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Assurance of learning: The role of work integrated learning and industry partners

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Abstract

In the partnering with students and industry it is important for universities to recognize and value the nature of knowledge and learning that emanates from work integrated learning experiences is different to formal university based learning. Learning is not a by-product of work rather learning is fundamental to engaging in work practice. Work integrated learning experiences provide unique opportunities for students to integrate theory and practice through the solving of real world problems. This paper reports findings to date of a project that sought to identify key issues and practices faced by academics, industry partners and students engaged in the provision and experience of work integrated learning within an undergraduate creative industries program at a major metropolitan university. In this paper, those findings are focused on some of the particular qualities and issues related to the assessment of learning at and through the work integrated experience. The findings suggest that the assessment strategies needed to better value the knowledges and practices of the Creative Industries. The paper also makes recommendations about how industry partners might best contribute to the assessment of students' developing capabilities and to continuous reflection on courses and the assurance of learning agenda.

Keywords: Assessment, Learning Outcomes, Industry Partners, Work integrated Learning, Assurance of Learning.

Introduction

There is increasing pressure on Australian universities to provide direct evidence of their graduates' learning against agreed learning outcomes for the discipline and profession. In the past, the data that informed the Higher Education quality agenda relied heavily on the inputs such as Student Staff Ratios and on indirect evidence of output such as student feedback on course experience (e.g. CEQ). A New Higher Education Quality and Regulatory Framework is now being established to regulate the sector and the establishment of Tertiary Education & Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA) in 2011 will be a further step towards the assurance of learning outcomes for tertiary graduates. Currently the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) is working with academic and professional communities to develop threshold learning outcomes (TLOs) for disciplines with the intention that this work will support universities to implement and assure graduates' attainment of learning outcomes. While statements of learning outcomes reinforce their importance in the curriculum their explicit development and assessment within university-based curriculum is often challenging and perceived as secondary to specific discipline studies (Costley and Arnsby, 2007:22). Students' engagement in work integrated learning (WIL) experiences, such as internships and industry-based projects, can support students' integrated learning (LEAP Report, 2007) across the breadth of learning outcomes. Student engagement in work settings also provides opportunities for them to evidence their developing capabilities both through their real world work products and processes. These capabilities include not only discipline-specific capabilities but also generic transferable capabilities such as interpersonal skills, communication skills and problem solving skills (Weisz & Smith, 2005:606).

As universities seek to engage with industry partners and the professions to increase WIL opportunities

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for students it is important that workplace practices and an understanding of learning at and through work strongly inform the development of WIL curriculum, pedagogy and associated assessment. It is only by establishing strong collaborative partnerships between universities, suitable work organisations and students that WIL programs will be effective and sustainable in the longer term (Smith et al 2006).

This paper reports findings to date of a project that sought to identify the key issues and practices faced by academics, industry partners and students engaged in the provision and experience of work integrated learning within an undergraduate creative industries program at a major metropolitan University. In this paper, those findings are focused on some of the particular qualities and issues related to the assessment of learning at and through the WIL experience. The findings suggest that the existing WIL assessment strategies needed to better value student's work practices and products as evidence of their developing capabilities. The paper also makes recommendations about how our WIL industry partners might best contribute to the assessment of students' developing capabilities and to continuous reflection on courses and the assurance of learning agenda.

Conceptualising Work Integrated Learning

Broadly work integrated learning is defined as “an umbrella term for a range of approaches and strategies that integrate theory with practice of work within a purposefully designed curriculum” (Patrick et al., 2008:9). Within this definition work integrated learning encompasses a range of on-campus and workplace learning experiences including project-based learning, service learning, work placements and internships. More specifically Work integrated learning (WIL) is described as “a class of university programs that bring together universities and work organizations to create new learning opportunities in workplaces” (Boud, Solomon & Symes, 2001: 4). Increasingly work-based WIL activities, like internships, service learning and projects, are being identified by the Higher Education sector as some of the high-impact, effective educational practices that can make important contributions to preparing graduates for a future of “daunting complexity” and “relentless change”(LEAP Report, 2007: 13). By providing real world contexts and problems, WIL experiences require students to integrate theory and practice (Weisz & Smith, 2005; Boud, Solomon & Symes, 2001) and to consider not only “how to get this done but also what is most worth doing” (LEAP Report, 2007: 13).

