

2020

Enabling the development of enterprise capabilities among higher education students through work-integrated learning in coworking spaces

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[10.25958/tkby-v135](https://doi.org/10.25958/tkby-v135)

Jackson, D., Shan, H. & Meek, S. (2020). *Enabling the development of enterprise capabilities among higher education students through work-integrated learning in coworking spaces*. Edith Cowan University.

<https://doi.org/10.25958/tkby-v135>

This Report is posted at Research Online.

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ENABLING THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENTERPRISE CAPABILITIES AMONG HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS THROUGH WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING IN COWORKING SPACES

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We gratefully acknowledge Spacecubed and Edith Cowan University for financially supporting this project.

We sincerely thank the industry representatives who responded to the survey on enterprise capabilities, and give our thanks to the interns, and their host businesses, who participated in this project.

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July 2020.

HOW TO REFERENCE THIS REPORT:

Jackson, D., Shan, H. & Meek, S. (2020). *Enabling the development of enterprise capabilities among higher education students through work-integrated learning in coworking spaces*. Edith Cowan University.

INTRODUCTION

This project trialled an innovative, scalable model of work-integrated learning (WIL) in micro-businesses in a coworking space. WIL embeds industry and/or community engagement into the curriculum through authentic learning and assessment activities. This project focused on workplace-based WIL, specifically, business students undertaking internships in a cluster of coworking spaces—under the umbrella of ‘Spacecubed’—in Perth CBD, Australia.

The project aims were broadly 1) to trial and evaluate ways to enhance enterprise capabilities among business students through WIL and 2) to introduce a model of WIL that overcomes some of the barriers that have previously prevented smaller organisations from participating in WIL.

Given rapidly changing work environments, due largely to evolving technology and globalisation, new graduates need to be agile, collaborative, digitally literate, able to transfer their skills across different contexts and connected. Micro-businesses offer a unique environment for learning these enterprise capabilities and the coworking space is a fertile learning ground for interns who are exposed to the development and use of emerging technologies and extensive opportunities to apply skills and build professional networks.

The project aimed to identify ways that coworking spaces and universities can collaboratively engage in workplace-based WIL to upskill higher education students and better prepare them for the future work environment. It recognises the fluidity of contemporary working practices and the need for adaptable graduates who can create their own opportunities, enhance knowledge and enact change through enterprise capabilities.

The project used a combination of a survey of employers in a range of organisation settings and interviews with interns and their host supervisors in a coworking space to explore:

- » How are different enterprise capabilities prioritised in contemporary work settings?
- » What are the informal and formal learning approaches to developing enterprise capabilities in organisational settings?
- » How can workplace-based WIL be designed to enable effective participation by micro-businesses in a coworking space and provide meaningful student learning outcomes in a scalable way?

The findings sought to inform higher education future curricular design to foster enterprise capabilities.



COWORKING SPACES

A coworking space is where entrepreneurs, freelancers and professionals from start-ups through to large businesses share a physical space, facilities and resources while operating their own businesses independently.

Coworking spaces provide workplace flexibility (Gregg, 2018) and allow people to connect and collaborate using common spaces (e.g., kitchens, event venues or meeting rooms) to develop a sense of belonging (Bouncken & Reuschl, 2018).

Use of coworking spaces has grown due to the rise in freelancers, start-ups and small- to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) worldwide creating a need for workspaces with lower rents, flexible leasing terms and a shared environment for networking, collaboration and innovation (Clifton et al., 2019).

Larger and public sector organisations are also trying out coworking spaces to satisfy employees' increasing desire for flexible work (Houghton et al., 2018) and to leverage the potential benefits of open knowledge sharing, creativity and increased staff productivity and staff satisfaction (CBRE Research, 2019; Clifton et al., 2019).

Coworking spaces have evolved into multiple forms, distinguished by types of membership, provision of infrastructure (e.g., working stations, social spaces and/or event venues) and size (Bouncken & Reuschl, 2018).

Different ownership models for coworking spaces have different aims. Those owned by not-for-profit organisations are largely for social enterprise purposes, large organisations (such as Apple) use them to promote an internal flexible and innovative work culture, state and local governments use them to improve local employment and knowledge exchange, and universities use them to enhance student learning and research innovation (Mahlberg & Riemer, 2017).

The Property Council of Australia (2018) reported 309 coworking spaces in the country. Growth is expected to continue worldwide to over 25,000 spaces by 2022 (Coworking Resources, 2019). The COVID-19 pandemic may increase demand due to tightened budgets and organisations wishing to continue their experienced benefits of remote and flexible working.

Table 1 summarises the use of coworking spaces across different industries.

TABLE 1. INDUSTRIES THAT USE COWORKING SPACES

INDUSTRY	%
Professional services	22.5
IT, computing and software	15.8
Property, real estate and construction	11.1
Sales and recruitment	9.7
Creative and media	8.7
Healthcare, medical and beauty	7.8
Engineering and architecture	4.0
Education and training	3.7
Charity and not-for-profit	1.3
Government	0.8
Other	9.4

Source: Office Hub (2019).

THE CALL FOR ENTERPRISE CAPABILITIES

New graduates are expected to perform effectively across diverse and rapidly changing professional contexts when transitioning to work (Committee for Economic Development of Australia, 2015; Productivity Commission, 2017). To succeed, they need to be adaptable, add value, share and create new knowledge and generate employment (Hajkowicz et al., 2016). This has become even more important given the negative impact of COVID-19 on already declining youth labour markets (Atkins et al., 2020).

The framework in Table 2 captures 14 capabilities needed for new graduates to flourish and add value in organisational contexts characterised by the fourth industrial revolution (Industry 4.0). The first 10 capabilities derive from an evidence-based framework of capabilities desired by industry of graduates entering the workforce (Jackson et al., 2020), the next three from the Entrepreneurship Competence Framework (Bacigalupo et al., 2016) and the fourteenth emphasises networks to mobilise ideas and learning (Bridgstock, 2019).

In essence, these capabilities combine to emphasise adaptability, strong communication and collaboration skills (Australian Industry Group, 2016); a mindset that embraces change and innovation (Foundation for Young Australians [FYA], 2016); the ability to network (Bridgstock, 2019); curiosity; creativity and problem solving (Howard, 2016); lifelong learning; digital literacy; confidence; and critical thinking and judgement (FYA, 2015a; McKinsey, 2014).



TABLE 2. CAPABILITIES DESIRED IN NEW GRADUATES

CAPABILITY	BEHAVIOUR
<p>1. Working effectively with others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Contribute constructively to group tasks through collaborative communication, problem-solving, discussion and planning, on and offline and within agreed timelines. » Operate within, and contribute to, a respectful, supportive and cooperative group climate. » Acknowledge the complex emotions and viewpoints of others and respond sensitively and appropriately. » Work proactively and appropriately with people from diverse groups. » Actively listen and demonstrate empathy when putting forward one’s perspective to achieve a common goal. » Address contentious issues and matters of conflict with key stakeholders in a constructive and appropriate manner.
<p>2. Communicating effectively</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Communicate orally in a clear and professional manner which is appropriately varied according to different audiences and seniority levels. » Seek, give and receive feedback appropriately and constructively. » Speak publicly with confidence and in a style appropriate to the audience. » Participate constructively in meetings. » Recognise and respond appropriately to non-verbal cues. » Communicate in a clear, structured and professional manner using written formats most appropriate for the target audience.
<p>3. Self-awareness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Reflect on and evaluate personal practices, values, strengths and weaknesses in the workplace. » Actively seek, monitor and evaluate sustainable opportunities for personal and professional learning. » Develop meaningful and realistic career goals and pathways for achieving them in light of changing labour market conditions and disruptions to industry. » Develop and promote own personal brand which reflects personal values and clearly articulates strengths, capabilities and achievements.
<p>4. Thinking critically</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Recognise and interpret patterns and concepts in documents and scenarios to understand the ‘bigger’ picture. » Objectively analyse and make judgements on key points in a range of documents and scenarios.
<p>5. Data and technology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Read and analyse numerical data and apply it to a given context. » Select, use and leverage appropriate technology to address diverse tasks and problems. » Be able to interpret data and use it in an informed way. » Retrieve, interpret, evaluate and appropriately use information in a range of digital and analogue formats.

