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Enriching Higher Education Students' Learning through Post-work Placement Interventions

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Editors

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Series Editors' Introduction

A key purpose of the Professional and Practice-Based Learning book series is to understand and elaborate how initial preparation for and on-going development of professional capacities can be effectively realised through experiences in educational and practice settings, actually or virtually, with an emphasis on the role that learning through practice can play. Increasingly, programs of initial occupational preparation for the professions are including work-based learning experiences. Although the organisation, form and duration of these experiences differ across occupations, national jurisdictions and educational programs in terms of their educational purposes and the processes of support for student learning, they are now a common feature of most tertiary education programs. However, more than providing these experiences for students, there are concerns about how these workplace experiences can be made more educationally viable and integrated into students' programs of initial occupational preparation or professional development. This includes consideration about their ordering (i.e. when they should occur in that program and what they should comprise), their organisation (e.g. short or longer term placements) and how what students learn through these experiences can be reconciled with the educational intents of those programs. Given the significant investment by educational institutions, workplaces and students themselves, and respecting the resources of workplaces, there is an imperative to optimise the learning potential of those experiences. This includes directing those experiences and learning towards specific educational outcomes. Much of this educational focus is associated with developing the competence required to practice the occupation and, increasingly, towards being able to move into practising those occupations in the work settings where education graduates are employed.

In this edited volume, the focus is on interventions utilising students' work experiences after they have been completed (i.e. post-practicum interventions). The key imperative is to identify and evaluate how we can enrich or augment students' work-based experiences after they have completed them. The occupational and educational context is what is currently occurring in Australian higher education institutions in which there is a strong and growing focus on work integrated learning experiences: work integrated education. In this volume, projects focusing on

post-practicum interventions from a wide range of occupations serviced by university programs are described and discussed. Among the occupational sectors represented by these projects are journalism, education, psychology, service learning, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and medicine. Importantly, across these projects, a range of different educational goals are represented that are sought to be achieved through these work placements and diverse kinds of processes that have been adopted to augment those experiences educationally. The intention here has been to trial and evaluate a range of processes to identify ways in which they can be effective and how they might be improved. Importantly, the approaches adopted have also been informed by understandings about what purposes students aim to secure from their participation in these kinds of activities and what are their preferred means to do so. Students' perspectives are clearly important as they are, ultimately, those who engage in these experiences, learning through and from them, and then reconciling the two sets of experiences. As a consequence, it is not possible to identify the effectiveness of these strategies without considering how students come to engage with them and will do so in the future. As evident across the contributions to this book, factors associated with student engagement and participation are central to whether these strategies could be implemented, and prospects for what was trialled through the interventions reported in these chapters being implemented in the longer term.

The contributions to this volume were generated through a large Australian teaching project in higher education that used broadly common processes and engagements, provided opportunities for the contributors to meet, discuss, share and advance their work. This coherence is aimed to be exercised through the organisation and structure of the volume. The opening two chapters sets the scene for the project and the contributions, followed by a series of chapters in which each of the interventions are introduced, the implementation and outcomes discussed and conclusions drawn about the elements and qualities of their effectiveness. Then, finally, a chapter provides a review and synthesis of these chapters in their contributions, in the first instance, and then an overall evaluation of the project in the latter.

In these ways, this edited monograph makes direct contributions to this book series, and more broadly to the field of the occupational preparation of the professions. The key focus on addressing, educationally, considerations of different ways in which students' experiences in work settings can be enriched and integrated into their studies, provides models and practices that have far broader application.

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Preface

This edited book aims to offer a range of insights about the processes and outcomes of enrichening higher education students' learning through post-work placement interventions. That, that is, using these interventions after students have completed their work placements to enrich those learning experiences and integrate them into the students' program of study and their learning. Work placements and their integration into the experiences provided in and by higher education institutions are now becoming essential elements of higher education. This is because there are growing demands for these students to secure capacities during their studies that will assist them find employment and be productive upon graduation. Although once restricted to healthcare, law, and education, the use of work placements, work experiences, and practicums of different kinds is now becoming a common element of the higher education provision. However, just providing work placement experiences alone is insufficient. Instead, it is necessary to assist students to draw upon, utilize, and reconcile what they have learnt through their workplace experiences with what they are being taught and are learning through the university-based components of their higher educational programs. Hence, there is a need for educational interventions to engage students in these processes and realize these outcomes.

The collected contributions in this edited monograph draws on the processes and outcomes of projects that were part of a large national teaching grant funded by the Australian federal department of education. That grant aimed to identify how best students' workplace experiences can be integrated into their programs of study. The key focus for the work in this grant was how, once students had participated in or completed workplace experiences, those experiences could be utilized to assist students' immediate studies, but also make them better placed to enjoy effective transition to work beyond graduation. This grant built upon two earlier teaching fellowships that focused on the integration of students' activities in work settings and the outcomes that have arisen from them into their programs of studies. Those earlier fellowships firstly explored the importance of students being agentic learners to engage effectively in both workplaces and their university-based activities and, importantly, to actively reconcile the two sets of experiences. The second of the two fellowships was far larger and explored curricular and pedagogic practices that can

promote the effectiveness of the two sets of experiences and how best they might be integrated within higher education programs across a range of disciplines and programs. In that second fellowship, the importance of engaging students actively after they had completed their work placements, practicums, clinical experiences, and the like was identified as being perhaps the most important moment to engage students in considering their experiences, reconciling them with what they are seeking to learn through those programs, and taking the opportunity to share, compare, and contrast with other students. In particular, accessing others' experiences provided opportunities to learn from a far wider range of sources than individuals' own workplace experiences.

These findings led to a grant focusing on how to optimize students' learning post-practicum. The first phase of this grant was restricted to healthcare disciplines, given the centrality of practicum experiences within healthcare education. That phase trialled a range of approaches and educational interventions that were then evaluated in terms of the kind of goals they were seeking to achieve in medical, nursing, midwifery, physiotherapy, dietetics, and speech pathology education. The processes and outcomes of those initial projects in healthcare were made available to participants planning similar activities in the second phase in a developmental conference held in February 2017. From engaging with the presenters and their projects, being aware of the processes that were used, the difficulties encountered, and the outcomes they were able to achieve, the second phase of participants planned and enacted their own interventions. The processes and the outcomes of those projects in the first phase have been published as an edited monograph (Billett, Newton, Rogers, & Noble, 2018).

It is the processes and findings of those second-phase projects, undertaken across 2017, that are the focus and contributions to this monograph. Occurring after students have had workplace experiences of different kinds (i.e., work placements, practicums, secondments, and clinical placements), the interventions trialled in these projects and comprising the contributions here occurred across a range of higher education programs and disciplines. These occurred across a range of Australian universities and had a common concern to enrich those workplace experiences for purposes of improving students' understandings and abilities to undertake occupational activities and of developing the kinds of dispositions that are required for practising those occupations. These processes and findings speak directly to educators across the broad ambit of higher education programs. Offered here are accounts of the issues, challenges, and complications faced by educators when enacting these interventions, the reporting of outcomes arising from them. In this way, the reach of the accounts of processes, findings, and evaluations is not wholly restricted to the disciplines represented by these chapters, but rather speaks more broadly to the range of disciplines across higher education that are now including work placements as part of the curriculum. The lessons provided through this edited volume are intended to inform how post-work placement interventions might be enacted across a range of occupational fields.

Such insights are likely to be informative and welcomed. In recent times, administrators and teachers within higher education have sought to utilize students' workplace experiences more effectively, and to enrich and integrate those experiences

with the activities and interactions provided to students in university settings as directed towards assisting students to become employable upon graduation. Providing students with opportunities to consider, share, compare, evaluate, and discuss their clinical experiences is now seen as a key means to achieve important educational outcomes associated with the efficacy of their occupational preparation. In particular, these processes are seen as ways in which students' knowledge can be enriched through the application of what they have learnt, and can be extended to other situations, preparing students for the requirements for clinical practice beyond graduation. Post-practicum interventions can be used to address diverse educational goals ranging from informing students about the range of tasks and performances that they need to secure their nominated occupations; developing the procedural capacities (e.g., skills) to interact with patients and clients, undertake assessments, and provide effective care over time; to beginning to understand variations in and options for occupational practice.

This monograph provides a selection of systematic accounts and analyses of different kinds of post-practicum interventions used to enrich their learning. In particular, the concern here is to find ways of utilizing their placement experiences that position them as being more than opportunities to practices or rehearse what has been learnt within the classroom and lecture theatre. Instead, it is accepted and understood now that these kinds of workplace-based experiences can make their own and salient contributions to higher education students' learning of the kinds of knowledge they need to practise their selected occupations after graduation. These include being generative of making students more informed, practiced, and dispositionally ready to effectively integrate their practice experiences with those from their classroom-based activities, with a focus on promoting their employability. However, consideration of how such interventions should progress and the goals that they seek to achieve differ across disciplines, and the particular purposes to be achieved need to be illuminated, further understood, and elaborated. This is the aim here.