In the partnering with students and industry it is important for universities to recognize and value the nature of knowledge and learning that emanates from WIL experiences is different to formal university based learning. Learning is not a by-product of work rather learning is fundamental to engaging in work practice. Work integrated learning experiences provide unique opportunities for students to integrate theory and practice through the solving of real world problems. (Patrick et al, 2008; Weisz & Smith, 2005; Boud, Solomon & Symes, 2001) Huber and Hutching (2004) recognize that our rapidly changing and ever-more-connected world is challenging the integrative abilities of experts and students alike and argue students need to be able to:

Integrate and connect skills and knowledge from multiple sources and experiences; apply theory to practice in various settings; utilize diverse and even contradictory points of view; and, understand issues and positions contextually.

The holistic and integrated nature of the WIL experience, which often challenges students to think outside their discipline knowledges, means, “students need to recognize knowledge presented in unfamiliar ways and to develop the skills of meta-cognition in order to recognize and learn from the knowledge and experiences encountered” (Brodie & Irving, 2007:12). By reflecting in and on their WIL experiences individual students are engaged in a process of personal meaning making. Reflection, if managed well, can help students build a deeper understanding of their integrated experiences in the workplace setting and see relevance to their course experience. This in turn informs their self direction as learners and their emerging identities as professionals (Brooks, Benton-Kupper & Slayton, 2004).

Learners as workers develop implicit tacit knowledge about their practice and surfacing this knowledge through reflection can add value to students WIL experiences. Mooradian (2005) describes tacit knowledge as the knowledge, which an individual will use subconsciously in order to make sense of a situation. Researchers have identified this knowledge is often difficult to recognize and articulate. While writers (Eraut, 2000; Mooradian, 2005) suggest that some tacit knowledge can be made explicit, they also indicate that other tacit knowledge might not lend itself to linguistic expression and recognize

that something is lost in the conversion of tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge. Some tacit knowledge because of its intrinsic character is harder to articulate into a written or spoken form. Mooradian (2005: 110) suggests visual, auditory and bodily experiences and skills are examples of tacit knowledge, which is difficult to describe because “language abstracts from the particulars of experience, leaving out much of its information value and emotional impact”. This fundamental understanding of work as learning and knowledge, which emanates from practice, raises important questions about how we value and assess the learning outcomes in this rich, predictably messy learning environment of the workplace.

Assessing work integrated learning

Work integrated learning experiences like internships are highly situated in the workplace context and most of the learning is a “by-product of doing work” (Jackson, 2010: 20). In this context students’ personal development is difficult to articulate as it “often involves the development of qualities and dispositions as well as new discipline knowledge and skills” (Jackson, 2010:21).

In creative industries internships this personal development often involves embodied kinaesthetic, visual and auditory knowledges and practices. In their university studies, students heighten their artistic knowing and arts literacies as they learn to communicate through their creative industries practice. As these students are exposed to and participate with others in communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) of the workplace setting, they continue to construct, apply and challenge these knowledges. For students as creative practitioners, this embodied knowing and learning is expressed through their creative practice (Smith et al, 2005). The challenge is to design assessment that appropriately recognises and evidences both the discipline-specific knowledges and skills and generic skills such as reflective practice, problem solving, collaboration and communication. It is therefore important that WIL assessment strategies take into account the discipline and context specific environments of students’ workplace experiences.