CAPABILITY	BEHAVIOUR
<p>6. Problem solving</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Use rational and logical reasoning to deduce appropriate and well-reasoned conclusions. » Analyse facts and circumstances and ask the right questions to diagnose problems. » Develop a range of solutions using lateral and creative thinking. » Make appropriate and timely decisions, in light of available information, in sensitive and complex situations.
<p>7. Enterprise</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Initiate and support change and add value by embracing new ideas and showing ingenuity and creativity in addressing challenges and problems. » Take action unprompted to achieve agreed goals. » Adaptable to change and demonstrates flexibility in approach to all aspects of work.
<p>8. Self-management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Be self-confident in dealing with the challenges that employment and life present. » Persevere and retain effectiveness under pressure or when things go wrong. » Ability to maintain well-being and a productive balance of work and life. » Recognise own emotions and regulate and adapt to environment or common goals.
<p>9. Responsibility and accountability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Behave in a manner which is sustainable and consistent with company policy and/or broader community values. » Accept responsibility for own decisions, actions and work outcomes. » Behave in accordance with relevant professional standards, values and codes of conduct. » Recognise different organisational structures, industries and sectors and the importance of adapting behaviour and attitudes to varying missions, operations, culture, policies and systems.
<p>10. Professionalism</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Achieve prescribed goals and outcomes in a timely and resourceful manner. » Complete tasks in a self-directed manner in the absence of supervision. » Manage one's own time effectively to accomplish goals. » Able to initiate and engage in appropriate conversation, build networks and differentiate between personal friendships and collegial relationships. » Go beyond the call of duty by pitching in, including undertaking menial tasks, as required by the business. » Set, maintain and consistently act upon achievable goals, prioritised tasks, plans and schedules.

CAPABILITY	BEHAVIOUR
<p>11. Ideas and opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Learners can recognise opportunities to address needs that have not been met. » Learners can test and refine ideas that create value for others. » Learners can build an inspiring vision that engages others. » Learners understand that ideas can have different types of value, which can be used in different ways. » Learners are driven by ethics and sustainability when making decisions.
<p>12. Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Learners can make the most of their strengths and weaknesses. » Learners are willing to put effort and resources into following their passion and create value for others. » Learners can gather and manage different types of resources to create value for others. » Learners can persuade, involve and inspire others in value-creating activities.
<p>13. Into action</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Learners can initiate value-creating activities. » Learners can create an action plan, which identifies and priorities and milestones to achieve their goals. » Learners can evaluate the benefits and risks of alternative options and make choices that reflect their preferences. » Learners can work together with a wide range of individuals and groups to create value. » Learners can reflect and judge their achievements and failures and learn from these.
<p>14. Networks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Work effectively with others from different disciplines and backgrounds to solve problems and create new ideas. » Translate the terminology used by people from other disciplines to understand and enrich understanding of a task or problem. » Consider and learn from perspectives that are dissimilar to one's own. » Actively seek out new and contrasting knowledge and perspectives to enhance overall knowledge of a problem or opportunity.

‘To succeed, they need to be adaptable, add value, share and create new knowledge and generate employment’ - Hajkowitz, S.

ENTERPRISE CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT

IN THE WORKPLACE

Organisational culture is an important determinant of organisational commitment to developing employee capabilities (Manuti et al., 2015). An organisation-wide teaching and learning philosophy is a key enabler for allocating time and resources to ongoing professional development (Manley et al., 2009).

Staff development may be via formal (e.g., workshops, orientations and performance reviews) or informal (e.g., team discussions, on-the-job learning, self-reflection and peer networks) learning modes (Manley et al., 2009). Offerings will vary by organisational size, industry, and available infrastructure and resources (Edward et al., 2019). On-the-job learning, mentoring, coaching and regular performance feedback are most popular for developing enterprise capabilities (ADT Research, 2018), with mentoring considered particularly valuable in early career workers.

Organisations have been reported as ineffective in developing specific skills in early career workers, particularly future leader development, managerial and supervisory skills, process improvement and critical thinking (ADT Research, 2018). Development is also often not a priority, particularly if facilitators and technology are limited.

AT UNIVERSITY

Enterprise capabilities are being developed as part of universities' curricula, along with co-curricular activities (activities that are not a formal component of a student's course). Approaches to development include hackathons, boot camps, mentoring and incubator-related activities (Advance HE, 2019). The challenges with engaging and skilling educators to develop enterprise capabilities in students has been noted (Rae, 2007). Enterprise capability development works best where students are proactive in their own learning (Huq & Gilbert, 2017). It is authentic; involves goal setting,

critical reflection and evaluation; and individuals must evidence their personal performance (Rae, 2007).

Despite higher education's efforts to develop enterprise capabilities, there remain evidenced skill gaps in new graduates (Pennington & Stanford, 2019) and school leavers (FYA, 2015b). This has prompted calls for greater industry involvement (Al-Tabbaa & Ankrah, 2019; Gento et al., 2020; Theobald et al., 2019).

WIL is a key platform for drawing on the expertise of industry or community professionals and exposing students to the realities of authentic work. WIL takes many different forms. Workplace-based WIL includes internships, placements and practicums where students undertake tasks and projects in the workplace. Other types include service learning (where students collaborate or work individually on a community-focused project), simulations, project-based learning, consultations, mentoring, field experience and case-based learning. The critical factor for WIL is that students directly engage with industry or community partners through learning and assessment, enabling an authentic experience that can enhance skill development, professional socialisation and career development learning.

WIL benefits skill development (Jackson, 2015) and adds value to enterprise capabilities (Australian Council of Learned Academies, 2016). This was reported in a national project employing a range of WIL activities, beyond traditional workplace offerings, across different disciplines and institutions in Australia (Smith et al., 2019). Mentoring has been noted as helpful in fostering a collaborative mindset, helping mentees to explore career pathways and enabling them to interact and familiarise themselves with senior executives (Mahlberg & Riemer, 2017)

ROLE OF COWORKING SPACES

Universities may choose to engage with coworking spaces to enhance their students' career readiness, particularly given shifts to remote and flexible working. Engagement is largely through internship opportunities, project-based WIL, access to study space in a collaborative environment and supporting student entrepreneurs across different disciplines.

Coworking spaces can provide a range of support services to ensure the quality of student internships, such as helping to match students with coworking members, providing access to events and development activities, and enabling weekly check-ins with space managers (Fishburners, 2020). Additional ways to grow engagement include promoting student memberships to use the community (as a quiet area for self-study or interactive space for group work) and through mentorship programs (Kropp, 2019).

Smaller businesses, however, are often excluded from workplace-based WIL due to supervisor capacity constraints. More specifically, having a staff member available with sufficient expertise and time to provide guidance, mentorship and feedback to interns is challenging for small businesses (Jackson et al., 2016). Having the required insurances, risk and occupational health and safety policies and procedures in place, as well as suitable desk space and equipment may also inhibit smaller organisations from taking part in workplace-based WIL.

The National Strategy for WIL (Universities Australia et al., 2015) recognised the need to remove barriers for SMEs and increase their participation in WIL, including workplace-based forms. For students, these internship experiences can expose them to cutting-edge technologies, creative mindsets and a collaborative and innovative workspace to help them prepare for a future career in Industry 4.0.