Drawing upon the processes and outcomes of some of these projects, this monograph offers a range of insights about, approaches to, and practices for augmenting students' experiences through post-work placement interventions within the Australian higher education system. A total of 27 projects were enacted across 14 Australian universities. Each project identified and responded to a particular educational concern identified by its proposers or through a student survey, and collectively focused on how to use post-practicum experiences to more adequately prepare students for the transition to employment after graduation. These projects are located in journalism, marketing, physiotherapy, education, hospitality, animal care, etc. In each instance, the project trialled different kinds of interventions, detailed the kind of processes that were adopted, and also gathered data about how students reacted, the contributions and outcomes realized, and conclusions drawn. It is a synthesis of the overall findings of those studies and a selection of those studies that are offered here as important contributions to the field of higher education. In these ways, insights derived from interventions of different kinds across a range of Australian universities providing occupational preparation across a range of disciplines and occupations are advanced.

Structure of Edited Monograph

This edited monograph is structured into three discrete parts. The first part – Post-practicum *educational* Educational and *learning interventions*Learning Interventions – provides an overview of the need to provide post-practicum interventions to promote student learning and to reconcile their experiences in both university and workplace settings, as directed towards developing the kinds of capacities required to practise their selected occupations. This part comprises two chapters. The first is an overview of the post-practicum project – its educational purposes, importance, and roles in achieving the kinds of outcomes being requested of contemporary higher education. The second focuses on and discusses the kinds of institutional arrangements, including curriculum structures and partnerships with workplaces, that can promote these kinds of educational experiences. The implications for higher education provisions are central here.

The second part – Instances and Evaluations of Post-practicum *practices* Practices – comprises 13 chapters from the projects that address distinct aspects of organizing, enacting, and evaluating post-practicum experiences for students. These chapters represent a range of disciplines including journalism, nursing, public healthcare, business, occupational therapy, organizational psychology, marketing, and physiotherapy. Importantly, beyond disciplinary diversity, the projects refer to a range of ways in which post-practicum interventions can be enacted. The focus on these chapters is not to present idealized and sanitized instances of these practices. Instead, what is proposed in these contributions is considerations of the practicalities of implementing such interventions and engaging students in these activities, and in ways that are constructive, focused, and directed towards achieving the kinds of outcomes that students require to make the transition from higher education into effective occupational practice.

The third part – Post-practicum *interventions* Interventions and Practices in Prospect – comprises a concluding chapter that seeks to capture the contributions of a range of projects described and discussed in the second section. It initially collates, summarizes, and synthesizes the contributions of the projects and then proposes and predicts how such interventions might be advanced in the future.

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Part I
Post-practicum Educational and Learning Interventions

This first part provides an overview of the need to provide post-practicum interventions to promote student learning and to reconcile their experiences in both university and workplace settings, as directed towards developing the kinds of capacities required to practise their selected occupations. It comprises two chapters. The first is an overview of the post-practicum project – its educational purposes, importance, and roles in achieving the kinds of outcomes being requested of contemporary higher education. The second focuses on and discusses the kinds of institutional arrangements, including curriculum structures and partnerships with workplaces, that can promote these kinds of educational experiences. The implications for higher education provisions are central here.

Post-practicum Project: Its Educational Purposes, Importance, and Roles

Stephen Billett and Faith Valencia-Forrester

1 Providing and Integrating Workplace Experiences in Higher Education

The practice of providing higher education students with workplace experiences has become increasingly common. This situation has arisen as the importance of graduate employability has become a central concern for universities, students and governments (Billett, 2015a; Cooper, Orrel, & Bowden, 2010). For some disciplines, these kinds of student experiences are long-standing and commonplace. Programs preparing graduates to be doctors, nurses, midwives and teachers have long provided workplace experiences and to do otherwise would be unthinkable. They even have specific names associated with them: clinical placements, continuity of care, internships, practicums etc.[1] Indeed, many occupations with occupational licensing requirements demand periods of workplace experiences, as do professional bodies such as engineers. However, the provision of workplace experiences (e.g. practicums, placements, internships) is now no longer restricted to these occupations. Instead, there is a growing demand for students in all kinds of university programs to have access to workplace experiences as part of, and to be integrated into their

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[1] In this book we use the term practicum to refer to these workplace experiences, although appreciate and respect that occupational fields have their own well understood and established terms (e.g. clinical placements, internships et cetera).

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degree programs across a range of programs (Patrick et al., 2008), and also how best these experiences can be optimised (Billett, 2011; Cooper et al., 2010; Orrell, 2011).

The optimisation of these experiences has become a key concern for higher education institutions in the contemporary era for a range of reasons (Billett, 2015a). Firstly, securing work placements and practicums has become increasingly difficult because of the demands being made on workplaces not only by universities but also vocational education colleges and high schools. Secondly, often, these experiences are not of the kind and duration that is ideal to develop the kinds of employability capacities for which they are being sought by higher education programs. Whereas there are accepted practices and arrangements to provide rich and supportive experiences within teaching hospitals that support medical and nursing students' learning, and the same in schools to support student teachers, these are less available in other sectors that do not have traditions of support. Thirdly, supporting the learning intended for students in higher education institutions is not a priority even for many of those workplaces with traditions of support and is a far lower priority in many others. Fourthly, there is a growing expectation now that universities will provide these kinds of experiences and students will directly benefit from them in ways that promote their employability. Indeed, some universities have practicum experiences as a central element of their marketing to attract students who are increasingly concerned about securing employable educational outcomes by the time they graduate (Cain, Le, & Billett, 2019). In these ways, not just the provision of workplace experiences, but how these can be effectively utilised is becoming increasingly central to higher education provisions of all kinds and disciplines (Patrick et al., 2008). Therefore, there is a need for an educational approach that encompasses experiences in work settings to support that learning and adopt pedagogic practices to achieve those outcomes.

Central here is the concern to find ways of augmenting these experiences, particularly once students have engaged in workplace activities and interactions. This augmentation is important for a number of educational reasons. The difficulty in securing workplace experiences for higher education students, the variability of their duration and quality, and that they are not always neatly aligned with securing the kinds of knowledge required for university programs means that these experiences need to be augmented and extended. Consequently, finding ways to optimise these experiences has become an imperative for teachers in higher education, administrators of universities, higher education students and also addressing governmental priorities associated with the quality and outcomes of university education (Billett, 2019). This book seeks to contribute to achieving those goals. In this way, it engages with an issue that has immediate relevance to practices within and policies about higher education. This is an important goal for informing teaching and learning practices in higher education. But, in doing so, it also addresses broader concerns about how knowledge that students learn in higher education programs can translate or adapt to circumstances beyond them.

A key premise for the broad educational project, albeit in schools, vocational colleges or universities, is that the knowledge learnt within them needs to be applicable following graduation. These institutions have been established not to serve their own purposes, but to generate knowledge in students that has applicability beyond the activities of the institutions in which they are learnt (e.g. universities and workplaces)

and to other practices and settings and into the future. This fundamental goal of the broad education project sometimes seems lost in the institutional practices and goals of educational institutions. It seems forgotten when there is such a key emphasis on primary education being a primer for secondary education, much of which is directed towards entrance into tertiary education (i.e. vocational and higher education). Indeed, relatively recently, initial theorising about curriculum defined it as serving the purposes of the institution in which they were provided (Tyler, 1949). This is not to suggest that educational institutions are and have become cloistered and inherently focused on themselves, but there is a risk that this can arise. For instance, it is often the case that the kinds of and focuses of assessment of student learning are those that are directed towards measures and performances that reflect institutional values and practices, not those beyond them. Yet, those basis for focusing efforts for intentional learning, providing experiences to achieve those learning outcomes and their assessment, may not always be well aligned with requirements outside of these institutions. With the governmental focus on ensuring the applicability of what is learnt in higher education to circumstances beyond it, and in particular, a smooth transition to work, these issues have become prominent, and also of interest to students, their parents and also those who employ upon graduation. The term often used here is about making graduates employable.

1.1 A Focus on Employability

Here, the concern is how students' workplace experiences can be optimised in terms of informing and being integrated with their overall programs of study to promote their employability. This educational process is often referred to as work-integrated learning (WIL), although whenever it is associated with the provision of experiences, more accurately, it should be described as work integrated education (WIE) (Billett, 2019). The overall objective of these educational processes is to provide students with experiences of the physical and social settings in which the occupations are enacted for which they are being prepared and they might find employment. This can and should include engaging in the activities and interactions that comprise the occupational practices that they are learning to enact. Importantly, the provision of these experiences is much more than orientation to those settings and the occupation or making these familiar. Instead, those settings (i.e. workplaces) and those experiences (i.e. activities and interactions) afford experiences of kinds and in ways that cannot be provided through educational institutions. That is, these experiences make particular and specific contributions to students learning and vice versa. Here, it is also important to note that educational institutions and the experiences they provide are often generative of learning that cannot be found in workplaces. So, each of these two kinds of social and physical settings (i.e. workplaces and educational institutions), and the activities and interactions they provide are helpful and, at best, complimentary in developing the kinds of knowledge that students need to learn and graduates and possess to move to find employment and be effective in their occupational practice.