Brodie & Irving (2007:17) recognize the assessment of students’ capabilities in WIL raises significant issues. Firstly, if capabilities evidenced in the workplace context are to be assessed the question arises: Who should be undertaking the assessment? (The student, the employer or a higher education observer). Secondly, if the employers do contribute to assessment then issues of equity, standardization and quality assurance need to be considered. Thirdly if students’ written evidence articulating how they are capable is used then their ability to write could influence the outcome. Brodie & Irving (2007:17) suggest, “this variable compromises the validity and integrity of the assessment of practical capability”. Finally the issue of appropriately weighting for capability assessment is considered. They report (Brodie & Irving, 2007:17) that students in their institution frequently suggest that the employers’ contribution should be weighted more than the current 10% and saw this issue as an ongoing assessment issue for curriculum designers. Further to the issues raised by Brodie & Irving (2007), industry supervisors assessing the quality of students’ work can also provide important and valuable external perspectives on the quality of students’ work. Course coordinators and their course teams can also use these industry perspectives on the quality of students’ work to help identify strengths and gaps in course design and inform continuous reflection and accountability at the course level (Hundley, 2010).

WIL offers contextualised integrative learning experiences that when intentionally designed can help students to connect and reflect on developing skills to enrich their capacities as reflective practitioners for their future work and lives. Schon (1991) refers to reflective practitioners using reflection in action as integral to their practice where reflection (thinking about what they are doing) works in conjunction with action informing and enriching their practice. In Schon’s (1983: 61) seminal work on reflective practice, he suggests that reflections enables us to “surface and criticize the tacit understandings that have grown up around the repetitive experiences of a specialized practice, and can make new sense of...situations of uncertainty or uniqueness.” Assessment methods like learning journals, reflective portfolios and learning circles if designed well can contribute to the students’ recognizing and evidencing their developing capabilities as well as contributing to enhancing their reflective practice skills. A number of authors provide guidance about approaches to support students’ reflections. Boud and Walker (1998) warn that “without a focus on conceptual frameworks, learning outcomes and implications, reflection for learners can become self-referential, inward looking and uncritical. They suggest “there is inevitably a tension between guidance which leads to the problem for recipe-following and a lack of structure which can lead to a loss of focus”. (Boud & Walker, 1998: 193).

Boud & Walker (1998: 194) also warn “because emotions and feelings are often downplayed in educational settings, it is common for reflection to be treated as if it were an intellectual exercise – simple matter of thinking rigorously”. Brodie & Irving (2007:15) suggest the reflective assessment strategies should provide students with “opportunities to focus on how they learn and, in requiring them to claim their achievement of learning outcomes through reflection and by evaluating feedback from a range of sources, involves self assessment of their learning goals”. Reflective activities like reflective journal and portfolios can help students recognize their future learning needs, which contributes to their life-long learning skills (Boud, 2000 in Brodie & Irving, 2007). Other authors have identified the important social aspects of reflection. Boud et al. (1993) suggested the process of reflection on learning through discussion enables students to interrogate the basis of their knowledge. Billet (2009: 48) suggests discussion undertaken in reflected learning groups and learning circles can also provide opportunities to extend student learning. Jackson (2010:14) further suggests we “transfer and adapt learning through telling and listening to stories” and we therefore “need to become adept at telling the stories of our learning and good at recognizing learning in the stories”. Reflective assessment tasks need to be carefully planned and structured with the challenges of reflective practice in mind and should be framed and situated by particular disciplinary and professional contexts.

WIL assessment design needs to both value the rich and diverse learning occurring in the workplace context and value add to this learning with experiences that enable students to deepen their learning and understanding of how they learning through reflection on their practice.

WIL in the Creative Industries: Background to the Internship program

The option to undertake an Internship is available to most final-year students in the Creative Industries Faculty. Internships are common forms of WIL that equate to students undertaking work place activities related to their tertiary programs over an extended period either intensively over a number of weeks or part time over longer periods. Students are able to commence their internships at any time through the year, to undertake intensive work with an organisation over a few weeks or an extended internship over a year. Over a year there can be up to 200 industry partners involved in supporting creative industries students on internships. Small-to-medium enterprises make up the majority of industry partners in this program. Students can take up internships within the Creative Industries sector and also with organisations outside the sector, particularly those organisations that seek to work with embedded creatives as a means of adding value to their organisation. Students are encouraged to approach prospective organisations with the aim of establishing their own internships. Additionally, the university advertises internship opportunities to students online and manages an application process for these advertised industry partners. This involves collating student internship applications for the industry partner to assess.