PROJECT APPROACH

In response to labour market demands for new graduates with highly developed enterprise capabilities, and calls for a fresh approach to workplace-based WIL for smaller organisations, the project investigated:

- » How are different enterprise capabilities prioritised in contemporary work settings?
- » What are the informal and formal learning approaches to developing enterprise capabilities in organisational settings?
- » How can workplace-based WIL be designed to enable effective participation by micro-businesses in a coworking space and provide meaningful student learning outcomes in a scalable way?

The project was conducted between July 2019 and June 2020 and comprised two broad components:

1. a survey of Australian employers to explore their commitment and strategies to developing enterprise capabilities in different organisation settings
2. the trial and evaluation of student internships at Spacecubed (the largest coworking space in Perth, Australia) to gauge the development of enterprise capabilities in future workers.

PART 1: EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVES ON DEVELOPING ENTERPRISE CAPABILITIES

Table 3 summarises the characteristics of the 306 employers who participated in the survey on commitment and strategies for developing enterprise capabilities. The employers rated their organisation's commitment to developing the 14 capabilities, how important they were to their organisation and approaches to development in their workplace.

TABLE 3. SUMMARY OF EMPLOYER CHARACTERISTICS

VARIABLE	GROUP	N	VALID %
Gender	Male	171	55.9
	Female	135	44.1
Position in organisation	Proprietor	47	15.4
	Director	91	29.7
	Executive Manager	74	24.2
	Line Manager	51	16.7
	Human Resources Manager/Officer	28	9.2
	Other	15	4.8
	Sector	Private	224
Not-for-profit		48	15.7
Public		34	11.1
Industry	Finance, insurance, property and business services	122	40.5
	Manufacturing, wholesale, transport and storage, logistics	17	5.6
	Electricity, gas, water supply, agriculture, forestry and fishing	13	4.3
	Mining and construction	43	14.2
	Health and community, public, cultural and recreational services	40	13.2
	Personal services, retail, accommodation, cafes and restaurants	35	11.6
	Communications	17	5.6
	Education	15	5.0
Organisation size	Small (1–49 employees)	177	57.9
	Medium (50–149 employees)	34	11.1
	Large (150+ employees)	95	31.0
Main location of business	Metropolitan area	265	86.6
	Regional or rural city/town	21	6.9
	Other	20	6.5
State	Western Australia	256	83.7
	Other (including multiple states)	50	16.3

PART 2: INTERNSHIPS IN A COWORKING SPACE

Table 4 summarises the individual and internship characteristics for the 11 students based at Spacecubed. There were two rounds of internships, the first from July to November 2019 and the second from February to June 2020.

TABLE 4. SUMMARY OF STUDENT INDIVIDUAL AND INTERNSHIP CHARACTERISTICS

VARIABLE	GROUP	N	VALID %
Gender	Male	3	27
	Female	8	73
Sector	Private	11	100
	Not-for-profit	0	0
	Public	0	0
Industry	Finance, insurance, property and business services	7	64
	Manufacturing, wholesale, transport, storage and logistics	0	0
	Electricity, gas, water supply, agriculture, forestry and fishing	1	9
	Mining and construction	1	9
	Health and community, public, cultural and recreational services	0	0
	Personal services, retail, accommodation, cafes and restaurants	0	0
	Communications	2	18
	Education	0	0
Organisation size	Small (1–49 employees)	11	100
	Medium (50–149 employees)	0	0
	Large (150+ employees)	0	0



The internships were focused on the application of theoretical knowledge and skills learned during students' university degree. They comprised 100 to 150 hours in the workplace, typically structured as one or two days per week. After three weeks, students were required to submit their first assessment, a learning plan that outlined their intended learning outcomes, strategies for achieving them, measures for evaluating their performance and evidence of achievement of their learning outcomes.

The interns undertook a range of discipline-based, general and sometimes trans-disciplinary tasks and responsibilities. They informally networked together and with other Spacecubed community members in common use areas. They also participated in at least two formal networking events in the community and in a workshop targeting the development of enterprise capabilities. Other than the skills development workshop and the first three weeks of the internship, the second round was largely undertaken virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions. Students worked remotely to complete their assigned tasks and remained connected with their host and the Spacecubed community via phone, email, teleconferencing and collaborative working tools.

Student interns and their workplace supervisors participated in interviews at the conclusion of the internship. Students were asked to 1) reflect on which of the 14 capabilities they had improved on and how during their internship experience, 2) the benefits gained from the developmental workshops and formal networking opportunities, 3) the benefits of being based in a coworking space, rather than a traditional work setting, and 4) any other enabling or inhibiting factors in the coworking space for enterprise capability development.

Supervisors were asked to discuss the approaches their organisation used (or intended to use) to develop the 14 capabilities in less experienced employees and student interns. Spacecubed staff who oversaw the community's internships participated in a focus group on how the community helps to develop less experienced workers', including WIL students', enterprise capabilities and any challenges to this. They were also asked to consider how to scale up the community's internship offerings and other approaches to engaging with universities to develop students' enterprise capabilities. Interview and group discussions were transcribed and analysed to identify common themes in their responses.



KEY FINDINGS

PART 1: EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVES ON DEVELOPING ENTERPRISE CAPABILITIES

Table 5 summarises the mean ratings (five-point scale) of employer perceptions on how committed their organisation was to developing the 14 capabilities and their importance to the organisation.

TABLE 5. PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE OF AND COMMITMENT TO DEVELOPING ENTERPRISE CAPABILITIES

CAPABILITY	COMMITMENT	IMPORTANCE
Working effectively with others	4.45	4.68
Communicating effectively	4.42	4.69
Self-awareness	4.13	4.41
Thinking critically	4.18	4.45
Data and technology	4.06	4.26
Problem solving	4.35	4.58
Enterprise	4.29	4.55
Self-management	4.20	4.49
Responsibility and accountability	4.50	4.66
Professionalism	4.53	4.72
Ideas and opportunities	4.09	4.30
Resources	3.98	4.20
Into action	4.07	4.26
Networks	3.94	4.18

Overall, organisations were committed to developing the capabilities in less experienced workers and reported barriers largely related to the costs associated with development. The top three capabilities were ‘professionalism’, ‘responsibility and accountability’ and ‘working effectively with others’, while the bottom three were ‘networks’, ‘resources’ and ‘data and technology’. High ratings were reported for importance, affirming their role in contemporary work. The highest mean ratings were for ‘professionalism’, ‘communicating effectively’ and ‘working effectively with others’, while the lowest mean ratings were for ‘networks’, ‘resources’ and ‘into action’.

When employers commented on how they developed each of the 14 capabilities in less experienced workers, six themes emerged. The themes, and the number of comments relating to each, are presented in Table 6.

TABLE 6. IDENTIFIED THEMES FOR DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACHES

THEME	NUMBER OF COMMENTS
Formal training and education	1048
On-the-job training	974
Mentoring, coaching and buddying	703
Organisational culture	698
Performance management	632
Collaboration and networks	507

FORMAL TRAINING AND EDUCATION comprised external training (via industry bodies and the education sector) and internal training (leadership and graduate programs, bootcamp weeks, workshops and/or online modules). Recruitment, including onboarding, was also important, particularly for developing 'responsibility and accountability'. The development of 'working effectively with others' heavily drew on formal training. Cascade learning was also evident, where one colleague would impart the skills and knowledge acquired during formal training to their peers and colleagues.

ON-THE-JOB TRAINING included appropriate assignment of tasks with clear instructions, work plans, shadowing and one-to-one meetings. Shadowing was popular, as was regular one-to-one meetings with supervisors to discuss progress in capability development.

