National WIL Strategy

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Major Challenges to WIL in Australia

• Managing expectations and competing demands
• Improving communication and coordination
• Adequately resourcing WIL
• Ensuring equity and access
• Ensuring worthwhile experiences

The WIL Report: Patrick, Peach, Pocknee 2008
Overview of Research Projects

• Work Integrated learning in STEM (University and Employers): Office of Chief Scientist
• Engaging Employers in Work Integrated Learning: Department of Industry

Office of Learning and Teaching Grants

• Leading WIL: A distributed approach to Work Integrated Learning
• Assessing the impact of work integrated learning (WIL) on Student Work Readiness
• Building institutional capacity to enhance access, participation and progression in work integrated learning
• Quality in Australian outbound student mobility programs: establishing good practice guidelines for international work-integrated learning.
• Improving work placement for international students, their mentors and stakeholders.
• Supporting graduate employability from generalist disciplines
• Developing graduate employability through partnerships with industry and professional associations
• How universities can best support students to develop generic skills
The Impact of Work Integrated Learning on Student Work-readiness

Findings

• WIL placements do have an impact on student work-readiness and contribute to employability capabilities, as do simulated activities.
• Student experience is enhanced when WIL is embedded and scaffolded across the curriculum both vertically and horizontal.

The studies drew attention to the importance of:

• curriculum and co-curricular factors
• the quality and organisation of WIL activities
• rigorous preparation of students for WIL experiences
• debriefing sessions which enable students to reflect on personal performance

“The impact of work integrated learning on student work-readiness”
Sonia Ferns, Calvin Smith, Leoni Russell, 2014
Recommendations

• WIL opportunities should be built into curricula to enhance students’ employability.
• Evaluation framework outlining quality assurance standards for high quality WIL should be developed
• Simulated work experience should be the subject of future research to determine the characteristics of a quality simulated WIL experience
• WIL practitioners should be skilled, experienced and supported
• Appropriate professional development opportunities should be develop
• Resilience, motivation and attitudinal change emerged as important individual outcomes from WIL experiences
• Industry and community partners should be more involved in supervising students and providing feedback on student learning and workplace performance.
• Industry and community partners and universities should collaborate on curriculum development and design, supervision of students and feedback on assessment.
Curriculum Dimensions of Quality WIL

- **Authenticity** of the WIL activity – autonomy, responsibility, consequentiality
- **Preparation** and induction processes for students and partners
- Quality of **supervision**, monitoring of progress and learning
- **Integration** of theory and practice – integrated learning
- **Alignment** of WIL activity and assessments to WIL-appropriate learning outcomes
- **De-briefing** session that enables reflection on the experience and the learning

The impact of work integrated learning on student work-readiness”
Sonia Ferns, Calvin Smith, Leoni Russell , OLT, 2014
Engaging Employers in Work Integrated Learning

- 264 employers surveyed (60% involved in WIL)
- High levels of ongoing engagement (5 years or more)
- Public sector more likely to be involved than private sector organisations
- Organisations receive significant benefits from involvement
- Smaller organisations less likely to get involved (20 yrs & /or 15 employees)
- Significant growth is possible in range of industry sectors
- Reliance on universities and students to facilitate WIL
- Diverse WIL arrangements
- Barriers: insufficient resources / supervision time
- Enablers more agreement than barriers
- Areas for increased partnership and collaboration:
  - More information about the benefits
  - Greater engagement from Universities

Department of Industry” Engaging Employers in Work Integrated Learning “Sept. 2014
National WIL Strategy

Statement of Intent: WIL : Strengthening University and Business Partnerships ( Feb 2014 )

National WIL Strategy ( March 2015 )

– Business Council of Australia ( BCA )
– Australian Industry Group ( AIG )
– Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI)
– Universities Australia ( UA )
– Australian Collaborative Education Network ( ACEN)
Aims

• Establish a baseline
• Identify existing areas of resources and expertise
• Identify, promote and disseminate good practice
• Facilitate University / Industry partnerships
• Increase the scale, breadth and quality of WIL
• Advocate for research and scholarship
• Identify and address impediments to growth
• Better inform students of the benefit of WIL
Overview

• Recognises and profiles the growth and role of WIL
• Acknowledges the value for all stakeholders
• Acknowledges WIL as including diverse models eg projects, placements, simulations
• Identifies gaps in:
  – Extent to which WIL is occurring nationally
  – Seeks to identify barriers to expansion
• Seen as providing the basis for greater collaboration between industry and universities impacting on national innovation
National WIL Strategy

- **National Leadership**: collaborative leadership to empower, grow and drive engagement with WIL nationally
- **Clarify Government policy and regulatory settings**
- **Build support** – amongst universities, students, employers and all sectors and governments to increase participation
- **Ensure investment in WIL is well targeted** and enables sustainable resourcing systems and practices for all stakeholders informed by a cost benefit analysis
National WIL Strategy cont:

- Develop university resources, systems, processes to grow WIL
- Build capacity for more employers to participate in WIL in order to grow WIL and benefit students
- Address equity and access issues to enable students to participate in WIL
- Increase WIL Opportunities for International students and for domestic students to study offshore
Progress to date:

- Recognition that more focused strategic and collaborative national approach is required
- Articulation of a shared vision
- Increased dialogue and collaboration between sectors
- Shared understanding of the key challenges and enablers
- Greater alignment of organisations initiatives
- Advocacy and support from the Federal Government
- Collaborative projects commencing
- National Forum with 50 organisations represented
ACEN Initiatives 2015

- Professional Development: Webinar series, Global WIL Module
- Expanded student scholarships scheme
- Increased WIL research focused on key areas
- Development of a suite of WIL resources, templates and case studies
- Third party provider guidelines with IEAA and NAGCAS
- Introduction of WIL Awards
- Increased international engagement through National Associations