and advocacy activities to develop and resource WIL. The data revealed that the motivation to engage with universities and students in WIL had much to do with previous experience (positive or negative) with WIL, and that it was important to take a long-term view. In some cases, engagement was driven by managers who had, themselves, been WIL students:

Change is difficult, because for organizations to see the benefits after taking in a WIL student, the employer may only become aware of the payoff from WIL regarding a particular student, after they have become a valuable employee, up to 5 years later. In some cases the managers themselves came into the organization as a WIL student.

(Peak body interview, National)

In this investigation, skills shortages and short- and long-term recruitment objectives were identified as the main motivators for employers and professions for engaging with universities in providing WIL placement experiences to students:

We find it difficult to find civil engineers. Also, we have identified a number of areas in which graduates require further development.

(Employer focus group, VIC)

Employers were clear about the advantages for them in terms of recruitment:

It’s about building a pipeline, so a WIL placement may lead to vacation employment which leads to graduate program and eventually a permanent position.

(Employer focus group, VIC)

I am obtaining an employee that has experience rather than starting with a green field –struggle with time – this gives us the edge on time restraints.

(Employer focus group, VIC)

Good staff recruitment tool.

(Peak body interview, WA)

Seeking new blood into the business and bringing in new thinking – this is a business decision.

(Employer focus group, VIC)

Employers recognise the value of engaging with students prior to their graduation. Despite such perceptions, capacity for engaging universities and their students in WIL varies between employer organisations. Importantly, SMEs, a substantial component of the overall Australian economy and currently suffering a shortage of skilled workers, may also face challenges to engaging in WIL due to limited available resources.

As well as seeing gains for themselves and their own area, some employers supported WIL because they saw that it contributed to their industry:

Personally I enjoy opportunities to work with students; it is a refreshing break from the day to day norms. But largely it is also the great need in the industry for skilled experienced engineers.

(Employer focus group, VIC)

Recognise that grads will leave and that skill levels are not entirely focused but look at the longer term goal for general industry.

(Employer focus group, QLD)

Both in the short term and the long term, we feel we are contributing to the industry's long term future when we take WIL students.

(Employer focus group, VIC)

Reference was also made to students gaining insight from the experience, encouraging new thinking and providing community service. Employer participants indicated that WIL facilitated the opportunity for students to engage with the workplace: it helps the student '*get the culture of the discipline*' (Employer interview, QLD). A participant from an accrediting body that mandates some form of work experience contended that students in the workplace:

can absorb the specific knowledge that is being conveyed but they can also see patterns of thought, modes of behaviour, and consideration of other issues such as safety issues and ethics and that sometimes there are more effective ways of conveying these attitudes rather than in chalk and talk.

(Peak Body interview, National)

While the demands for generic skills development and work-ready graduates are motivators for employer involvement in WIL, it was also recognised that students and employers accrue many other benefits through this engagement, which goes beyond simply the 'WIL experience'.

5.3 University students

Opportunities it [WIL] presents are priceless – no course at uni could offer the experience a workplace can – it's worth the stress.

(Student survey, QLD)

Students are obviously key stakeholders in their learning and higher education provisions more generally. Not only do they sponsor it through their financial contributions, but are central to the learning experiences in both academic and practice settings. Consequently, it is important to understand the basis by which they prefer to engage with WIL. It is 'students' total experience of university — not just what happens in the traditional classroom — that shapes their judgments of quality, promotes retention and engages them in productive learning' (Scott, 2005, p. vii). Scott's report, *Accessing the student voice* (2005, p. 9), identifies 'practice-oriented and interactive, face-to-face learning methods' as those that students considered the 'best aspect' of their learning experience.

The contribution WIL can make to student engagement has been recognised across higher education in Australia. Research has shown that levels of student activities can be measured empirically (Coates, 2005; Pike & Kuh, 2005) and that such data show significant links to 'desirable learning outcomes such as critical thinking' (Carini, Kuh, & Klein, 2006, p. 23).

Following the lead of North American institutions, Australia and New Zealand are now compiling and tracking indicators of student engagement across a number of scales which relate to clusters concerned with 'academic challenge', 'active learning', 'student and staff interactions', and enriching educational experiences' (Australian Council for Educational Research, 2008). The AUSSE (Australasian Survey of Student Engagement), an Australasian innovation, building upon existing item clusters from the North American instrument, has added a scale entitled 'Work Integrated Learning' (Australian Council for Educational Research, 2008).

This supports the view of WIL as an activity to 'generate high-quality learning' (Australian Council for Educational Research, 2008, p. vi).

The importance of WIL as an activity to generate high-quality learning and student engagement was supported by university staff, students and employers who provided feedback in this project. Through the focus groups and surveys, student participants provided insight into their motivations for participation in WIL activities. The most common theme was the opportunity to obtain *wicked work experience for your resume* (University student focus group, SA) and the ability to make themselves more attractive as potential employees. Some students claimed that the WIL experience gave them an advantage over other students in the job market. This perspective was supported by data from participating employers who stated that WIL experience was invaluable on graduates' resumes, was vital for providing opportunities for students, and influenced their perception of graduates' ability (see Appendix J).

Students also identified that WIL experiences provided them with career direction. That is, they can *find out whether they like it* (University student focus group, WA) or *find they are not suited to their chosen profession if not prepared for the reality of the workplace* (Symposium, SA). This was also highlighted by university staff who commented that WIL was *an opportunity for students to trial their career before they graduate* (Survey, NSW). Having the opportunity to 'test the water' prior to a major employment commitment is a compelling reason to engage with WIL that warrants further investigation.

Students were also motivated by perceived learning gains. As Biggs (1999) points out, motivation to engage at a deep level must be driven by the relevance of the potential experience to future career success, to personal enrichment and to development. One student summed up her learning as *taking all of the skills learned through uni and using it all in this [WIL] course – it's all wrapped up in this [WIL] course* (University student focus group, QLD). In addition, students identified a number of non-discipline related skills such as networking, the importance of asking questions and *learning to smile and nod* (University student focus group, QLD). Others stated they were more motivated to study, classes seemed easier and they were now specifically seeking *to learn stuff that's going to help me in my new job* (University student focus group, SA).

In summary, WIL helps students to engage more deeply as they create meaning from content knowledge in an applied professional environment. It provides direction for career choices, an understanding of workplace culture, and a relevance that drives deeper learning.

6. MAJOR CHALLENGES TO ENGAGING WITH WIL

The recent reports mentioned earlier recommend that opportunities for students to engage in WIL should be increased. Participants in this project agree that several challenges and issues must be addressed if increasing numbers of students are to be given the opportunity to participate in quality WIL experiences. For example, The Hon. Brendan O'Connor noted the difficulty of the relatively small percentage of engineering students provided with support to obtain professionally mandated work experience placements (O'Connor, 2008, p. 5). Five major challenges were identified: these challenges emerged through the process of delivering on the project's stated intention to identify key stakeholders and provide mechanisms to identify and prioritise key challenges and issues that currently face the sector in the implementation and enhancement of WIL.

6.1 Challenge 1: Ensuring equity and access

As well as being motivated to access learning activities such as WIL, students (including mature aged students, school leavers and students from diverse backgrounds) must be in a position to take up such opportunities. There was an emphasis of participants on the difficulty of ensuring access to the experience of WIL, even when those experiences are professionally mandated, and concern with the *inequities in experiences between students* (Survey, WA).

Financial ramifications of undertaking WIL differ across institutions and disciplines but can include the following:

- unevenness of curricular integration
- modes of sourcing placements
- mandated participation.

These are prominent descriptors of a diverse WIL landscape with which students must contend and base their choices (or reconcile to a lack of choice) regarding WIL. Students' concerns may vary according to age, family and other related socioeconomic conditions. Opportunities to engage with WIL placements may be constrained by variations in time commitments, such as full-time or part-time study and work schedules. Students' fee status varies between domestic HECS, domestic fee-paying, and international fee-paying (where visa restrictions impose limitations and administrative requirements upon participation in work placements). Such variables impact on the appropriateness and efficacy of WIL approaches within curricula. All of these variables impact considerably upon equity of access and outcomes across WIL practice.

An issue raised by respondents was that of the selection of students for placements or projects based on academic performance: *Only the credit/high distinction students get to go out on the projects* (University senior management interview, WA). One respondent explained: *If we send out students who are not competent ... [we] could get a bad reputation in the workplace which will not help students in the future* (Conference, QLD). Another asked: *What about the problem students – those that no one wants to employ, or who cannot be taken on field trips?* (Survey, QLD). Some employers also emphasised the importance of having 'good students'; that is, *[employers] need skills not just bodies* (Employer interview, WA) and *some [students] are interested in money, others in learning. We take the students interested in learning* (Employer focus group, QLD).

These comments highlight the importance of providing equitable access to WIL opportunities, and also that selecting students for placements and projects solely on the basis of academic achievement is inequitable: it limits opportunities for students with the potential to succeed and to gain from the experience in ways that can change their lives. As one senior manager noted in relation to younger students:

Students go out as adolescents and come back as adults. It helps them integrate and understand their studies better. Mediocre students come back enthused and positive.

(University senior management interview, VIC)

Described below are issues of equity and access that affect students from diverse backgrounds, including international, employed students/students with family responsibilities, students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, those with a disability, Indigenous students, and those from regional and remote areas.

6.1.1 International students

International students were the student group most frequently referred to in the data. Participants argued that issues related to international student access to WIL opportunities (particularly placement) must be addressed urgently. According to staff, *international students report ongoing frustrations at not having equal access to WIL opportunities* (University focus group, VIC). The Universities Australia paper reported on research that indicates that international students are significantly less satisfied with finding work experience opportunities than domestic students. As the authors of that paper observe:

It is in the interests of the skilled migration program, the Australian economy and Australia's higher education providers that international students (and with their domestic counterparts) enjoy better opportunities to improve their work-readiness for ultimate employment in areas of skill demand both in the Australian workplace and in their home countries.

(Universities Australia, 2008a, p. 6)

This issue of access is important on an individual level as well as a broader level, as discontent with graduate outcomes could affect the attractiveness of Australian university study for international students. A university manager claimed that currently *Australia is actually in some ways holding itself back without that flexibility in the system* (University focus group, VIC). In 2007 the Educational Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act (Australian Government, 2007), along with a range of associated legislative instruments and Acts of Parliament, was reviewed by government. As a result, there are now severe restrictions associated with international student visas, specifically in regard to a student's ability to undertake what regulators call 'workplace training'. International students can only undertake a work placement subject if it is a compulsory part of their course. In this context 'compulsory' means they cannot complete the qualification without undertaking the subject.

There was some understanding of the rationale behind the visa restrictions:

they are dealing with political concerns about students being taken advantage of. And one of the ways that they see themselves as being able to control that is put some really heavy-duty restrictions around what providers can offer to students by way of workplace training.

(University staff focus group, VIC)

This legislative change, however, has caused considerable concern across the sector. Some respond by denying this opportunity to international students:

We don't bother placing international students. This came to be a problem for us five years ago – and when the visa restrictions came in it caused big problems so now international promotional literature doesn't mention placement.

(University senior management, VIC)

Others, while making the restrictions clear, were disappointed that they could not be more accommodating:

And we're very careful about what we say to students, and make it very, very clear that things like industry based learning are not available to international students unless it's a compulsory part of the program. So most of the time I feel a bit like a wet blanket.

(University staff focus group, VIC)

Effective preparation and promotion of international students was raised as an issue:

How do we prepare the international students for employment and how do we deal with potential issues and prejudices in the work place towards international students and their capabilities?

(University staff focus group, VIC)

Participants in a staff university focus group (VIC) perceived the reluctance by some employers to take international students for reasons including:

- limited return on investment in providing international students with workplace mentorship and supervision when they are not likely to stay in Australia after graduation
- variable English language skills, which make it difficult to manage large numbers of international students
- limited understanding of Australian workplace culture.

It should be noted, however, that other employers added that investing in helping students (both international and Australian) to improve language skills and awareness of workplace culture is a way to attract and retain quality students.

While English language skills were seen as a major barrier to full participation for some international students, some participants felt that the language issue was simply a smokescreen for cultural issues and misconceptions in the workplace:

I wonder about the focus on English language where international students are concerned. I mean the first thing is, when people talk about English language and international students it comes across like every international student has a problem with English which is simply not the case. It also suggests that citizens of this country don't have any problems which is equally not the case.

(University staff focus group, VIC)

Participants and employers who had worked extensively with international students thought that language skills and cultural awareness should be looked at much earlier in the curriculum and that employers would benefit from advice on the complexity of the situation:

Our key issue ... is to educate the employers. To say to them, 'Look, try our international students, they have many skills. There might be initially, a language issue, but we think that that's short term. We think with some intensive training; either on your part or our part that can be alleviated'. Their attitude to date has been - 'We don't have the time to help improve their language skills. Why don't you do it? They go to university - it should be your responsibility'. And we say - 'Yes, we're looking at it. It would be good to have it as a shared prospect because you're going to need the international students simply because there's a shortage of people - you know, you're not going to have enough. You're going to be forced to take international graduates so let's try and work something out'.

(University staff focus group, VIC)

As a way of 'working something out', many careers units at universities have hired international student careers consultants to develop special programs for international students, some of which have been written up as vignettes for this report: see <http://www.acen.edu.au/>. Others, such as Swinburne University, have developed special websites for international students to make them aware of potential programs they could undertake: see <http://www.swinburne.edu.au/>. It was pointed out, however, that international students along with other students should have equitable access to elective, credit bearing units that give them opportunities to develop employability skills.

There is some awareness of a need to identify placements for international students in their country of origin.

[The university] has a large international student component - 35% overall. A major issue for them is the cultural barriers in relation to international student placements although there is no problem with placing international students - especially in skills shortage areas. International students need WIL placements exactly as domestic students want it. They need to integrate also into their home culture - so placements need to include overseas companies.

(University senior management interview, WA)

Generally, however, placing international students in the country of origin was seen as resource intensive, requiring international job recruitment, special placement agreements and compliance with international laws. Some universities have aligned themselves with national organisations such as the International Association for Exchange of Students for Technical Experience

(IAESTE), or have investigated voluntary placements as ways to help international students prepare for the workforce.

Many participants felt that the issues of student placement should be more closely addressed by government:

The issue of overseas students albeit having language and cultural differences is something that the country and the WIL need to consider. Invariably [the] majority of these students will become residents of this country under a myriad of immigration initiatives ... the federal government, educational sector and their families spent millions of dollars to train them to receive tertiary qualifications. The inability for them to obtain a job pertaining to their training is a social cost to the community. For example, having IT qualified graduates working in restaurants and driving taxis does contribute to the GDP but it is a misallocation of resources!

(University senior management interview, VIC)

The data indicate that restrictions on international student participation in WIL placements have implications for individual students and their satisfaction with their studies in Australia. The data also highlight the broad policy and strategic implications that must be addressed by government in consultation with universities and employers. That is:

We need to see all the performance indicators associated with the international students as being the same as what we'd expect for a domestic student and yes it's an industry and it brings in significant revenue to the sector, but unless we see international students in exactly the same way as domestic students, as well rounded employable graduates, then eventually it will backfire

(University staff focus group, VIC)

6.1.2 Employed students/students with family responsibilities

Participants identified a number of equity issues in relation to WIL placement programs for employed students and those with family responsibilities. It is not surprising that the time demands of WIL placements were considered an important issue for these students.

Students are no longer full time students who live at home with their parents. They have jobs, they are experienced in the workforce already ... Student profile has changed.

(University senior management interview, VIC)

Unpaid placements were also seen to disadvantage self-supporting students and those with family responsibilities, especially if they have to leave paid employment to complete an unpaid placement.

If it [the WIL activity] was paid, I could invest more time into it as I wouldn't have had to do as much unrelated (paid) work.

(Student survey, QLD)

These findings reflect observations made in the 1999 Flinders University practicum audit report (Cooper, Orrell, & Jones, 1999), which found that child care was a particular problem for students expected to take full-time placements in law firms. Not only was child care a financial burden, but finding a child care place was also difficult. Another concern voiced was lack of recognition of previous relevant work-life experiences in lieu of placement, especially for mature aged students. These comments help draw attention to the changing student profile and the obligation universities and employers have to ensure that employed students and those with family responsibilities are not disadvantaged in placement programs.

An equity practitioner from Queensland commented that discrimination law was an important concept for WIL placement organisers to be aware of, because if students were disadvantaged by being unable to access WIL placements due to their parental status, family responsibilities, pregnancy, or other grounds, then such students could raise a complaint regarding discrimination. These issues are dealt with currently, especially in the large-scale compulsory practicums in courses such as teaching and nursing, by making reasonable accommodations for students with particular needs, so that they have equal access to the learning experiences in the practicum, for example, flexible course offerings to help with family commitments.