In an earlier project that is focused on how the integration of these experiences could best progress, it was identified that there were curriculum, pedagogic and personal aspects to that integration (Billett, 2015a). The curriculum considerations included planning for and providing workplace experiences for students in ways that were enmeshed within the overall curriculum, rather than something which was in addition to it. Hence, considerations of the timing, sequencing, duration and purposes of providing work experiences is a central curriculum issue. Then, pedagogic considerations were identified as being those that might be enacted prior to students participating in practicum experiences, during them and then once they have been completed. Most compelling was the evidence from the earlier studies about the potency of engaging students once they have had work experiences and had a basis for engaging with other students and their teachers, in processes that permitted them to compare, contrast and critically appraise those experiences in terms of the knowledge that they need to learn. So, whilst it is important to prepare students for workplace experiences and provide them with support during their work placements, the findings suggest that the optimum time for structured interventions to integrate and augment these two sets of experiences were at the point when students had had all completed their workplace or practicum experience. It was also identified in the earlier study that it was important to account for the experience curriculum – how students come to experience, construe those experiences and learn from them. Considerations of the 'experienced curriculum' (what students come to experience and learn) needs to be considered within what is planned (the 'intended curriculum') and what experiences are being provided through these interventions ('enacted curriculum'). So, whilst the focus of this book seeks to emphasise interventions after students have completed their practicum – post-practicum interventions – those interventions need to account for, encompass and integrate students' experiences.

1.2   Post-practicum Intervention: Augmenting Students' Workplace Learning Experiences

All the above suggests that a consideration of experiences in workplaces, how those experiences can be engaged with by students, how university educators can organise the integration of two sets of experiences effectively and then augment them through specific pedagogic practices has become a key priority for contemporary higher education (Billett, 2019). It is finding ways of augmenting those experiences that is central to what is presented and advanced in this book. Much of what is advanced here, and the project that is the source of the contributions, intentionally builds upon earlier work focusing on the importance of the student as an active or agentic learner and considerations for how to effectively integrate the learning potential of both sets of experiences in developing those students' knowledge. If that thinking and acting can be augmented in productive ways and can be directed towards the intended outcomes of students' experiences, these outcomes are likely to be richer and far more

effectively directed towards achieving intended outcomes. In particular, the ability for students to articulate, share, compare and critique those experiences is likely to lead to informed and adaptable outcomes through means that are structured and focused, and can go beyond what can be achieved through students' own mediated experiences (i.e. their zone of potential development) (Grealish et al., 2019; Harrison, Molloy, Bearman, Ting, & Leech, 2018; Levett-Jones, Courtney-Pratt, & Govind, 2019; Noble et al., 2019; Rogers, Parker-Tomlin, Clanchy, & Townshend, 2019). Whether experiences alone or processes of augmentation are being considered, the learning process needs to be interdependent, rather than independent or dependent. Learners need to be engaging actively with, and being informed by, the contributions of activities and interactions in which they think and act. Ultimately, experiences provided by educational programs and in work settings are nothing more than invitations to change; it is the learners who decide how and for what purposes they take up that invitation. So, finding ways of engaging students, placing them in the driver's seat, supporting their construal and construction of what is provided for them will be central to the success of educational programs and interventions. It is for this reason that some studies have emphasised the importance of positioning a student in this way (Cardell & Bialocerkowski, 2019; Harrison, Molloy, Bearman, Ting, & Leech, 2019; Noble et al., 2019; Steketee, Keane, & Gardiner, 2019).

So, once students have had workplace experiences, they can be engaged with and optimised through educational interventions – i.e. post-practicum experiences. That is, the kinds of pedagogic practices that can be used to assist students to articulate their experiences, what they learn from them and how they might come to share, compare and contrast their experiences with others so that the learning will not be restricted to what individuals alone have directly encountered and learnt from but through the sharing of experiences. All this puts considerable emphases on the organisation and implementation of pedagogic practices within higher education settings once students have had practicum experiences. This volume is a product of a large teaching grant that has generated a previous volume focusing on health and social care work that comprise the first phase of that grant (Billett et al. 2019). Building on what is learnt in that first phase, the studies reported here address issues associated with the provision and integration of practicum experiences, including disciplines that sit outside of those with long-standing traditions of support for learners.

Having introduced the need for and importance of providing and augmenting students' workplace experiences, this chapter now progresses by overviewing the earlier work that has led up this emphasis on post-practicum interventions (i.e. augmenting or optimising practicum experiences after students have completed them) and the process and procedures comprising the practical inquiries that were undertaken through the teaching grant. Then, four salient findings associated with students' participation in these activities are discussed. These comprise firstly, student readiness to engage in these interventions, secondly, managing the engagement of students who are time jealous, thirdly, considerations about whether post-practicum activities should be voluntary or compulsory, and fourthly, the importance of a safe social and psychological environment in which the sharing of experiences in post-practicum events occurs.

2 Students' Integration of Experiences in the Workplace and Higher Education Settings

As a means of explaining the importance of augmenting student's workplace experiences, this section, briefly describes the two earlier studies and the most recent study from which the contributions for this book are drawn. As foreshadowed, whether referring to work-integrated education or work-integrated learning, curriculum and pedagogic practices, there is a primary and central concern to place students centrally within these discussions. Throughout the considerations of educational provisions centred on curriculum and pedagogy that are progressed below, there is a need to consider how students come to engage in and learn through these experiences. The first project was about developing students to be agent learners to participate effectively in the workplace experiences and, thereby, prepare them for effective learning across working life. The second was a large multi-institutional and cross disciplinary project that sought to identify the bases by which work integrated learning could be effectively realised. That is, identifying the curriculum, pedagogic and personal practices students require to achieve this goal. The third project, again a multi-institutional and cross disciplinary project, sought to understand ways in which students' workplace learning experiences could be augmented to achieve the kind of educational goals identified.

2.1 Project 1: Developing Agentive Learners

Based on understandings about how people learn in and through work, in 2008 a pilot project was undertaken (Billett, 2009) to examine how higher education students' learning could be enhanced through the provision of experiences with a particular focus on engendering these learners to be agentic (Billett & Pavlova, 2005). That is, generating the capacities of higher education students to be proactive, focused and directed in their engagement with workplace experiences and to secure effective learning outcomes. The overall consideration here is that students need to be agentic in their practicum experiences as they ultimately have responsibility for organising, directing and securing their learning in workplaces. This capacity will be the premise for how they will come to engage in and learn across their working lives (Billett & Pavlova, 2005). This project was quite small involving four discipline areas (i.e. nursing, physiotherapy, human services and midwifery) across five university programs that focused on the integration of students'experiences in the workplace into their programs of study. The key premises were that effective work-integrated learning is required to develop the kinds of knowledge required for graduates being effective within occupational practice and that learning was premised upon the actions of the learners (i.e. students). It also focused on how students might

come to take up the educational invitation that has been provided to them through the organisation of workplace experiences. In particular, and as the title suggests it focused on examining how best to develop the agentic qualities of students when engaged in work-integrated learning.

The key findings from this study were identifying the importance of preparing students before they engaged in practice settings to permit them to participate effectively and learn. That is, to promote their readiness to engage in these learning experiences. Here, there was a combination of the kinds of capacities they would need to participate effectively in their placements, as well as strategies that they might engage to learn effectively. It was also identified that having other forms of support during engagement in practicum activities and in practice settings was helpful in a multitude of ways. This included overcoming isolation, having-bases for mediating their experiences and learning on the basis of what others had experienced and learnt, peer interaction as a form of discrete but trustworthy interaction and the need for some structuring to achieve those outcomes. In all, when students could identify the direct benefits of developing and enacting such dispositions and procedures, they appreciated and valued the worth of being agentic. However, being able to exercise agency was differentiated across students and circumstances of their practicums. Finally, it was reported that when students have the opportunity to share, reflecting critically appraise their experiences this was helpful in developing professional capacities and maximising their learning.

2.2 Project 2: Integrating Students' Workplace Experiences in Higher Education Programs

The second project comprised a large national teaching fellowship that sought to identify the curriculum and pedagogic practices required for effectively integrating practice-based experiences within students' programs of study (Billett, 2011). Here, the consideration of curriculum and pedagogies were about those that would assist with the provision of practice-based experiences and how they might come to be effectively applied. This project comprised 20 projects across 6 universities in a range of disciplinary areas and involved individual projects that sought to trial curriculum and pedagogies to support that integration. This fellowship was premised upon a collaborative model of development in which the participating project shared their processes and outcomes in a professional environment and the sharing of those through with face-to-face meetings, videoconferences and a dialogue forum (i.e. were participants presented, shared and critique their findings). One of the key outcomes of this fellowship was the identification of the range of different educational purposes to which work integrated education might be directed (Billett, 2011, 2015a). These range from: learning about an occupation;

learning about some of the various forms of that occupation; extending the knowledge learnt in university settings; orienting to the kinds of settings where the occupation is practised; building the actual occupational capacities required to be an effective practitioner; developing specific forms of knowledge associated with the particular occupation and also those more broadly associated with engaging with others, solving problems and responding to new challenges, as well as securing occupational licensing. Other key findings from this study included that just having workplace experiences alone is insufficient: they needed augmenting and mediating by specific kinds of experiences to optimise the learning. Building upon the previous study, there was an emphasis on, firstly, preparing students for supporting during, and assisting them connect experiences after work placements were completed.

Again, and as foreshadowed in the pilot study, students'readiness (i.e. their interest, capacities and disposition) to participate in the workplace and learn from it was central to the kinds and qualities of learning outcomes. That also realised the importance of students''time jealousy' (Billett, 2015a). That is, whilst they often refer to students as being time poor, this does not adequately capture many of the students bases of engagement. Whereas being 'time poor' suggests that students do not have enough time, time jealousy refers to the actions by students in prioritising and being selective about the activities they engage with to meet the needs of competing demands upon their time. Also, teachers' attitudes and actions, the degree by which they valued students work experience and the need to integrate those experiences into their programs of study, varied widely. Again, the importance of how students come to engage in activities, construe meaning, procedures and dispositions from them and ultimately come to practice, emphasise the importance of the experience curriculum, namely, what students experience and how they respond to it. Students also reported that as neophytes or novices they preferred a gradual or incremental process of engagement in practice-based experiences and support. This fellowship also reinforced what was identified in the initial study, namely, that preparation for their practicums followed by assistance in reconciling their experiences after their practicums were key focus of effective educational intervention.

