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### **Abstract**

This paper explores academics' perceptions of work-integrated learning (WIL) resourcing provisions and challenges at one institution to better envisage institutional support for WIL. The study draws on the WIL Curriculum Classification Framework to unpack how support and resourcing aligns to different modes of WIL. This study reports on the perceptions of 95 academics from a range of disciplines, teaching a variety of WIL activities. Findings are organized under core resourcing challenges: workload and recognition; developing WIL; administering and scaling WIL; sustainable management of industry relationships, and; other support requirements. Findings suggest mixed perceptions on WIL resourcing, space for more WIL integration in subjects, and consensus on the under-recognition of WIL work. Findings highlight the invisibility of academics' efforts to embed WIL in curriculum, showing clashes in workload modelling and WIL practices. The study has implications for institutional WIL resourcing and recommends more coherent policies for recognition of WIL work.

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# Resourcing and recognition: Academics' perceptions of challenges experienced embedding work-integrated learning in the curriculum

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This paper explores academics' perceptions of work-integrated learning (WIL) resourcing provisions and challenges at one institution to better envisage institutional support for WIL. The study draws on the WIL Curriculum Classification Framework to unpack how support and resourcing aligns to different modes of WIL. This study reports on the perceptions of 95 academics from a range of disciplines, teaching a variety of WIL activities. Findings are organized under core resourcing challenges: workload and recognition; developing WIL; administering and scaling WIL; sustainable management of industry relationships, and; other support requirements. Findings suggest mixed perceptions on WIL resourcing, space for more WIL integration in subjects, and consensus on the under-recognition of WIL work. Findings highlight the invisibility of academics' efforts to embed WIL in curriculum, showing clashes in workload modelling and WIL practices. The study has implications for institutional WIL resourcing and recommends more coherent policies for recognition of WIL work.

Keywords: Curriculum, resourcing, non-placement WIL, workload

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Work-integrated learning (WIL) is gaining attention and traction across higher education as institutions place greater emphasis on preparing graduates for a complex world of work (Oliver, 2015; Orrell, 2011; Patrick et al., 2009; Peach et al., 2015;). WIL is a pedagogical approach that offers students the opportunity to practice authentic discipline skills and apply their learnt knowledge within or alongside industry or community. By participating in WIL activities, students are introduced to a range of work experiences that shape professional identities and foster career development learning (Artess et al., 2017; Sheridan, Sheridan et al., 2021). Through these authentic work experiences, individuals can emerge from their studies more aware of their potential, better equipped for a self-determined future, and being able to differentiate themselves as having valuable work-based skills (Artess et al., 2017).

However, despite the value of WIL for developing learners' work readiness (Smith et al., 2014), it is not equally available to all students (Mackaway et al., 2014; Orrell, 2011; Peach et al., 2016). Participation rates in WIL in vocational disciplines, for example, education, engineering or nursing are higher than those in other non-vocational disciplines, such as business, management and society and culture (Lester et al., 2016; Universities Australia, 2019). Work placements for vocational degrees are generally a requirement for professional bodies. Recent research shows that graduates in disciplines with work-based WIL traditionally embedded, such as education, health and engineering, have higher perceived preparedness for work compared to those disciplines where WIL is not consistently integrated (Jackson & Dean, 2022). For students completing a degree where WIL is not mandatory nor supported as a

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requirement for degree completion, WIL opportunities will vary or, be absent from their studies, limiting exposure for learning through work.

Limited access to WIL has significant implications for equity cohorts (Mackaway et al., 2014; Orrell, 2011). Students excluded from WIL may miss out on personal and career development opportunities that set them up for transition into work (Orrell, 2011). Research shows that some students, such as those first in their family to attend university, may have limited social or family capital for seeking employment after graduation and may require additional support at university (O'Shea et al., 2021). Students with a disability experience disadvantage in WIL, facing barriers around sourcing and staying on placement (Mackaway et al., 2014). Such barriers demonstrate the importance for appropriate support in the delivery of WIL programs. Universities should consider the needs of all learners in order to fashion suitable opportunities to support and prepare students as lifelong learners in and through work transitions (O'Shea et al., 2021; Universities Australia, 2019). Yet designing WIL into curriculum requires additional academic labour and personal investment in pastoral care for students that is often unaccounted for and undervalued (Hayes, 2018; Rio Poncela et al., 2021).

Therefore, while advocating for WIL for all is virtuous, without appropriate resourcing around WIL, systematic inequalities for preparing learners for work will prevail. Significant attention needs to be given to the resourcing, support, and sustainability of WIL programs and institutional policies, processes, and strategies. This paper reports on the experience of academics at one institution on the provision, needs, and challenges of embedding WIL into curriculum. The paper begins with a brief discussion on the ongoing concerns with resourcing in WIL and higher education, before offering an overview of the context of the study and the WIL Curriculum Classification Framework (Dean et al., 2020) employed to organize and report on different types of WIL activities. The methodology and findings are presented and the paper closes with a discussion on resourcing and the implications of this research for higher education institutions.

## RESOURCING WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING

In many countries, preparing work-ready graduates is a political and economic imperative with government funding targeting student employability and stronger partnerships with industry (e.g., see, Australian Government, 2021; Government of Canada, 2021). These government incentives may address some of the inequalities in WIL by allocating funds to prioritize access for certain cohorts of students. For example, in Australia, the *National Industry Priority Linkage Fund* (Australian Government, 2021), targets WIL as a priority area as well as increased industry partnerships for STEM-skilled graduates to improve employment outcomes. In Canada, the *Student Work Placement* program (Government of Canada, 2021) incentivizes employers to host students, with greater funds for employers who hire students from equity groups including women in STEM, persons with disabilities and Indigenous students.