MENTORING, COACHING AND BUDDYING adopted a less formal approach and were popular for interns and graduates. Fostering **ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE** that emphasised lifelong learning, open styles of communication, self-expression, transparency and rewarding good behaviour were considered important for development. The need for early career workers to understand and adhere to codes of conduct and be accountable for their behaviour was emphasised as part of 'responsibility and accountability'.

For **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**, goal setting and regular appraisals with rich feedback were noted to support capability development. These, in combination with formal performance reviews, helped with 'into action', 'self-awareness' and 'communicating effectively'. Enhancing **COLLABORATION AND NETWORKS** through meetings, tasks, debriefs, forums for discussion and sharing ideas were important for engaging and supporting less experienced workers. Regular meetings and encouraging early career team members to contribute were emphasised. Task collaboration across diverse groups was considered important for not only development, but also for empowering new workers and building their confidence.

Approaches to developing capabilities varied across different organisational settings. For example, the public sector favoured formal training and education, while both the private sector and not-for-profit organisations preferred on-the-job training. As expected, smaller organisations delivered more on-the-job training and relied more on collaboration and networks. Medium-sized organisations drew on performance management, formal training and organisational culture, while large organisations favoured formal training and mentoring, coaching and buddying.



PART 2: INTERNSHIPS IN A COWORKING SPACE

Supervisor perceptions of enterprise capability development

The workplace supervisors were asked to identify their and their organisations' approaches to developing the 14 capabilities in their interns and other less experienced workers. These broadly aligned to the six themes identified in the survey of industry representatives (see Table 6).

In alignment with most small businesses, **FORMAL TRAINING** was used minimally and largely comprised an induction. This was considered important for managing supervisor and student expectations—including capability standards and behaviour—and for onboarding students on relevant systems.

ON-THE-JOB TRAINING was used largely to clarify tasks and instructions, giving background on why things needed to be done the way they did. Sometimes interns were directed to additional background reading to understand a particular topic or concept, or encouraged to undertake research to enhance their knowledge and skills.

MENTORING was evident and varied across the supervisors. Some adopted a warm and supportive style, taking the intern under their wing, while others encouraged independency by giving out tasks with a 'sink or swim' attitude. Some felt that entrepreneurs may favour this approach given their own autonomy and time and resource pressures. Others provided rationalised support, adopting a methodological, coaching approach that they felt would grow skills and professionalism.

Several supervisors acknowledged the role of **ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE** in fostering confidence and capability among interns. They emphasised trust, openness, confidence to contribute and reflection as important for developing a positive culture that encouraged learning and development.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT was inherent to the internships and students' learning, with progress updates for academic coordinators and a formal evaluation at the conclusion of the WIL experience. Supervisors emphasised the importance of the formal review for interns to

reflect on how they may improve aspects of their 'self-awareness', 'self-management', 'problem solving' and 'data and technology' capabilities.

Finally, **COLLABORATION AND NETWORKS** were critical to capability development in the coworking space. Interns participated in formal and informal networking within the community and in their own businesses through, for example, morning stand ups, team meetings, debriefs and task collaboration across diverse groups.

As with responses in the employer survey, supervisors expressed that while businesses can facilitate development, it needs to be employee-driven and personal agency plays an important role. Some felt the development of certain capabilities was largely related to accruing experience and personality traits, and being able to adapt to team cultures was also beneficial.

Intern perceptions of enterprise capability development

Interns emphasised the following as being pivotal to enterprise capability development:

- » Being assigned **MEANINGFUL TASKS** that were clearly outlined, relevant to their studies, and challenged and engaged them.
- » A transparent and **SUPPORTIVE TEAM CULTURE** where they learned to trust and be guided by others, and felt comfortable and confident to share their views, propose ideas and ask questions.
- » **COLLABORATING AND NETWORKING** with others in the coworking space and online, helping them to transition to more formal and professional communication, such as team meetings, report and email writing, in their role.
- » The coworking space and businesses' **HIGH-TECH ENVIRONMENT** exposing them to cutting-edge software, different organisations and roles, a flexible work culture, and significant amounts of data and information.

- » Being exposed to a **CULTURE OF AUTONOMY** where they felt trusted and were inspired and encouraged to set goals, prioritise tasks and manage themselves effectively. This encouraged accountability and sharing responsibility for the team's work output.
- » A **SUPPORTIVE MENTOR** that is keen to teach, supplemented by guidance from academic coordinators and the connections with other interns in the coworking space.

Challenges to development in coworking spaces

Some key challenges were identified for developing enterprise capabilities in coworking spaces:

- » The need for fluidity in assigned tasks due to changing business needs and circumstances, making it difficult to assign a single project for the duration of their internship.
- » Businesses are often niche, so the intern may only be exposed to a very targeted and specific area of work.
- » The lack of human resource capacity in small business to support development and training, with a lack of regular feedback and no contingency plan for if an assigned supervisor was absent. Further, some interns found the entrepreneur's mentoring style too intimidating.
- » The short length of the internship means that students can only be given exposure to the business in the form of small tasks, rather than independently perform significant tasks that require critical thinking and draw on theoretical knowledge.
- » Several supervisors felt that interns were often unprepared for their experience. This related to interns' lack of research and understanding of their host business, and underdeveloped social and discipline-based skills. Further, interns often had the mentality of being afraid to fail and ask for help, lacked confidence to network, needed to assume ownership for their work, and needed to be more proactive in seeking feedback and opportunities for learning. Having to upskill students during the internship was costly as it detracted from organisations' core business.
- » Students noted their multiple commitments (paid work, study and caring/social demands) impacted on their ability to engage fully in

community activities and events, hindering their capability development. In addition to their commitments, supervisors noted that students' internship hours may not coincide with events, and often interns were unaware of what was scheduled.

- » Businesses often had higher expectations of interns' skills than was the case.
- » The no-conversation rule in the shared working space inhibited some students from asking questions of their supervisors and work colleagues.

Those in the second round of internships shifted to remote working after approximately 50 hours of workplace experience. Given that much work is cloud based, the disruption to completion tasks was considered minimal by supervisors and interns. Regular check-ins, debriefs and meetings were scheduled via a range of collaborative working and communication tools. Some students felt that remote working improved their self-management skills and autonomy and helped them to learn new communication tools. Some, however, noted they were less able to freely network as virtual events were more structured and the lack of face-to-face engagement inhibited building personal connections.



IMPLICATIONS FOR STAKEHOLDERS

ENTERPRISE CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT

The relatively lower importance ratings for developing ‘resources’, ‘into action’ and ‘networks’ do not support innovation. It is critical that less experienced workers are encouraged to consider how they can leverage their strengths and add value to their organisation, particularly during lean times. They need to be supported in creating and mobilising ideas and developing viable action plans to make full use of their abilities.

Greater importance also needs to be assigned to ‘data and technology’, with digital literacy being fundamental for new workers (Deloitte, 2019). Universities’ lack of access to the latest technologies means that organisations must train early career workers to ensure they can keep pace with technological change and effectively leverage it for more effective workflows.

While providing early career workers with access to formal and on-the-job training, organisations must create a culture of sharing, collaborating

and networking to foster self-development, constructive feedback, and mentoring and coaching among employees. Pooling resources, sharing knowledge and developing networks to effectively drive change and innovation are critical for organisational performance and national prosperity.

Building the capacity of less experienced workers to create value through leveraging resources and personal strengths, and through collaborating and connecting with diverse others, is critical for enhancing Australia’s performance in innovation. Also pivotal is equipping future workers with technology-related skills to prosper in Industry 4.0.

Despite difficult economic conditions, which have been worsened by COVID-19, organisations must seek ways to resource capability development, even those they feel are not overtly essential for their business. Fostering a culture that encourages different forms of training and development, empowering employees and working to align organisational training needs with those of the individual are important.



