SCIENCE CONNECT: NON-PLACEMENT WIL

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Science degrees develop a range of skills including those that are discipline specific as well as general skills such as problem solving and critical thinking. In a rapidly changing world with an ever-changing workforce, it is these more general scientific skills which will be incredibly valuable to students in their future careers. Despite the importance of these skills, they are often of lesser importance in current science curricula, and science graduates often find it difficult to find work soon after graduation.

To address these issues, we developed a scalable Workplace Integrated Learning (WIL) experience for all science students at Flinders University. In our approach, groups of students work on campus in a simulated consultancy company, to provide answers to real-world problems from companies and government organisations. Throughout the semester, the course provides various professional development opportunities, and provides students with the opportunity to interact with external partners from relevant industries. Responses from student questionnaires show that the WIL experience produces significant improvements in students' perceived preparedness for work. The course design provides a scalable approach to providing genuine WIL experiences in science.

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