From this fellowship, a series of findings about the intended enacted and experienced curriculum were advanced. The intended curricular is what is planned for and anticipated would be the outcomes of the experiences provided for students. The enacted curricular is what happens when it is enacted, and students engage in the activities provided for them. The enacted curricular is what students experience and it is a product of a range of factors including the teacher, their interests and present work, the kind of practice setting in which they are engaged, and the kinds of support that they are able to secure or within the work settings and experiences provided for two reconcile what they had experienced and learnt. This study led to the development of a range of premises for organising and enacting work integrated education, including how students might come to engage effectively in these learning experiences (Billett, 2015a).

2.3 Project 3: Augmenting Students' Post-practicum Experiences

The third project – Augmenting students' post-practicum experiences - and the contributions reported here (Australian Government, 2019) arose from that second study – the fellowship. It was found in that fellowship that, on balance, that, the point at which students had completed their workplace experience, was the optimum moment for educational interventions. That is, to engage with them in articulating, sharing, comparing and, the experiences they had in workplace settings. This is not to negate the importance of preparing students for workplace experiences or supporting them throughout. However, it is only when the students have had workplace experiences, engaged in the activities and interactions that comprise their target occupations that they have a strong foundation to understand what that occupation comprises, its requirements for performance and having a basis by which they can align and organise their knowledge accordingly. This project comprises two rounds of post-practicum interventions over a three-year period. The first was through 14 projects in the health and social care sector (Billett, Newton, Rogers, & Noble, 2019). At the end of those projects these 14 projects were presented to the organisers of 30 additional projects that were enacted across 19 Australian universities. This book reports the processes and outcomes of those projects. There was no single preferred approach for organising these post-practicum interventions and each project that devised a process that was germane to its circumstances and students. Here, two forums were provided to assist the process of learning from, and sharing across, these projects. In addition, a survey was undertaken to gather information from a larger body of students about the kinds of purposes and practices to which work integrated education was being utilised and, to identify in what ways all of this could be effective.

The first round of projects from health and social care sector utilised a range of interventions to engage students' post-practicum. The processes and outcomes of these 14 projects were made available to the second round of projects for them to learn from and perhaps adapt or adopt particular approaches and were published in an earlier and volume with a focus on health and social care (Billett et al., 2019). The findings of the survey provided patterns of responses that were helpful in considering how post-practicum interventions could be used, and for what purpose (Cain et al., 2019). A range of findings came from the survey including students' preference for such a provision to assist them be effective. Interestingly, and against some expectations, it was found largely necessary for their post-practicum processes to be guided by more informed partners. Students were particularly interested in judgements of their development when made by experienced healthcare practitioners. So, against expectations about students needing and wanting to be agentic, they had a preference for engaging with more expert partners who could advise about their progress and assist them to align their learning with employment beyond graduation. In many ways, this is not surprising given the importance for

students to receive informed feedback by those who are most credible and expert. Perhaps also, the health sector, with its hierarchical organisation, may well prevent such arrangements. Yet, a recurring concern is that students were less interested in leading and organising post-practicum interventions.

In the first round of projects, a range of post-practicum strategies were trialled in health and social care disciplines. These included: oral assessment tasks, professional exchanges, reflective writing, structured learning circles structured clinical debriefings, workshops, face-to-face reflective debriefs, personalised feedback and students generating videos to capture their work experience and analyses of it (Billett et al., 2019). The findings from this first round of projects informed the subsequent round of studies that are the focus and content of this publication. They discussed purposes, principles and practices associated with curriculum and pedagogies, and their interrelationships, to understand how to effectively and purposefully utilise information about post-practicum experiences. In doing this, a concern is to identify and evaluate the specific educational purposes that these interventions have sought to achieve using specific curriculum and pedagogic practices.

The second round of studies, thirteen of which are reported here were not restricted to the health and social service fields, but were far more broadly arrayed. There are a range of educational purposes to be achieved through integrating and augmenting students' workplace experience within the overall course of study. In these projects, some focused on broader educational purposes, such as the broad development occupational identity and capacities in their assessment, whilst others focused on more specific purposes. For instance, Edgar, Sutherland, and Connaughton (this volume) this aim to provide experiences that would make students aware of and more ready for the requirements of physiotherapy work beyond graduation, through the provision of targeted experiences. Gribble and Netto (this volume) aim to identify and validate means by which students could critically appraise their and others' practice is devised to improve their effectiveness as occupational therapists. Heck, Grainger, Simon, Willis, and Smith (this volume) are concerned to provide a framework for teachers to, similarly, appraise their and others' practices teachers with a focus on improving their self-efficacy and capacity to address novel challenges that they might face in classrooms. Following this trend, Murray, Roiko, Sebar, and Rogers (this volume) focus on promoting professional identity and efficacy in healthcare students through fostering critical appraisal of their and others' experiences. Similarly, Palesy and Levett-Jones (this volume) focus on developing professional dispositions within cohorts of student nurses. As with those above, there was often an implied concern about students being ready to face the challenges of practice. This was evident also in Wake's (this volume) focus on resilience for journalism students who might be find themselves in confronting situations and, the evidence suggests that there may be little support for them in or from their workplaces. In a different but also broad focus, Patrick, Webb, Peters, and Trede (this volume) seek to generate student efficacy through promoting work ethic and focus on service, that is intended to be broadly applicable across a range of occupations.

Some projects have more specific objectives. Antwertinger, Larkin, Lau, O'Connor, and Serrano Santos (this volume) are concerned about developing students' ability to utilise and benefit from feedback, its role and how it can support their efficacy and resilience, including responding to negative feedback. Boag-Hodgson, Cole, and Jones (this volume) seek to develop and validate an instrument to assist provide valid assessments associated with students learning from practice and have that assessment process based on occupational expectations that would be developed across a series of placements. Valencia-Forrester (this volume) uses a group debrief process that specifically focuses on developing informed or wise practice, by highlighting and discussing instances of those practices that were evident in journalism students' placement in major events. Hains-Wesson and Ji (this volume) focus on developing team-based work capacities through the use of projects and assessments to develop collaborative capacities for business students. Jackson and Trede (this volume) seek to develop the capacities for self-authorship through explicitly engaging students in processes that seek to reconcile personal and professional dispositions.

It can be seen that through this array of educational purposes that were selected as the imperatives for the projects there are both broader and more specific focuses. It is perhaps noteworthy that the imperatives selected by these educators have some similarities. There is a clear focus on student readiness, assisting them develop and sustain the occupational identity as they engage in work activities and assessments and that concerns about occupational competence and capacity building are underpinned by strong dispositional elements (i.e. identity, self-efficacy, resilience).

However, to proceed the reporting of these chapters, in the following section, some key issues emerging across the entire cohort projects (i.e. Phase 1 and Phase 2) are advanced as a means of identifying factors that are central to the effective augmentation of practicum experiences after they have been included. Those factors include understanding and responding to learner expectations; readiness; student engagement; engagement interventions; having a safe environment in which to share; and the importance of designing and enacting effective interventions. The following section discusses these issues.

3 Implementation Issues for Post-practicum Interventions in Higher Education

The two phases of projects identified specific issues to be addressed and imposed practicum interventions, which they then enacted and evaluated those interventions, providing a series of project-specific and more general outcomes. Crucial implementation issues emerged during the implementation and evaluation of the post-practicum strategies. Identifying such issues is important as it is necessary to understand how best such interventions should be enacted and what factors shape their enactment in higher education institutions. Factors that either support or inhibit

the enactment of these interventions need to be delineated and understood to assist them be enacted effectively. Through reviewing these chapters, four sets of issues were delineated:

- students' readiness to engage in these interventions
- managing student engagement
- considerations about both voluntary and compulsory activities
- having a safe social and psychological environment in students can share and compare their experiences.

3.1 Readiness

Readiness comprises learners' abilities and interest in engaging and learning productively from particular experiences (Billett, 2015b) – in this case that is, whether students have the existing conceptual, procedural and dispositional knowledge to productively engage and learn from the experiences they encounter in work and educational settings. This set of conditions is central to them realising the outcomes intended to arise from these experiences. For instance, if students are unfamiliar with a work environment or what comprises the roles and activities of their selected occupation, and their practicums are at the commencement of their studies, then they may lack the readiness to learn through these experiences fruitfully. Instead, rather than learning what is intended, these experiences might be overwhelming and lead to dissonance (i.e. being confused), rather than to effective learning. Hence, there are factors associated with student readiness and the kind of experiences provided for them. A way of addressing this issue is to provide students with opportunities for learning that are commensurate with their level of readiness (i.e. their conceptual, procedural and dispositional knowledge), and that offer experiences to build on that level. For instance, an opportunity in which they might initially observe practice in action (e.g. in classrooms, wards, simulations), or attend meetings where the occupational practice is discussed first (e.g. handovers), may assist them to develop a level of readiness to engage in more demanding activities. Without having adequate concepts associated with what is being discussed or experienced, the procedures to helpfully utilise those interactions and the interest to do so, immersion in authentic work activities in busy healthcare settings may simply be too much, too soon (i.e. leading to dissonance). That readiness is particularly important when it is anticipated that the students will learn specific knowledge from experiences, albeit in education or workplace settings. It also needs remembering that in work settings, students will likely mediate their own learning, because there can be no guarantee that others will be available or in a position to mediate that knowledge for them via explanation or modelling. Hence, their readiness to engage in activities where there is unlikely to be adequate support is crucial to worthwhile educational outcomes.