INTERNSHIP DESIGN IN COWORKING SPACES

The coworking space provides fertile ground for fostering enterprising capabilities in less experienced workers. Similar themes emerged in the common developmental approaches used by businesses based in coworking spaces, as those identified by survey participants from diverse work settings. As shown in Table 6, these themes were formal training and education; on-the-job training; mentoring, coaching and buddying; organisational culture; performance management; and collaboration and networks. While it is critical for businesses to facilitate training, individuals need to be proactive in their learning and development.

In particular, the community space provides valuable opportunities for informal and formal networking opportunities for skill development and career progression. However, low student engagement in community events means they are not always leveraging opportunities to practice their networking skills and build contacts. Stakeholders need to upskill interns from the outset to give them the confidence to informally engage with others around the community and away from noise-controlled shared working areas. Formally embedding event participation into internship design may increase participation. Building in a form of speed dating networking activity¹ across start-ups may also accelerate interns' ability and confidence in networking informally with others in the community space.

Being prepared for internships is always important, but particularly when students are based in very small companies that cannot carry individuals with significant training needs. Pre-internship research on the host organisation and a visit to familiarise students with the coworking environment would assist. Further, skill

development training in networking and industry-specific skills is needed to boost confidence and interns' willingness to hit the ground running. The university assigning micro-businesses with interns who are proactive, confident and keen to pursue a challenge may benefit all. Further strategies to overcome the identified challenges and improve WIL design in coworking spaces include:

- » 'Sharing' interns across tenant businesses to give students broader exposure to different areas of work.
- » Bolstering workplace supervisor guidance and mentoring with increased academic support. Allocating a certain amount of time in the workload of a discipline-based academic to provide guidance on the completion of tasks and feedback on work may reduce the pressure on micro-businesses with limited resources.
- » Adjusting mentoring style to ensure that supervisors challenge but do not intimidate their interns.
- » Lengthening internship experiences, or delivering them in intensive mode, to facilitate the completion of more substantial tasks.
- » Running events at Spacecubed that connect students and business members, increasing willingness to host students, managing business expectations on skill capabilities and familiarising students with the coworking community environment.

¹ A speed dating networking activity could involve interns rotating through numerous start-ups, introducing themselves and meeting Directors and employees in each business. This will help them to understand the types of businesses based in the coworking space, and build their confidence in introducing themselves, making conversation and developing relationships with others.

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APPENDIX ONE: PROMOTING INTERNSHIPS TO SPACECUBED BUSINESSES

School of
Business & Law



Spacecubed and ECU work placement opportunities

What hosting a student means

The ECU School of Business and Law is offering organisations the opportunity to host last-year students on work placements as part of their degree studies (work-integrated-learning). A component of the placement can be virtual, and students may have access to an academic mentor for advice on discipline-related work (if needed).

Organisations of any size and from all sectors and industries are invited to participate. The placements are free of charge and insurances are covered.

The main benefits for organisations:

- Access to motivated and top-quality students with new ideas
- Trial prospective employees and identify potential graduate talent
- Develop mutually beneficial links with the University
- Help shape what future students are taught

Students are available from a range of business disciplines for 100 to 150 hours or 80 hours for a community-focused project which does not need to be related to their course.

Main responsibilities for the host supervisor:

1. Guide and mentor students to achieve target learning goals
2. Provide feedback on student performance

To get started, think about:

- What tasks/projects you are looking to complete
- How long it might take
- What skills and knowledge you might need
- What resources you might require e.g. a desk, computer, or other equipment
- Do you need to retain Intellectual Property (typically, this belongs to the student, but this can be discussed with the ECU team)

What can students do:

- Embark on new tasks/projects such as developing new plans, procedures, work-flows or campaigns
- Complete existing or shelved projects in line with their discipline and skills
- Undertake research to inform future practice
- Assist on day-to-day work matters, such as social media communications and contributing to events.

How to join us:

1. Express your interest on this [link](#). Expressions of interest are open all year round.
2. Assess student candidates recommended by ECU (all participating students are vetted through an application process).
3. Host students(s) on placement
 - Round 1: February-May
 - Round 2: June (80 hours only)
 - Round 3: July-October
 - Round 4: December-January (100-150 hours)

Please note: Members must be based out of Spacecubed for the duration of their student's placement.

Get in contact with us today!

If you have an enquiry, please contact the School of Business and Law WIL team.

Email: businessWIL@ecu.edu.au
Phone: (08) 6304 5727

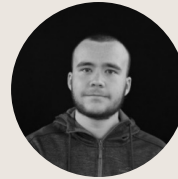
Meet our student interns who have already contributed to the Spacecubed community!



Jemima Baker
Marketing Intern
CORE Innovation Hub
|
Researched potential business partners to create targeted e-marketing campaigns



Faith Ng'Uni
Marketing Intern
Spacecubed - Plus Eight Sprint
|
Created marketing content and supported the development of training



Dave Keay
Commerce Intern
Castle Gates
|
Accessed financial values of publicly listed companies to provide value-add advice to shareholders



Abby Evans
Event management Intern
Spacecubed - Plus Eight Sprint
|
Coordinated events and projects, including Alumni insights



Conor McCrossan
HR Intern
Global io
|
Developed standardised working procedures, staff remuneration and benefit programs for business



Damini Ramsamy
Commerce Intern
Scale Partners
|
Managed business clients' accounting, taxation and finances; researched company profiles on behalf of investors



Lisa Wallman
Digital Marketing Intern
Hatchet
|
Collaborated with tech teams to support the business' online marketing operation success

**Tom Smolarek,
Growth Marketer & Director, Bud**

"As a digital agency, working at a fast and collaborative pace is crucial. It was a bonus to have an enthusiastic and self-driven student helping in the team, as that's the mould we look for in a team-member in an agile agency."

Working with the WIL student gave me an opportunity to review on-boarding workflows on a graduate level.

It's great to have a new wave of enthusiasm and perspectives in our team and we enjoyed hosting our WIL student."



**Ashleigh O'Meara,
Spaces and Member Experience Manager,
Spacecubed**

"It was great having the ECU intern on our team as they were able to help deliver on projects that were brand new to our business as we adapted to the changes resulting from COVID-19."

We were able to see the development of our interns' enterprise skills from early stages in the project all the way through to final delivery and presentation and we were delighted with their input. I highly recommend taking on a WIL student if you have the opportunity."



APPENDIX TWO: INTERNSHIP TIMELINE FOR SPACECUBED BUSINESSES

Preliminary Stage – Student Matching			
TIMELINE	ECU	SPACECUBED WIL COORDINATOR	SPACECUBED TENANTS
All year around	<p>Provide WIL promotional flyer</p>	<p>Promote WIL to tenants using <i>ECU SBL WIL Promotional Flyer for Spacecubed</i>, which include a Link for tenants to express their interest.</p> <p>*A detailed ECU SBL WIL Guidelines for Industry and Community Collaborators is available on the linked webpage for interested tenants.</p>	<p>Express interest all year around using the link (online Expression of Interest form) included in the promotional flyer.</p>
<p><i>Round 1:</i> Oct-Dec</p> <p><i>Round 2:</i> May-Jun</p>	<p>Review EOIs and match students</p> <p>ECU reviews submitted Expressions of Interest, and sends suitable student profiles for each potential collaborator</p> <p>(*all ECU communication with Spacecubed tenants will include the Spacecubed WIL coordinator in the loop)</p>		<p>Assess and finalise student selection</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. assess student candidates' profiles (directly liaise with students if further interviews needed), 2. finalise the selection of student(s), and contact student(s) to confirm the starting and ending date of placement, and 3. complete the an online student Confirmation Form <p>*Tenants which selected students majoring in Master of Project Management must provide brief job descriptions in the confirmation form, as these students' WIL activities need to be approved by their course coordinator from ECU.</p>
	<p>Confirm student placement</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. process the submitted Confirmation Form(s), and 2. process students' unit enrolment in WIL 	<p>Prepare to start (e.g. arranging access cards, adding students to newsletter, etc.)</p>	<p>Prepare to start (e.g. briefing student supervisor, assigning workspace, etc.)</p>