6.1.3 Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds

Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds already experience disadvantage whilst studying at university and compulsory, unpaid WIL placements might entrench that disadvantage if such students require additional travel costs or surrender of paid work. Participants observed that *unpaid compulsory community placements were a real danger area for students who came from lower socio-economic backgrounds* (Focus group, VIC). Other participants referred to financially struggling students *having to delay their studies or withdraw as they could not meet the practicum demands of some courses* (Focus group, VIC).

The National President of the National Union of Students highlights the barriers to low socioeconomic participation in this media release:

Again and again we hear stories about students dropping out of university because they can't afford to support themselves. Again and again we hear stories about students missing classes in order to work excessive hours to pay rent and cover basic living expenses ... your time at university is commonly recognised as the toughest time, financially, in your life. This is the real barrier to low-SES participation.

(McFarland, 2008)

These comments highlight the impact financial pressures have on students and their capacity not only to participate in WIL placement programs, but also to successfully complete their studies. Two national studies undertaken by Universities Australia in 2000 and 2006 (see <http://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au>) confirm that students average 15 hours of paid employment each week. The studies also reveal the 'catch 22' that many low-income students experience whereby their attempts to meet the educational and living costs associated with being a student are undermining the amount of time and attention they can give to their studies. One Queensland university has an extensive scholarship and bursary program for its low-income students, with additional faculty-based bursaries for those experiencing particular problems with practicum costs. Careful consideration must be given to the financial cost of WIL placements (especially compulsory, unpaid placements) so as not to further disadvantage students.

6.1.4 Students with a disability

There were only a few references about the placement of students with disabilities, even though they represent 4.02% of the Australian higher education student population. One participant commented that the *availability of placements may be difficult for students with disabilities* (Symposium, SA). Whilst some university policies refer to placement of students with a disability, this is an area that requires further investigation. All stakeholders have an obligation to ensure that students with disabilities have access to appropriate, satisfying, quality WIL experiences and that they are not disadvantaged in placement programs or in future employment opportunities. All universities are required by law to ensure that 'reasonable accommodations' are provided for students with a disability who are undertaking WIL experiences required by their course (Australian Government, 2006). Disability advisers in all universities currently assist faculties to design such accommodations, taking into account the inherent requirements of the WIL placement. These policies and practices are well developed and understood, and are underpinned by very clear legal requirements.

6.1.5 Indigenous students

Indigenous students were also identified as an equity group for consideration in the area of WIL. One senior manager (WA) mentioned the need to further explore WIL with regard to Indigenous students. Another referred to the desire to find *ways to engage [the] Indigenous population* (University senior management interview, NT). These comments were supported by survey respondents who referred to the requirement for the *provision of suitable experiences/ programs for Indigenous students* (Survey, WA). Since these were the only specific references to Indigenous students, it is obvious that access and opportunity to WIL for Indigenous students requires further investigation. Indigenous Support Units should be consulted in any further investigations, as they are the ones most familiar with the issues faced by Indigenous students, and can sometimes be providers of WIL experiences themselves, for example, through organising cadetship programs.

6.1.6 Students in regional and remote areas

Students placed in rural (regional) and remote communities confront particular barriers to effective participation. These barriers include costs associated with travel, accommodation and away-from-home expenses (Halsey, 2007). Participants in the NSW survey noted the ‘lack of practical support for away from home industry placements — food, accommodation’. The ‘Trends in WIL’ vignette also shows that accommodation costs in rural areas can be high, and that managing the placement of large numbers of students is resource intensive (Trends in WIL vignette, www.acen.edu.au, 14/08/08). Another issue raised was that of the limited range of placement opportunities for students from rural and remote areas. There are *equity issues arising from differing opportunities available to internal and external students, based on their locations* (Survey, NSW). The financial barriers confronting students placed in rural and remote locations and the opportunities for students from such areas to experience a range of WIL placements also requires further investigation.

6.2 Challenge 2: Managing expectations and competing demands

The challenge of managing expectations and competing demands was raised in relation to differing motivations and objectives for WIL from university, employer and student perspectives. One academic described an apparent tension between *employer objectives and academic objectives and the generic skills objectives within the curriculum and more discipline specific skills*. The expectations gap that arises from competing demands is illustrated in the following comment:

[This university] does have a commitment to increase the number of placements available to students. Course structures are being reviewed – still in early phases – giving a sense of community and industry views of [this university] and its offerings – and they are getting views around work-readiness. There have been all sorts of views expressed but one of the industry ones was the industry representatives saying, ‘Yes we want people who are realistic about work’ but there is more variety in employer views than you might think relating to whether it is the role of the university to make them work-ready or to educate them in other ways. Work-ready might not be the training that universities are best equipped to provide. This has also been identified in business – i.e. – the expectation gap of what employers expect and what uni can deliver in a 3 or 4 year degree.

(University senior management interview, WA)

Obviously employers cannot be treated as a homogenous group in defining their interests, but these concerns about roles appear to be both philosophical and practical across a wide range of employers. The philosophical concerns can be summed up by the idea that education is not just about employability: *Education should not be driven by industry* (Symposium, NSW). According to McRae (2004, p. 5) the message to employers must be that they are participating in the educational development of burgeoning professionals, not just engaging with a job placement service. McRae (2004, p. 5) also highlights the importance of managing student expectations:

Dissatisfaction can arise when students feel that their expectations are not being met. This leads to issues of lower student retention and engagement. Messages should be communicated early on, consistently and repeatedly through many media.

Circumstances that create a perception by students that engaging with WIL is unjust, unfair or too costly may be even greater de-motivators than the perceived relevance and usefulness of the learning experience.

It was noted that engagement by some students was limited by competing demands on their time; McInnis and Hartley (2002, p. 4) argue that ‘the demands of often highly “flexible” workplaces and somewhat less flexible educational institutions have to be balanced’. The value of ‘reciprocity of engagement’ in WIL emerges as a key theme in this study.

However, as universities and employers seek to increase WIL opportunities, managing different expectations and competing demands in relation to curriculum, pedagogy, roles, resources and performance indicators must be addressed (Tynjala, Valimaa, & Sarja, 2003).

6.3 Challenge 3: Improving communication and coordination

This challenge emerges from data that indicate that improved communication and coordination are essential in enhancing a cooperative relationship between universities and employers and across disciplines and faculties. Stakeholders identified the need for closer collaboration between universities and employers in order to provide work-related learning experiences for students. They claim that *the current skills shortage has made effective communication and coordination even more pressing* (Employer focus group, VIC).

There were comments indicating that, for universities, a closer relationship with employers would mean a curriculum that better reflects work practices:

[WIL provides] tremendous opportunities for universities to learn from the work place. [There is] important learning that could and should influence the academic world [that] can flow back from industry.

(Peak body interview, National)

There are all kinds of wins with this issue. Employers take more students. Students should have employment relevant to classroom learning, and opportunities to research their career. Employers and universities come closer. Every degree should have some kind of WIL. Credit should be given.

(Peak body interview, National)

Some employers described communicating with universities as a complex task, with difficulties in locating appropriate faculty staff:

It would make it easier if it didn't have to go through so many gate keepers. More information in the uni's website including key contracts. Make expectations clear.

(Employer focus group, VIC)

Getting enough access to the students. Knowing who to go to in order to get the students.

(Employer focus group, QLD)

Knowing the right people to contact, [it] can be difficult to reach them.

(Employer focus group, VIC)

Other employers commented that it is difficult to have direct communication with students other than at career days or fairs. Others mentioned a lack of information about WIL and how they might be involved:

Still looking to understand where our industry can engage with WIL.

(Employer focus group, VIC)

University needs to promote it more. Industry doesn't know much about it.

(Symposium, WA)

Very little knowledge available in this role – have never heard of WIL.

(Employer focus group, VIC)

Improving internal university communication and coordination across disciplines and faculties was identified as an important way to share information and knowledge:

Law, medicine, nursing, engineering, education, business & economics there are WIL programs but not thought of in a consistent coordinated way. And this is one of the things I am trying to change but trying to establish what is good practice so when opportunity comes up to implement a program there is a body of knowledge to draw on.

(University senior management interview, VIC)

Suggestions on ways to improve communication and coordination included *greater inter-disciplinary networking* (Survey, NSW), *ensuring all areas of the university work collaboratively in regards to WIL* (Survey, QLD), and *establish[ing] networks across faculties* (Survey, NSW). Being able to draw on knowledge and information across disciplines and faculties was also mentioned.

In addition to sharing knowledge and information, effective internal university communication was also seen as important for a coordinated approach to employers:

With a centralised model paramedics may be talking to the same people as bio medical science. That needs to be managed.

(University senior management interview, WA)

[University staff] drive the community mad with people asking for experience ... Uni needs to manage the community interaction ... [University staff] not being aware of what other contacts have been made.

(University senior management interview, VIC)

The data highlight that there is much to be gained by improving communication and coordination between stakeholders and across disciplines and faculties. The challenge of improving communication and coordination across the sector is addressed in more detail in the sector-wide communication plan (see Chapter 8).

6.4 Challenge 4: Ensuring worthwhile WIL placement experiences

'If the focus of a WIL placement is the development and enhancement of graduate capabilities then WIL experiences must be relevant, meaningful and worthwhile' (Cleary et al., 2007). Participants referred to several issues related to the challenge of ensuring worthwhile placement experiences. These include:

- lack of shared understanding of purpose and role
- difficulties in identifying placements
- quality of placement supervision and tasks
- student preparedness for placement.

A 'disconnect' in the understanding of the purpose and role in WIL experiences was evident in the data. Smith, Mackay, Challis and Holt (2006) also found a disconnect in their study of the IT profession. They identified three general assumptions that universities make about the level of commitment and understanding of industry partners. First, universities make assumptions about the level of commitment of employers and their understanding of experiential/integrated learning. Second, they assume that industry supervisors are carefully selected on the basis of shared understanding of the skills required and have the capacity to demonstrate these skills and, third, they assume that industry supervisors have a vision of what constitutes a meaningful/satisfying placement and their role in achieving this. The study concludes that a 'shared vision of what constitutes a satisfying placement cannot be taken for granted' (Smith et al., 2006, p. 1) and identifies that more work must be done to identify current practices and suggest different ways of working.

Ensuring satisfying placement experiences is one concern, but finding placements is another:

Endlessly expanding practicum offerings is a nice idea, but as a past practicum coordinator, I am well aware of the difficulties of generating large numbers of placements.

(Symposium, WA)

The problem for smaller regional universities who have to compete for placements was also mentioned: *We've probably got one too many universities over here which makes it hard* (University senior management interview, WA). As more institutions become interested in WIL, and in areas that have not traditionally adopted WIL strategies, the pressure on available student placement opportunities grows.

Number one problem is industry being able to take placements. Also – the number of universities now looking to place students – it makes it harder for everyone.

(University senior management interview, VIC)

The small pool of available placement opportunities makes finding appropriate experiences for students with particular needs even more difficult. This exacerbates the equity and access issues that can arise for students (see Section 6.1). Some participants had a sense that a growth in placement opportunities was unrealistic. As a peak body participant observed, *there is a saturation point* (Peak body, National). Another participant concluded the *reality is that [the university] is unlikely to provide a high volume of placements for students* (University senior management interview, QLD). This comment draws attention to the issue of supply and demand of placement opportunities and the challenges universities have in not only sourcing positions, but also the resource implications of managing larger numbers of students engaging in WIL placements.

The process of identifying placements was seen as a key factor in determining relevance and quality. For example, some universities rely on students identifying their own placements, which can cause concerns about relevance and ‘quality’ if the experience is not appropriately structured. A participant at a Victorian focus group asked, *how do you guarantee the quality of a company the student has identified themselves ... and how do you cover the risks involved once they have started?* Other participants raised concerns about the negative effects on students of what were described as ‘dud placements’, and, as was pointed out, it is *Fair enough to say don’t use them again – but what do you do with the student involved?* (Conference, QLD).

The issue of quality in relation to workplace mentors and supervisors who may not have the time, ability or desire to engage with students’ learning was also raised. Some participants observed that workplace supervisors were often untrained, and students pointed out that workplace learning did not always take place: *The students knew more than the industry partner* (University student focus group, QLD). However, it was noted by another participant:

Whilst I did not always work under the conditions I desired, the jobs and sites I worked on as part of my experience is something I now value, which cannot be taught in a lecture or learnt from a book; it is the real world experience that has given me confidence in my work and respect from my (now) work colleagues.

(Student survey, QLD)

This comment emphasises the value that some students believe a relevant WIL experience provides for their learning and self-confidence.

The problems that universities experience with placements reflect the imperfect cultural shift towards partnership and a stakeholder approach. Unless placement strategies are adequately resourced, well prepared for by both students and employer, and well coordinated, they can be counterproductive, as these employer participants observed:

What would you do with someone for 6 weeks? Pain in the arse! You’d be looking for things to randomly do. Whereas 12 months you could structure, 4 months – a semester length – getting there but initial reaction is 4 months is not long enough to do something long term.

(Peak body interview, WA)

[Accounting] is very hands on – lots of face to face work with clients – can’t have people hidden out the back who aren’t actively involved in what happens in the businesses.... can’t do anything meaningful in a short time. The student says, ‘if this is what accounting is – I’m off to the mine’.

(Peak body interview, WA)

Placements are only *really good if well managed and structured and well integrated into the university and the work place* (Peak body interview, National).

There is a sense from some employers that placements should be organised on an industry- or profession-wide basis, rather than on an ad hoc basis.

Whilst we do have such programs in place they need to be formalised and strengthened as do the relationships with universities.

(Employer focus group, VIC)

Student comments on the quality and relevance of placements included examples of inappropriate workplace tasks. For example, a student described how she had been placed in a company for a short-term environmental audit program. When she turned up on the first morning they showed her a card table on the balcony. They explained that, as she was interested in the environment, she would enjoy it out there. *There was no computer and the placement was poorly understood by the company* (University student focus group, SA). *Real placements [are] needed; not just filling envelopes!* (Symposium, SA).

Even where students believe that WIL offers a ‘good’ learning experience, some note that the outcomes of the experience are influenced by the host organisation staff who can *impact on the value of the experience* (University student focus group, SA).

What really matters is the whole office knowing why you are there. Otherwise they can ignore you and you can die quietly in the corner and no one notices.

(University student focus group, SA)

The risk of exploitation is also recognised:

As this is a small organisation, I have not been able to witness any psychosocial assessment, or other things that I have considered important for my learning, and that my friends have been able to do in their government organisations. my time there is also VERY unstructured and I feel like I am not learning much [discipline related information], but mainly doing odd jobs and things that my supervisor doesn't want to do. even though I acknowledge that I need to do odd jobs every now and again, as it is a part of ... work, I don't feel like I am learning very many [discipline related] work skills. also, my friends are receiving much help from their supervisors in regards to theories etc, and my supervisor just tells me to look it up.

(University student survey, QLD)

However, from an employer perspective, student engagement in the workplace is often limited by their ability or preparedness:

I think it is a really good idea to have students being in the workplace but the nature of [this area] makes it too difficult. And students are not adequately equipped to make the most of the experience.

(Peak body interview, VIC)

They [students] are not productive until they understand the culture.

(Employer interview, QLD)

This notion was supported by comments from university participants:

[For] an accounting firm taking on a student there will be some resourcing it costs them because the student isn't ready to do something like an audit.

(University senior management interview, WA)

University participants also highlighted students’ abilities in conjunction with the importance of adequately preparing students for placement and for *the ‘culture’ of the workplace they are entering* (Symposium, SA). Billett, Barker and Herson-Tinning (2004, p. 237) support this by highlighting that despite ‘goal-directed activities and interactions and their distribution being shaped by social norms and practices, individuals exercise their agency in determining how they interpret and engage in social practice’. In effect, the level of learning is impacted by the willingness of the student to engage with the experience. Ensuring worthwhile WIL placement experiences requires stakeholders — university staff, students and employers — to work towards a shared understanding of the purpose of the experience and how their different roles impact on quality.

6.5 Challenge 5: Adequately resourcing WIL

Participants all talked about problems related to resourcing WIL programs. Even ‘old timer’ disciplines such as nursing, education and engineering, with longstanding WIL practice and professionally mandated accreditation requirements, find resourcing the provision of WIL placements problematic. McCulla (2008) comments that ‘professional experience placements in schools are becoming harder and harder to find’ (p. 12) and argues for a range of responses

including the requirement for teacher accreditation and registration bodies to ensure that the demonstration of professional standards as a teacher include ‘mentoring new teachers and coordinating whole-school pre-service and induction programs’ (p. 14), not only to alleviate the problems of ensuring sufficient placement, but as a way to also invigorate the practicum experience.

