

Gripes, Grizzles, Secrets and Successes: An ACEN open forum about the scaling up of WIL

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Research has shown that students who complete Work Integrated Learning (WIL) during their university degree develop a plethora of skills and attributes associated with a successful metamorphosis from student to valued employee (Clarke, 2018; Jackson, 2018, Thompson, Bates, & Bates, 2016). With escalating focus on employability of graduates, universities are increasingly looking to improve the effectiveness of WIL programs in developing students with an awareness of workplace culture and those 'soft skills' while at the same time further developing the professional and technical skills which are the content of degrees (Department of Education and Training, 2013, Jackson 2018). By its very nature, WIL can be more costly and resource intensive yet as demand is increasing (Gribble, Blackmore & Rahimi, 2015), universities are scaling up their WIL initiatives. This scaling up has naturally led to discussion about the significant workload implications of this form of student learning for university staff (Bilgin, Rowe & Clark, 2017).

The Australian Collaborative Education Network (ACEN) is committed to sharing good practice in WIL in order to improve student experience in WIL. This workshop seeks to facilitate the sharing of the obstacles and challenges faced by practitioners, and the small wins and larger gains they have experienced in the pursuit of achieving good learning outcomes. With increased student enrolment in WIL units, along with increased pressures on budgets and staff workloads, is it an impossible balancing act? Let's share the secrets to ensuring success in WIL.

References:

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