In some regions, universities are now required and legislated to address the needs of all students in curriculum design, specifically those who are disadvantaged (Australian Government, 2017; Brown, 2010). However, the extent to which this reaches into WIL pedagogy remains problematic. Issues of equity and access in WIL is addressed in WIL policies and processes and by integrating alternative types, such as non-placement WIL, into curriculum (Peach et al., 2016). Given the legality of inclusive education, to create fair educational conditions, institutions may find themselves at risk of breach of ethics or law if they fail to provide inclusive educational experiences to students in equity cohorts (Hughes, 2015).

Even with government endorsement, institutions are largely responsible for developing and funding WIL. It is no secret then, that one of the main barriers and determinants of the implementation of WIL is adequate support and resourcing (Patrick et al., 2009; Rook, 2017; Wenham et al., 2020). Resourcing issues for WIL programs have been previously identified as workload and time restraints (Bates, 2011; Clark et al., 2016; Jovanovic et al., 2018) contributing to a current “lack of recognition of the amount of work and skills required to run successful WIL programs” (Patrick et al., 2009, p.34). For academics or educators coordinating WIL, a number of personal and professional resources are dispensed, and as the central driver of the program, should be of key concern for efforts evaluating the sustainability of WIL.

However, little is known about how institutions resource WIL programs. In a large Australian study, Edwards et al. (2015) reveal that staff are largely unaware of the costs and funding allocations for WIL across the institution and only partially aware of costs associated with a specific subject (unit of study) or course (also known as degree or program). Resourcing also remains a significant barrier to implementing WIL to greater numbers of students (Edwards et al., 2015; Johnson et al., 2019). Edwards et al.'s (2015) study highlights that in order to increase access and sustainability of WIL in STEM, a number of systemic barriers need to be addressed. These include challenges of attracting enough industry partners, funding for administrative staff, a lack of infrastructure and process, and issues with recognition such as the value placed on WIL and the load it assumes for a small number of academics (Edwards et al., 2015).

Investing in industry partnerships is also highlighted as a resourcing barrier for implementing WIL (Johnson et al., 2019). As indicated by Bates (2010), time taken to maintain relationships with industry may have been estimated to involve up to six hours per week in activities such as meetings, email correspondence, telephone calls, training, and planning WIL experiences as well as practice-oriented projects to maintain ongoing WIL partnerships. ‘Relationship maintenance’ work (Bates, 2010), was noted to be additional time to academic work. These WIL partnership activities are currently not recognized in most workload allocations (Jovanovic et al., 2018), even though the investment of time in these may also be valuable for other research and community engagement outcomes (Fleming et al., 2018; Johnson et al., 2019; Sheridan, Price et al., 2021). With these barriers in mind, Johnson et al. (2019, p. 53) recommend institutions “ensure the investment in WIL is well targeted and enables sustainable, high-quality experiences, stakeholder participation and growth.”

#### *Resourcing and Teaching in Higher Education*

Providing the necessary support and resources for academic staff to perform their roles is not unique to WIL but is a well-known challenge for higher institution providers (Christensen et al., 2020; Startup, 1979). For a university to meet its teaching and learning goals, academics must feel supported and motivated in their roles (Gappa et al., 2007). Studies have shown that employee access to resources is positively related to performance (Nielsen, et al., 2015) and a stronger sense of wellbeing (Han et al., 2020), while a lack of availability of job resources can directly impact on employee burnout (Bakker et al., 2014). It is also suggested that a lack of resources for curriculum development or implementation can affect an academic's productivity and lead to exhaustion (Han et al., 2020).

The types of resources referred to thus far may be classified differently in organizations, yet are typically understood as internal (e.g., intrinsic motivation) or external resources (e.g., financial, recognition). Bakker and Demerouti (2007, p. 312) refer to job resources as “physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job” that enable an employee to achieve work goals, reduce job

demands and stimulate learning and development. They offer three groups of resources: organizational resources (such as pay, control of job, promotional prospects, and security), social resources (support from colleagues and leaders, team climate), and task-related resources (task identity and significance, autonomy, performance feedback). Similarly, yet relating to university teachers, Chang et al. (2010) identify three categories of support that academics require to perform their roles, these are teaching resources, peer support, and administrative support. Teaching support includes financial or staffing support that enables teachers to facilitate learning and contributes to favorable working conditions. Peer support is a social resource that contributes to teachers being able to achieve their work goals. Administrative support is described as a factor that contributes to academics being recognized and appreciated for their work.

This study proposes two research questions: (i) How are academics supported and resourced across various forms of WIL? (ii) What are the core challenges for facilitating WIL that impact on an academic's available resources? To answer these questions, a range of organizational, social and task-related resources that are pertinent to facilitating WIL were drawn upon. These include: workload and recognition, financial support, support or time for developing WIL, support or time for administering and sourcing WIL opportunities, support or time for sustaining or managing industry relationships, and other support requirements (such as equipment or software purchase).

#### *Work-Integrated Learning Curriculum Classification (WILCC) Framework*

To investigate the impact of resourcing for different types of WIL, this study employed a typology that clusters different types of WIL into discrete categories. The WIL Curriculum Classification (WILCC) Framework (Dean et al., 2020) is a university-wide reporting framework for making visible WIL activities across every degree program. It is designed to enable mapping and scaffolding of different types of WIL activities across a degree program to ultimately enhance the employability of students.