If students lack readiness to engage in work activities, what was intended is unlikely to be achieved. Problem-solving activities might become guessing games;

group activities might become individually-focused attempts to contribute; activities based on assumptions about students' existing knowledge may become flawed. Consequently, and particularly in circumstances where students are positioned as solely mediating their learning, the degree of readiness to engage in the activities is crucial. For instance, the assessment tasks set for nursing students (Levett-Jones et al., 2019) were similar to those in which they had previously engaged. Consequently, students familiar with these activities, and the assessment tasks were provided fresh scenarios and prompting by teachers that added novel dimensions to this way of augmenting the students' practicum experiences. This is referred to as managing the cognitive load of educational experiences (Kirschner, 2002) to facilitate effective learning. Hence, because the students were familiar with part of the task, they were able to effectively manage novel aspects of those tasks and, thereby, build upon what they knew, could do and valued (i.e. learning). The new requirements were not, therefore, overwhelming, as might have been the case if students were unfamiliar with this process; rather, they sat within their zone of potential development (Cole, 1985).

Differences in readiness were evident in a project in which students from two universities were engaged in reflective writing tasks, yet only one of these universities had provided similar experiences to these students earlier (Sweet, Graham, & Bass, 2019). Therefore, this task was quite unfamiliar and was a challenge for students from the second university, compared with those from the first. In the first university, it was a requirement that all students had to engage in a reflective development process that was used to prompt and structure their reflective writing activities. Therefore, the students at this university could manage this task quite successfully and productively, and their cognitive resources could be directed towards engaging in learning through the novel aspects of the task in which they engaged. However, students at the other university had to engage in an entirely new pedagogical process (i.e. reflective writing) whilst also seeking to engage with the intended focus of the intervention. Because of this lack of readiness, support was required for these students, so that they could come to engage effectively in the critical writing task. The point is that for students to effectively use this kind of intervention, they must have the capacity to utilise it before engaging with it. So, when students were asked to engage with two new tasks simultaneously, one of which was the focus of the intended learning outcomes, these may not have been realised as effectively because the students were not ready to engage in the process focused on that activity. In this way, familiarity and competence with the actual pedagogic process was a prerequisite for effective learning.

Similarly, interventions trialling the use of feedback (Noble et al., 2019) also found that students' ability to engage effectively with feedback was quite limited and that teachers and clinical supervisors cannot rely on it. Students were not ready to engage in appraising feedback. This group of researchers concluded that students should have the capacity to engage in these processes, and the processes should not be merely integrated into their programs without support and guidance. It follows, they enacted an intervention which students were provided with experiences in how to engage effectively with feedback prior to participating in the intervention itself.

Student readiness, therefore, stands as an important basis for the successful use of these interventions. If a particular kind of intervention is being used to promote learning, as was the case in the intervention by (Newton & Butler, 2019) where students had to prepare videos of community nursing. Unless the students were competent with the required presentational media (e.g. making videos, reflective logs) then the engagement in and learning from this intervention associated with the intended outcomes was limited. This is because students have been directing their efforts to learnings not directly associated with the course. However, as with the oral assessments and reflective processes, these presentational capacities are required to be learnt either prior to or during these interventions in addition to those earning associated with course content.

All this suggests that not only should something of students' readiness be understood, but also consideration should be given to how that readiness is aligned with the kinds of educational experiences provided, what is intended to be learnt and the means selected to promote that learning. Aligned with these concerns about readiness is the degree by which students want to commit to engaging in these activities. A key aspect of this is discussed in the next section.

3.2   Managing Student Engagement ('Time-Jealous' Students)

Managing student participation and engagement with these interventions proved to be a key challenge for some of the sub-projects, in ways that are quite instructive. Put simply, engaging students in activities that they might view as being extracurricular and not part of their assessable program of study is an increasing challenge for those teaching in higher education. The key issue is that contemporary higher education students are often 'time jealous' or 'time precious. They have a range of conflicting demands upon their time, which include paid part-time work, friend and family commitments, along with their studies (Billett, 2015a). Therefore, they are often highly selective about how they direct their time and energy. Programs with work placements add another element that consumes their time and resources. Sometimes this element of the program is not part of their assessment or is not seen as being central to students' progress within their courses. Consequently, they may view a work placement as being a lesser priority than course elements that are assessed. Of course, it is these kinds of programs that these sub-projects represent and in which interventions of different kinds were being piloted.

Most of those interventions that sit outside of directly assessable items encountered difficulty in encouraging engagement by students. Even some interventions that were deemed to be highly successful (Harrison et al., 2019), but that were voluntary, had difficulty securing and sustaining engagement by and interaction with students. A factor here is how students perceive these activities. Hence, a different term was used in the Harrison intervention to describe these essential interventions, avoiding the terms 'reflection' and 'learning circles'. Interestingly, the processes used in this sub-project, although having similar qualities to the above-mentioned

processes, were deemed by students to be highly effective. However, even feedback from students who deem these processes as highly effective does not necessarily guarantee that they will engage in them subsequently. For instance, despite the processes used in the intervention of (Cardell & Bialocerkowski, 2019) being judged as highly satisfactory by students, less than half of them indicated that they would engage in a subsequent activity of the same kind in the future.

Other interventions (e.g. those of Grealish et al., 2019; Newton & Butler, 2019), reported considerable difficulty in securing student participation, even when incentives were offered. For instance, Newton and Butler (2019) report repeated efforts to engage with students were frustrated, and students had many queries and questions about the approach. There were also some technical difficulties associated with students'access to the website. Students were given an incentive ($50 gift card) to participate. A total of six (ultimately, eight) students out of 54 engaged in this activity. Even those accepting the incentive were sometimes parsimonious in the kind and extent of their engagement in this task. Forced or reluctant participation is unlikely to lead to students engaging in the kind of thinking and acting that is conducive to the higher-order outcomes (i.e. deep conceptual knowledge, strategic procedures) that can potentially be realised through such experiences.

Not all issues associated with student engagement were negative. Many sub-projects referred to successful engagements and outcomes from students' participation. Indeed, in one intervention (Cardell & Bialocerkowski, 2019), the concern was that students were progressing too quickly and in ways that were difficult to manage. This was particularly the case when there was a sharing activity with the entire group. This caused problems with timing, organisation, and advancing experiences in intended ways. Yet, given the demands upon students and their strategies to manage these demands means that the risk is that only tasks associated with assessment are likely to attract the kinds of engagements required by students to deeply learn. This concern leads to a consideration of whether these activities should be voluntary or compulsory.

3.3   Voluntary or Compulsory Activities

A conundrum is whether educational interventions such as the ones outlined above should be compulsory or voluntary so that students engage only of their own volition and as motivated by their interests. Whilst making activities compulsory means that students engage with them, the basis of the compulsion is usually that they are assessed. Whilst this is often helpful and constructive, the great concern is that students will respond to the tasks in ways shaped by the assessment and, ultimately, this may well constrain the potential of their engagement and learning. With processes such as providing reflective logs, responses to feedback and critical accounts, students may elect to respond to the assessment criteria more than what they experienced, concluded or actually believed to be the case (Sweet & Glover, 2011). If the activities are voluntary, then not all students will engage with them and, indeed, small numbers may take up these invitations. Again, participation in these

circumstances might also be influenced by students who volunteer, seeking to curry favour with their teachers. Also, if experience is deemed necessary, it should be included for all students. For instance, (Clanchy, Sabapathy, Reddan, Reeves, & Bialocerkowski, 2019) used a process that involved the entire year cohort (albeit only 20 students) because the interventions they provided were essential for all the physiotherapy students to be prepared for practice after graduation. Similarly, (Rogers et al., 2019) and (Levett-Jones et al., 2019) made their interventions compulsory because they were part of the student assessment activities, and both of these studies reported that students positively engaged.

Perhaps the best option is to have activities that students find inherently interesting and would wish to engage in, either as part of assessment or outside of it. For instance, medical students are deemed to be very time jealous, and in previous activities were seen to only engage in those they were pressed into. Nevertheless, Harrison et al., (2019) enjoyed considerable success with their intervention because the students found it worthwhile and interesting, and they were provided with a safe and secure environment in which to discuss the aspects of their clinical experience that they found interesting and others found worthwhile. In this circumstance, as the teachers were not directly involved in the students' discussion, the students reported that they could share stories about errors that had made or seen, and that were of interest to the other students within a group of confidants.

Even in this seemingly successful intervention, not all students volunteered to engage, and some who did were not particularly supportive of the intervention; however, the majority were. Importantly, it is unlikely that an educational intervention that all students are willing to engage in and find helpful and express appreciation for will ever be identified and enacted. Another example of a compulsory, structured intervention in which students engaged effortfully was the structured case presentation that (Steketee et al., 2019) enacted. In this intervention, there was a high level of student involvement; they identified and enacted the structured case presentation as identified by themselves, and they engaged in generating responses. Beyond the case presentation was an opportunity for students to compare and contrast their experiences and discuss them with peers.