Of course the problem of resourcing in higher education is not unique to WIL. Over the past decade or so, government funding to the higher education sector has changed, with increased competition and thinner operating margins. Universities Australia (2008c, p. 2) describe this period as characterised by ‘decreased government funding’, ‘increased regulatory compliance and other transaction costs’, ‘the growth of opportunistic funding arrangements and decision-making’ and ‘increased rigidities of core or block funding’. The ‘shift away from public funding’ (Bradley et al., 2008, p. 12) has resulted in an increased reliance on revenue from students and contestable funding for research. The Review of Australian Higher Education discussion paper highlights the changed composition of revenue for higher education, with a fall of direct Commonwealth grants from 58% in 1996 to 42% in 2006, and a growth in revenue from students from 25% in 1996 to 39% in 2006, with international student fees rising from 7% to 15% (Bradley et al., 2008, p. 11). Reliance on fees from international students varies but accounts for ‘over 50 per cent of total revenues’ in some institutions (Bradley et al., 2008, p. 51). This reliance on student revenue has affected the nature of student participation. The discussion paper notes that ‘student numbers have outstripped Commonwealth funding for teaching. Student-staff ratios have grown markedly, from 12.9 in 1999 to 20.3 in 2005’ (Bradley et al., 2008, p. 13). While the authors go on to argue that there is ‘no evidence’ that the introduction of fees and loans had ‘any material effects on participation’ (Bradley et al., 2008, p. 31), the Universities Australia 2007 survey of student finances found that students experienced significant financial pressure and, as discussed earlier, students can face particular financial barriers to participation in WIL placement programs.

In 2005, as a result of changes to federal policy, many WIL placement programs were no longer entitled to Commonwealth Grant Scheme funding for students participating in work placement programs. The policy changes forced universities to focus attention on the level of oversight, direction and management of student learning provided through WIL placement programs and to restructure some programs to meet criteria identified by Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST), now the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). The Higher Education Support Act 2003 ‘Administration Guidelines’ (05/09/2005) (Department of Education, Science and Training, 2005) were most recently amended in November 2007. Among other things, the guidelines (see Table 6.1) specify requirements that must be met for work to be considered ‘work experience in industry’ under the terms of the Act. The amended guidelines also specify the circumstance in which students ‘are exempt from units of study that wholly consist of work experience in industry’ under subsection 169-20(2) of the Act (Department of Education, Science and Training, 2005).

Table 6.1: WIL and Commonwealth Grant Scheme funding

Supported (no CGS funding, but possibly some HECS) (All of the following must be evident)	Directed (full CGS funding and HECS) (All of the following must be evident)
Interaction between the supervisor and the student, which may include site visits	Ongoing and regular input and contact with students.
Organisation of student placements.	
Ongoing monitoring of student work and progress.	Oversight and direction of work occurring during its performance.
Assessment of student learning and performance during the placement.	Definition and management of assessment of student learning and performance during the placement.
	Definition and management of the implementation of educational content and objectives of the unit.
	Definition and management of the standard of learning and performance to be achieved by the student during the placement.

These amendments define the nature of support that is expected in WIL placement programs if Commonwealth funding is to be provided to universities for WIL placement programs. These changes reduce the capacity of universities to provide a range of WIL opportunities, but at the same time, help ensure the academic integrity and rigour of such experiences.

In practicum audits conducted by Flinders University (Cooper et al., 1999; Smiegel & Harris, 2008), a number of critical issues emerged in relation to resourcing WIL including lack of recognition of the amount of work and skills required to run successful WIL programs, clerical and administrative assistance, status, staff development opportunities and career development opportunities. Similarly, respondents in this study identified that the capacity of stakeholders to provide quality placements is impacted by key resource issues including recognition of staff workload and staff development, both of which require a significant increase in funding.

Money is a key challenge – WIL is expensive to do really well.

(University senior management interview, QLD)

I have long argued that if the faculty genuinely wants to expand the practicum it will need to create a position specifically dedicated to that end. The phone-calls, emails and networking involved in organising placements is overwhelming as it is and leaves very little time for further expanding the profile of the program.

(Survey, WA)

Workload and time constraints associated with WIL programs were identified as a pressing issue for university staff, employers and students. One academic reflected:

The major difficulty we face is the time it takes both to organise and sustain the existing program. Academic staff do this as part of our usual workload with little or no formal recognition or support from either our school or faculty. It is a very time-consuming process and we believe our industry links and liaison would be greatly improved if we had more time to forge new alliances and extend existing ones. Ideally, we would like to have time for more detailed industry feedback beyond a brief telephone discussion or a written feedback sheet on particular students. Our ability to drop in on workplaces when students are there is extremely limited because of time constraints and the great variety of places in which our students are engaged. With more resources, we might be in a better position to standardise to some degree the type of feedback we receive from this varied array of industry partners, perhaps even running an annual employers' focus group to shed light on their perceptions of the internship process and how it might be improved.

(Journalism Internship vignette, www.acen.edu.au, 14/08/08)

Other participants consistently reported workload, including recognition of workload, as a major issue for staff involved in administering WIL programs. For example, lack of time, due to lack of workload recognition, impacts on the ability to *think, research and improve our WIL practices (University survey, SA) and this contributes to increased stress levels and inability to provide appropriate time to students needing additional attention and support (Survey, VIC)*. One respondent suggested that what is required is:

... recognition by the school and university of the commitments in academic time required to undertake the WIL activities and thus taking this into consideration when reviewing workloads, research output and promotion applications.

(Survey, QLD)

In some cases WIL supervision is not recognised as 'real work'. Disciplines such as nursing identified management pressure to supervise students from 'a sense of obligation' rather than budgeting for adequate supervision; one academic highlighted the importance of *recognition of the need for sufficient administrative support to coordinate all the organizations and individuals (Conference, QLD)*. Another academic noted that inadequate planning and resources for supervision create *workplace stresses (e.g. overload) which affect the learning environment (Conference, QLD)*.

A comprehensive survey of staff involved in WIL at Griffith University identified that even with the support of administrative staff, WIL academics are involved in a wide range of activities and are required to initiate and sustain WIL as well as manage the learning outcomes of the experience (see Appendix L). Administrative staff involved in WIL also play a special role and this *must be recognised in terms of promotion pathways* (University senior management interview, QLD).

Additionally, it was pointed out that resource implications also impact on employers:

I have to justify why spending the time to mentor the students when telling management that they're under staffed.

(Employer interview, QLD)

They are struggling to supervise the apprentices they have.

(Peak body interview, National)

According to Harvey et al. (1998, p. 7), 'For many employers, the initial reaction to work placement tends to be that the process has resource implications, and that, in effect the benefits (such as improved recruitment) are a gamble'. This was recognised by universities:

The biggest issue we have is the industry attitude to WIL – here industry is not as used to the concept as in UK and USA. It's been a struggle (and we've been doing IBL [Industry Based Learning] for 40 years) and it is a constant struggle to keep employers interested in it. Companies are very financially focussed and it has to satisfy their bottom line. Maybe this project needs to highlight to industry the less tangible benefits of having a WIL student.

(University senior management interview, VIC)

Employers acknowledged that there will be a cost, especially to cover potential student mistakes, and that this should be factored into the investment. Yet if managed well, students on placement can provide a resource that would otherwise mean some projects and work activity would not be undertaken. However, some employers reported frustration at the lack of understanding on the part of the university in relation to time costs involved in providing placements for students, and the basic understanding that employers are always time poor (see Appendix K). Other employers consulted indicated that possibly even more than the financial cost and the impact on the bottom line, the time element is the major inhibitor to increased involvement in WIL placement programs. As Harvey et al. (1998, p. 7) point out, this 'is time that has to be invested, particularly up-front with the university and students on placement' and 'this is particularly the case for short placements and/or projects and for SMEs without the infrastructure to support students on placement'. Similarly:

Students can't do anything for 6 weeks in accounting ... but they could do something in a four month summer placement.

(Peak body interview, WA)

Be a bit flexible – your way is not always the right way for industry – uni/WIL needs to integrate with our business.

(Employer focus group, VIC)

Universities to be aware and open to flexible delivery. Break down walls – build relationships.

(Employer focus group, VIC)

The resourcing implication of participation in WIL experiences for students, that is, the impact on students holding down existing and continuing part-time work while studying, or on those with family commitments, means that at the very least they are unable to be flexible with the time they devote to university study while undertaking a WIL placement. As student numbers increase and more disciplines engage in WIL, the need for additional resources to support staff and provide quality placements is apparent. If government, universities and employers want to generate more WIL opportunities for students, they will have to make an additional resource investment in WIL, be more flexible in terms of the length and timing of the activity, as well as address issues of staffing allocation and workload expectations.

7. STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING WIL

Much of the literature on WIL outlines the benefits associated for employers, students and the university (Brown, 2002; Weisz & Smith, 2005, p. 607), but few tackle some of the important challenges and issues that arise in its implementation — with the important exceptions of Berman (Berman, 1990, cited in Eyler, Giles, Stenson, & Gray, 2001, p. 20) and Orrell (2004, p. 1). The participants in this study were generally positive about WIL, but most qualified their enthusiasm in terms of necessary preconditions for effective WIL curriculum development and implementation. These preconditions include:

- implementation of appropriate policies and approaches
- cultural shift towards the development of partnerships and a ‘stakeholder approach’
- development of WIL curriculum and pedagogy
- adequate resourcing.

Each of these is considered below.

7.1 Strategy 1: Policies and approaches

This study shows that universities are increasingly looking to WIL as a way to achieve strategic goals and improve student learning. However, most grapple with complex curriculum and administrative issues of program implementation; that is, most universities are quick to recognise the benefits of WIL but are challenged by the need to develop a university-wide commitment to WIL that is supported by coordinated policies and approaches. As one senior university manager identified, *WIL offers great opportunities but has to be totally owned by the university* (University senior management interview, VIC).

Some universities have adopted an approach where responsibility for the development and implementation of WIL curriculum rests with faculties but administration is coordinated and supported centrally. Participants observed:

We have a decentralised model for managing or creating programs. Curriculum is developed across our schools but quality assured at a higher level.

(University senior management interview, WA)

We have a decentralised model which is academic led, academic supervision, academic resourced and academic assessed. Programs come from the faculties and these programs need to be engaging community. Each school has a consultative committee and they have strong community representation.

(Conference, QLD)

The benefit of this approach, as opposed to a more centralised university approach, is that programs are more likely to reflect the specific needs of the faculty. This approach can also encourage the growth of strong relationships between faculty staff, employers and the community. However, it depends on faculty-based commitment to WIL and this can lead to variable engagement in WIL across the university. As a participant in the NSW Symposium pointed out, *there is a lack of support for this method of learning and teaching within our discipline, and I guess within the wider faculty.*

In conjunction with faculty-based approaches some universities provide opportunities for students to engage with WIL facilitated via careers services. This approach can provide faculties with access to industry databases and provide opportunities for careers advisers and faculty staff to work together. Participants noted that this collaborative approach should not be ‘either/or’ and that WIL, as a curriculum activity, must be ‘owned’ at the faculty or discipline level. Harvey et al. (1998, p. 13) agrees:

It would not be appropriate for careers services to take responsibility for placements that are a compulsory part of academic programmes... Giving guidance about the value of all types of work experience, information sources, obtaining new opportunities and promoting them are all quite different from being involved in the selection and placement of specific students, or assessing their experience.

A senior manager explained:

Strategies are at faculty level. We do use the careers for support but we want to find our own faculty places.

(University senior management interview, WA)

Apart from university and faculty-based policies and approaches there was some discussion about the development of a national policy relating to WIL. Participants suggested that the federal government consider developing policies that encourage incentives for employers to engage (especially small-to-medium enterprises) as well as policies that increase student opportunities to access WIL. The Universities Australia (2007) proposal for the development of a national internship scheme is an example of a possible federal response to these issues. A national policy should also address the student equity issues discussed in Section 6.1 of this report. As WIL expands, universities (including faculties and careers services) must increase their capacity to provide access to WIL opportunities underpinned by policies and approaches that support this growth.

7.2 Strategy 2: A stakeholder approach

Participants offered a range of suggestions on ways to improve engagement between stakeholders. These suggestions highlight the need for a stakeholder integrated approach to the planning and implementation of WIL that is based on formalised relationships and a common understanding of the associated responsibilities and level of commitment required. It was suggested that productive dialogue, genuine understanding, and commitment are more likely to occur through *collaboration rather than competition* (University senior management interview, WA). That is, a stakeholder approach requires clear agreements and the recognition of needs as well as mutual benefit and costs. Issues of mutual benefit and responsibility were raised consistently, with WIL described as an activity of *multiple enrichment*, as one participant explained:

The driver is relevance. The educationalists are seeing the value of adding this to their courses and the marketing people are seeing it as a good way to promote the university. It is becoming relevant. It's an integrated effort...win win...everybody wins.

(University senior management interview, WA)

However, Moody (1997) warns that if benefits fail for any of the stakeholders, the partnership ceases to be effective. The importance of maintaining productive partnerships that result in mutual benefit was highlighted in several of the vignettes:

The most important factor in operating our work integrated learning program is the mutual respect and commitment of the University and the ambulance authority in WA.

(Paramedic degree programs, a university and industry partnership vignette, www.acen.edu.au, 14/08/08)

The success of the program is the result of the ongoing constructive partnerships between individuals across both the University and the government and non-government sector. It is that commitment and experience that has fostered the long-term relationships which allows this program to be so successful for all the parties involved – students, academics, supervisors and all other staff from partner organisations.

(Professional practice in Criminology and Criminal Justice vignette, www.acen.edu.au, 14/08/08)

Like many other areas, health care is an extremely dynamic field and presents an increasingly challenging environment for the provision of work-integrated learning programs. We need to work with our key partners to continually reconsider their needs and aspirations in order to progress the further development of our relationships in mutually beneficial ways.

(WIL in Health vignette, www.acen.edu.au, 14/08/08)

It was pointed out that maintaining relationships can be time consuming:

Going out and recruiting organisations – and when you can go out and speak to organisations they are receptive – but it is time consuming. It is a one to one and you're selling and introducing the concept, and often you are developing a project for these students while they're on placement. That's worked well, then the organisations will fill out their advertisement.

(University focus group, VIC)

A stakeholder approach means recognising different stakeholder perspectives and imperatives and stressing the importance of *productive partnerships and collaborative approaches [that] build capacity and add value... [and] support innovation and quality* (Symposium, SA). It also means addressing challenges like this one described in the vignette, 'Paramedic degree programs, a university and industry partnership':

... the rate at which the university works does not align with the ambulance service, a solution has been to introduce multiple semesters to reduce the student work load and spread it over the working year. Similarly the requirement of the university CMS for a two year lead in to the introduction or changing of the program, limits our ability to respond to market forces. This problem is to some extent relieved by creative writing and planning of units.

(www.acen.edu.au, 14/08/08)

This example illustrates the importance of universities and employers working together to develop mutually beneficial and sustainable relationships. Moreover, increased engagement is likely to benefit not only WIL initiatives but also the full range of programs offered by universities. A better understanding of issues by all stakeholders will create more meaningful linkages and help produce the adaptive, adaptable and transformative employees of the future.

7.3 Strategy 3: WIL curriculum and pedagogy

University staff argue that, from a learner perspective, WIL can provide students with an authentic learning environment where they combine professional knowledge building and practice with workplace learning. Exposure to workplace settings can help students adopt appropriate workplace behaviours and assist them to become adaptive, adaptable and transformative employees (Harvey et al.,1998).

Atchison, Pollack, Reeders and Rizzetti (2002, p. 6) identify 11 principles of good practice in the design and management of WIL programs. These principles emphasise the importance of curriculum design that incorporates work integrated activity into the curriculum, accommodates the diversity of learning, includes the learning and teaching of both specific and generic skills, and recognises generic and career skill development. If WIL curriculum is to achieve its desired educational outcomes and build a bridge of learning between the university and the workplace, then the sector has to extend its current range of WIL approaches and assessment strategies. This means incorporating new models that are purposefully designed and constructively aligned both to mainstream university curricula and employer needs. Increased communication and feedback between universities, students, and employers about curriculum issues will enhance curriculum design and establish mechanisms for continuous quality improvement for future initiatives.

7.3.1 Curriculum design and alignment

In this investigation both university senior managers and academic staff highlighted the importance of designing WIL as an integral part of the curriculum, rather than an added extra. For example, attendees at a university focus group stressed the need to explicitly write it into the curriculum and assess it otherwise WIL was *good for students but unfocused and unproductive* (Focus group, VIC). Most senior managers and WIL staff called for a coherent university-wide approach to WIL with coordinated policies that support university-wide, cross-faculty networks and build strong links with the community and employers:

The challenges are to recognise that WIL is a process and people contribute to it at different parts of the process – it is multi-owned. [We] need to refine the handover processes and feedback processes across jurisdictional boundaries. The answer is not to give it to one group who builds up a silo around it. The challenge

is to recognise it is about a student experience – the mapping of that will show when people are called upon to do certain things and will show where things can be shared for the benefit of the university, student and employers. [We] won't get them to collaborate unless you can lay pathways through the process. So long as it is student-centred and integrated.