The WILCC framework was developed in an Australian context and institution and was informed by two existing WIL typologies. The first is University Australia's (2019) typology that offers four types of WIL and four delivery modes of WIL. These types were labelled as placement, project, fieldwork, simulation or other WIL activities, while the delivery modes are named (i) Work experience in industry, a whole subject devoted to WIL, (ii) Full WIL, a subject with 50% or more workload of WIL, (iii) Embedded WIL, A unit/subject partially devoted to WIL, less than 50%, and (iv) Extra-curricular WIL, WIL activities outside a unit/subject.

The second is Kaider et al. (2017) authenticity-proximity framework developed at Deakin University, Australia, that categorizes types of authentic assessment according to their representation of industry practice (authenticity) and context of practice to work (proximity). The authenticity-proximity framework recognizes how different authentic assessment and WIL activities may cluster into first, middle, and final years of study. These two frameworks are helpful as they offer ideas for how WIL might be reported based on looking at the WIL activities within a unit/subject, and important factors that impact WIL design. However, they are both limited to naming or grouping 'types' of WIL which leave little room for discipline-specific nomenclature or innovations.

Drawing on Billett's (2009) conception of learning in WIL as learning through practice, the WILCC framework avoids grouping WIL activities by types to instead centralize what students do in WIL to shape a classification structure. Looking at ways students learn through practice in WIL demarks a movement from close teacher-interventions and support for learning, towards greater autonomous practice-based learning in proximity to industry partners and work spaces. In this way, the WILCC

framework offers stages for scaffolding learning through and in practice and it does through offering four categories across curriculum that take place within credit-bearing subjects: Foundational pre-WIL; Embedded pre-WIL; Applied WIL and Professional WIL.

The first two classifications outline preparation activities for WIL, that involve reflection and practice intended to assist students to learn essential skills prior to participating in WIL. Foundational pre-WIL depicts activities that “encourage students to observe, explore, analyze, or reflect on theory in practice” (Dean et al., 2020, p. 8) without directly participating in a work or work-based practice. Examples include work observations, industry-based case studies and career development learning. Embedded pre-WIL outlines work or work-like activities where students are applying, investigating or experimenting with discipline knowledge and skills, in a subject where time in the pre-WIL activities are less than the contact hours spent in formal classes such as lectures, tutorials or workshops. In Embedded pre-WIL, students’ start practicing and applying their skills in a safe learning environment. Examples include workplace simulations, role-play, and other smaller industry engagement activities. With Applied WIL activities, students engage with industry or community partners inauthentic workplace or work-based activities, where the time spent in these WIL activities is greater than the contact hours spent doing other modes of learning. Examples include industry projects, smaller internships and consultations. Finally, Professional WIL denotes time spent over a sustained time participating in professional practices at work, where this WIL comprises the whole subject. Located here are activities that involve sustained time on placement with an industry partner. Across all four classifications the following design elements are essential: reflection, engaged feedback and career development learning.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employed a case study methodology to gauge the perceptions of teaching academics, who design and coordinate subjects (also known as units or modules), across a single institution. Gathering perceptions of academics at a single site was selected as a homogenous sample to reflect on the conditions of resourcing at that institution. A survey instrument with qualitative and quantitative questions was distributed to all teaching academic staff, to reach subject coordinators across all disciplines and in both undergraduate and postgraduate spaces. Ethical approval was sought (HREC 2019/307) and participation was voluntary and anonymous.

In total, 95 participants responded to the survey. Participants were instructed to select one subject they were coordinating to respond to the survey. They began by firstly responding to the WILCC Framework classification of that subject before responding to several questions. These participants identified being subject coordinators for subjects with the WILCC Framework classifications seen in Table 1.

Table 1: Participants organized by WILCC Framework.

Foundational pre-WIL	Embedded pre-WIL	Applied WIL	Professional WIL	No WIL	I Don't know
33	26	13	11	10	2

Participants were also represented from across discipline groups, with the highest number of responses from Arts, Humanities and Law, shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Participants organized by discipline groups.

Business (Bus)	Information Technology & Engineering (ITE)	Arts, Humanities & Law (AHL)	Education & Social Sciences (ESS)	Health & Science (HAS)	Other	TOTAL
13	13	27	17	21	4	95

Descriptive statistics were applied for quantitative data, with several inclusion frames including total responses and responses by WILCC Framework classifications. Qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

At this institution, workload provision is translated into various task-time allocations that are employed to manage staff activities within the context and resources provided. Each discipline group identified in Table 2, have similar proportional allocations for calculations relating to teaching, research and governance/service provisions and activities, between teaching, research and governance/service that by and large works on a 40%, 40% and 20%, time allocation respectively. However, within these domains, allocations of hours for specific activities are not made transparent across discipline groups and, therefore, each group may have their own formulas for activity allocations.

Therefore, while there appears to be some degree of uniformity in workload models, the practices of workload allocation as well as interpretations of these models, are indeed considered at times, contentious and contested. Workload development may reflect legacy practices, various degrees of consultation (i.e., faculty wide consultation to consultation restricted to the capacity of a few workload reference group members) and various level of detail and prescription in resultant documents. Similarly, the practical translation of workload rules into what academics actually do, may range from standardized homogenous allocation of work to more individualized negotiations. This is not to say that workloads should not have some flexibility, what is often contested is the tenuous, if not absent, recognition and valuation of corporate imperatives such as WIL into quantifiable impacts on academic time and work demands. Workload models and workload allocations are pertinent in this study, as one of the key areas of enquiry was to explore time demands of WIL activities across disciplines.