During Placement

TIMELINE	ECU	SPACECUBED WIL COORDINATOR	SPACECUBED TENANTS
Round 1: Feb-May	Host Student Induction and Workplace Preparation on campus or virtually	Host Spacecubed Induction on site (see <i>ECU SBL WIL Guideline for Spacecubed</i>)	Host Workplace Induction on site or virtually (See <i>Recommended Practices for WIL Hosts, including virtual delivery</i>)
Round 2: Jun (80 hours only)	Support students' skill and academic development Lecturer: 1. supports students' academic performance, and professional development 2. provides feedback on students' assignments, and 3. follows up with hosts on student performance 4. collects completed Supervisor Evaluation Forms from hosts and thank for the support.	Manager students' experience Spacecubed WIL coordinator 1. promotes training/networking events 2. coordinates student-supervisor relationships 3. regular check-ins about students' experiences	Supervise students' learning experience 1. promote a learning environment 2. provide on-the-job training 3. manage student performance 4. complete a Supervisor Evaluation Form by the end (students will provide the link to their supervisors) 5. correspond to ECU lecturer regarding students' learning progress
Round 3: Jul-Oct			
Round 4: Dec-Jan (100-150 hours only)			

Post Placement

ECU	SPACECUBED WIL COORDINATOR	SPACECUBED TENANTS
Seek feedback from students, Spacecubed WIL coordinator and industry hosts *Collect testimonial for future promotion.	Further students' community engagement	If extending student employment Tenants can directly liaise with students if they wish to hire the students after contracted placement period. *Tenants will be responsible for arranging insurance cover for the students.

APPENDIX THREE: RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR INTERNSHIP HOSTS IN SPACECUBED

Recommended Practices for WIL Hosts

Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) is where students apply their skills and knowledge in a practical way in collaboration with industry and community partners. Support and guidance from the Spacecubed community is crucial for students' learning outcomes, including providing opportunities for:

- Socialising into professional roles, including culture and values;
- Developing professional capabilities, particularly communication and teamwork;
- Growing professional networks and the skills needed to network effectively;

This resource guides organisations hosting WIL students on how to optimise the student learning experience, including recommended practices for virtual WIL placements.

The supervisor checklist (Appendix 1) is a great way of ensuring your organisation is prepared for a quality WIL experience. If the supervisor has any questions, or any of the below information raises concerns, it is best to contact the ECU WIL Team on businessWIL@ecu.edu.au or 08 6304 5727.

Prepare for the placement

- Develop a detailed placement brief that outlines tasks, responsibilities, timelines, supervisory arrangements, feedback processes, outcomes and outputs/deliverables or the placement. The more information your students have about the background, purpose and anticipated outcomes of their work, the more likely you are to be happy with the end result.
- Understand the importance of and assign workload to providing written and verbal constructive feedback for students during WIL. The supervisor will be contacted by the Edith Cowan University (ECU), School of Business and Law (SBL), WIL team to provide informal feedback on student performance during the placement, and to complete a formal, written evaluation at the end (which contributes to the student's final grade). This [resource](#) gives tips on how to provide effective feedback.
- Ensure that everyone involved in the placement has read through the [ECU SBL WIL Guidelines for Industry and Community Collaborators](#). This contains important details about roles and responsibilities for the host, supervisor and student.
- If the host organisation has the capacity, assigning a mentor or a work buddy is recommended to help students learn and be more engaged, especially for those working virtually.

Meet the student - Placement Induction

An introduction to your company/workplace with key information will help set them up to succeed. Some aspects you might cover include:

- Overview of organisation, including vision, policies and practices and accessing resources to help understand organisational culture and purpose (e.g. annual report, organisational chart, strategic plan etc). It always helps for students to understand the 'bigger picture'.
- Meet the workplace supervisor, team members and any mentor or work buddy.
- Location of desk and other relevant amenities.
- Computer and WIFI access, and IT support (particularly if working virtually)
- OSH / emergency procedures, fire exits and any procedures that apply in an online environment.
- Availability of supervisor for support and channels for communication. This includes detail on working hours, when available for feedback/meetings, phone numbers and email addresses.
- Intellectual property processes including what is IP and how it is managed. Note that IP created during a WIL placement belongs to the students, unless pre-arranged otherwise.

- What is confidential and seeking clarification on this. Students need to provide evidence of achievements during placement and may wish to include certain artefacts in their portfolio.
- Approaches to sharing and collaborating on work, such as intranet and Google docs.
- Any policies, such as social media and privacy, to protect everybody's reputational risk.

Preparing for a quality experience

Prepare to expose students to available professional development opportunities, resources and networks within the organisation and broader industry/sector/community. For example:

- Encourage students to attend relevant online/offline, internal/external events and workshops
- Include students in informal gatherings team meetings, emails, online groups or forums

Understand the academic requirements for their completion of the WIL unit, including:

- Confirm the minimum working hours (80, 100 or 450 hours).
- Clarify the students' placement schedule (days and hours). In the virtual setting, clarify if students are working on fixed days /hours or a self-paced schedule.
- When you need to sign their timesheet.
- Understand the unit assignment requirements and any support you might need to give? Typically, the first assignment is creating a learning plan with targeted learning outcomes, strategies for achieving them, performance indicators and evidence of achievement. They should share the plan and seek supervisor endorsement to ensure it is feasible for the organisation.

Manage expectations and establish some guidelines for meetings, feedback and communication.

- Ensure both student and supervisor have a clear understanding of how performance will be monitored and how and when feedback will be provided, both informally and formally.
- Establish the best communication channels and expectations on regularity of communication.
- Unless the placement is pre-arranged as a virtual experience, it is expected that students should work under the supervision of the workplace supervisor for at least 50% of placement.
- Establish whether your student has access to an academic mentor (for advice on discipline-related work) during their placement. This applies to only certain WIL students.

Once WIL has started

- Clarify placement tasks and projects for students, aligning with their target learning outcomes. Provide students with the "bigger picture" so they are aware of relevant stakeholders (and how to contact them) and how to seek support within the organisation.
- Promote a positive learning environment by:
 - Provide guidance (or assign co-workers) on tasks as needed
 - Encourage students to ask questions, establish a protocol for this (e.g. ongoing informally, via email, or saving questions for meetings) and allocate time for this.
 - Encourage students to share their own ideas to problems/issues.
 - Encourage students to present and contribute to group events (e.g. meetups, brainstorm sessions, and client meetings).
 - Encourage the team to lead by example and model the behaviour expected by students.
 - Where possible, provide students with a sense of ownership over their work
 - Remain patient and understand this may be the students' first experience with work related activities.
- Encourage students to reflect on their work, challenges they encountered, their skill development, and how to improve outcomes. This [resource](#) provides key tips on coaching strategies to assist students to reflect on their emerging knowledge and skills. Reflection is built into their formal assessment for the WIL academic unit and is critical for their learning.

- Effectively manage student performance by:
 - Set regular face to face or virtual meetings / check-ins with students.
 - Provide meaningful and constructive, timely feedback to promote learning and improvement.
 - Provide encouragement when students are doing well.
- Occasionally challenges occur during WIL and are usually resolved through a conversation with the student. Some examples of issues that may arise:
 - The student is unable to complete the tasks required.
 - Confirm that the student understands the requirements and is equipped to complete tasks
 - Check the student is prioritising their work and that workload is manageable
 - Assess timeframes in accordance with the student's capabilities.
 - The student appears unwilling to complete the task.
 - Determine whether there is a reason, related to the placement or an external issue
 - Take care not to confuse inhibition with lack of motivation.
 - The student is late or absent.
 - If the student is absent without notification, contact the ECU WIL team immediately.
 - Explain that lateness is unprofessional and the need to conform with expectations.