It can be concluded that, under any circumstances, offering activities that students find relevant and can contribute to may secure the best and most effortful kinds of engagement. Similarly, compulsory activities associated with assessment may need criteria that are carefully crafted to align with the kind of outcome intended, and being open to the likelihood of students being most influenced in their responses by that criteria.

3.4 Safe Environments in Which to Share

An issue identified across some of the sub-projects was the quality of the environment in which students could come together to share, compare their experiences. Having a safe (confidential) environment was an important factor, not only to

encourage and engage students but also to shape the progress of interventions. For instance, in the circumstances in which medical students wanted to discuss learning through errors (Harrison et al., 2019), it was important that they had a safe and supportive environment that included minimal intervention by teachers. It was organised by the students and involved small-group participation. These groups appeared to permit a diversity of levels and kinds of engagement by the students and were able to accommodate different student needs, at least to some degree. The environment and the activities of the student-led component of the intervention were shaped by the scope of what students wanted to discuss, and how those discussions would progress.

Similarly, with the dietetics program (Williams, Ross, Mitchell, & Markwell, 2019), a series of small-group interactions was provided for initial debriefing sessions and discussions of two or three critical incidents. Quite deliberately, these groups were structured to be small and intimate to assist students in overcoming the difficulties they faced in being relatively socially isolated within their practicums. The concern was to have a supportive environment that would allow them to share their experiences in a way that would be conducive for that sharing and the provision of responsible and responsive feedback. The imperative for the educators was to provide participant comfort and an environment in which openness was exercised by the students. In another medical education intervention (Steketee et al., 2019), effort was similarly exercised to ensure the small-group activities were collegial and supportive, and this was the key role undertaken by the teachers, rather than intervening in the discussions students were having about cases.

When students lead processes, there may well be potentially adverse outcomes for some or all students. Hence, there is a need for careful management of these experiences. In the speech therapy intervention (Cardell & Bialocerkowski, 2019), the process of managing the student engagement of this kind was almost compromised by students themselves wishing to press on with the activity. The idea was for small groups to hold intimate discussions, and then for issues to be advanced and made available to the entire group. The teachers' concerns arose when students want to move too quickly into open disclosure of experiences, which for some students may have been too quick and potentially confronting.

In all, readiness, engagement, having voluntary or compulsory activities, and the quality of the environment were identified as being salient for the effective implementation of these interventions. What constitutes a post-practicum experience varies in form, structure, and student participation. Models ranged from small group sessions to whole of student cohort workshops, with both structured and unstructured elements. The range of face to face formats included 'listening circles', 'huddles' and 'peer group exchanges'. Other post-practicum experiences included individual and group scenarios involving surveys, written reflections, video reflections, student presentations of portfolio's, and face to face interviews with students. All the approaches were centred around creating opportunities for students to reflect on their practicum experiences and process what they had learned. Opportunities for students to consider integration of theory and practice, engage in critical thinking and peer learning were also key design elements. Activities to support critical

reflection and evaluation of the students' performance while on placement were also identified by both students and academics as important for post-practicum interventions. Contextually, positioning the student experience in relation to developing employability was also a significant framing device for each of the models.

The educational purpose of the post-practicum's purpose lies in its function to provide students with a solid bridge between what they have learnt, at university and about them themselves, and life beyond the institution including employability and future work. Importantly, post-practicums help students contextualise the knowledge and understanding they have gained through their experiences. Jackson and Trede (this volume) see them as providing a useful platform for deliberate reflective peer activities that allowed for complex meaning-making of their learning experience Edgar et al. (this volume) see their purpose in linking post-practicum experiences of physiotherapy students with the development of employability. Significantly, the "inclusion of post-practicum strategies [] improves students' abilities to recognise the skills and knowledge they need to develop, prior to entering the workforce" (Edgar et al., this volume) and ensure the outcomes being requested of contemporary higher education. As such, post-practicum interventions have particular importance in contemporary tertiary education because they not only encourage students to connect theory with practice, but the interventions allow students to take what they have experienced during the placement, and contextualise that understanding in the context of their peers experiences, identify links to employability, and an appreciation for the wider application of that knowledge in their future careers.

4   Conclusion

How students come to engage in post-practicum intervention and for what purposes, is central to their learning, as reported earlier (Billett et al. 2017 and elaborated in Cain et al., 2019). The bases of these engagements – what is referred to as students' personal epistemologies – are central to how students come to participate in, and learn through, activities and interactions in which they engage at work and through their tertiary studies. This includes how they reconcile those two sets of experiences, which is so central to their learning from both of these sets of experiences, and how, together, these experiences contribute to individual learning. The considerations advanced in this edited book are about the role that post-practicum interventions can be used to reconcile, integrate and augment learning derived from experiences in both practice and educational settings. The 13 chapters in this volume that report specific interventions set out particular purposes, processes and outcomes that can or might be achieved through such interventions. Yet, throughout, a consideration of good educational practice in terms of the sequencing and organising of experiences, the readiness for students to engage in them, and then the enrichment and augmentation of these experiences through the use of specific pedagogic strategies. All of this is helpful. Yet, as noticed in the four key points above derived from these studies. There is also an underlying concern about students' engagement

in these activities and the degree by which they participate actively and in ways likely to develop the kinds of knowledge that is intended through these programmes. So, beyond a consideration of the organisation, sequencing and enactment of educational experiences and their enrichment through even the most targeted instructional pedagogic strategy, it is important to emphasise those strategies and approaches that most engage students in the kinds of effortful thinking and acting that are required to develop these forms of knowledge.

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Institutional Arrangements and Student Engagement Supporting Post-practicum Interventions

Denise Jackson and Janice Orrell

This chapter presents a narrative situated within a large national project, across a range of disciplines and involving multiple universities. It will posit an argument that the design of Work Integrated Education (WIE)[1] has largely limited its attention to providing Work Integrated Learning (WIL) experiences in the form of placements and other alternative, authentic activities, and failed to place sufficient emphasis on augmenting the work-based learning with post-practicum learning. It will also differentiate between the diverse models and modes of WIE and WIL, and consider two key matters in regard to post-practicum learning. Firstly, it considers the role of higher education institutions in supporting the curriculum changes required to include effective, post-practicum pedagogies. It identifies some orthodoxies of higher education which present barriers to achieving the changes required to enhance WIL, and how we might address these challenges. Secondly, given that student learning must be the central focus of provisions of education, this chapter discusses how students' learning progresses in the context of contemporary higher education, with an emphasis on the provision and integration of work-based experiences, and, in particular, the essential use of post-practicum interventions.

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[1] Throughout this chapter, we will use terms such as Work Integrated Education (WIE), Work Integrated Learning (WIL) and Practicum. We will primarily use 'WIE' as this refers to the design and delivery of an educational program. The term 'WIL' is used when referring to student learning within the program. 'Practicum' is a term used to denote a program of learning that occurs in the practice setting in contrast to theoretical, propositional learning in classrooms and online learning platforms. WIL has come to be used as a common term to denote all of these things, however, we believe that these distinctions are important.

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1   Fostering Post-practicum Experiences

The inclusion of work-based experiences into university degree programs has been overwhelmingly welcomed and commended by students and graduates. Students appreciate the interesting and engaging alternative that WIE offers (Rayner & Papakonstantinou, 2015). Students recognise the unique potential value of WIL in enhancing their employability. Considerable systematic research has confirmed that students are right in believing that exposure to work environments provides favourable opportunities for the types of learning that classrooms cannot provide (Freudenberg, Brimble, & Cameron, 2011; Jackson, 2013).

It must be emphasised that the positive outcomes derived from providing students with WIE within their studies are predicated on an assumption that these programs are well designed and well managed. There is considerable evidence-based information available to provide guidance to decision-makers regarding the design of WIE and the management of WIL, and this information has been used to good effect across many programs. One problem, however, is that it remains the case that the provision of WIL experiences is sometimes still viewed simplistically as a matter of negotiating and allocating placements for students. Despite the overwhelming evidence that comprehensive, evidence-based WIE design is important to achieve its full potential gains (Smith, 2012), it is still all too often regarded as an 'easy curriculum option' of merely placing students in workplaces.

Billett's (2011) work, along with that of others, has provided detailed evidence that good practice in pedagogical design for effective WIL requires substantially more than this. Students and their workplace supervisors require preparation, students' self-management requires deliberateness (Trede & McEwan, 2016) and, of key interest in this volume, is the inclusion of post-practicum experiences as an important augmenting factor in enhancing the experiences. These inclusions require both curriculum space and purpose-driven activities that are led by expert tutors. However, the inclusion of post-practicum experiences, in particular, remains an important but rarely acknowledged role of universities. The importance of post-practicum learning can be found in a growing recognition that how students come to experience what is afforded to them in workplace or educational settings, and how they come to learn from them and reconcile across them, is premised upon their role as catalytic meaning makers. Hence, curriculum and pedagogic considerations need to fundamentally embrace considerations of how students come to engage with, and learn from, these WIL experiences. Recent reviews have indicated that it is not sufficient simply to provide workplace experiences; these experiences need to be augmented.