## FINDINGS

The findings were organized to reflect on the two research questions regarding how academics are supported and resourced across various forms of WIL activities and to unpack the core challenges for facilitating WIL that impact on an academic's available resources.

### *Perceptions on Resourcing Work-Integrated Learning*

The survey invited subject coordinators to respond to a Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree, not sure) to the broad question 'WIL activities in this subject are appropriately resourced'. The responses were analyzed first by an overall response and then by WIL classification.

Overall, as seen in Table 2, of those who identified as coordinating a subject with pre-WIL or WIL (n=83, ten participants identified as not including WIL in their subject at the time of responding and two weren't sure), most participants (31%, n=26) disagreed that pre-WIL and WIL are appropriately resourced. This was followed by those who believed it is well resourced (19%, n=16) and those who



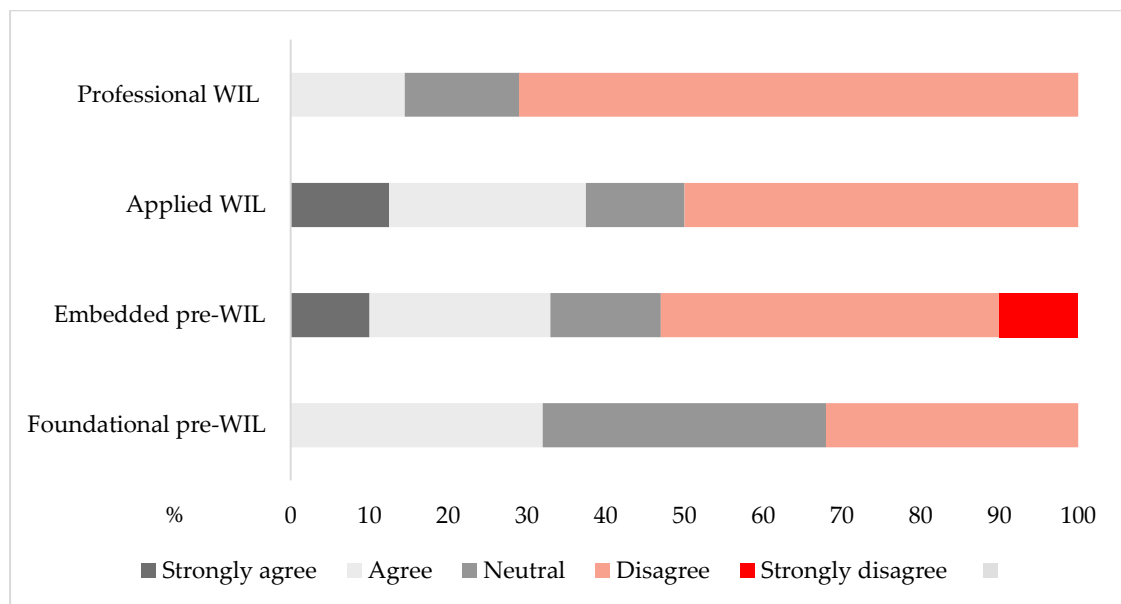
were neutral (17%, n=14). Very few held strong opinions that the WIL resourcing in their subjects were either very well (strongly agree 4%, n=3) or very poorly (strongly disagree 2.5%, n=2) resourced. A surprisingly large number skipped this question (26.5%, n=22).

Table 3: Overall perceptions on WIL resourcing.

Scale item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Skipped	total
Count	2	26	14	16	3	22	83
Percentage	2.50%	31%	17%	19%	4%	26.50%	100%

Excluding those who are not currently coordinating a subject with pre-WIL or WIL activities (n=12) and those who skipped this question (n=22), these perceptions were next analyzed according to the WILCC Framework to uncover any patterns against the classification of WIL offered in subjects (n=61). As seen in Figure 1, 71% (n=5) of participants who coordinate a Professional WIL subject disagreed that WIL in their subject is appropriately resourced. Subject coordinators of Applied WIL subjects' responses were spread with 50% (n=4) disagree and 50% either neutral (12.5%, n=1), agree (25%, n=2) or strongly agree (12.5%, n=1). For subject coordinators with Embedded pre-WIL subjects, the largest category was disagree (43%, n=9), with a small percentage (10%, n=2) strongly disagreeing. Foundational pre-WIL appeared more evenly spread across each scale for agree (32%, n=8), neutral (36%, n=9) or disagree (32%, n=8).

Figure 1: Likert scale response to whether WIL is adequately resourced.



### *Sourcing of Work-Integrated Learning*

A significant resourcing issue relates to sourcing WIL opportunities and the support available to investigate and secure industry connections, projects, or placements. Thirty-three participants responded to this question and identified themselves as coordinating a subject that involves the sourcing of an industry opportunity. Participants could select from several options as sourcing may be undertaken by more than one party. The data shows the majority of industry experiences are sourced

by the subject coordinator (n=23, 70%), with fewer by students (self-sourcing) (n=9, 27%) or members of the WIL team (e.g., a placement officer or faculty industry liaison) (n=9, 27%). Percentages are out of total responses (n=31). Note that with multiple selection options, these figures won't add up to 100%. This suggests that staff are drawing heavily on their own networks and connections to source industry experiences.