At the end of placement

Ideally WIL should be rewarding for both supervisors and students. A collaborative WIL debrief, face-to-face or online, provides a good opportunity to reflect on the experience, including:

- The learning experience, benefits and challenges faced by the student and supervisor.
- The student's performance, strengths and weaknesses.
- The student's career action plan and strategies for future personal development.

You can invite students to provide feedback on your performance as a workplace WIL supervisor (although the authority aspect of a student-supervisor relationship can impact on this). Below are some self-reflection questions to consider your own effectiveness:

- Is there any training, tools or guidance that will improve my performance as a supervisor?
- What have I learned that I might be able to pass along to other workplace WIL supervisors?

Team support during WIL is critical so you may consider hosting a formal or informal team session to reflect on the experience. Some questions to be asked could include:

- Did you feel prepared for your role in supervising/supporting the WIL student?
- As a team, are we happy with the outcomes of the WIL placement?
- What additional resources, support or processes in the workplace would to enhance our roles as workplace supervisor/supporter of a WIL student and improve placement outcomes?

Also, the ECU WIL team are always grateful for any feedback you provide on the WIL experience so they can improve future experiences for both you and the students.

Appendix 1: Supervisor checklist

ECU appreciates your willingness to host students undertaking their WIL experience. This checklist guides you through the experience, assisting you to plan for activities and interact with students.

Prepare for the placement

- Develop a detailed placement brief to give your student a clear understanding of tasks.
- Ensure that everyone involved in the placement has read through the ECU SBL WIL Guidelines for Industry and Community Collaborators.
- Ensure the student supervisor has read through the Recommended Practices for WIL Hosts.
- Consider assigning a mentor or work buddy.

Meet the student - Placement Induction

- Create a welcoming atmosphere and carry out a full induction on:
 - Overview of the organisation
 - Yourself (workplace supervisor), team members and any mentors/work buddies.
 - Location of desk and other relevant amenities.
 - Computer and WIFI access
 - Location of relevant resources
 - OSH and fire exits
 - Availability of supervisor for support and channels of communication
 - Organisational policies – including Intellectual Property, confidentiality, intranet/social media.
- Discuss any expected behaviours and code of conduct.
- How feedback will be provided and how performance will be monitored.
- Expose students to available professional development opportunities, resources and networks.
- Check with students about academic requirements for their completion of the WIL unit.
 - Confirm minimum working hours (80, 100 or 450 hours)
 - Clarify the student's placement schedule (days and hours)
 - Confirm whether you need to sign a timesheet for them.
 - Establish their assignment requirements and what, if any, support you need to give.
 - Check the students' learning goals for WIL so you can align placement tasks with them.
- Establish guidelines for meetings and communication.
- Establish how your role differs, and complements, their academic mentor (if applicable).

Once WIL has started

- Clarify and refine placement tasks/projects:
 - Clarify placement tasks and projects for students in line with their target learning outcomes.
 - Set a clear expectation of task objectives and provide students with the “bigger picture”.
 - Communicate who are the relevant stakeholders and how to contact them.
 - If available, provide a written placement brief to manage expectations for all.
- Promote a learning environment:
 - Encourage students to ask questions / offer ideas and establish a protocol for this.
 - Encourage students to present and contribute to group events
 - Encourage the team to lead by example and model the behaviour you expect of students.
 - Where possible, provide students a sense of ownership over the work
 - Remain patient and be mindful of your students' level of prior work experience.
- Provide on-the-job training:
 - Set and communicate task objectives clearly and provide guidance on work/action plans.
 - Allocate sufficient time for students to ask questions and complete tasks.
 - Emphasise that clarifying instructions and asking questions is encouraged.

- Manage student performance:
 - Set regular meetings / check-ins with students.
 - Provide meaningful, timely and constructive feedback to optimise learning and outcomes.
 - Provide encouragement when they are doing well.
 - Ask students to reflect on successes and failures to improve in the future.
 - Ensure the students' learning goals are covered during the placement.
- If issues arise, apply the tips included in the Recommended Practices for WIL Hosts.
- Contact the ECU SBL WIL team if you need any assistance.

By the end of placement

- Organise a final reflection on the WIL experience for both student and the supervisor.
- Encourage the student to keep connected with the team.
- Reflect on the WIL experience with the wider team to identify areas for improvement.
- Provide any feedback to the ECU WIL team on any areas that could be improved.

APPENDIX FOUR: INTERNSHIP GUIDELINES FOR SPACECUBED HOSTS

Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Guidelines for Industry & Community Collaborators

School of
Business & Law



These Guidelines describe the respective responsibilities of the University (including those of relevant members of staff), students and industry and community collaborators (“Collaborator”) engaged in Work Integrated Learning (“WIL”) for the following programs offered by the School of Business and Law:

- ECU Work Placement Program (FBL3501 and BUS6900).
- ECU Internship Program (FBL3400, FBL3500, FBL6505 and FBL6510).
- ECU Service Learning Program (FBL2505).

These Guidelines must be read in conjunction with, and subject to, any express written agreement between ECU and the Collaborator concerning the relevant WIL activity.

1. What is Work Integrated Learning?

Work Integrated Learning (WIL) is the intentional integration of theory and practice. It is the process whereby students learn through experience in practical settings. WIL is learning which is embedded in the experience of work, whether it is paid or unpaid, full-time or part-time. It may be embedded into a course or unit, or completed as an extra or co-curricular activity. Other terms used to describe WIL include practicum, internships, fieldwork, cooperative education, field education, sandwich course and service learning.

ECU is committed to embedding WIL in all undergraduate and postgraduate courses by ensuring that all aspects of teaching, learning, and research are inspired by industry and community collaboration.

WIL at ECU aims to enhance the skills and attributes that have been identified as being critical to the success of our graduates – making significant contribution to our graduates’ work and industry readiness. During WIL, students have the opportunity to learn by doing and being provided with valuable feedback – providing them with the opportunity to develop the skills and capabilities that employers and community expect.

2. The benefits of Work Integrated Learning

Your organisation can benefit from participating in this program in the following ways:

- Staff development through interaction and engagement with students and ECU staff.
- Developing links with the University and other organisations.
- The opportunity to identify prospective employees.
- The opportunity to provide feedback that shapes what future students are taught.
- A mutually-beneficial collaboration with ECU and its various Faculties and Schools.

3. Roles and Responsibilities for WIL Activities

The WIL experiences covered by the Guidelines relate to the following units in the School of Business and Law:

- ECU Work Placement Program (FBL3501 and BUS6900).
- ECU Internship Program (FBL3400, FBL3500, FBL6505 and FBL6510).
- ECU Service Learning Program (FBL2505).

When arranging the WIL experience, the ECU Coordinator will inform the Collaborator which program the experience refers to (if this has not been conveyed to the Collaborator already). Further information about the units listed above is set out in the Briefing Sheets at Appendix One.

ECU Coordinators’ Responsibilities

The relevant ECU Coordinator is responsible for:

- a) Liaising with students engaged in WIL activities and ensuring that assessment is conducted in accordance with ECU’s Assessment Policy.
- b) In consultation with potential Collaborators, identifying opportunities for WIL activities and allocating students to those activities.
- c) Providing adequate and appropriate information for Collaborators about ECU’s expectations of all parties involved in WIL activities.

