Work Integrated Learning in STEM in Australian universities

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Overview

- Introduction – who we are

- Context – WIL in practice

- What we would like to know…

HE Research @ ACER

Areas of Work		
Assessment	**Surveys**	**Policy Research**
Shared assessments Collaborative Development Learning Outcomes Capacity building in institutions 'Future thinking' - innovation in assessment	Engagement and experience of students and staff Graduate intentions and destinations Transitions to tertiary education Evaluation of program, process, policy & quality Benchmarking	Transitions and pathways (linked to selection and equity) Assesment measurement and quality System growth and monitoring change Indigenous access and learning International student issues (esp. mobility) Student outcomes - 'learning' and 'career' Benchmarking for institutions and systems
Core Strengths		
Independent, not for profit Emphasis on communication and relationship building Institution, regional, national and trans-national work High level statistical expertise: Pyschometrics, sampling Multidimensional analyses, synthesis of data Ability to design, deploy, analyse and report Synthesis of multiple data sets to explore complex issues Well developed deployment platforms Focus on quality and practically useful outcomes		

Context

- Project for the Office of Chief Scientist

- Involves exploring WIL in practice in Australian universities with a focus on Sciences, ICT and Agriculture fields.

- Literature reviews (general, engineering, international)

- Collection of primary data:
  - Interviews
  - Templates for collecting data
  - Undertaken during Semester Two

- ...expect to hear from us soon!!

WIL in Australia – Broadly...

Broad definitions for a 'chameleon' term:

WIL involved developing students' work-readiness skills to industry standards and enhancing employability…

WIL is the term given to an activity or program that integrates academic learning with its application in the workplace. The practice may be real or simulated and can occur in the workplace, at the university, online, face-to-face or any combination of these...

WIL provides the means to 'do in context' rather than developing practical skills alone

(this is particularly important in the context of the sciences where there is practical learning anyway)

- WIL programs in Australian universities include, but are not limited to:
    – Career development learning;
    – Clinical placements;
    – Fieldwork;
    – Industry-based projects;
    – Internships;
    – Job-shadowing;
    – Project-based learning;
    – Teaching practicum;
    – Virtual projects and simulations;
    – Volunteering;
    – Work placements; and
    – Research-related placements

WIL - Importance

- **Demand from**:
  - Industry ('we want work-ready grads')
  - Government ('we need to justify funding and plug skills shortages')
  - Students ('we want to secure relevant employment')
- **Benefits in**:
  - Improving job prospects
  - Building confidence in workplace abilities of students
  - Enhancing the 'soft skills'

WIL – We know...

- Widely incorporated into Australian university curricula
- Usually offered in later ugrad or in pgrad years
- Often the model described includes one-on-one placements
- Is costly – both $ and time (where costs are known)
- Increasingly becoming a mandatory component of degree

WIL – We don't know...

...Lots! Hence this project...

- How much is happening in science, ICT and agriculture

- Cost sustainability

- Assessment and use of WIL for credit

- Equality and access to WIL

- Participation of international students

OCS Project – A Stocktake of WIL

- Interviews with all universities – Assoc Deans...
- Collating information about WIL in practice in your departments:
    - the types of WIL being undertaken
    - integration of WIL in curriculum
    - WIL programs that attract credit and those that don't
    - sources of funding for WIL activities
    - current costs (and difference between funding and the full cost)
    - administration of WIL
    - opinions about the impact of WIL

OCS Project – A Stocktake of WIL

- Visits to be planned for Semester 2...

....We will be in contact...!

Thanks

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