#### *Formal Workload Allocation Verses Actual Time Spent in Work-Integrated Learning Activities*

The survey aimed to draw out perceptions of time spent in WIL activities verses those formally allocated in workload agreements. Across all classifications, academics reported that they spend more hours sourcing and facilitating WIL compared to what is formally allocated in workload agreements. Data suggests that subjects in the Applied WIL classification are most in need, with approximately five times (5.00) as many hours spent facilitating WIL compared to those hours formally allocated. Subjects in the Applied and Embedded pre-WIL classification had on average 3.66 times as many actual hours used compared to those allocated, whereas subjects in the Foundational and Professional classification together had on average 2.25 as many.

Participants were asked how many hours they were allocated in workload and how many hours they actually spent per semester (there are two semesters a year) for two activities: (i) engaging with industry partners around WIL activities and (ii) engaging with students around WIL activities. Response ranges are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Workload verse actual hours for industry and student related WIL activities.

	Engaging with industry		Engaging with students	
	Workload hours	Actual hours	Workload hours	Actual hours
BUS	0	15-40	0	14-35
ITE	0-5	1-50	0-10	5-35
AHL	0	5-20	0	5-50
ESS	0-1	1-126	0-1	1-252
HAS	0-34	1-70	0-60	1-120

These ranges point to considerable differences between allocated and actual hours doing WIL activities, they also note the difference in workload allocations across Faculties. Looking at the workload allocations, there also appears to be little recognition, if any, specifically for industry engagement activities. Looking deeper into cases though, there are examples of academics doing WIL that aren't distinguished in workload as discrete WIL. For example, in Education and Social Sciences (ESS), an Applied WIL subject with an industry experience and multiple site visits, has 0 hours for industry activities and actual is listed at 126 hours. In Health and Science (HAS), a Professional WIL subject claims double the hours of allocated compared to actual, with 60 hours listed for students but 120 hours listed as actual. In Arts, Humanities and Law (AHL) a Professional WIL subject with hospital placements, has 0 hours allocated for industry partners but the participant listed 20 hours for actual hours taken. In Information Technology and Engineering (ITE), an Applied WIL subject with an industry project and multiple field trips, listed 0 hours for industry engagement and 50 hours as actual. In these cases, the WIL work is not identified as separate or different but rather subsumed into broader teaching and learning work.

### *Core Challenges for Resourcing of Work-Integrated Learning*

Academics were asked to identify the main challenges they experience when facilitating WIL that impacts on their available resources. Across the four classifications, textual data revealed five core challenges for subject coordinators concerning resourcing pre-WIL and WIL. These have been labelled as challenges relating to (1) workload and recognition, (2) developing WIL, (3) administering and scaling WIL, (4) sustainable management of industry relationships, and (5) other support requirements.

#### *Workload and recognition*

One of the main insights in the open text responses was the idea of 'invisible time', that is, academics spend hours outside of teaching or formal workload making WIL work. For these academics engaging their students is not only invisible but often goes unrecognized and undervalued. As one academic in Social Sciences (ESS) coordinating a Professional WIL subject described this as "it is additional time that I commit to the process to enrich student learning and applications of subject content knowledge in a real world, community context" (Participant 81, ESS). Additionally, the WIL work for subjects with Embedded pre-WIL classifications also involves "huge workload around simulation and scaffolding of WIL activities. Workload for the subject does not fit into the typical [subject code] structure" (P21, ITE).

Academics also pointed to work with engaging industry or community partners as resource intensive. Once industry partners are involved and students' work straddles workplace and university needs, there are a greater number of factors outside the control of the academic and curriculum, which could benefit from dedicated resources. One suggestion was to streamline some processes:

...workload activities are unsupported and unfunded – it takes a significant toll on overall capacity... suggest a dedicated WIL practitioner for the subject/s to receive own budget for education, engagement and career events, to receive workload adjustments on capacity. (P11, BUS)

Another academic agreed that institutional financial assistance is vital,

Subject coordinators are provided with no support for WIL. It needs to be financed and if the uni wants placements / industry partnerships, they need to employ a dedicated team to do that. Otherwise, it becomes as additional burden for me and far exceeds my 40% teaching allocation. (P 34, AHL)

The words 'time' and 'workload' were repeated throughout the text responses as a barrier to embedding or growing WIL opportunities, for example, "lack of academic staff time due to increasing workload" (P 76, HAS). This related to a range of WIL activities, including those non-placement WIL experiences such as projects or simulations.

The size of current workloads was reflected as was the fluctuating busy periods around teaching. One academic with no extra WIL support reflected, "we have no particular resource allocation for this subject. WIL development requires time for face-to-face visits with industry, which is hard to do during the session when teaching" (P 64, HAS). Many of the subjects without extra resourcing are those that employ WIL projects or simulations that take place inside and alongside other pedagogical approaches and activities. Coordinators in these subjects, while believing in the benefits of WIL, were also experiencing challenges having their work recognized and valued:

Faculty/Discipline does not see the value of this style of embedded learning, where WIL is directly integrated with case-based learning... The response has been 'WHY ARE YOU DOING ALL THIS STUFF' and always arises with discussions around the casual teaching budget. (P 74, HAS)

For universities there is a financial need to now commodify and market to students the value of WIL activities within their degrees, yet the academics' labour in resourcing this requirement needs to be taken into consideration.