(University senior management interview, WA)

Employer participants argued that it was important to recognise the *competing objectives and constraints from industry and education perspective* and develop effective WIL strategies to avoid placements being little more than students getting *all the [jobs] nobody else wants to do* (Peak body interview, WA). Other university senior managers and academic staff emphasised the importance of balancing different objectives and motives. One academic observed that there was a *synergy between the two – knowledge and life skills*, while another saw WIL as playing a role in *adequately preparing students for the experience of a balance of academic and work skills* (Conference, QLD).

Respondents made specific suggestions about university policies such as mapping work-based practice across faculties, developing a common databank of industry contacts, and the professional development of staff, including industry supervisors. A number of participants suggested strategies to facilitate employer engagement, for example, the development of an employer WIL kit that addresses employers' concerns about WIL and compliance issues (for example, OHS, insurance etc.). One senior manager suggested a sector-wide approach:

A uniform approach... develop a Carrick model where the basics are covered – like the work placements for school kids.

(University senior management interview, WA)

Respondents also highlighted the importance of an integrated WIL curriculum that was supported by adequate resources to enable appropriate preparation, supervision and mentoring arrangements. Clearly defined and tailored assessment methods and strategies for evaluation and quality assurance were also identified as important elements of a well-designed WIL curriculum.

There needs to be coordinated, systematic approach to planning, curriculum and practicum standards.

(University senior management interview, WA)

As several participants pointed out, this approach requires a reasonably high level of skill by those involved. It was observed that academic staff have varying levels of curriculum design expertise and might require specific support to develop appropriate WIL curricula. One Tasmanian manager observed:

There are some common issues across all disciplines and all professions. We all need to develop professional skills development – and a framework for those – rather than each discipline repeating the development of these.

(University senior management interview, TAS)

The need for greater understanding about the range of WIL approaches currently being used across the sector (see www.acen.edu.au), the advantages and disadvantages of different strategies, the appropriateness of assessment methods, and how WIL can be embedded into mainstream curriculum were seen as key enablers for increased staff engagement in WIL.

7.3.2 Assessment methods

Assessment is integral to effective curriculum design, and the assessment methods reported in the data reflect a number of emerging innovations such as reflective journals, portfolios/ePortfolios (including real work products and career-related artefacts such as CVs and client feedback), workplace mentor/supervisor reports, and workplace projects aimed at providing value to employers as well as to students. Table 7.1 provides examples of assessment methods identified in the vignettes (see www.acen.edu.au) and while not exhaustive, it begins to identify the range of assessment strategies currently being used. Many of the assessment strategies outlined include negotiated outcomes in an attempt to meet the unique context and situation that each student faces while undertaking a WIL program.

Table 7.1: Examples of assessment methods identified in vignettes

Vignette	Assessment details
Professional practice in Criminology and Criminal Justice	20% participation, 20-60%* reflective journal, 20-60%* negotiated assessment, but usually the project completed by the student for the organisation. *Students decide their own weighting in consultation with organisational supervisor and their academic facilitator.
International Business internship/practicum	Formal report, organisational audit (report), weekly learning journal, bi-weekly progress report, seminars/feedback sessions, peer presentation, industry presentation.
Undergraduate and graduate paramedic degree programs	Journal and review with on-road tutors accompanied by competency tests.
Creative Industries Transitions to New Professional Environments Program	CV and cover letter, placement/project proposal and Gantt chart, journal, formal analytical report, industry partner assessment. CI Project students are also assessed against internally developed project outcome benchmarks.
Journalism internships	Portfolio including industry-standard work output (news stories etc.), a workplace diary, and a critical reflection on what has been learned.
Occupational Therapy Abroad	Students apply to the competitively selected program by writing to a series of selection criteria. Assessment is conducted across this range of individual and team-based activities: language and cultural orientation sessions, daily reflective learning journal, clinical placement notes and project outcome report, debrief sessions, professional practice in all phases of the 7-week program.
The New England Award	Informal assessment by providers of extracurricular activity. Self-assessment through reflective journal writing.
Work integrated learning in Health	According to the requirements of the various discipline groups and/or registering bodies, students' performance is assessed in the workplace settings where their off-campus practicums are undertaken. Although there are variations, the integration of national competency sets into the assessment methodology may be required. Self-assessment by students is also part of the assessment process.
Business Advantage Program	Varied assessment depending on topic. Assessment items include personal action plans, specific topic assignments such as developing a budget or resume, plus in-class exercises.
Industrial Affiliates Program (IAP)	Variety of assessments: planning report, seminars, milestone reports, technical defence, final report/thesis, participation in a project expo.
Industry-based learning (IBL)	Although there are variations, most IBL students are required to prepare a formal report, present to faculty and/or industry, and undertake a self-assessment against an internally developed learning benchmark.
Virtual Placement Project (VPP)	Job application: weight 10% (individual mark); online discussion forum entries and executive summary: weight 15% (individual mark); project outline: weight 15% (team mark); completed project and individual assignment: weight 40% (team mark 10%; individual mark 30%); student ePortfolio entry: weight 20% (individual mark).

The development and implementation of effective assessment methods for WIL programs are key issues in higher education, and respondents to the Universities Australia discussion paper (Universities Australia, 2008a, p. 9) noted the need for the 'the development of mechanisms for assessment and validation of work experience'. Kandlbinder (2007, p. 159) also notes '... this search for alternative forms of practice-based learning has changed how student performance is being assessed'. Respondents to this study reflected a general concern for *valid assessment of performance in the workplace* (Survey, SA) and included a specific emphasis on the need for *student reflection on their experiences and their mentoring by senior colleagues* (Survey, SA).

In summary, respondents highlighted five main concerns about assessment methods in WIL:

- maintenance of academic standards
- relevance and consistency of assessment processes

- responsibility for assessment
- what should be assessed when a student is on work placement
- processes by which this assessment is supported and managed.

There is indeed a range of assessment practices used in WIL programs and project work curricula, and there is an awareness of the need for innovative assessment (Bryan & Clegg, 2006). However, the concerns identified in this study warrant further investigation to ensure that assessment methods used in WIL programs encourage reflection and integration of theory and practice (Jorgensen & Howard, 2005, p. 1). The effective integration of WIL into curricula requires appropriate assessment methods that can be implemented within the constraints of resourcing and employer commitment and involvement (including the extent to which the assessment might require collaboration). It is important to note that the choice of method is greatly impacted by both the level of engagement of the employer partners and the availability of university WIL staff. Such issues impact not only on assessment, but also on many other WIL administrative issues, such as risk management and student supervision, which are discussed in other parts of this report. Ultimately, the assessment approaches adopted must be constructively aligned with WIL learning experiences as well as the professional program in which it is situated.

7.3.3 Evaluation and quality

Feedback on the quality of WIL programs was identified as an important aspect of continued curriculum improvement and development. As one respondent commented, *How do we know WIL is working – what do we want out of it?* (Survey, WA). Participants identified both formal and informal mechanisms for gathering feedback, as well as indicators of success. Formal feedback mechanisms include stakeholder pre- and post-surveys, evaluation forms and interviews. According to respondents, informal feedback is gathered mostly through stakeholder feedback: *When everybody's happy [they] share stories of insightful learning* (Survey, NSW). When asked to identify indicators of quality and success one respondent noted that *the university would say employment outcomes and the Course Experience Questionnaire* (Survey, WA). Respondents also mentioned specific indicators such as increased participation rates of students and employers; student enthusiasm and engagement; improved classroom interaction, grades, and completion rates; increased numbers of students returning to do further study; and increased numbers of employers requesting consultancies. Universities' engagement in WIL programs and the building of meaningful relationships with employers will enhance the quality of the learning experience and optimise students' whole of university experience.

7.4 Strategy 4: Resourcing WIL

Participants recognise that managing resources is important as WIL expands across different disciplines and professions. Participants suggested a variety of solutions already in place in some universities, or ideas that could be implemented across the sector. These suggestions are based on the expectation that university policy and approaches recognise coordination and supervision of WIL curriculum as a legitimate academic endeavour that is recognised and valued in the promotion process. For example, it is encouraging to observe that several universities have developed policies and approaches to ensure workload issues are recognised. The promotion system at Edith Cowan University accounts not only for good research and teaching feedback, but also for engagement with the community, and Griffith University has addressed workload concerns by recognising the additional and special nature of activities involved in managing WIL programs (see Appendix L).

One suggestion for managing resources found in the survey responses is to purposefully build the capacity of existing staff involved in WIL activities, both academic and administrative. According to respondents, two critical areas requiring improvement are:

- assessing students in the workplace
- managing interactions between universities and employers.

Participants commented that university staff, on-site supervisors and students all require skill enhancement in these areas. Linked to this suggestion is the idea that better promotion of the benefits of WIL would encourage more staff, students and employer to engage:

Staff need to embrace developmental challenge. Staff don't necessarily come to [WIL] en masse. [Need to provide] appropriate staff development and be available to support staff.

(University senior management interview, NT)

Another suggestion is the development of a range of support mechanisms to better enable facilitation of WIL. One way to alleviate functional issues related to workload is to divide the workload of training and administration between academic and administrative staff.

Appointment of [administrative] staff compared to academics – there needs to be a close relationship between the two because the workload is intensive. Training should be done by academic staff and administration done by professional staff. Perhaps, separate classification or category – practitioner trainer – career track for professional supervision.

(University senior management interview, QLD)

A further suggestion is to build and enhance internal and external networks. Collaborative links are seen as an important way to provide support and opportunities to share knowledge and practice among stakeholders. These networks can operate through websites, communities of practice, conferences and cross-university projects.

Employers identified time as a particular resourcing issue. They suggested that it would be helpful if universities could be more adaptable in terms of the timing and length of placements. The importance of flexibility in terms of engagement was recognised by a senior university manager in New South Wales, who suggested *having more flexibility across the year regarding when placement can be done*. In addition to making courses more flexible, one employer suggested that a *list of expectations, requirements for the students to meet during their time in the industry* (Employer focus group, VIC) would assist in minimising the time it takes to engage in WIL activity.

Recommendations were also made to increase the interaction of students with employers within the university classroom setting, and likewise for academics to consider time in the workplace to help build stronger networks and maintain currency. A university respondent (Survey, QLD) suggested that it *would help employers to persuade their organisation to host and supervise students if opportunities were made available for employers to become adjunct teachers*. This form of professional development could offer opportunities to the employer and university as well as contribute to improving the quality of the workplace experience for students.

Resourcing issues for students also include the pressures of time. As discussed earlier, students often juggle existing employment, family and study commitments whilst engaging in WIL, and universities and employers must provide access to adequate support for students:

Assessing what information the students require, when, and the most effective way of packaging and providing the information. Consider if the students have access to and the skills to use information communication technology.

(Survey, SA)

In addition to providing students with timely and appropriate information, participants suggested assistance with fuel costs plus financial support to offset loss of income would alleviate financial pressures on students. Of particular interest are the recommendations in the proposed National Internship Scheme (Universities Australia, 2007; 2008a) in relation to ensuring students can receive payment for their WIL experience, without having to do additional paid work at the same time.

Participants made several suggestions on ways the federal government could assist with issues of resourcing WIL, for example, providing ways to increase university engagement with business, professional groups, government agencies and community groups. Bradley, Noonan, Nugent and Scales (2008, p. 55) observe in their discussion paper that 'Australia has recognized engagement as an important component of university activity in its National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes'.

Government policy could be more positive and *put in place something that motivates industry to take on students* (University senior management interview, VIC). The federal government could also broaden its definition of WIL — *WIL seems to be a term DEST accepts in terms of applying credit. WIL is a broad umbrella that encompasses more types of activities but DEST has limited range of what is called WIL* (University senior management interview, VIC) — and work to *improve employer knowledge about WIL programs* (Survey, WA) by promoting the importance of WIL programs in the graduate workforce.

A Universities Australia report suggests a public subsidy for internships:

A truly national internships scheme may also require some element of wider public subsidy. Commonwealth wage subsidy schemes provide a precedent for public budget contribution, and could provide for wage supplementation to meet any gap between intern productivity and reasonable minimum wages. Corporate tax relief could offer equivalent benefit and was viewed as the easiest solution by the majority of stakeholder respondents.

(2008b, p. 11)

Participants also suggested that governments — state and federal — could be more sensitive to the link between WIL and recruitment: *Government [needs to come] to the realisation that we need internships to provide graduate workforce and fund accordingly* (University senior management interview, VIC) because it was felt that without adequate federal funding there was a concern that *WIL will be carried by the few committed academics and be half effective* (Survey, QLD).

Solutions to these resourcing issues can be found in improving staff capacity, building functional support mechanisms, enhancing networks, commitment to flexibility and support for students. It is important that WIL be seen as an integral part of teaching and learning and community engagement and that it be appropriately resourced.

8. COLLABORATIVE KNOWLEDGE BUILDING

Participants emphasised the importance of learning from others and having access to information about different approaches to WIL so they can be adopted or adapted where appropriate. It is apparent from the data that WIL staff can feel isolated within their own discipline, within their own university, and of course, when distance is a tyranny, trapped somewhat within their own state or region.

WA is isolated it is quicker to fly from Perth to Singapore than to Melbourne. That isolation is a big factor for WA.

(University senior management interview, WA)

WIL staff enjoy opportunities to meet and collaborate, both on a discipline basis and to learn broadly from other types of WIL practice. Seeing what others are doing is invaluable, especially when the resources and processes involved in different programs are identified.

Educational activities that integrate theoretical learning with its application in the workplace ... should provide a meaningful experience of the workplace application that is intentional, organized and recognized by the institution, in order to secure learning outcomes for the student that are both transferable and applied.

(Survey, WA)

Developing internal communication and support structures across different disciplines and faculties was identified as an integral element for academic and professional staff for improving and sharing practice.

This also extended to networking with colleagues from other universities:

... more financial support for academics to network at national and international [level]. In my experience that is the most useful thing, and I often pick up ideas from hearing what others are doing in completely different contexts from my own discipline.

(Survey, QLD)

Participants agreed that online resources would be an important way of improving collaborative knowledge building and the dissemination. Many mentioned having a common and central website where staff would have access to a wide variety of information including an online refereed journal and a database of resources.

In this regard ACEN is actively engaged in developing communication processes and tools that will enable stakeholders to contribute experiences and research in a shared space. Since the commencement of the project, ACEN's website has undergone further development to improve access to resources and other information, including the vignettes collected as part of this study. Other approaches that ACEN could consider to improve communication with key stakeholders are described in the ACEN communication strategy (see Table 8.1).

The audience for the communication strategy includes ACEN Executive and Advisory Group, university WIL staff, university senior management, government, employers and the professions, and students. The aim of the strategy is to generate increased understanding of stakeholder needs and to ensure all stakeholders have the opportunity to contribute to, and benefit from, a range of communication methods that will inform their ongoing involvement in WIL in Australia.

Table 8.1: ACEN communication strategy

Stakeholder/ audience	Goal	Method	Timing	Frequency/ year
ACEN Executive and Advisory Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enable identification of challenges in the area of WIL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> meetings of the executive to discuss progress and challenges facing the sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every second month 	6
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide formal recognition of the activities of ACEN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> regular communication with executive and advisory to facilitate information sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> monthly 	2
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identification of specific reports to be commissioned to explore stakeholder issues, through stakeholder surveys etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> as appropriate 	NA
University WIL staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> share knowledge and experiences of members including practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> web-based newsletter: information on matters of interest regarding WIL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> monthly 	12
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify and collectively respond to challenges facing the sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> web blog: WIL topics for members to dialogue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> topics updated monthly 	12
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> promote involvement through state ACEN partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> vignettes: members talk about their WIL experience/practice around suggested themes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> themes update monthly based on the topics arising through the blog 	12
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enhance leadership capacity in WIL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conferences that include professional development opportunities for all stakeholder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> annually 	1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> improved practice and pedagogy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> press release to Campus Review and Australian Higher Ed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> as appropriate 	2
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> database of project management tools, an annotated bibliography and expert contacts list 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ongoing 	NA
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> facilitation of research hubs on defined WIL practice and pedagogy areas of interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ongoing 	

Stakeholder/ audience	Goal	Method	Timing	Frequency/ year
University senior management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> highlight and maintain WIL as an important issue in higher education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> invite Universities Australia representatives to respond to key issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> as appropriate 	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> institutional support for a range of WIL experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conferences that include professional development opportunities for all stakeholders and sharing of the achievements and challenges of WIL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> annually 	1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> institutional support for support of WIL staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> include senior management on the Advisory Group for ACEN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> triennially 	1/3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide forum for sharing of responses to WIL issues such as workload, ranges of WIL experiences etc. 		N/A
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> highlight and maintain WIL as an important issue in higher education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> send an invitation to government representatives to respond to key issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> as appropriate 	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> strong support in terms of appropriate funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure inclusion in conferences that include professional development opportunities for all stakeholders and sharing of the achievements and challenges of WIL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> annually 	1
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> include on the Advisory Group for ACEN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> triennially 	1/3
Employers and the professions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> facilitate connection with other stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> web-based newsletter: information on matters of interest regarding WIL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> monthly 	12
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> share experiences, suggestions and feedback collectively to respond to challenges facing employers and professions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> web blog: WIL topics for members to dialogue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> topics updated monthly 	12

Stakeholder/ audience	Goal	Method	Timing	Frequency/ year
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> increase understanding of employer perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> vignettes: members talk about their WIL experience/practice around suggested themes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> themes update monthly based on the topics arising through the blog 	12
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> development of strong sustainable partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conferences that include professional development opportunities for all stakeholders and sharing of the achievements and challenges of WIL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> annually 	1
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> web-based newsletter: information on matters of interest regarding WIL and sharing of WIL opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> monthly 	12
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> share experiences, suggestions and feedback collectively to respond to challenges facing students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> vignettes: members talk about their WIL experience/practice around suggested themes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> themes update monthly based on the topics arising through the blog 	12

This project is a contribution towards developing a sector-wide approach to collaborative knowledge building and the dissemination of ideas, good practice examples, information and resources. The ACEN communication strategy provides a mechanism for sharing and promoting quality WIL practice. ACEN has agreed to assume responsibility for the ongoing development of this strategy and work with its national executive and state groups towards the advancing of partnerships in a range of WIL experiences.

9. FRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE WIL PROJECTS

Introduction

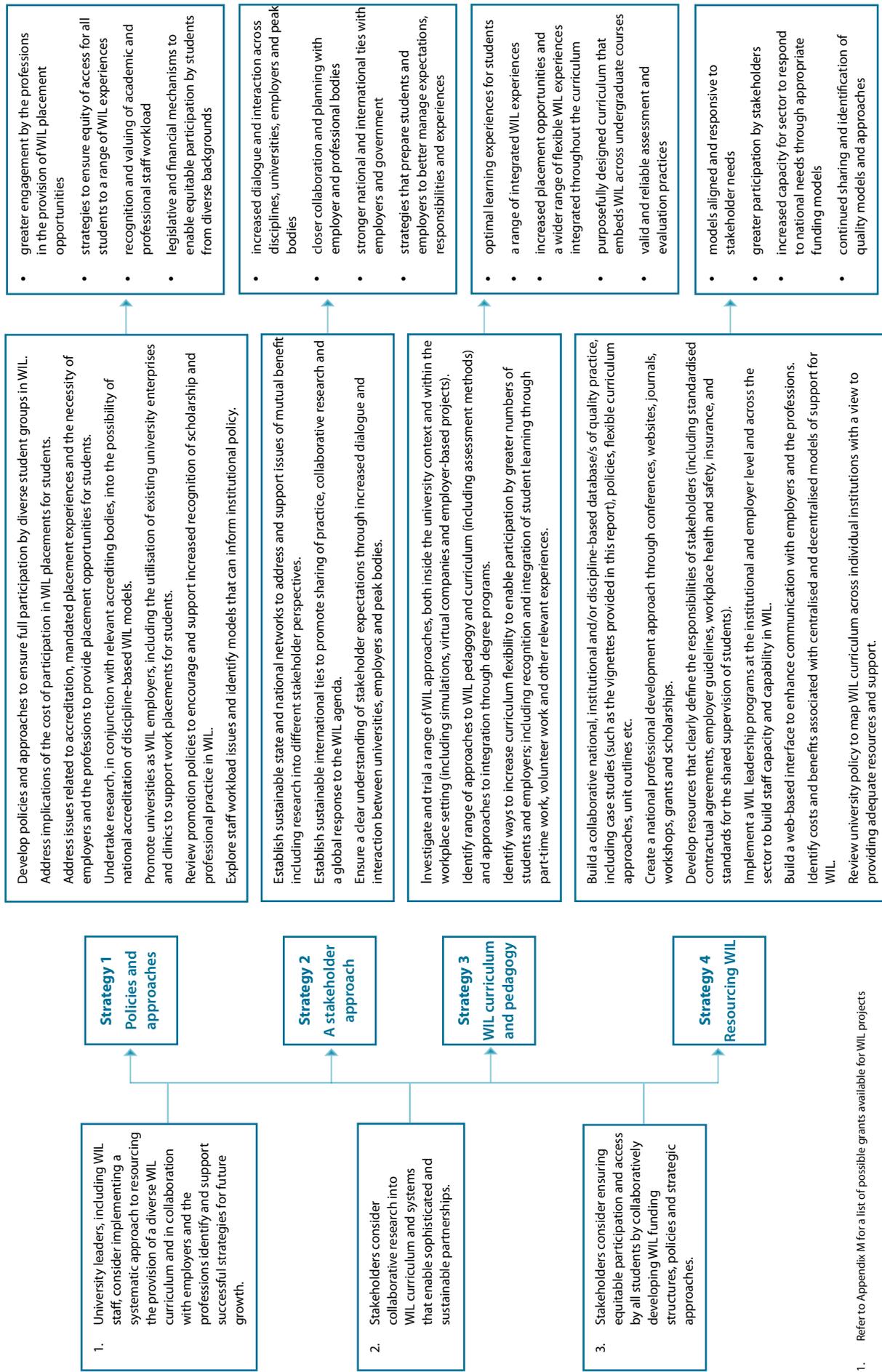
A key objective of this project was to develop a national framework for future initiatives that was constructed from participants' contributions and reflects current thinking in the field but still recognises the need for future work and research in the area. This framework identifies ways in which ACEN members and university staff who lead and manage WIL activities may work as a communities of practice to develop resources and practices that will enable the sector to collectively respond to the rapidly changing demands and complex issues surrounding the implementation of WIL programs from a teaching and learning and administrative perspective.

The framework is based on the premise that success of future initiatives can only be achieved through ongoing collaboration between stakeholders, including university staff, students, employers and the professions, and government. This will require a shared understanding of stakeholder perspectives and the development of sophisticated and mutually beneficial partnerships.

Recommendations to enhance WIL

Strategies to enhance WIL

Priority actions to enhance WIL



1. Refer to Appendix M for a list of possible grants available for WIL projects

10. CONCLUSION

The WIL Report makes an important contribution to an increased understanding of the challenges and issues confronting stakeholders engaged in providing quality WIL experiences. It gives voice to participants who consistently reported the positive benefits of WIL, and highlights the importance of strong partnerships between stakeholders to facilitate effective WIL outcomes. The findings highlight the extent of goodwill amongst stakeholders for collaborative and inclusive sector-wide sharing of initiatives, especially in relation to curriculum design, assessment and appropriate resourcing. In this study, WIL — work integrated learning — is interpreted as an umbrella term for a range of approaches and strategies that integrate theory with the practice of work within a purposefully designed curriculum, and acknowledges the plethora of terms used to describe WIL.

Whilst much of the feedback provided by participants related to WIL as ‘placement’, a range of other real-world learning experiences, both external and internal to the university, were discussed. The study also draws attention to equity issues in relation to student participation and identifies some of the barriers that make participation difficult.

Finally, the study provides practical resources and mechanisms for successful implementation of WIL curriculum, including vignettes of current practice across diverse discipline areas, a communication plan for collaborative knowledge building, and a framework that defines areas for further exploration and provides practical guidelines for investigation. This framework details opportunities for the sector to identify partnerships and enhance current practice that can be used across disciplines and universities to foster creative interdisciplinary engagement with WIL.

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APPENDIX A: LIST OF VIGNETTES

Vignettes

The following vignettes are available on ACEN website www.acen.edu.au

University	Name	Surname	Discipline	Title
Charles Darwin University	Lorraine	Connell	Education	Teacher Education Professional Experience
Curtin University of Technology	Trevor	Goddard	Occupational Therapy	Occupational Therapy Abroad: International interdisciplinary service learning clinical placements
	Nigel	Gribble		
Edith Cowan University	Richard	Brightwell	Paramedic	The production of undergraduate and graduate paramedic degree programs, a university and industry partnership
Flinders University	John	Harris	Multi disciplinary	Trends in Work Integrated Learning
Griffith University	Merrelyn	Bates	Criminology	Professional Practice In Criminology and Criminal Justice
Griffith University	Barry	Bell	Business	A WIL framework for a resource limited environment
Griffith University	Kenneth	Bennett	Business	International Business Internship/ Practicum
Griffith University	Jennifer	Cartmel	Human Services	Field Placements in Human Services — undergraduate and postgraduate
	Jane	Thomson		
	Vicki	Fuller		
Griffith University	Susan	Forde	Journalism	Journalism internships
	Michael	Meadows		
Griffith University	Carol-joy	Patrick	Engineering	Industrial Affiliates Program (IAP)
Griffith University	Zoe	Rathus	Law	Legal Clinic and Advanced Family Law Clinic (AFLC)
Griffith University	Greg	Reddan	Exercise Science	Exercise Science Field Project
Griffith University	Lynne	Weathered	Education/Law	Griffith University Innocence Project
Monash University	Ian	Martin	Business	Bachelor of Business Systems Cooperative Education Program
Queensland University of Technology	Christy	Collis	Creative Industries	Creative Industries Transitions to New Professional Environments Program: ('CI Transitions')
Queensland University of Technology	Jill	Franz	Design, Urban Development and Engineering	Work Integrated Learning (WIL) where students undertake a curriculum based work placement as a formal unit or units in their course
Queensland University of Technology	Ingrid	Larkin	Business	Internships in Advertising, Marketing and Public Relations

University	Name	Surname	Discipline	Title
Queensland University of Technology	Robyn	Nash	Health	Work-integrated learning in Health
Queensland University of Technology	Melinda	Shirley	Law	Virtual Placement Project (VPP)
	Iyla	Davies		
	Tina	Cockburn		
Queensland University of Technology	Andrew	Paltridge	Business	Business Advantage Program
	Joanne	Venturato		
RMIT	Alan	Montague	Business	Work Integrated Learning Courses in the Bachelor of Business (Management)
Swinburne University of Technology	Nicolette	Lee	Design	Design Centre, Honours and Masters Program at the Faculty of Design
	Mark	Strachan		
Swinburne University of Technology	Nicolette	Lee	Multi disciplinary	Final Year Experience: Major projects for all final year undergraduate students
	Maryanne	Mooney		
Swinburne University of Technology	Maryanne	Mooney	Multi disciplinary	Professional Employment Program
	Sebastian	Ng		
Swinburne University of Technology	Maryanne	Mooney	Multi disciplinary	Careers in the Curriculum
	Tonya	Wimhurst		
Swinburne University of Technology	Cathy	Pocknee	Multi disciplinary	Industry-Based Learning (IBL)
Swinburne University of Technology	Karen	Pomeranz	Multi disciplinary	There's more than one way to net a barramundi!
University of Gloucestershire	James Garo	Derounian	Multi disciplinary	Study of live consultative and deliberative projects
University of New England	Robyn	Muldoon	Multi disciplinary	The New England Award
Victoria University	Fiona	Henderson	Business	Assessment support: A suite of manager interviews (some bi-lingual) on DVD to model and develop 'learning in the workplace' skills
	Alan	McWilliams		

APPENDIX B: PROJECT PROPOSAL SUMMARY

ACEN WIL DBI proposal summary

Project leaders

Ms Carol-joy Patrick (Griffith University)

Dr Deborah Peach (Queensland University of Technology)

Ms Catherine Pocknee (Swinburne University of Technology)

Aim

The aim of this project is to undertake the first large scale scoping study of work integrated learning (WIL) curriculum in contemporary Australian higher education in order to improve the educational experience of students across the sector. The project will identify, examine and map key issues related to work integrated learning curriculum and develop a framework for future projects that outlines a systematic approach to supporting good practice across the higher education sector.

Project outcomes and deliverables

The scoping project will:

1. Identify key stakeholders and provide mechanisms by which they can identify and prioritise the key challenges and issues that currently face the sector.
2. Develop a national framework for future projects that will enable members of ACEN to work as a community of practice to develop resources and practices that will enable the sector to collectively respond to key challenges and issues as identified by the sector and key stakeholders, including students.
3. Develop an ACEN-based, sector-wide communications structure for collaborative knowledge building and embedded dissemination of ideas, good practice examples, information and resources. A website database will also be developed, in accordance with the Resource Identification and Networking (RIN) requirements, to post examples of best practice in WIL curriculum.
4. Prepare recommendations and a Phase 2 project plan that details key initiatives and research participants, timelines and project outcomes (including dissemination and evaluation strategies).

Host institutions

The host institutions, Griffith University, Queensland University of Technology and Swinburne University of Technology, are committed to the principles of cross-university mentoring, capacity building, leadership and knowledge building. They agree to co-manage the scoping project and to represent the diverse interests of all ACEN stakeholders using a participatory and empowerment model of evaluation and dissemination. The host institutions are committed to representing the broader interests of ACEN and have been nominated because they have:

- university senior management support, demonstrated by large internally funded projects for work integrated learning curriculum in their institutions
- an established whole-of-university approach to work integrated learning curriculum
- established, long-term relationships with industry, government and peak bodies
- experienced Carrick mentors including Deborah Southwell (QUT), Lyn Simpson (QUT), Ros McCulloch (QUT) and Georgia Smeal (QUT)
- a long-term and demonstrated commitment to ACEN and work integrated learning curriculum

A APPENDIX C: ALTC REQUESTED CHANGES TO THE PROJECT'S OBJECTIVES

Communication regarding the change to the objectives of the project

Date	Medium	To	From	Message
18/02/2008	Email	Dr D. Peach	Dr E. McDonald	Highlighted the preference for project to produce areas of enhancement and future development.
05/03/2008	Email	Ms F. Webb	Ms N. Baker	Required the outcomes to be less specific than a project plan or a list of future projects.
15/05/08	Interim report 2	Project team	ALTC	In a meeting in Sydney with the Carrick Institute the project team provided an update on the current progress of the project. The team were informed by the Carrick Institute that it is important to identify the audience, i.e. the practitioner, before commencing the final report and that the framework and exemplars should be framed for this particular audience. It was also highlighted that the framework would identify areas for further exploration as opposed to discrete projects. The discussions clarified that the final objective of the project (prepare recommendations and a Phase 2 project plan that details key initiatives and research participants, timelines, and project outcomes (including dissemination and evaluation strategies) would be amended to incorporate recommendations and the way forward and that the Phase 2 project plan would no longer be required.

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APPENDIX D: METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

To scope WIL nationally, the project used participatory action research methodology. The basic action research model consists of four elements: plan, act, observe and reflect (Ballantyne, Bruce, & Packer, 1995; Costello, 2003; Jones, 2006; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006). The project was characterised by collaboration among team members and project stakeholders in an iterative, cyclical process of data gathering, review and reflection. This is demonstrated in the approaches to data collection where, as discussed below, revisions were made to instruments in response to newly gained insights.

Ethics approval

Ethics approval was granted for all of the project's data collection tools by Griffith University on 16 August 2007. As part of the ethics approval, no participant is identified in this report without their full knowledge and consent.

Literature review

Integrated throughout the report was a literature review that was undertaken on the targeted topics of: government policy, WIL curriculum and pedagogy, assessment, overseas and Australian-based practice, student engagement, models of delivery, resourcing, definition, scoping studies, participatory action research, employer and community engagement, quality, placement availability and scheduling, employability skills and equity. Literature was sourced from relevant books, journals, websites, databases, and university communiqués and policy documents. The scope of the review was limited to publications from 1998 to 2008, with a few key exceptions.

Dissemination

Dissemination of draft findings has been undertaken throughout this project. The values of inclusiveness, diversity, long-term change, collaboration and excellence (McKenzie, Alexander, Harper, & Anderson, 2005; Southwell et al., 2005) were promoted in the design and conduct of the study. Several strategies were used to promote the uptake of innovative practices. These included: sponsoring and participating in the state-based ACEN events, QUT teaching and learning conferences, a Swinburne industry breakfast, the 2008 HERDSA conference, and making resources, documents and information available through the ALTC Exchange (formally the Carrick Exchange) and the ACEN website; support for collaborative research papers; and support for dissemination of project outcomes and future directions at the ACEN/WACE Asia Pacific Conference.

Data collection

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used for this project in order to capture data from the diverse group of WIL stakeholders. The data collection took place between September 2007 and April 2008 coinciding with WIL-themed state-based events.

Participants

Government

The Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet have indicated their interest in the outcomes of this report. This demonstrates the potential importance of this agenda for the Prime Minister's Office.

University and employer communities

University staff and students and employer representatives were identified and selected via the partnering institutions, ACEN state-based events, and events held at Queensland University of Technology and Swinburne University of Technology.

Strategies

Government

The government voice was accessed via a review of media releases, legislation, government policy, government websites, and ongoing communication.

University and employer communities

Given time and financial constraints, four data collection strategies were adopted early in the project: interviews, focus group discussions, large group activities and a survey. Table 4.2 summarises participation strategies in data gathering by participant type.