In the internship program, creative industries students undertook four assessment tasks. Initially students prepared for the internship by completing a CV and Cover letter and an internship proposal (weighting 20%) that addressed among other things internship application and selection, the internship aims and objectives, Occupational Health and Safety requirements and other legal requirements. Ongoing through the internship, students kept an online reflective blog (formative), which they shared with their academic supervisor. At the end of their internship students used these structured reflections to write an academic essay, which encouraged them to surface their tacit understandings and make new sense of their internship experience. (Schon, 1983:61) This individual essay had until recently formed the main assessment task (70% of the overall mark) for the internship program. Finally an industry partners’ evaluation of student’s work made up 10% of the overall mark. In this evaluation industry partners provide feedback on the quality of students’ work against a set of generic criteria and standards supplied by the university through a paper-based evaluation form. This suite of assessment is not dissimilar to many other internship program. What initial data from students was indicating was the assessment approach was not appropriately valuing the work as learning nor was it valuing the important contribution of the industry partners.

Researching stakeholder perspectives

To account for the diversity of perspectives influencing the partnerships that is the Creative Industries internship program the following research was undertaken. Industry partners’ perspectives were sought through interviews with 20 industry partners who provided formal work based experience opportunities for internship students. The industry partners interviewed represent various business organisations,

including for profit and not for profit organisations, and small to medium enterprises and larger organisations. Student interns who worked with these industry partners came from a range of disciplines in the creative industries including Dance, Drama, Creative Writing, Visual Arts, Music, Web and Interactive Design, Fashion, Creative Advertising, Journalism and Media Communications. Students' perspectives were sought through the analysis on qualitative data available through the unit evaluation surveys and 2 student focus groups. Interviews with 6 academics involved in the Transitions Program were also conducted to inform the research.

The interviews and focus groups were designed to elicit the perspectives of industry partners, students and academics on the internship experience with a view to informing the ongoing development of the Internship program. Data from these stakeholders was analysed to inform changes in work integrated learning program including the assessment design. Initially the stakeholders were asked to provide background information about their involvement in the internship program. This was followed by a series of open questions designed to make explicit their perspectives on the reasons for engaging in the internship, the internship program design and assessment, approaches to the implementation of the internship program and readiness for students to engage in the internship. The data was collected over twelve months and collated and analysed using open coding methods. The data presented here represents part of ongoing analysis. It offers some insight into stakeholders' (i) perspectives on assessment of the internship program and (ii) perspectives on the contribution of WIL partners to this assessment process. This research has led to a review of the assessment design for the program.

Stakeholder perceptions of Internship assessment design

There were a number of key themes emerged from the data in relation to the design of the assessment tasks. While stakeholders provided positive feedback on the relevance and usefulness of early assessment tasks and the industry partners' evaluation they also raised a number of issues with aspects of assessment design. Firstly the focus on the written academic essay emerged as a significant issue with stakeholders who called for more value to be placed on the workplace activities and the feedback provided from industry partners. Secondly, both students and academic supervisors saw the heavily weighted written academic essay having limited capacity to capture the rich learning that occurs in the aural, visual, tactical and kinesthetic disciplines of the Creative Industries. Thirdly the lack of opportunities to reflect on and share workplace experiences with peers and academic supervisors also emerged as an issue for stakeholders.

When students were asked what most needed improving their comments most often focused on the assessment for the unit. Students questioned the heavy focus on academic writing and called for an increased assessment focus on the work placement activities. Students suggested they would prefer to be marked on what they have done in the placement, not how they 'can relate it to academic texts'. A student remarked the assessment "shouldn't be too academic" and suggested it be more reflective. Another student while recognizing the purpose for reflection and review felt that the journal tasks were sufficient and formal academic writing did not add value to the experience.

Although I understand the reasoning behind reflection and review it's not something I enjoy. Incorporating theory and academic referencing into a formal review document seems quite pointless to me as a lot of the theory is based around common sense. I covered most of it in my diary [journal] anyway.

Students criticized the emphasis on academic writing over the work undertaken and produced in the workplace setting. One student stated:

The report overlooks all of the hard work I have done over my placement. The report is a big research assignment that is weighted too heavily over the content I have produced as part of my placement.