#### *Developing work-integrated learning*

Developing new WIL activities and revising existing WIL experiences was noted as a challenge in the data. For some this related to a time issue (e.g., 'Time taken to modify content and assessments'), while for others it was the lack of access to people with specialized expertise to assist (e.g., 'Not enough people able to assess/approve internship agreements'). Academics of Professional WIL subjects that include placement programs, pointed to the development and training of new assessors, workplace supervisors, casuals or other support staff as a challenge and load on their time. One coordinator of an Embedded pre-WIL subject with simulations commented how workload for WIL is frontloaded around development:

Developing WIL activities (such as in my case experiential simulations) requires a significant time investment to first develop the activity and then a smaller (but ongoing) investment each year in comparison to other forms of assessment activities. (P 38, AHL)

Others agreed on the front-heavy investment required to seek partners and design WIL in a way that meets stakeholder's needs. Yet the development of WIL curriculum compared to the development of subjects without an external stakeholder, is treated the same.

Additionally, academics highlighted the need for greater access to staff who have expertise in designing WIL activities and programs, as well as professionals in career development learning to help develop and teach into WIL experiences. One academic reflected:

I am not trained in career development. People do whole degrees in that. It is unrealistic to expect me to be able to teach students about that stuff. We need to have trained people coming into our subjects. (P 34, AHL)

Two issues emerge here, the first is the development of WIL is a specific approach that may require the support of specialists in WIL pedagogy, and can include 'pracademics' - those who are an academic and an active practitioner. The second is when teaching into WIL, academics signaled that they may not have the skills or knowledge to facilitate career-focused activities and conversations. Several academics also identified that they simply do not have the time to develop new WIL activities, while one stated that it can be challenging to develop WIL activities for first year cohorts.

#### *Administering and scaling work-integrated learning*

The impact of class size was identified as a key challenge, particularly for those of subjects identified as Foundational pre-WIL and Embedded pre-WIL. An academic in Science, facilitating a large experimental and hands-on subject identified as Embedded pre-WIL commented, "could be better resourced to enhance this experience (but there is a threat to reduce number of classes)" (P 75, HAS). Others reflected on the size of their classes as a barrier to introducing WIL activities, "class too big for

WIL activities other than practical classes and content with lectures/tutorials' and ensuring scalability that is an appropriate WIL experience" (P 59, HAS).

Academics of Professional WIL subjects identified administrative burdens managing multiple placements, which included, "staff time to set up online Moodle site and follow up students and issue industry certifications" (P 25, ITE). Administrative load was not as prominent for academics in other WIL classifications, perhaps because non-placement WIL, such as industry projects and simulations, lends itself to group work or a smaller number of industry partners. Another academic agreed that the administrative load to source and facilitate placements can be difficult, stating "Just getting the number of placements required is an ongoing mission. We have an entire team of people to do it, and we still struggle. It's also often on the precipice of disaster" (P 82, ESS).

Scalability and administering WIL experiences is an area that needs to be considered to enhance WIL opportunities so that academics can better support their students.

#### *Sustainability of relationships with students and industry*

Maintaining relationships and supporting industry partners, as well as students, was highlighted as taking place in addition to and beyond the academic's role. For industry partners, the challenge related not only to sourcing potential industry partners but the ongoing resourcing of time for academic staff to engage with industry partners and the associated activities pre-and post-WIL. This finding was echoed in statements such as, "in this subject I manage on average 6 to 8 'clients' or industry/community partners and up to 18 student teams working on real world projects" (P 33, HAS). Supporting students was also mentioned as an activity that takes place 'out of work hours', with one participant commenting, "there is a great deal of pastoral care that occurs with students on placement. This often occurs outside placement hours such as evenings and weekends" (P 77, HAS). An academic commented on the value of their 'good will' as, "it is additional time that I commit to the process to enrich student learning" (P 81, ESS). This data signals the invisible work academics dedicate to WIL pedagogies.

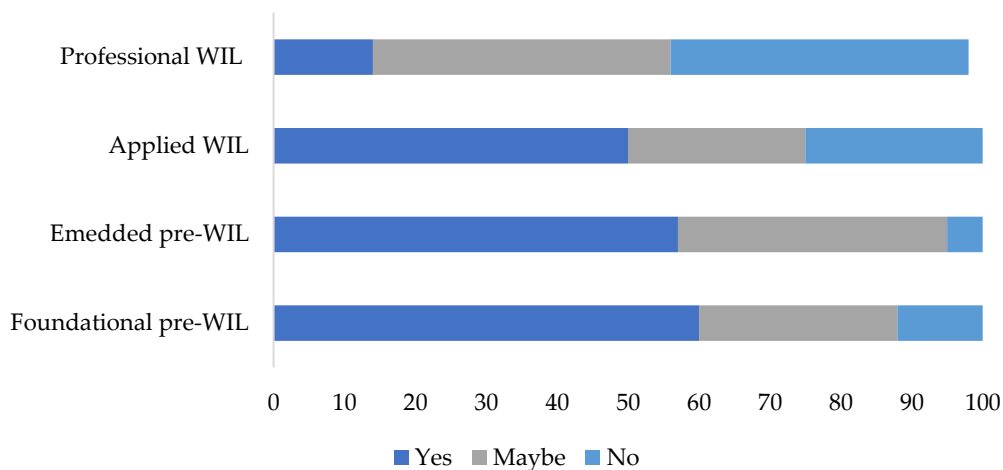
#### *Other support requirements*

Academics also identified a range of other needs to support WIL activities within their subjects. Several suggested practical resources for academics to embed WIL activities. Others recommended small pockets of funding for marketing the program, to produce student outputs or products for industry partners/clients or to pay casuals for training related to supervision and marking assessments.