Curriculum vignettes

A series of curriculum vignettes (case studies) were developed by practitioners and published on the ALTC Exchange and the ACEN website. A standardised vignette template and instructions were developed, and participants were asked to complete the template using the associated instructions. A variety of completed examples were provided to participants to act as a model or guide. The vignette participants (n=30) were purposefully recruited from presenters at state-based symposia, by practitioner referral at state-based symposia and meetings, the 2008 HERDSA conference, and by open recruitment via a national ACEN email. The vignettes were developed to inform participants of current practice across the sector.

Vignette template

Guide

Our aim is to gather and document current practice in a variety of traditional and non-traditional areas of work integrated learning or work placement programs.

This document is divided up into two parts. There is a table with summary information at the start (please keep responses brief) and then, in the body of the document, you are able to tell your story.

We ask that you limit your responses in the body of the document to 150–300 words per question. If possible, we would like you to include a photo of yourself and your students that is copyright free because we would like to publish this information on the ACEN website and ALTC Exchange.

Host university	State name of your institution or employer	Please insert your photo here
Date submitted	Month, year	
Contact person	The name of the person who answers general inquiries about your particular WIL initiative email and/or other contact details (This is not a compulsory area)	

Vignette title and details State title of work integrated learning vignette i.e. Industry-based learning. Type of initiative i.e. Workplace projects, length of time — F/T, 6 month or 12 months and course i.e. undergraduate or graduate	
Discipline State name i.e. engineering, nursing, IT, multidisciplinary etc.	
Employment sector Specify industry, education, health or government etc.	
Student numbers Average number of students involved per year i.e. 20–30, 300+	
Optional/compulsory Credit bearing? Specify whether the work integrated learning initiative or program is optional or compulsory for students and whether it is credit bearing into a degree program	
Assessment Specify type of assessment i.e. formal report, journal, presentation to industry etc.	
Payment Please give insight into the issue of payment for the student. For example, is a payment given to the student or institute where they are employed or undertaking a real world learning task? Or, is student paid (70% of graduate income), voluntary, tax free scholarships \$28,000 – \$32,000	
Number of staff involved Specify numbers of staff involved in work integrated learning initiative or programs i.e. 5 academic staff, 10 work place mentors	
Weblink Some readers may like to access further information	
Key words List key search words. These keywords are important because they will be used for searching the ALTC Exchange website.	

In the next section, you are able to tell your story. We are hoping to obtain an insight into your program or initiative; and, what makes it special and interesting. We want to share your experiences with other practitioners via the ALTC Exchange and ACEN websites.

Overview

You may wish to include here information or detail that has not been covered in the table. You may like to specify the period of time work integrated learning initiative or program has been running and the reasons why you are running such a placement program.

Please note that the overview is important because it will be the description that first appears to web users on the ALTC Exchange and the ACEN website.

Structure of program

Why do you run the program the way you do?

Please outline the particular model you use and the important way/s in which your employers, students and/or university intrinsically benefit from the work placement, i.e. how employers were able to trial potential employees, how students gained insight into whether this was a suitable career for them or universities were able to demonstrate that it was part of their community engagement role.

Please do not include information already covered.

Special features

What do you do really well?

Please outline the way/s your program has been successful. For example, you may take a great deal of time in matching students and employers or map your program to graduate attributes. You may provide evidence of what you do well — this could include data or quotes, feedback, awards, etc.

Please do not include information already covered.

Future work

What improvements would you like to make?

Please outline some of the difficulties you have faced and the solutions you found. For example, you instituted a workshop whereby students were able to drop in once a week to discuss any problems they encountered in the workplace. Do you have a long-term plan for work placements? Where do you see your work placement programs heading?

Please do not include information already covered.

Additional insights

You may include any comments that you feel were important but were not requested.

Analysis and use of data

As part of the project's action research cycle, the team reflected on the scoping research data as it was collected and analysed. Basic descriptive data about research participants were obtained via the data collection strategies (see above) to identify their role in WIL.

To ensure consistency and simplify sharing of data, the project team used computer assisted qualitative data analysis. NVIVO 7, a qualitative software package, is a useful tool in qualitative research because it enables the management, analysis and interpretation of large amounts of data. It is especially useful in team-based research because it enables the team to share the analysis and codes easily, while maintaining a master copy in a central repository to minimise the chance of data loss.

All data were entered into the program and coded according to emerging themes identified in the literature, surveys, interviews and focus groups. The project officers were primarily responsible for coding. They maintained consistency of coding by creating emergent categories that they reviewed each week. The project leaders guided the grouping of categories into major themes represented in this report.

The project team vigorously engaged with the coded data and raw data (notes, transcripts and surveys) in the preparation of this report. The process was one of analysis, review, comment, discussion and re-analysis, moving iteratively towards a broad understanding of the scope of WIL in Australia. The project team sought to manage any bias by carefully analysing data and double checking trends via NVIVO. Preliminary findings were also discussed with the peers, colleagues, stakeholders and the project reference group to check for bias.

These approaches allowed the project team to draw conclusions with confidence that they fairly represented the views of the participants as gained from the four data collection strategies.

Given the length constraint of this report, generalisations are supported by a single comment or a cluster of comments that typify the participant response. To readily differentiate these from quotations from the scholarly literature, the direct comments derived from the data collection strategies are italicised. More extended extracts are provided in the vignettes and these can be accessed on the ACEN website: www.acen.edu.au.

Interviews

Face-to-face interviews (approximately 1 hour each) were conducted with senior management from 21 universities across Australia as well as with representatives from four national peak bodies. Questions were developed from themes identified in the submission and refined in response to the literature review. All interviewees responded to the same set of questions. University senior management interview participants were selected from universities that were known within the sector for demonstrating a strong engagement in WIL. Industry participants were selected from peak bodies that were representative of a broad range of industries. Interviews were conducted by a member of the project team. If those interviewed agreed, interviews were digitally recorded (8 of 29). For those not recorded, the interviewer made notes. The recorded interviews were not transcribed, but the interviewer compiled notes and quotations from recordings. Neither the transcripts nor the notes were returned as participants are not directly identified in the report.

Data collection tools: Interviews

University senior management interview

1. Could you tell us a little about your role within the university and how that role relates to work integrated learning?
2. How does your university define WIL?
3. What types of programs do you run within the university?
4. Do you have strategies for extending or promoting WIL in your university? If so how?
5. Do you have a university-wide standpoint on WIL and does that articulate into university policy?
6. What do you think are your university's key challenges in the field of WIL?
7. What do you think are the key agenda items surrounding WIL in WA, nationally and internationally?
8. (Prompt) Have you got suggestions on how these could be addressed?
9. What policies and structures do you think the government needs to put in place to promote the uptake of WIL across Australia?
10. What other issues surrounding WIL do you feel need further exploration?

Interview questions — partners

These questions are targeted to those employer representatives that have participated in WIL.

1. Why do you participate in university placement programs?
 - Assist in recruitment
 - Contribute to the student learning
 - Organisational policy — engaging with students
 - Access to skill base not found in your organisation
 - Cost effective resource for the organisation
 - Developing links to the university
2. Does/did the placement achieve these outcomes for your organisation?
 - Assist in recruitment
 - Contribute to the student learning
 - Organisational policy — engaging with students
 - Cost effective resource for the organisation
 - Developing links to the university
 - Research opportunities
3. What might prevent you from participating in the placement program?
 - Available space
 - Available time to supervise
 - Structure of the program
 - Not having an appropriate activity for the student
 - Cost
4. What changes, if any, would improve your experience with a placement program?
 - Increased placement time
 - Less paper work
 - More university interactions
 - More support from the university
 - Training/information sessions on supervision
5. In your opinion how important is the WIL experience for university graduates for your field? Would this WIL experience on a resume impact a graduate's chances for employment with you?
6. Do you think the placement helped students put into practice strategies they had learned in class? How?
7. Do you see an alignment between what students are taught in university and what is required of them in employment?
8. The practicum experience is supposed to be an authentic learning experience. Was it? Why?
9. Are you involved with the university/universities in other capacity?
 - Career fairs
 - Guest lecturing
 - Research
 - Advisory board/reference group
 - Other
10. How would you like to be involved with universities? In what capacity?

Peak body interview questions

1. What is the primary role of your organisation?
2. How many members do you represent?
3. Are you familiar with student placement programs available through the universities? Are they visible? What would make them more so?
4. Is there a relationship between skills shortages and your interest in WIL as a way of addressing this issue?

5. How important do you think the placement programs are in higher education?
6. How important are they to your employer?
7. What interactions do you think are required with employers and to ensure appropriate support for WIL?
8. What role should employers play in building WIL in Australia?
9. Have you heard of the Australian Collaborative Education Network?
10. Would you like more information about work integrated learning in your state?
11. How would you like to be informed about opportunities in work integrated learning?

Accrediting body Interview

1. What is the primary role of your organisation?
2. What is the role of your organisation in relation to tertiary education and in relation to accreditation of university programs in particular?
3. How important do you think the placement programs are in higher education?
4. How important are they to your industry?
5. What drives your decisions to include the work experience component of your accreditation requirements?
6. Can you identify certain types of work experience which seem to have better professional outcomes?
7. Do you consider that your association and tertiary institutions have sufficient dialogue regarding the role of work experience in programs of study? What are the barriers/enablers for dialogue?
8. Should universities be charged by a placement provider?
9. How do you decide the appropriate length of time for this experience?
10. What issues/challenges do you face in defining the accreditation standards?
11. Is there any requirement for certain quality and standard of the experience?
12. Have you heard of the Australian Collaborative Education Network?

Focus group discussions

Focus groups (approximately 1 hour per discussion) were conducted with university staff, students and employers. Questions were developed from themes identified for the submission and refined in response to the literature review and key issues identified via early state-based symposia. University staff participants were selected as participants on the basis of their extensive background in coordinating WIL programs. The selection of one university staff focus group in Victoria was based on staff experience with international students in WIL programs. Participants in student focus group were recruited from universities through their involvement in state-based symposia. An industry focus group breakfast was held in Victoria and participants were recruited by Swinburne Industry Solutions. Focus groups were facilitated by project directors from the project team. If those interviewed agreed, focus groups were digitally recorded (5 of 7). For those not recorded, the facilitator made notes. With one exception (the staff focus group regarding international students) the recorded focus groups were not transcribed, but the facilitator compiled notes and quotations from recordings.

Data collection tools: Focus group discussions

Student focus group questions

The university student focus group will be conducted in line with the ethics permission requirements consisting of:

- Welcome
- Researcher/facilitator brief
- Informed consent
- Sign consent form

Fill in demographic questionnaire (option to be discussed with team)

Introduction

Each student to introduce themselves to the rest of the group and briefly outline the type of placement they are undertaking. They will need to identify:

- their course and university
- the type of placement they are undertaking
- how long they have been there
- possible demographic questions.

Please refer to draft attached with informed consent document further on in this paper.

The facilitator questions and probes

1. Why did you undertake a placement?
 - Did you want a break for uni?
 - Did you think you needed the experience?
 - Tell me about the recruitment and placement process?
 - How did you hear about it?
 - Was it competitive?
 - Did you have to apply?
 - What did you have to do?
 - Was it fair?
 - Were you satisfied with the process?
 - Why did you follow it through?
2. What did you hope to gain out of your placement?
 - Graduate placement
 - Money
 - Experience
 - Good way to learn

3. While you are on placement do you have much contact the university?
 - Who with? (Academic? Professional? How were you contacted? Do you feel it's the right type of contact?)
 - Is there enough contact?
 - Do you use the knowledge you have gained at uni in your workplace? ... or
 - How close is what you learn at uni to what you learn on placement?
4. What might prevent you from participating in the classroom engagement and/or placement/experience program?
 - Available space
 - Available time to supervise
 - Structure of the program
 - Not having an appropriate activity for the student
 - Cost
 - Other
5. What changes, if any, would improve your experience with a placement/experience program?
 - Increased placement time
 - Less paper work
 - More university interactions
 - More support from the university
 - Training/information sessions on supervision
6. What do you consider were the learning outcomes from your experience of placement/experience programs?
7. Does the university involve you in classroom learning for the student and do you consider this work integrated learning?
8. Are you involved with the university/universities in other capacity?
 - Career fairs
 - Guest lecturing
 - Research
 - Advisory board/reference group
 - Other
9. How would you like to be involved with universities? In what capacity?

Additional questions after review of the data

Are there particular placement models or lengths that work best for you as an employer?

What types of experience do you think are valid classroom experiences that replicate the world of work?

Have you achieved other outcomes, such as research collaborations, from being involved in work placements or classroom engagement?

Large group activities

The various large group activities provided the project team with access to input from all key stakeholder groups as identified in the project proposal and planning documentation. These stakeholder groups are described in Section 4.2.

The approach used to collect data differed slightly with each event. However, each event began with a presentation on the project's purposes followed by an open discussion with the participants. These activities were conducted at ACEN symposia, QUT conferences, meetings and a Swinburne breakfast: see Appendix E for details. The state-based ACEN symposia and meetings, as well as the primary source of data, provided access to participants interested in WIL and enabled network building and engagement.

Data collection tools: Large group activities

Butcher's paper lunch time activity — NSW Symposium

1. What aspects of WIL should be researched in the future?
2. What can ACEN do for you? How can we keep you connected?
3. What questions should we be asking during our national scoping study?

Group activity — Clinical Legal Conference

1. Do you think there are issues about WIL that are specific to Clinical Legal Education?
2. Do you have suggested solutions to these?

Employer — large group activity

Name:

Organisation:

Role:

Primary business of your organisation (e.g. Engineering):

Discussion questions

1. In your opinion how important is the work integrated learning (WIL) experience for university graduates for your field? Would this WIL experience on a resume impact a graduate's chances for employment with you?
2. What would or does motivate you to participate in university placement/experience programs?
3. What would or does prevent you from participating in the classroom engagement and/or placement/experience program?
4. As an employer what do you think is your role in WIL?
5. What recommendations can you make that would enable universities to engage you in WIL experiences?
6. What actions would you recommend to build bridges between the universities and employers?
7. What do you want tell us about the WIL agenda?

Survey

A survey was undertaken prior to each state-based symposium or meeting to capture demographic information as well as participants' perspectives of the key challenges and issues resulting from their involvement in WIL. Survey data were initially obtained entirely via open-ended responses. As the team reviewed the survey instruments for effectiveness and clarity, questions were modified into multiple-choice formats as categories of responses emerged. In most cases, survey respondents had the opportunity to provide a new response if the multiple choices did not satisfy their intended response to the item.

Preliminary analysis of data from the pre-symposia survey was conducted and findings were presented at state-based event. This method was adopted to promote greater participant engagement in symposium-based activities and to further enhance the cyclical process of data gathering, review and reflection.

Data collection tools: Survey

University pre-symposium survey

Part A

- A1. Surname
- A2. First name
- A3. Email address
- A4. Position title
- A5. Institution
- A6. Name of department
- A7. Are you currently a member of the Australian Collaborative Education Network (ACEN)?

Part B

- B1. What is your discipline (e.g. nursing, engineering, education)?
- B2. What is your role in the context of work integrated learning (WIL)?
- B3. How long have you been in this role and/or involved with WIL?
- B4. What specific labels are given to WIL in your area/institution?
- B5. What does WIL mean to you?
- B6. Who (in terms of leadership role such as VC, PVC, Director, Dean, etc.) are the significant sponsors and supporters of WIL in your institution?
- B7. What are the desired outcomes that these significant sponsors and supporters of WIL expect from WIL initiatives in your institution?
- B8. List below in order, the top 5 'hot issues' that you see arising from the implementation of WIL in your area/institution:
 - B8.a Hot issue #1
 - B8.b Hot issue #2
 - B8.c Hot issue #3
 - B8.d Hot issue #4
 - B8.e Hot issue #5
- B9. What challenges do students face in participating in WIL?
- B10. How could the WIL experience in your area/institution be improved to better meet students' learning needs?
- B11. How do you know that WIL activities/programs in your area/institution are successful?
- B12. How do you currently keep up to date with WIL activity in both your institution and more broadly?
- B13. What kinds of initiatives do you think should be resourced as future WIL projects?
- B14. How can future communication and networking be developed in the interests of growing and improving WIL in Australia?