A review of over 30 WIL projects funded by the Australian Government over the previous 7 years (Orrell, 2011), identified that the majority of projects exclusively focused on innovation and development of pedagogies in the WIL experience, yet none had considered the importance and value of post-practicum pedagogies. While a number attended to the value of students' reflections on their learning within workplaces, the design of deliberate, innovative educational activities occurring

post-practicum that explicitly leveraged students' workplace experiences to enhance their learning, were entirely neglected. It is most certainly not sufficient to merely provide workplace experiences. These experiences need to be augmented with activities that build on and transform them into learning for the longer term that can then be transferred to new workplace contexts.

Billett (2010) has long argued that an important and unique role for universities within the WIE agenda is to provide curriculum space and activities to support students' engagement in critical, self-reflexive review of their WIL experiences. In doing so, he has argued that students' learning is enhanced when they are able to transform experiential knowledge into evidence-supported, practice knowledge. Since the 2011 review, Billett has initiated a multi-disciplinary, multi-program project across Australian universities to assist health education disciplines, which has since been applied in other disciplines, to develop innovative ways to augment post-practicum learning (Billett, Newton, Rogers & Noble, 2019) and to generate evidence of their effectiveness in enhancing graduate employability. A survey study conducted by Billett, Cain and Le (2018), within this larger project, identified that students welcome post-practicum opportunities to engage with their peers and tutors to critically review their workplace experiences, to consolidate their learning, and to reflect on and plan their career directions. This study also found that students have quite definite notions of their preferred mode for engaging in post-practicum learning, indicating that their preference was to engage in face-to-face post-practicum peer group reviews led by experts.

2　Diversity of WIE Models

Models of WIE in higher education arise from particular historical precedents and institutional imperatives, and are significantly shaped and influenced by particular educational intentions. There are three distinctive placement models, as well as innovative alternative modes of WIL, that are increasingly being developed in order to work around some of the constraints that prevent universities from offering WIL placements for all students. There are three broad modes of work-integrated placement programs: (1) professional placement programs; (2) vocational placement programs; and, (3) generic placement programs.

2.1　Professional Placement Programs

This first mode, professional WIE, is largely found in pre-professional programs such as Medicine, Nursing, Speech Pathology, Engineering, Social Work, Teacher Education and other similar professional programs. The distinctive nature of this mode of WIE is that alignment with professional practices is often required and guided by accreditation processes led by peak bodies associated with the relevant

profession occupations whereby such accreditation is a requirement for graduate registration to practice in those professions. The inclusion of WIL into the professions education curriculum is broadly accepted, rarely requiring justification within the academic milieu because it is largely driven by compliance with professional accreditation. In the case of some professions, there are prescriptive requirements for the number of days or hours that students must undertake placement; the range of exposure they must have to different aspects of professional practice; and workplace supervisors must meet specified professional qualifications. Failure to adhere to such requirements can jeopardise the accreditation of the university program itself as well as the future employment eligibility of graduates.

The pedagogy of these professional placements also has some distinctive features arising from the fact that WIE in professional programs largely incorporates either a placement of significant duration or a number of placements over time. Over the course of the placements, students in professional programs are required to demonstrate their progressive development of capabilities towards meeting required professional standards of practice. Attainment of the expected professional standards of practice must also be attested through university approved, valid, and reliable assessment processes, particularly because they can be associated with 'high risk' professions whereby the university has to ensure that those who graduate are well equipped to practice at a level that will provide assurance that they are not a social, economic, or psychological risk to community wellbeing.

It is challenging to find where the work experience itself is used as a resource for further learning in these programs. Other than the projects included in this and its prior publication, little evidence has been found of professional programs that incorporate post-practicum activities that sustain, augment, and enhance post-practicum learning. However, there are some notable instances. One is found in pre-service teacher education where, at a national level, an expectation has been imposed that graduates of all initial teacher education programs must produce a portfolio of evidence of practice experience and attainments that aligns with the National Professional Standards for Teachers (Graduate Level) (Roberts, 2016). Each initial teacher education program has been encouraged to develop their own particular approach to this requirement (TEMAG, 2014).

Other instances can be found in health professions, such as the new paradigm for medical education, Programmatic Assessment for Learning (PAL), following the lead of similar programs in the United States and the Netherlands (van der Vleuten et al., 2012). However, there is a critical difference; these examples are largely motivated by a requirement to generate evidence to attest to the attainment of professional capabilities. By contrast, the motivation for the kinds of post-practicum programs considered in this series of projects is primarily the transformation and enhancement of the learning that has occurred in workplace learning. While these two different intentions might not be exclusive of each other, the differences in the primary motivation is notable.

2.2   Vocational Placement Programs

The second type of WIE includes those programs that focus on occupational areas of practice, such as Business, Information Technology, Environmental Management, Health Science, Media, and Sports Coaching. Some of these occupations might be classified as 'new professions' in which status and potential impacts have not previously warranted extensive workplace experience as entry requirements. WIE in such programs often requires matching students' capabilities to the particular placement contexts. For example, within sports coaching programs, a tennis expert should not be placed where they would be required to coach football. These programs are often a one-off event, with variable length of process, learning outcomes with some reference to the vocational domain, assessment activities, and supervisory arrangements largely established by the course of study in conjunction with university course rules.

Institutional acceptance and practices for the vocational placement model of work integrated learning is quite different from that in professional programs described earlier. While these vocational programs will have practice options and opportunities, they are not regulated by external bodies and are open to accommodate students' career and personal needs.

2.3   Generic WIL Placement Programs

The third type of WIE is an area of significant recent growth in universities. Generic WIE programs are largely delivered centrally in the university, or by large 'super faculties' or colleges. Principally, they aim to provide students in generalist degrees with WIL and Service Learning (SL) experiences. SL is defined as "a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities" (see the National Service Learning Clearinghouse). Service learning is where students undertake work that meets a community need while developing personal capabilities that will enhance their employability and their sense of civic responsibility (Patrick et al., 2019).

The intent of generic WIL is to provide authentic experiences and challenges that extend students' learning experience beyond that provided by formal classrooms, thus increasing students' personal and social awareness as well as enhancing their capabilities that can lead to satisfying careers. Evidence (see Barrie, 2006; Hill, Walkington, & France, 2016) suggests that, despite diverse terminology used by different higher education institutions to describe these capabilities, they are largely referring to similar sets of generic knowledge, skills and dispositions not associated directly with a particular discipline or occupation. This mode has no specific discipline-based or externally imposed learning outcomes linked to a particular occupation but, commonly, there are learning outcomes that seek to address the

publicly stated graduate capabilities of their particular institution. Assessment in this type of WIE is varied and student-centred. In some sense, unlike the previous two modes of WIE, this mode is not restrained or limited by any histories of traditional, ritualised WIE practices and are thus open to leading the way in developing innovative practices in the contemporary university.

Collectively, these three modes of WIE constitute the models are offered by universities in Australia and also internationally. Terms that refer to such programs include practicums, clinical experiences, cadetships, internships and sandwich courses. Central to all is the importance of providing students with workplace experiences as a key element of the higher educational provisions.

3 Alternatives to Placement Models of WIE

While the three WIE modes described above are largely workplace-based, there are other emerging types that somewhat stretch the definition of WIE and, at some point, provoke debate regarding the purposes of higher education but, nonetheless, all aim to enhance graduate employability. These diverse and emergent modes of WIE programs include consultancies, simulations, and client-based projects, which are conducted in collaboration with industry partners on campus. Other models include on-campus work experiences hosted by universities' service centres, such as libraries or careers centres, where universities are recognised as work sites. This latter model of WIE can be used as an early staging process in WIL for students who have low social capital or other challenges and, as a result, require greater support and cultural orientation to work and workplaces. Other emerging models include entrepreneurial start-ups, either within a discipline or adopting an interdisciplinary approach, in which students of diverse disciplinary backgrounds combine their expertise to create solutions, solve problems, and market their novel products. Examples of many of these emerging models are reported by Sachs, Rowe and Wilson (2017) in their recent review of WIL in Australia.

Another recent inclusion is the adoption and reporting of a more deliberate approach to include WIE in research higher degree education programs, in which research students engage with industries as partners or members of research teams (Jones & Warnock, 2015). Until recently, inclusion of internships in research higher degrees has been ad hoc and informal, but now such initiatives have been adopted at a national and institutional level. Such practice is now a formally recognised, encouraged, recorded practice, and is reported to government as an intentional strategy within the WIE space (Universities Australia Work Integrated Learning Final Report, 2019). The intentions for this type of WIE is to assist postgraduate students to form industry-related networks that will enhance their ability to secure employment that will enable them to utilise their advanced knowledge in their field of research.

Finally, there is a growing impetus for 'virtual' WIL where students undertake projects or tasks in an online space, exposing students to, and helping them prepare

for, increasing trends of remote working (Sachs et al., 2017). Online WIL has proved useful for simulations of matters that are too risky for safety, ethical, or political reasons to give students actual firsthand exposure, for example, conflict resolution and crisis management within Peace and Conflict Degree programs.

There are other emergent modes of WIE not accounted for here but, suffice to say, WIE is emerging as a site of innovation as universities seek to find alternative ways to enhance their graduates' employability (Ferns, Russell, Kay, & Smith, 2018). Apart from a desire to seek a future-oriented approach, the need to be innovative is prompted by the drive to increase student participation in WIL and a scarcity of placements (Doran & Cimbora, 2016; PhillipsKPA, 2014), particularly in the second and third modes of WIL (vocational and generic) described above. These imbalances in supply and demand are due to an increased interest in providing all university students with a WIL experience (Universities Australia, 2019) and a general reluctance amongst some employers to facilitate placements within their companies, often due uncertainties of cost impost and the related benefits (Jackson, Rowbottom, Ferns, & McLaren, 2016).