#### *Growing Work-Integrated Learning Opportunities*

To conclude the survey, participants were asked their response to the following question: "looking into the future, can you identify opportunities to embed more WIL activities into your subject?" As Figure 2 demonstrates, for Professional WIL subjects, which comprise WIL for the whole subject, 14% of respondents still saw opportunity for more WIL. The most interesting finding to note from the data is that most teaching academics facilitating subjects with either Applied WIL (50%), Embedded pre-WIL (57%) or Foundational pre-WIL (60%) agreed they could include more pre-WIL or WIL in their subjects. Very few academics in Embedded pre-WIL agreed that no additional WIL could be introduced (5%).

Figure 2: Perceptions of including more WIL in subjects.



## DISCUSSION

Enquiring into academic perceptions of adequate resourcing produced a mixed spread of results, with many believing it is well resourced and a slightly higher percentage from those who identified the WIL curriculum as needing additional resourcing. More than half of academics with non-placement WIL, classified as Applied WIL, preparation activities in Embedded and Foundational pre-WIL, agreed there was space for more WIL curriculum to be integrated in their subjects. These findings are both exciting and concerning. Although academics recognize this work is not always well resourced, there is an openness for doing more with WIL pedagogies. This study draws out a contention in WIL work, between doing good work, that is caring and relationship-building with students and partners, and doing work that can have limited resourcing and recognition.

WIL pedagogies by definition require three stakeholders: the student, educator and industry or community partner. Involving an external partner within core learning increases risk. It relies on an academic's ability to connect and maintain relationships that are valuable and beneficial to external stakeholders and students' learning. This is complex, nuanced work, requiring flexibility and constant calibration of needs alignment and learning outcomes. As Lucas et al. (2021, p.171) recognize, WIL is highly dependent on the strengths of these relationships, "the value extends far beyond the transaction of the placement itself". Many relationships with industry are nurtured and grow from an academic's own networks and survive because of the intimate knowledges that academics bring to these relationships. Where this is the case, consideration needs to be given to how academics can nurture these important relationships and how the partnership can be sustained over time, especially if the academic moves out of teaching that subject.

Providing adequate and timely care for students, particularly if they are off campus, is also a risk to student wellbeing if not done well. In large part, this caring work is fulfilled by teachers devoting emotional, social, material and political resources into doing what they feel is right for their students (Rio Poncela et al., 2021). Speaking to the caring work that emerges to help students in addition to facilitating WIL, Hayes (2018, p. 29) illustrates other labour that goes unaccounted for:

In addition to teaching and research, academics undertake a range of activities such as personal tutoring, writing references for students seeking employment, sitting on programme review committees and acting as external examiners, all of which can be described as “academic citizenship” (Havergal, 2015). While it is important to maintain quality and support pastoral care that universities now commodify and sell to students, this labour is undervalued by institutions and does not bring with it career rewards.

In order to mitigate these risks, academics must have their WIL practices seen and formally recognized as valuable to creating rich, authentic learning experiences for students. Establishing or rewriting curriculum through WIL pedagogies needs to be seen as a unique resourcing challenge, beyond simply the need to source placements.

The findings echo previous WIL resourcing studies (Bates, 2010, 2011; Jovanovic et al., 2018) that highlight *time* as a crucial resourcing challenge. Sourcing experiences, projects or placements has significant time implications and can create roadblocks when not given sufficient attention or allocated early enough before the semester begins. The findings show that academics are doing double the amount of sourcing industry experiences, compared to students or other support staff. Working with industry is not new to academic’s work. It is seen in governance roles, liaising with industry to build and develop networks. It is seen in research roles, where external partners are key to research processes, competitive grants and productive outputs. Yet what the findings in this study is telling us, is that partnership work is not always aligned to or recognized within teaching and curriculum roles.

Reflecting on Table 4 in the findings, the considerable amount of zero hour allocations to WIL for industry activities and a lesser extent student activities, suggests that WIL work is not always a formally recognized task in an academic’s educational work. The findings draw out the inconsistencies across different Faculties as workload models are not uniform across the university. When considering that WIL work is being completed alongside other curriculum and teaching practices, it can be seen that much work to accomplish WIL is at the expense of the ‘good will’ of academics or subsumed into the broader category of ‘teaching and learning work’. The invisibility of caring teaching (Rio Poncela et al., 2021) and acknowledgement of the required specialized practice-based skills, reflects the precarious situation for sustaining WIL in universities. These findings relate to and are echoed in other findings highlighting workload concerns (Clark et al., 2016; Edwards et al., 2015; Jovanovic et al., 2018; Wenham et al., 2020). Given the concerns of over working and lack of support (Han et al., 2020), careful consideration must be paid to the structures and policies guiding an academic’s time at work.

Administrative load and issues with scaling up WIL were identified as a challenge, as academics flagged facilitating WIL can be largely an individual exercise. Gaining additional support or staff for a range of roles, for example administration, marking, industry liaison, were suggested as helpful resources. The findings further highlighted a need for increased access to professional learning and WIL pedagogy expertise. Universities need to more aware of how WIL funding and support is allocated to facilitating different types of WIL and across different disciplines, in order to ensure all students are supported in and through work transitions (Mackaway et al., 2014; Orrell, 2011).

#### IMPLICATIONS FOR STRATEGIC INSTITUTIONAL WIL RESOURCING

These findings have several practical implications for institutions that will address the allocation of WIL resources and necessary recognition for all types of WIL work across the university. First, it suggests the need for more consistent WIL recognition, policies, and processes at an institutional level. Academic workload allocations for WIL must be written into workload models for all staff to achieve

sustainable WIL practices. It would be useful to offer guidance, visibility, and flexibility around the range of resource demands of various categories of WIL outlined in the WILCC Framework. Institutions may also consider a central WIL team for enrichment, support, and maintenance of industry relations and for WIL administrative functions, as part of a mixed model of centralized and decentralized organisation. Future work may consider proposing ranges of workload hours to the different classification of WIL.