Another student stated: "more of the mark should be from the evaluation you get from the actual work place". Similar to student comments, industry partners and academics also questioned the academic writing emphasis of the assessment in the context of the industry focused, practical experience of the internship. An academic supervisor suggested that the academic nature of this writing task seemed incongruent to the practical placement and was quite challenging for students.

Um I suppose for a lot of our students it's quite funny because they've just been through a really industry focused, practical placement and we suddenly ask them to analyse this in an academic way. Now I know we're a university and that's what we should be doing, but that's quite hard for them ...

An industry partner in calling for an increased input on the students' results commented:

Given that an internship is predominantly about tacit and experiential learning, it is important that the industry partner be given the opportunity to assess that and provide some leverage to the student's mark.

In expressing her concern about with minimal weighting on the Industry Partner Evaluation compared to the Written Reflective Report an industry partner further suggested students' capacity to operate in the work setting was not being valued within the assessment program and this in turn could skew students' results.

When the industry partner evaluation was weighted at 10% of the students grade, it bothered me that student's could too easily skew this....doing badly on the job but writing an excellent written review assessment therefore not really reflecting their internship performance. Similarly, this could be reversed and the student have performed exceptionally well in the internship but not be able to translate this well in written form, particularly in the visual arts discipline.

In contrast to these issues, most industry partners, who had supervisory responsibilities, reported that they felt comfortable evaluating their students against the stated criteria and indicated they were happy for students to receive a copy of the evaluation. Moreover, many indicated they also provided verbal feedback against the criteria at the mid internship feedback session and at the conclusion of the internship as well as informally throughout the internship. In a few cases, partners indicated they would like more space for written comments to make the necessarily generic criteria and standards more relevant to the internship activities. In contrast to this position, two industry supervisors who had limited supervisory experience of interns and work employees did indicate some nervousness about their role in assessing the intern's work. One industry partner who was a more junior staff member in discussing her awkwardness in evaluating her intern stated:

I felt a little bit umm, I guess awkward for marking people or umm... providing my evaluations of them directly to them because obviously like, I really liked both of our interns and they did do good work, but like I said they did have downfalls but I guess it's hard because I kind of become like part of the family so it's sort of hard to try and say these things you did well, but you didn't actually show these skills, yeah

Secondly, both students and academic supervisors indicated the final report is too broad for the diverse workplace contexts of the Creative Industries Internship Program suggesting there needed to be "more flexibility in the assessment depending what the placement entails". They identified the importance of valuing the practices of the discipline. An academic supervisor from a design discipline in considering the academic writing focus in the unit states: "I think there's a visual and tactile thing that could still be improved for that unit". Another academic from a performance discipline in referring to the written report states: "It was very generic and it is very difficult ... in the performance area. I think it needs to be twiggled a bit in order to suit. Another academic suggested, "maybe the assessment could be different, depending on the majors that people are studying".

Thirdly, students and academics recognized the value of establishing learning spaces and dialogue to support students reflect on their own experiences and consider their experiences in the light of the experiences of their peers. One academic suggested:

I would really love a component of that final thing to actually be an oral presentation to the rest of the group, because I think there is such a quality of learning that just could be shared amongst the group, particularly those who have gone overseas.

Student comments reinforce the value of dialogue among peers to support students to make sense of their experience. One student suggested "maybe a debrief with other students and the supervisors

would have helped with reflection”. In questioning the relevance and value of the academic essay another student also suggested that dialogue with peers and academic would be better enable the sharing of views and the unpacking of perspectives:

I'd much prefer a relaxed round table discussion between academic supervisor and all discipline interns at the same time. That way a broader range of views and experiences could be exchanged, discussed and workshopped.

Additionally a student recommended debrief opportunity part the way through the internship hours:

Maybe there could have been some kind of debrief or social thing mid-way through – like some kind of lunch or social thing even for an hour – to meet people and talk about how it was going, and get ideas on how you could improve. That would be helpful.