Student survey

1. Please specify your gender:
 - A. Male
 - B. Female
2. Please specify the age group to in which you belong:
 - A. under 20 years of age
 - B. between 20 and 29 years of age
 - C. between 30 and 39 years of age
 - D. between 40 and 49 years of age
 - E. 50+ years of age
3. To which discipline area do you primarily belong?
4. Please specify your work placement location (either present or past):
 - Industry
 - University
 - Community organisation
 - Government sector
 - Other
5. In my program/degree, completing a work placement is:
 - A. a compulsory course to complete my degree
 - B. a mandatory requirement that is not a course but must be completed as a part of my degree (e.g. 120 hours of work experience)
 - C. a voluntary option
 - D. not applicable
6. Is your work placement credited to your program/degree?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No (please move on to Question 8)
7. How many credit points is your work placement?
 - A. 0CP
 - B. 5CP
 - C. 10CP
 - D. 20CP
 - E. 30CP
 - F. 40CP
 - G. Other
8. Is your work placement in a paid or unpaid capacity?
 - A. Paid
 - B. Unpaid
9. How many hours in total did/will you spend on work placement?
 - A. 0–20 hours
 - B. 21–40 hours
 - C. 41–100 hours
 - D. 101–200 hours
 - E. 201–400 hours
 - F. 400+ hours
10. In addition to your university studies do you have paid employment?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No

11. How many hours per week do you work in paid employment in addition to your university studies?
- 1–5
 - 6–10
 - 10–20
 - 20+
 - full time
 - not applicable
12. At the start of your university work placement, what did you hope to gain? (Multiple selections allowed)
- Employment opportunities
 - Employable skills e.g. communication, team, problem solving skills
 - Networks for future employment
 - Real world experience
 - Improved learning opportunities
 - Good grades
 - Other
13. How well has your current/recent work placement met your overall expectations?
- | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|---|---|--------------------------|---|-----|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| | Did not meet my expectations | | | Exceeded my expectations | | |
14. How could your current/recent work placement be improved to meet your learning needs? Please outline ideas briefly.
15. University staff have identified a number of challenges faced by students in participating in work placements. From your perspective as a student rate the following challenges on how they impact you.
- | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|-------|-----|
| 15a | The challenge of managing several commitments i.e. family, university, work, etc. while on university work placement | | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| | Low | | | | Highs | |
| 15b | The challenge of obtaining an appropriate placement for my discipline | | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| | Low | | | | Highs | |
| 15c | The challenge of insufficient university support | | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| | Low | | | | Highs | |
| 15d | The challenge of applying the theory learnt at university in the workplace | | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| | Low | | | | Highs | |
| 15e | The challenge of managing the transition from university to work | | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| | Low | | | | Highs | |
| 15f | The challenge of an inappropriate/unhelpful workplace experience | | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| | Low | | | | Highs | |
| 15g | The challenge of the economic costs associated with work placement | | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| | Low | | | | Highs | |
| 15h | The challenge of the additional demands on my time | | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |
| | Low | | | | Highs | |
16. Do you have any comments that we may include as quotes in our study on your experience of work placement?

A APPENDIX E: SYMPOSIA AND EVENTS

Symposia and other data collection events

Symposia and events	Date	Location
NSW Symposium	Aug 2007	University of Western Sydney, Hawkesbury campus
WA Symposium	Oct 2007	Curtin University of Technology
QLD Effective Teaching and Learning Conference	Oct 2007	Queensland University of Technology, Kelvin Grove campus
ATN Assessment and Evaluation Conference	Nov 2007	Queensland University of Technology, Kelvin Grove campus
TAS Meeting	Dec 2007	University of Tasmania
ACEN VIC Meeting	April 2008	Victoria University, Flinders Street campus
SIS Industry Breakfast: Employer focus group	April 2008	Swinburne University of Technology, Hawthorn campus
SA Symposium	April 2008	University of South Australia, Brookman Hall, City East

A APPENDIX F: PARTICIPANTS

Data collection by state

State	Stakeholder	Activity	Description	n
New South Wales	University	Symposium <i>Mapping the territory</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poster session • Survey • Group activity 	54 25 Survey
	University	Interview: Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Western Sydney 	1
	University	Interview: Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charles Sturt University 	1
Queensland	University	Effective Teaching and Learning Conference <i>Preparing students for work in the real world</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poster session • Survey 	20
	Student	Focus group: Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Griffith University • Central Queensland University 	9
	Student	Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Griffith University 	42
	Employer/Industry	Focus group: Employer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Griffith University • Central Queensland University 	2
	University	Clinical Legal Education Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group activity 	10
	University	Australian Technology Network of Universities (ATN) Conference <i>Assessment and evaluation for real world learning</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keynote address (Peach) • Poster session • Survey • Group activity 	26
	University	Interviews: Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queensland University of Technology 	2
	University	Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Griffith University 	1
	Employer	Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consortium for Integrated Resource Management 	2
	Peak body	Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queensland College of Teachers 	1
Western Australia	Employer/ Industry and University	Symposium <i>Experience works</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Note Address (Patrick) • Poster Session • Survey • Group activity 	60 Industry 25 University 12 Survey
	Student	Focus group: Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curtin University of Technology 	4
	Peak bodies/ Industry	Interview: Peak body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPA • Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia 	1 2

State	Stakeholder	Activity	Description	n
Western Australia	University	Interviews: Management	• Curtin University of Technology	2
			• University of Western Australia	3
			• Edith Cowan University	3
			• Murdoch University	2
Tasmania	University	Interview: Management	• University of Tasmania	1
	University	Focus group: University	• University of Tasmania • Keynote Address (Patrick)	15
Victoria	University	Interviews: Management	• Swinburne University of Technology	2
	University	Focus group: University	• Swinburne University of Technology — Faculty staff	5
	University	Focus group: University	• Swinburne University of Technology — Support staff	5
	University	Focus group: University	• Survey • Presentation (Peach) • Group activity	33 11 Survey
	University	Interview: Management	• Deakin University	1
	University	Interview: Management	• Victoria University	1
	Employer	Large group activity: Swinburne Industry Solutions Breakfast	• A selection of managers and human resource representatives for Victorian organisations	18
	University	Interview: Management	• Monash University	1
South Australia	University	South Australia Symposium <i>Work integrated learning: Sharing perspectives, meeting objectives</i>	• Survey • Keynote address (Pocknee)	79 21 Survey
	Student	Focus group: Student	• University of South Australia	3
Northern Territory	University	Interview: Management	• Charles Darwin University	1
National	Peak body	Interview	• Australian Association of Graduate Employers	1
	Peak body	Interview	• Engineers Australia	1
	Peak body	Interview	• Australian Industries Group	1
	Peak body	Interview	• The Australian Psychological Society	1
	University	Survey: Link partners through ACEN website		7
	University	Interview	Consultant	1
TOTAL				519

A APPENDIX G: ACEN AND THE PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

Thirty-four Australian universities are represented as members of the Australian Collaborative Education Network (ACEN). This network spans the diversity of Australian universities including ATN, IRUA, GO8, regional, unaligned, and transnational. The project used the existing infrastructure of ACEN to identify key stakeholders, identify and prioritise key challenges and issues, and map a way forward for the sector.

The partner universities are drawn largely from universities represented on the ACEN Executive or reference group. These universities are actively involved in the ongoing development and improvement of work integrated learning curriculum and the development of a vibrant community of practice both at institution and sector-wide levels.

List of institutions that have contributed to the project

University	Contribution to the project
Australian Catholic University (ACU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey
Central Queensland University (CQU) <i>(partner institution)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey University student focus group
Charles Darwin University (CDU) <i>(partner institution)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview Vignette
Charles Sturt University (CSU) <i>(partner institution)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview Critical readers Survey Reference group
Curtin University of Technology (CURTIN) <i>(partner institution)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview Critical readers Survey University student focus group Symposium host Reference group
Deakin University (DEAKIN) <i>(partner institution)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey Interview
Edith Cowan University (ECU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey Interview
Flinders University (FLINDERS) <i>(partner institution)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University student focus group Survey
Griffith University (GRIFFITH) <i>(host institution)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey University student focus group Interviews Critical readers Reference group
James Cook University (JCU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group activity
La Trobe University (LA TROBE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group activity
Macquarie University (MACQUARIE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group activity
Monash University (MONASH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group activity
Murdoch University (MURDOCH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group activity
Queensland University of Technology (QUT) <i>(host institution)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey Interviews Critical readers Conference host Reference group

University	Contribution to the project
RMIT University (RMIT) <i>(partner institution)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group activity • Survey
Swinburne University of Technology (SWINBURNE) <i>(host institution)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey • Interviews • Critical readers • Reference group • University staff focus groups • Industry breakfast
University of Adelaide (ADELAIDE) <i>(partner institution)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symposia
University of Ballarat (BALLARAT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey
University of Canberra (CANBERRA) <i>(partner institution)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reference group
University of Melbourne (MELBOURNE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting
University of New England (UNE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey
University of New South Wales (UNSW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey
University of Newcastle (NEWCASTLE) <i>(partner institution)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey • Reference group
University of Queensland (QUEENSLAND)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey
University of South Australia (UniSA) <i>(partner institution)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey • Symposium host
University of Southern Queensland (USQ) <i>(partner institution)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey
University of Sydney (SYDNEY)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey
University of Tasmania (TASMANIA) <i>(partner institution)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview • Focus group host
University of Technology Sydney (UTS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey
University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) <i>(partner institution)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey • Group activity
University of Western Australia (UWA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey • Interviews
University of Western Sydney (UWS) <i>(partner institution)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey • Interview • Critical readers • Symposium host • Reference group
University of Wollongong (UOW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey
Victoria University (VU) <i>(partner institution)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview • Critical readers • Survey • Focus group host • Reference group

A APPENDIX H: PROJECT REFERENCE GROUP

Carrick Project
Work integrated learning: A national framework for initiatives to support best practice
Reference group
Terms of reference

1.0 Introduction

The Carrick Project reference group shall serve as a consultative body to provide expertise and general support in regard to work integrated learning (WIL) curriculum, practice and leadership, and to enhance the nominated project outcomes identified in the proposal submitted to, and accepted by, the Carrick Institute for Learning & Teaching in Higher Education; Discipline Based Initiative program.

2.0 Responsibility

The Carrick Project reference group shall:

- 2.1 Assist the project team in achieving the outcomes of the study in accordance with the proposal submitted to, and accepted by, the Carrick Institute for Learning & Teaching in Higher Education; Discipline Based Initiative Program.
- 2.2 Advocate support for the project with various individuals, institutions and organisations.

3.0 Functions

The specific functions shall be to:

- 3.1 Help further strengthen the links with universities, students and industry across Australia.
- 3.2 Advise the project team on possible directions for the scoping study.
- 3.3 Provide feedback to questions raised in the study and posed by the project team.
- 3.4 Advise the project team on mechanisms to ensure quality outputs.

4.0 Membership

- 4.1 Invited members for the Carrick Project reference group

Name	Organisation/Institute
Professor Ian Goulter (Chair)	Charles Sturt University
Associate Professor Jan Orrell	
Professor Sue Spence	Griffith University
Professor Dale Murphy	Swinburne University of Technology
Associate Professor Martin Fitzgerald	University of Newcastle
Ms Belinda McLennan	Victoria University
Ms Deborah Southwell	Queensland University of Technology
Ms Megan Lilly Ms Lee-Anne Fisher	Australian Industry Group
Mr Malcolm Farrow	Professions Australia

Name	Organisation/Institute
Professor Norman Jackson	University of Surrey
Ms Jennie Walsh	Curtin University of Technology
Dr Lars Svensson	University West, Sweden
Associate Professor Richard Coll	University of Waikato
Ms Jessica Farah	Student, University of Western Sydney
Mr Marco Lamantia	Student, Victoria University

5.0 Meetings

The Carrick Project reference group shall aim to meet at least four times over the duration of the project (14 months).

- 5.1 The reference group meetings will be via email, teleconference or video conference.
- 5.2 The reference group will aim to meet at least every three months.

A APPENDIX I: EVALUATION TERMS OF REFERENCE

Carrick Project
Work integrated learning: A national framework for initiatives to support best practice

External Evaluator
Terms of reference

1.0 Introduction

The Carrick Project External Evaluator shall serve as an investigator to evaluate the project, Work integrated learning: A National Framework for Initiatives to Support Best Practice, and to ensure the nominated project outcomes identified in the proposal submitted to, and accepted by, the Carrick Institute for Learning & Teaching in Higher Education; Discipline Based Initiative program are achieved.

3.0 Project description

The aim of this project is to undertake the first large scale scoping study of work integrated learning (WIL) curriculum in contemporary Australian higher education in order to improve the educational experience of students across the sector. The project will identify, examine and map key issues related to work integrated learning curriculum and develop a framework for future projects that outlines a systematic approach to supporting good practice across the higher education sector.

4.0 Qualities

The Carrick Project External Evaluator shall have:

- 4.1 An affiliation with Australasian Evaluation Society Inc. or evidence of ethical conduct of evaluations.
- 4.2 Independence.
- 4.3 Project evaluation experience in higher education, and ideally in the discipline or area of the project.
- 4.4 Broad understanding of the discipline or area of the project.
- 4.5 Skills in quantitative and/or qualitative data analysis, as appropriate to the project.
- 4.6 High level oral and written communication skills.
- 4.7 Capacity to meet the project's evaluation timelines.
- 4.8 Willingness and capacity to work with the Project Leaders, project team and the project reference group, as required.

5.0 Functions

The specific functions shall be to:

- 5.1 Review and critique the final report according to the nominated outcomes of the study before its submission to the Carrick Institute for Learning & Teaching in Higher Education; Discipline Based Initiative Program.
- 5.2 Review the project's data collection tools and advise the project team if the project management, delivery and outcomes is aligned with the ethics approval.

- 5.3 Review the project team's achievement of the outcomes of the study in accordance with the proposal submitted to, and accepted by, the Carrick Institute for Learning & Teaching in Higher Education; Discipline Based Initiative Program.

A APPENDIX J: EMPLOYER GROUP ACTIVITY RESPONSES (SIS INDUSTRY BREAKFAST)

Employer group activity — Tuesday, 8 April 2008						
Resume impact of WIL	Motivation for participation in WIL	Prevents participation in WIL	Employers role in WIL	Recommendations for engagement between uni and industry	Actions for bridge building	Employer comments for WIL agenda
Previous employment is very important in recruiting – it allows the students to understand industry and it allows us to ask questions about the student experience in industry	Recruitment – both in the short term and the long term. We feel we are contributing to the industry's long term future when we take WIL students	WIL students do absorb more management time than graduates but are perfect fits for some projects. When this happens it's a win/win	Provide an opportunity for the student to gain insight into our industry	We are engaged. I am not clear why others are not. Maybe there is inadequate understanding of the benefit to industry of WIL programs	We are contacted annually – this works	Our experiences have been very positive
My highest priority – get students to experience real world of work – time values, culture, deadlines and objectivity BEFORE they graduate – put a value on the IBL year	Personal experience my start in design was as a cadet automobile stylist at 17 yrs straight from school – I started doing design and learnt part time	Finance – must be able to have the funds to invest in the students and cop the costs if mistakes which inevitably happen	Real world input. Expose the student to any and/or every project that comes into the office – spend time with them and show them examples of past work that is relevant.	Be prepared to spend more time in contact with the student. INSIST on employer feedback (Online or personal visits). Provide more 'how to' input before sending students out	More regular contact IT – many issues here Input into course content Professional standards	Personally very committed to the concept. Want to contribute to an improved curriculum
WIL is very important, graduates are not just employed based on their academic abilities but on their experience, and on how well they can adapt to the workplace culture. What better place to learn it than through WIL	Personally I enjoy opportunities to work with students, it is a refreshing break from the day to day norms. But largely it is also the great need in the industry for skilled experienced engineers	Time! It would need to be managed with my other work priorities, which would require my employer committing my resources to such a program als	To provide students with an 'actual' experience of the industry where they can apply the theory they are learning also to give them an appreciation for the industry	A list of expectations, requirements for the students to meet during their time in the industry	Universities understanding / researching where the gaps and needs are in the industry and developing students (and incentives for students) to develop skills in those areas	Has great potential but will need a large amount of resources and commitment from both Industry and universities
Could be very useful Absolutely	Clarity as to what we need / need not pay students Getting the appropriate students (quickly pick up the values and ethics of the business)	Time – or lack of time for this project I am looking to get involved somehow in such a program this year	To treat the student/ graduate as a hard – working , even if part time, member of an integrated team / business	Clarify what we need / need not pay students	Amongst others – informal gathers are no doubt important (coffees, cocktail parties, informal seminars) The event today	Marketing the expression WIL or work integrated employment. May take some minds time to reflect on what WIL means
Most definitely	The opportunity to be involved in a venture that will hopefully help the industry in general	Time / commitments	Giving an insight from the employers perspective	Feedback, agendas and the knowledge of where it is going functionally	Build a rapport with industry	It seems relevant I hope it isn't just mission statements and has support
Extremely It would certainly be beneficial, to have some hard and fast work experience un the field	Possible selling of the organisation as a great place to work? Testing out of graduates before employment	The number of employment strategies already in place ie graduate program, vacation, work experience all take a toll on time poor supervisors managers	To identify clear objectives, sell the importance, ensure the experience is good, feedback to the universities	Identify with the organisation appropriate fields/ streams of work Established framework if discussions – where do you go?? Can assist. Voice of requirements on working party or reference group	Universities to be aware and open to flexible delivery. Break down walls – build relationships	Think it is good. Concern about establishing and costs of doing this, who funds?