Second, at present the resourcing challenges identified by academics address concerns for their subject only. Various discrepancies across academic's experiences may arise because WIL resources are allocated to specific subjects and programs, potentially producing inequalities and, at the least, devaluing modes that aren't professional WIL. There is a need to reorganize WIL resourcing from subject-level resourcing or allocations to a specific WIL program, to consider WIL resourcing across a course or degree. Although a standard university-wide financial/staffing resourcing model for WIL may seem the reasonable solution, developing a singular resourcing model may not capture the unique nature of each WIL activity or program nor the diversity of contextual factors that impact on the implementation of WIL within each discipline. A course-wide approach to resourcing WIL would enable discussions within course teams to identify scaffolded WIL opportunities across various stages of learning to support and reorganize resources for placement and non-placement WIL opportunities for all students.

Third, to assist the sustainability and quality improvement of WIL and WIL resourcing, it is recommended that WIL is integrated as a fixed item within formal course review processes. This includes reflecting on existing pre-WIL and WIL activities and using the WIL Quality framework (Campbell et al., 2019) to benchmark and improve WIL pedagogy. It should include resourcing discussions to ensure adequate support for all variations of WIL across the course and include identifying professional learning opportunities on WIL pedagogies and support from educational curriculum specialists.

## CONCLUSION

This study sought to better understand how WIL is resourced and recognized across different WIL categories. The study shows mixed opinions on resourcing of WIL, with a small majority claiming WIL resourcing needs some improvement. This finding aligns with previous commentaries on WIL resourcing (Edwards et al., 2015; Johnson et al., 2019; Patrick et al., 2009; Rook, 2017). However, what is highlighted is that academics believe WIL work needs greater recognition. Given the demands on an academic's time to source and maintain industry partnerships (Bates, 2010), more needs to be done to include this work as curriculum design inside workload, to increase its visibility (Jovanovic et al., 2018). Given the contemporary literature demonstrating the impact of WIL of different types of students employment and employability (Jackson & Dean, 2022), it's time to recognize community and industry partners as key to teaching business.

The maintenance and sustainability of WIL for all students in higher education is crucial for the future of work ready graduates (Australian Government, 2021; Patrick et al. 2009). This sustainability is challenged with irregular and inconsistent resourcing and an over reliance on individual's personal resources and networks to administer WIL. A lack of strategic planning around institutional WIL resourcing is problematic given the ethical and legal requirements for institutions to support staff well-being, provide all students equitable educational experiences (Hughes, 2015), and prioritize equity and access to WIL (Mackaway et al., 2014; Orrell, 2011). This study suggests a strategic approach to



resourcing and recognition of WIL is needed to better support different types of WIL activities and ensure that the needs of all students are captured at various stages of their academic journey.

This study has several limitations including the single site of data and the disproportionate number of responses across categories in the WILCC Framework. Future research should focus on evaluating the implementation of these recommendations and broaden the scope of the study to investigate national and international patterns and perspectives for resourcing WIL.

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## About the Journal

The International Journal of Work-Integrated Learning (IJWIL) publishes double-blind peer-reviewed original research and topical issues dealing with Work-Integrated Learning (WIL). IJWIL first published in 2000 under the name of Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education (APJCE).

In this Journal, WIL is defined as "*an educational approach that uses relevant work-based experiences to allow students to integrate theory with the meaningful practice of work as an intentional component of the curriculum. Defining elements of this educational approach requires that students engage in authentic and meaningful work-related task, and must involve three stakeholders; the student, the university, and the workplace*". Examples of practice include off-campus, workplace immersion activities such as work placements, internships, practicum, service learning, and cooperative education (Co-op), and on-campus activities such as work-related projects/competitions, entrepreneurship, student-led enterprise, etc. WIL is related to, and overlaps with, the fields of experiential learning, work-based learning, and vocational education and training.

The Journal's main aim is to enable specialists working in WIL to disseminate research findings and share knowledge to the benefit of institutions, students, co-op/WIL practitioners, and researchers. The Journal desires to encourage quality research and explorative critical discussion that leads to the advancement of effective practices, development of further understanding of WIL, and promote further research.

The Journal is ongoing financially supported by the Work-Integrated Learning New Zealand (WILNZ; [www.wilnz.nz](http://www.wilnz.nz)), and the University of Waikato, New Zealand, and received periodic sponsorship from the Australian Collaborative Education Network (ACEN) and the World Association of Cooperative Education (WACE).

## Types of Manuscripts Sought by the Journal

Types of manuscripts sought by IJWIL is primarily of two forms: 1) *research publications* describing research into aspects of work-integrated learning and, 2) *topical discussion* articles that review relevant literature and provide critical explorative discussion around a topical issue. The journal will, on occasions, consider good practice submissions.

*Research publications* should contain; an introduction that describes relevant literature and sets the context of the inquiry. A detailed description and justification for the methodology employed. A description of the research findings - tabulated as appropriate, a discussion of the importance of the findings including their significance to current established literature, implications for practitioners and researchers, whilst remaining mindful of the limitations of the data, and a conclusion preferably including suggestions for further research.

*Topical discussion articles* should contain a clear statement of the topic or issue under discussion, reference to relevant literature, critical and scholarly discussion on the importance of the issues, critical insights to how to advance the issue further, and implications for other researchers and practitioners.

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