These comments raise important questions about how best to value the work and learning in the workplace context and how best to add value to students' workplace learning experiences through the assessment design. On the one hand students are looking to receive appropriate credit for the work undertaken on the internship. Industry partners, academics and students raised concerns that the work students engaged in as part of the internship was not being valued appropriately in the assessment design. On the other hand a number of students, academics and industry partners also recognize the benefits that stepping back and reflecting on the experience to make sense of the experience and bring to surface tacit knowledge (Mooradian, 2005: 110). These stakeholder perspectives also raise questions about the goals of assessments in the Work Integrated Learning context. These perspectives challenge universities to consider how best to partner with the workplace supervisors to support student learning and how to appropriately recognise the capabilities students develop and evidence in the workplace setting. These issues also highlight the need for criteria and standards that are: (1) developed and shared with stakeholders; (2) allow for variation across disciplines; and, (3) encourage comparability in the evaluation of students' internship work. Further if a goal of WIL assessment is to help students step back from their situated workplace learning experiences and through reflection make sense of these integrated and complex experiences (Bates, 2003; Boud et al, 1993) then these stakeholder perspectives raise a number of questions. Is the lone task of academic writing the best way to assist students make sense of their real world experience, to challenge their disciplinary understandings and make explicit informal learning strategies that will help them be effective learners through their lives? What are the best ways for universities to support and facilitate students' reflection on their experiences? And significantly, how can industry partners' expertise be best leverage through assessment?

Closing the Loop: WIL Stakeholder perspectives informing changes to assessment and evaluation practices

The research into WIL stakeholder perspectives has led to changes in the assessment design for the Creative Industries Internship program. It has also lead to a consideration of how we can better incorporate the industry partner feedback into the evaluation of curriculum quality and the assurance of student learning outcomes. Following is a discussion of assessment changes including the ways industry partners contribute to the assessment of students' internship work and ways students' reflect on their developing professional practice.

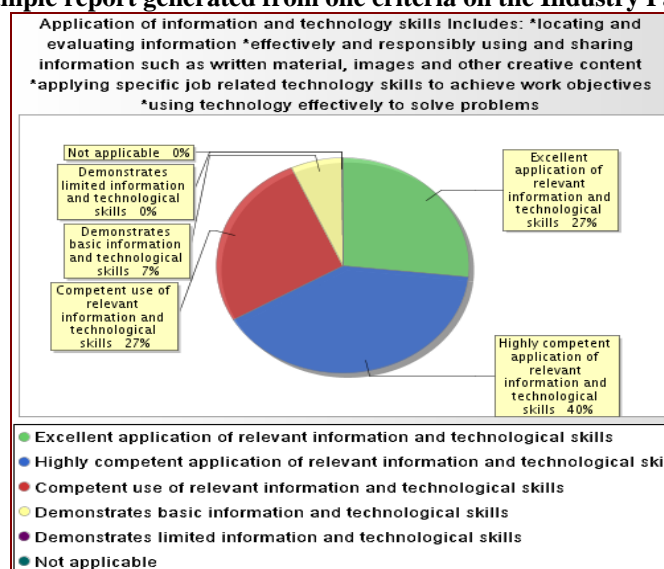
The major assessment task was changed to include an oral presentation and group discussion, which aims to facilitate reflective dialogue among interns, their peers and academic supervisors. While the original reflective report did encourage students to make explicit connections between their university studies and their learning in the workplace, it did not however enable students to benefit from sharing their reflection with others nor to build a deeper understanding of their experience in relation to others (Boud et al, 1993). Additionally the written focus of the report provided a challenge to students whose discipline knowledges and practices are embodied in other literacies such as visual and kinaesthetic (Brodie & Irving, 2007:17). Students are now required to share aspects of their internship experience with their peers and the academic supervisor, which can be accompanied by a display of portfolio materials produced during the internship. Students also have the option to invite industry partners to attend and assess the student's oral presentation and contribute to the discipline-based seminar discussion about working in their industry. Previously the academic reflective report was heavily weighted (70% of the overall marks). The revised oral/written reflection and portfolio has now been reduced to 50% of the overall weighting to enable more weighting to be allocated to the Industry

Partner Evaluation. Students have also been provided with options on how they would like the oral presentation is weighted compared to the written component of the reflective assessment.