- d) Regularly consulting with Collaborators about the performance of students placed in those organisations and providing and recording details of timely feedback provided to students engaged in WIL activities.
- e) Communicate to students regarding any specific requirements Collaborators have in terms of intellectual property rights for works created by students during WIL activities prior to commencement of those activities so that the students can make an informed decision in as to whether they wish to proceed. Collaborators will be required to communicate any specific requirements they have in relation to intellectual property prior to receiving students and any assignment or licence documentation will be the responsibility of the Collaborator.

Student's Responsibilities

An ECU Student undertaking a WIL experience is responsible for:

- a) Complying with all applicable policies, procedures and requirements of the Collaborator (including any confidentiality requirements).
- b) Complying with and, where relevant, providing evidence of meeting any pre-requisites for attendance at the workplace, including certification requirements and participation in induction programs.
- c) Alerting the University and the Collaborator to any medical condition or disability that might impact on the student's capacity to carry out their tasks and responsibilities during WIL.
- d) Committing themselves to full and active participation in the WIL experience and its assessment.
- e) At the earliest opportunity, raising with the relevant ECU Coordinator any issues impacting adversely on their participation in the WIL experience, including issues relating to their supervision, intellectual property rights, conflicts of interest or inter-personal conflicts.
- f) Acting in a professional manner consistent with the ECU Student Charter and in accordance with the provisions of relevant ECU Statutes and Rules.

Collaborator's Responsibilities

A Collaborator is responsible for:

- a) Committing itself to active and responsive participation in all aspects of a WIL experience, including:
 - unless alternative supervision arrangements have been agreed upon, providing supportive supervision by staff members of the organisation;
 - providing regular feedback on student's progress in WIL; and
 - responding in a constructive and timely manner to requests by the University or a student for changes in arrangements for a WIL experience.
- b) Providing a safe workplace and adequate training, including induction programs, in occupational health and safety policies, procedures and practices.
- c) Ensuring that adequate and appropriate information is provided to students about its relevant policies and procedures.
- d) Unless alternative supervision arrangements have been agreed upon, appointing an individual workplace supervisor for each student placed in the organisation, with responsibility for:
 - supporting and mentoring the student throughout the WIL experience, including providing adequate induction and information about the organisation's policies and procedures;
 - being aware of the expectations for the student which are inherent in the WIL experience, including those relating to the range of experiences and learning opportunities to be provided to the student;
 - providing regular feedback to the student and the University supervisor about the student's progress and maintaining records of such feedback;
 - contributing to the assessment of the student by providing periodic evaluations of their performance and participating in the determination of their final result in the unit (as prescribed by the ECU Coordinator); and
 - consulting the University supervisor at the earliest opportunity if concerns arise about the student's progress or conduct during the WIL experience or if inter-personal disputes involving the student occur in the workplace.
- e) Informing all staff at the WIL experience location that the student is engaged in a WIL experience

- or activity and describe the nature and purpose of the program.
- f) Contacting the ECU Coordinator immediately if the student is absent from the WIL experience, ill, injured, or asked to leave before the expiration of this agreement.
 - g) Communicating to the relevant ECU Coordinator any specific requirements it has in relation to intellectual property prior to the receiving any students.
 - h) Notifying and inducting the student into the appropriate Occupational Health & Safety systems within the WIL workplace including but without limitation:
 - Health and safety policies;
 - Emergency and evacuation procedures (including emergency numbers);
 - First aid arrangements (including names and phone numbers of first-aiders);
 - Procedures for reporting accidents/incidents/risks;
 - Name and location of health and safety representative; and
 - Details on the process for managing and resolving health and safety issues.

4. Additional Matters

Confidentiality

The Student and the University acknowledge the need to respect commercial-in-confidence and other material owned by the Collaborator. ECU students may have access to privileged or confidential information in the course of their WIL experience or activities and ECU will direct all students to comply with any procedures or policies of the Collaborator in terms of confidentiality. If the Collaborator has any specific requirements such as requiring students to sign confidentiality undertakings, these requirements should be conveyed by the Collaborator to the ECU Coordinator prior to receiving any students.

Insurance

ECU has insurance policies in place that extend to students participating in unpaid WIL activities. Certificates of Currency for these policies can be provided upon request.

The WIL experience does not give rise to an employment relationship between the student/s and the Collaborator or ECU. Unless the student and Collaborator, on their own volition, enter into an employment contract or arrangement (which will be a private arrangement not involving ECU), students shall not be paid for their time on the WIL experience.

If students become employed or are paid in anyway, it will become necessary for the Collaborator to maintain insurance cover (including worker's compensation insurance) for that student. Once an employment agreement is in place between the student and the host, ECU's insurance cover will no longer extend to the student.

5. Workplace Supervisor Guidelines

Workplace supervisors are critical in the success of WIL and developing students through on-the-job training, coaching and mentoring. Students are very keen to observe and evaluate other professionals in the workplace and engage in feedback and self-reflection to further develop and refine their own skills for professional success.

Some suggested guidelines for the workplace supervisors are set out below.

a. Project/program of work scope

Consider and document the scope of the proposed work the student will complete, outlining thoughts on the nature of the project/program of work and the required student skills. This clarifies, for all parties, the type of work the student will be completing during their placement.

b. WIL preparation

- Ensure colleagues in the work area are aware the student will be coming on WIL and the purpose of their work. Workplace colleagues are very important to the value and enjoyment a student gains from the workplace experience.
- If required given the nature of the WIL activity, ensure the student has a work station and the necessary equipment to perform their role in the workplace. Agree with the student on the start and finish dates and the day(s) they will be attending the workplace during this period.

c. Project/program of work outcomes

Negotiate the learning outcomes with the student at the beginning of the WIL experience. This will include the student's roles and responsibilities during the WIL experience, their learning goals and expected outcomes/deliverables upon completing the WIL experience.

d. Workplace induction

Ensure students are given a warm welcome and are suitably inducted to matters relating to Occupational Health and Safety; confidentiality; ethical behaviour; organisational culture; dress code; professional conduct; organisational structure; reporting requirements; and organisational policies and procedures.

e. Ongoing supervision

Unless alternative supervision arrangements are agreed upon with the University, supervise the student in a manner that enhances their learning experience. Suggested practices may include:

- Setting realistic and measurable goals with the student at the beginning of the WIL experience and evaluating completed tasks and achieved outcomes to enhance their future performance.
- Making time for informal and open discussions on the student's strengths and any areas requiring improvement.
- Conducting regular performance management meetings, drawing on the input and feedback of other supervisors, peers and/or mentors as appropriate.
- Encouraging student participation in team meetings to understand the bigger picture and to gain a better understanding of what is required of them and others within the workplace.
- Enabling participation, if appropriate, in professional development workshops, seminars or similar events in the workplace.
- Developing greater student awareness of organisational protocol and industry/community expectations of their role and responsibilities. Inadequate preparation in these areas can cause students to feel inferior and lack confidence during their WIL experience.
- Adopting a mentoring role by encouraging students to reflect on their performance and ways they could improve in the future. Asking questions is critical to student learning as it encourages them to relate theory to practice and checks their disciplinary knowledge and understanding. It is also important to encourage students to reflect on their performance in employability skills such as team work, self-management and communication.
- Helping students gain a better understanding of what constitutes professional demeanour, ethical behaviour and efficient working practices through discussion, meetings, direct observation and feedback.
- Providing adequate support or advice regarding career choices and job requirements to enable students to gain an insight into what their profession entails on a day-to-day basis.
- Contacting the ECU Coordinator if any issues or concerns arise during the WIL experience.

f. Evaluating Performance

Evaluate student performance to assess whether the project outcomes and learning goals have been met. This should involve a de-briefing with the student at the end of the WIL experience and completing a supervisor's evaluation which may form part of the student's assessments for the unit.