Resume impact of WIL	Motivation for participation in WIL	Prevents participation in WIL	Employers role in WIL	Recommendations for engagement between uni and industry	Actions for bridge building	Employer comments for WIL agenda
WIL is one of the tools we utilise, however it differentiates itself by providing practical skill sets which integrate quickly into the business	Strategic objectives to address aging workforce and retention of valued labour force	University's ability to meet/ support/ change delivery methods/ requirements to suit our business needs	Devote and support the resources required and assist in achieving the capabilities to meet the business needs and staff retention	Be a bit flexible- your way not always the right way for industry – uni/ WIL needs to integrate with our business	Discipline representative group to network with industry regularly?	Target your audience more clearly – one size doesn't always fit all Thankyou!
WIL would be very beneficial to a graduate resulting in increase employment opportunities	The ability to help graduates gain experience	Lack of time	To allocate resources into programmes of work and provide graduates with experience	To meet with organisations/ industry each financial year to understand their strategic initiatives and business goals and associated projects or programmes of work that may span over many years	Industry workshop session to learn about specific industry initiatives	
Yes WIL assists students to be work ready	Part of scouting – extension of youth development programme	Costs/ finance therefore students are placed on a voluntary basis	Mentoring Work readiness Personal development for students To assist with leadership	Formalise the relationship ie organising a body Encourage lecturers to interact with business	Regular engagement such as formalised body establishment	<p>Student readiness Students motivation determines the success of the program- issues with non – resident students</p> <p>The need to 'factor in' the requirements of the Not For Profit sector. This is a growing sector and deploys human resources in delivering their services and programs. Therefore, requirements, training prerequisites, remunerations and voluntary aspect need to be considered.</p> <p>The issue of overseas students albeit having language and cultural differences is something that the country and the WIL need to consider. Invariably majority of these students will become residents of this country under a myriad of immigration initiatives.</p> <p>Their gainful employment is not only an equity issue but the social cost to the economy. The Federal government, educational sector and their families spent millions of dollars to train them to receive tertiary qualifications. The inability for them to obtain a job pertaining to their training is a social cost to the community. For examples, having IT qualified graduates working in restaurants and driving taxis do contribute to the GDP</p>

Resume impact of WIL	Motivation for participation in WIL	Prevents participation in WIL	Employers role in WIL	Recommendations for engagement between uni and industry	Actions for bridge building	Employer comments for WIL agenda
						but it is a misallocated of resources! This issue did get a lot of 'air time' from the Group and i am glad to trigger this off.
Work experience counts a lot. It shows ambition , experience in working and dealing with people in the community/ industry	Need to expose marketing students/ engineering students etc to the worlds other than FMCG which seems to dominate student focus	Don't know how disruptive it would be / time needs for the business. Not sure how to go about it. Only know about through my graduate employees	Provide workplace experience / and a good fast impression of the workplace. Motivate students into fields other than profit industry	Scope of flexibility in employer expectations, cost Lead times from need to fulfilment	½ yearly placement offers emailed. Set up interviews with maybe 2-3 students to select from. May only take 1-2 at a time	Lack of communication and expectations of what is required needs improving
Important from a perspective of breadth of experience and an indicator of willingness Yes it also gives a reference point	Seeking new blood into the business and bringing in new thinking – this is a business decision Building potential employees A service of the community Better understanding of the benefits	Time/ Focus Lack of understanding Understanding the benefits and of rewards	Welcome the co reality These are the expectations and outcomes that we look for	Package a plan for our business Make us feel relevant to the process. Your time commitment. Understanding the structure requirements	Universities to be in our face with systems to help us understand the needs and potentially the benefits Integrate into the business by understanding needs	
Certainly – we now not only look for qualifications but in the business world where time is a restraint we seek experience – WIL gives that experience	I am Obtaining an employee that has experience rather than starting with a green field – we struggle with time – this gives us the edge on time restraints	Very little knowledge available in this role – have never heard of the above (WIL)	Commitment and guidance with the participant short term for me will pay in the long term benefits as an employer	(WILFM) – Difficult to obtain people with the right skills – if WIL will give me the right people save me time. Need clarity in what WIL is Make it appear I get WILFM Tell me what it does to make it easier to recruit	Communications Engage us to talk to students about our career Understand what we need- help us to understand what we need	
Its becoming increasingly important, particularly in the engineering field and its associated skill shortages It would be advantageous as it enables them to hit the ground running	Its about building a pipeline, so a WIL placement may lead to vacation employment which leads to graduate program and eventually a permanent position	Whilst we do have such program in place they need to be formalised and strengthened as do the relationships with universities Time and resourcing also another issue and we may not be able to accommodate all requests due to availability and business needs	To provide students with an opportunity to experience the workplace with a view to them returning to VIC Roads in the future To address short term resourcing needs	Knowing the right people to contact, can be difficult reach them	Representations at lectures, perhaps working together to influence the curriculum – case studies using real life examples	I think its something
Very important Graduates with industry/ work experience will bring value – at time of interview through out the selection process they will be seen as the preferred candidate	Skill shortage. We find it difficult to find civil engineers. Also, we have identified a number of areas in which graduates require further development	Nothing We do come across obstacles such as budget, resources and time but the need is such that these obstacles are disappearing	Engage with universities to facilitate opportunities within our organisation. Create opportunities for dialogue	It would make easier if didn't have to go through so many gate keepers. More information in the uni websites including key contracts. Make expectations clear	Working parties increase opportunities for interaction make IBL and project work mandatory. Have clear program objectives. Build relationships!	Our agenda is clear, we want it and we are ready to initiate the process. We want to create a pipeline that can see a university student move through different programs including vacation employment, IBL, graduate program and permanent jobs
I believe it is important because it gave the chance and opportunity to develop and gain skills and experience	To build my confidence up grade knowledge and share with others	Maybe a lack of time	To demonstrate my capability and knowledge to share with others	As an employee, worked for VIC roads I recommend to encourage students in WIL – do not give up	Be honest and give that opportunity it needs to engage with the work environment	Very interesting and thank you for this opportunity to be involved

Resume impact of WIL	Motivation for participation in WIL	Prevents participation in WIL	Employers role in WIL	Recommendations for engagement between uni and industry	Actions for bridge building	Employer comments for WIL agenda
In the retail environment WIL for Uni grad is not very important, retail is more suited to the TAFE system	We would be likely to accommodate students in marketing, finance to benefit from new info/ younger staff	Currently lack of knowledge of experience of this type of program (we don't know what we don't know)	Still looking to understand where our industry can engage with WIL	Provide single contact point possibly web based to access WIL info, resources and requirements		

A APPENDIX K: WIL WORKLOAD

The Work-integrated Learning (WIL) at Griffith Survey (Engaging Students in the Workplace (ESiWP) Working Party, 2006, December) identified that, when role boundaries were isolated from the data:

- 68.16% of academics were responsible for initiating the WIL activity
- 73.64% of academic staff were responsible for the induction of students into their WIL workplace
- 53.56% of academic staff were responsible for supervision of the student during their WIL activity
- 65.9% of academic staff were responsible for formal assessment of the student during their WIL activity
- 51% of academic supervisors were responsible for management and well-being of the student undertaking a WIL activity.

The table below provides details of the division of the WIL responsibility across the three stakeholder groups.

Responsibilities of stakeholders in the work-integrated learning process							
	Initiation of WIL	Formalisation of WIL	Student induction into workplace	Student WIL supervision	Student management and wellbeing during WIL	Evaluation of WIL student performance	Student formal WIL assessment
Academic supervisor	334 (68.16%)	347 (76.60%)	352 (73.64%)	331 (53.56%)	352 (51.09%)	342 (57%)	371 (65.9%)
Student	112 (22.86%)	59 (13.02%)	33 (6.90%)	36 (5.83%)	104 (15.09%)	59 (9.83%)	42 (7.46%)
Workplace industry supervisor	44 (8.98%)	47 (10.38%)	93 (19.46%)	251 (40.61%)	233 (33.82%)	199 (33.17%)	150 (26.64%)
TOTAL	490 (100%)	453 (100%)	478 (100%)	618 (100%)	689 (100%)	600 (100%)	563 (100%)

This provides an initial flavour of the complexity of the WIL role as compared to the role of a traditional classroom offering: it is accepted that within a 'normal' course academic staff would be involved in evaluation and assessment of students but it is proposed that the components associated with initiation, formalisation, induction, supervision and pastoral care of a student in a WIL placement are unique to WIL academic staff.

A APPENDIX L: WIL TEACHING AND SERVICE CATEGORIES

The Work-integrated Learning (WIL) at Griffith Survey (Engaging Students in the Workplace (ESiWP) Working Party, 2006, December) identified the following:

WIL teaching and learning categories	Service	Teaching	Unique to WIL
Course design		✓	
Workshops (for preparation; during WIL; and for assessment)		✓	
Lectures		✓	
Tutorials		✓	
Management of individual WIL contracts (student, university, industry partner)		✓	✓ ¹
Assessment		✓	
Recruitment, induction and maintenance of Industry partnership, including membership of professional association and committees	✓		✓ ^{2 3 4}
Industry supervisor training		✓	✓ ^{5 6}
Student induction into industry		✓	✓ ⁷
Placement counselling (student and the industry supervisor) – at risk – career – employment	✓	✓	✓ ⁸
Directed student learning visits and monitoring of student learning in the workplace – Rural – SEQ – International	✓	✓	✓ ^{9 10}
Event management		✓	✓ ¹¹
OH&S, IP, risk management and insurance		✓	✓ ¹²
Supervision/mentoring of WIL administrative staff		✓	

¹ Service agreements, individual agreements or learning contracts that may or may not include project specific issues.

² Ongoing marketing and promoting to potential industry partners, attending events, individual visits at 1.5–2 hours each to the workplace to explain program, check workplace suitability, etc. (repeating each year and ongoing expansion of markets).

³ Keeping up to date with industry trends, developing networks, promoting WIL culture within potential WIL organisations or industries.

⁴ Working collaboratively with industry partners for evaluations, liaising and inviting membership of industry reference groups for programs and courses.

⁵ Providing workshops and training to industry and individual supervisors for educational supervision requirements.

⁶ Providing opportunities for social interaction and networking between supervisors and academic staff including breakfasts, colloquiums and WIL-specific activities.

⁷ Providing specific information regarding professional expectations, behaviour and requirements of transition and induction from university to professional work.

⁸ WIL academics have a responsibility to identify, support, and assist students who evidence difficulty while on placement; sometimes this requires the WIL academic to be involved with industry as part of the resolution process.

⁹ Visiting each and every student in the workplace as part of supervisor responsibility can take 1.5–2 hours each.

¹⁰ Individual oversight to ensure directed learning — not just delivery then an exam at end (to ensure DEST compliance).

¹¹ Organising exhibitions of student accomplishments, attending to invitations for industry, academic colleagues and other interested parties, marketing and networking in anticipation of the next WIL offering.

¹² For a number of placements extra knowledge and attention to issues surrounding risk management and insurance is essential, e.g. blue cards, criminal history checks, hepatitis screening.

A APPENDIX M: POSSIBLE GRANTS FOR WIL PROJECTS

ARC

Website: http://www.arc.gov.au/ncgp/lp/lp_default.htm

<p>ARC Linkage Projects</p>	<p>The <i>Linkage Projects</i> scheme supports collaborative research and development projects between higher education organisations and other organisations, including within industry, to enable the application of advanced knowledge to problems. Typically, research projects funded under the scheme involve risk.</p> <p>Proposals for funding under Linkage Projects must involve a collaborating organisation from outside the higher education sector. The collaborating organisation must make a significant contribution (equal to, or greater than, the ARC funding), in cash and/or in kind, to the project. Linkage Projects aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourage and develop long-term strategic research alliances between higher education institutions and industry in order to apply advanced knowledge to problems, or to provide opportunities to obtain national economic or social benefits • support collaborative research on issues of benefit to regional and rural communities • foster opportunities for postdoctoral researchers to pursue internationally • competitive research in collaboration with industry, targeting those who have demonstrated a clear commitment to high quality research • provide industry-oriented research training to prepare high-calibre postgraduate research students • produce a national pool of world-class researchers to meet the needs of Australian industry. <p>Linkage Projects supports all types of research, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Pure basic research which is experimental and theoretical work undertaken to acquire new knowledge without looking for long-term benefits other than the advancement of knowledge. b. Strategic basic research which is experimental and theoretical work undertaken to acquire new knowledge directed into specified broad areas that are expected to lead to useful discoveries. Such research provides the broad base of knowledge necessary to solve recognised practical problems. c. Applied research which is original work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge with a specific application in view. Such research is undertaken either to determine possible uses for the findings of basic research or to determine new ways of achieving some specific and predetermined objectives.
<p>Discovery Projects</p>	<p><i>Discovery Projects</i> aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support excellent fundamental research by individuals and teams • enhance the scale and focus of research in the National Research Priorities • assist researchers to undertake their research in conditions most conducive to achieving best results • expand Australia's knowledge base and research capability • foster the international competitiveness of Australian research • encourage research training in high-quality research environments. <p>Discovery Projects supports all types of research, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Pure basic research which is experimental and theoretical work undertaken to acquire new knowledge without looking for long-term benefits other than the advancement of knowledge.

Cont.

	<p>b. Strategic basic research which is experimental and theoretical work undertaken to acquire new knowledge directed into specified broad areas that are expected to lead to useful discoveries. Such research provides the broad base of knowledge necessary to solve recognised practical problems.</p> <p>c. Applied research which is original work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge with a specific application in view. Such research is undertaken either to determine possible uses for the findings of basic research or to determine new ways of achieving some specific and predetermined objectives.</p>
International Linkage Projects	<p>The objectives of <i>Linkage International</i> are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • build collaborations among researchers, research teams and/or research centres of excellence in Australia and overseas • generate opportunities for researchers to participate in leading-edge international research networks and strengthen their international research experience • build Australian research capability by enhancing existing and developing new collaborations among researchers • develop innovative modes of international collaboration; and/or • foster participation in global innovation networks. <p>International linkage supports a range of activities in support of research which involve the movement of eligible researchers between eligible Australian research organisations and centres of research excellence overseas, and the fostering of collaboration and networking between Australia-based and overseas researchers.</p>

ALTC Grants Scheme

Website: <http://www.altc.edu.au/carrick/go/home/grants/cache/offonce;jsessionid=568B450032A4A59645377A8CCF65EA59>

Competitive Grants Program	<p>The <i>Competitive Grants Program</i> supports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and development focussing on issues of emerging and continuing importance. • Strategic approaches to learning and teaching that address the increasing diversity of the student body. • Innovation in learning and teaching, including in relation to the role of new technologies.
Leadership for Excellence in Learning and Teaching Program	<p>The <i>Leadership for Excellence in Learning and Teaching Program</i> supports systematic, structured and sustainable models of academic leadership in higher education.</p>
Priority Projects Program	<p>The <i>Priority Projects Program</i> supports programs addressing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic standards, assessment practices and reporting • Curriculum renewal • Teaching and learning spaces • Peer review.

DEEWR

Website: http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/programmes_funding/programme_categories/key_priorities/diversity_fund.htm

<p>Diversity and Structural Adjustment Fund</p>	<p>The objective of the <i>Diversity Fund</i> is to promote structural reform by eligible higher education providers that supports greater specialisation among providers, more diversity in the higher education sector and better responsiveness to labour markets operating in the local or national interest.</p> <p>The Total Program Funds and Allocation will be \$49,991,000 in each of the calendar years 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011, plus:</p> <p>In each year the Allocation will be available for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. meeting existing funding commitments made under the <i>Diversity Fund</i> for the year b. meeting existing funding commitments made under the <i>Collaboration and Structural Reform Fund</i> c. grants in response to proposals invited by DEEWR d. grants in response to proposals outside the submission-based rounds referred to in subparagraph 9.15.1(c) that address specific priorities set by the Minister from time to time and identified at http://www.dest.gov.au/highered/dsa. <p>Grants will be made only in response to proposals that are consistent with the objectives of the program and address the program's priorities. Priority areas for the Diversity Fund may be identified by the Minister from time to time.</p> <p>The current priority areas for funding are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Projects that can identify strategies to better meet student and employer demand, particularly where they focus on addressing the capacity of higher education providers to better respond to labour markets operating in the local or national interest. b. Projects that enable higher education providers to diversify, specialise their disciplines, build on existing dual sector activities, create new dual sector activities or enhance learning and teaching performance. c. Higher education providers in regional and smaller metropolitan areas (including those multi-campus providers that operate in an outer urban context), that can demonstrate the greatest need for structural reform and the greatest relevance to labour markets and teaching and learning (see 4.1.1(c)); and/or d. Community service projects to meet community needs.
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