This research has also led to changes in the design and implementation of the Industry partner's evaluation of the intern's work. In response to feedback provided by both the industry partners and students, the Industry Partner Evaluation of the student's internship has been redesigned. Firstly, Industry Partner Evaluation has increased to 20% of the overall weighting. Secondly, the criteria and standard for assessment have been reworked to provide more focus and guidance for industry partners and greater focus on the assessment of the students' application of discipline knowledge and skills. Thirdly the paper-based Industry Partner evaluation has been moved into an online survey tool. This online survey tool enables academic supervisors to review and moderate evaluations made across the program, which opens up opportunities for academic supervisors and industry supervisor to discuss the applications of standards.

The survey tool also enables reports to be generated that collate and graphically represent the Industry Partners' evaluations against Creative Industries academic standards. The evaluation has been set up to enable whole of faculty and discipline-level reports to be generated. The diagram below provides an example of the reports that can be generated. The reports collate the interns' performance against a broad set of identified graduate capabilities for the creative industries. These reports can help course coordinators and course teams to identify strengths and gaps in student learning outcomes to inform continuous reflection and accountability at the course level.

Figure 1: A sample report generated from one criteria on the Industry Partner Evaluation



Other strategies that engage external stakeholders in providing feedback on the quality of student learning outcomes and on courses, such as assessment panels and benchmarking activities, can often be selective, very resource-intensive and rely on a significant amount of goodwill from industry. Being able to harvest feedback from many industry partners involved in the provision of WIL is efficient, scalable and more inclusive. The issue that needs to be considered further is the quality and usefulness of this feedback. The first stage of implementation of the online evaluation identified two key limitations of the feedback. Firstly the lack of the specificity in the feedback limited the capacity to drill down to determine gaps in students' learning. While the evaluation data does provide industry perspectives on the students' achievement against capabilities, industry partners have not been asked to provide detailed feedback in relation to specific discipline-level skills and capabilities. Academic staff felt that where issues with achievement against the broad criteria were identified further investigation would be required. Secondly the qualitative feedback provided by industry partners tended to focus on the positive aspects of the interns' work, personal qualities and dispositions. While this feedback is encouraging for students it does not provide them with suggestions for improvement and continued personal development. With a focus on the positive aspects of the interns' work, the data also has limited usefulness in the process of course review. Planned changes to the online industry partner evaluation include incorporating guidance to industry partners on writing qualitative feedback to students. The evaluation is being changed online to encourage industry partner to discuss areas for

further development in the intern's work as well as areas of strength. This more specific qualitative feedback from industry partners will likely benefit both students and academic course teams. By analysing this more specific qualitative feedback, industry course teams will have readily access to external perspectives on how students are performing in real world settings. Additionally it is planned that the criteria and standards used in the evaluation will also be reviewed to align with Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) discipline threshold outcomes, which are currently being developed through the Australian Learning and Teaching Council.

Conclusion

Assurance of learning is increasingly important business for universities and work integrated learning experiences can make a significant contribution to providing evidence of students' developing capabilities. The challenge to universities is to recognize these rich, complex real world contexts are not like the formal learning context of university and therefore require a reconsideration of assessment practices. WIL assessment design needs to not only value the critical embodied knowledges evidenced in students' work practices and products but also needs to consider ways assessment can add value to this situated learning experiences through enriching students' reflective and self-directed skills to manage their own learning. External feedback on WIL students' capacity to apply their knowledge and skills to workplace problems and challenges can also be valuable data for course teams. This research has also lead to a consideration of how we can better incorporate the industry partner feedback into the evaluation of curriculum quality and the assurance of student learning outcomes.

To leverage the potential of WIL our partnerships with industry need to be seen as much more than the provision of institutional learning at sites outside the academy. Particularly, the businesses that are the work providing partners in WIL initiatives need to be seen as more than external resources that informatively support university-controlled curriculum and assessment. WIL provision requires that universities understand and appreciate those partners as contributors with them to a culture of learning provision and support. These industry partner contributions need to be understood as valuing work as learning, not work as something that needs to be integrated with learning to make that learning more authentic and thereby more vocational.

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