4   Post-practicum Activities Across WIE Modes

Nonetheless, the learning outcomes of all these modes of WIE are likely to be enhanced by the inclusion of a post-practicum element to the curriculum. Post-practicum activities leverage students' workplace learning and assist them to transform their experiences into transferrable practice knowledge that can be applied to the diverse employment contexts that graduates seek. All these diverse modes of WIE, however, provide challenges that disrupt traditional and common expectations related to university education. The introduction of a fully comprehensive approach to WIE calls for new considerations related to policy development, curriculum design, instructional and supervisory responsibilities, and assessment. The impact is ubiquitous and has effects on university leaders, professional (administrative) staff, and academics, as it challenges the very canons of university education and the role of universities within society. Despite the extensive scholarship regarding WIE and WIL practices, the broad conception of the practice is largely limited to that of placements and alternative simulations, and on-campus learning experiences which are variously enthusiastically embraced or vigorously contended. What remains largely ignored is the important and unique role of universities in capturing such rich WIL experiences and augmenting and transforming them into practice knowledge that has value in the longer term for graduate careers.

5 Purpose of Universities and Canons of University Education

Universities have long held that their primary function is to generate and transmit knowledge through research and educational activities. Increasingly, a third agenda has assumed considerable importance, namely, to engage with governments, industries and communities to foster research translation. More recently, this agenda has expanded to demonstrate measurable impact of university research and education to justify the economic and societal investment in these institutions (Connell, 2019). Of course, as alluded to earlier, universities are increasingly expected to educate and produce graduates with high level knowledge, skills, and dispositions that will meet the evolving needs of the workforce. There are some subtle tensions that are tacit within this broad understanding of the university role in society. In the last 40 years, universities have incrementally emerged from institutions that were set up to cater to the educational needs of society's intellectual elites (Orrell & Higgs, 2012). Not only did they seek to produce leaders, they also sought to perpetuate the global intellectual community through research training of the next generation of academics. These universities have been challenged by the massification of education, where fewer graduates of university education expect to become academics, and there is an expectation of education for employment as a return on investment. Education for education's sake and speculative thinking and research no longer have popular currency. As a result, discourse regarding university education is increasingly being diminished to that of it being a private benefit, rather than a common good (Williams, 2016). This significant change in the expectations of universities has WIE at its heart, but change is slow to arrive within the university sector and graduate employability is a new mantra which has not necessarily been founded on aligned changes to curriculum, policies, and university infrastructure.

So, there are tensions in the different roles and societal expectations of higher education, and increasing consideration of educational approaches such as providing and integrating workplace experiences do not always sit easily within how universities see themselves, their resourcing, and privileging of some activities over others. Yet, those in the field and concerned about the engagement of higher education more broadly within society would suggest that these three elements manifest collectively. It is the research that informs both the content and process of teaching, it is the teaching and learning by students that extends and instantiates what research finds, and engaging with applications of knowledge associated with occupations reaches out and addresses societal needs and those of individuals and their communities. As such, there is not necessarily attentional contradiction across these three elements, though many might see this to be the case. Consequently, it is worth considering how initiatives such as work integrated education, and specific practices such as augmenting students' experiences post-practicum, fit within the contemporary role of universities.

There are several core orthodoxies that are challenged by the scale of WIE as an enterprise of the modern university. They include:

- the roles and expectations of university staff, both academic and professional;
- the follow-on contestations regarding the purpose, design, and contested space within the curriculum;
- legitimising and requiring student engagement in post-WIL learning; and
- the relationships between universities and industry and communities in seeking to achieve greater equality and reciprocal benefit for all parties in the provision of WIL.

5.1 Staffing Matters

While traditional professions-based WIE programs, such as those described earlier, may have been frustrated by some established university canons, over time, they have found ways to work around them to achieve their intended outcomes. This has been possible because WIL was largely invisible within the traditional university structures and often within university curriculum, where the work of academics who bridged the theory-practice divide was unrewarded and unrecognised (Cooper & Orrell, 1999). Now that WIE has gained the attention of university leadership in response to their accountability for graduate employability and employment, its execution has challenged both those who would hold fast to the traditions of university education and those who would disrupt it. These differences in viewpoints in regard to the purposes of university education and its related practices has produced three states of university staff who support the university education agenda. These states are:

- A traditional academic role in which academics have a vested interest in research with an obligation for research translation through education.
- A modern academic role in which academics have been recruited for their practice expertise and whose focus is on maintaining a symbiotic relationship between theory and practice. A challenge for these academics is to maintain their practice currency and, at the same time, engage in applied research.
- A third state, namely, academic and professional staff who are fully engaged in education to practice WIL (Schneijderberg & Merkator, 2013; Whitchurch, 2010a, 2010b; Whitchurch, Skinner, & Lauwerys, 2009). This third state is, as yet, largely invisible within university polices and academic profiles, and represents academics and professional staff whose primary role is to recruit and prepare students for placements, and supervise and assess them during their placement experience.

It is these latter group of staff that are now predominantly involved in designing and leading the introduction of models of post-practicum learning activities. These staff roles are not new, but their existence and contribution to WIE and WIL is now being noticed at an organisational level due to the small but growing body of research emanating from the UK, Germany, and North America. The dilemma universities face is how to classify those who occupy these positions. Some have an

academic classification and some do not and are employed for their practice knowledge and expertise. They teach, but their teaching does not take commonly expected forms such as lectures and tutorials in classrooms. They also assess student performance, but this assessment is not efficient as it is often a one-on-one process to assess performances (e.g., assessment of practicum outcomes that may take place across a variety of contexts for the student cohort and are subject to wide-ranging variables) that cannot be standardised or replicated if contested and involve a greater degree of subjective professional judgement. According to the canons of university policy, if they are to teach and assess, it would seem that their classification should be academic. However, much of their work involves recruiting students for WIL, identifying placement opportunities, managing off-campus liaison with graduate employers, and preparing workplaces so that students can experience worthwhile learning experiences, all of which are traditionally viewed as professional or administrative tasks. The role classification and associated WIE workload is in the early stages of consideration (see Bilgin, Rowe, & Clark, 2017) and requires the attention of university leadership.

5.2   Interplay Between Curriculum Structures and WIE

There is limited opportunity to capitalise on students' practicum experiences without explicit attention to the two important issues of the *legitimacy* of embedding such activities and their *timing* within the unit of study and the broader degree. New claims on curriculum space for post-practicum activity add to the contestability of WIE and concerns curriculum leaders expressed in regard to overloading in an already crowded curriculum. Such claims can result in resistance and challenges by classroom-based academics who are not involved in, nor committed to, WIE. This is especially the case where WIL is not required by external professional accreditation bodies and where requests to accommodate post-practicum space may be regarded by those responsible for the theoretical elements of the curriculum as an unreasonable impost. While WIE in professional programs is not protected from such challenges, the demand for space in the curriculum is legitimated by accrediting bodies. Such contestation prompts internal debates regarding the relative importance of theory versus practice in the education of the next generation of professional practitioners.

5.3   Student Participation in Post-practicum Learning Experiences

Timing is also critical for ensuring that students engage with post-practicum activities and don't merely 'drift away' post-placement without the benefit of an opportunity to collaboratively reflect on the meanings and knowledge that the collective experiences provide. This can be particularly problematic when WIL is not interwoven and scaffolded throughout the degree, such as in many professional degree programs. In generalist degrees, or those with a vocational focus, such as Business, IT and Media, WIL is often a one-off, final capstone unit which offers little opportunity for post-practicum experiences. Scaffolded WIL experiences occurring early in the degree program would better enable students to build their workplace learning experience and enact their post-practicum learning. Multiple episodes of WIL and a whole-of-program approach afford students the opportunity to share and reflect on their workplace experiences with their student peers, enabling ideal conditions for rich post-practicum experiences. Importantly, for some students, the world of practice is very familiar; for less professionally connected students it can be unfamiliar territory. Students with less developed social and cultural capital may need additional time and support to be factored into the curriculum structure to adjust to the workplace setting to optimise their learning outcomes.

Timing group-based post-practicum activities within a singular academic unit dedicated to WIL can also be problematic as students are often at different stages in their WIL experience during the semester cycle. Some may complete the typical unit requirement of 80–120 h of workplace learning in a block format, while others may choose to structure their experience in an episodic manner across a longer time span to accommodate paid work, study, and caring commitments. The need to vary start and completion times to cater to industry partners' cycle of demand for WIL students is increasingly apparent, particularly given the growing competition among universities to secure placements for their students (Jackson et al., 2016). This then leads to the central concern within contemporary higher education, and that is student engagement.

For effective student engagement in post-practicum experiences, those responsible for curriculum design must shift their focus to consider how students can be helped to engage and learn from their experiences in the physical and social settings of the workplace. Considerations for student engagement and how that can be enacted by students themselves, as well as promoted by teachers and institutions, are central here. This issue brings to the fore the often ignored important role that universities can play in enhancing the 'experience curriculum' through assisting students to transform and learn from what they are afforded through opportunities to engage in activities and interactions in workplace settings. This transformation process is a legitimate responsibility of university education because it shapes how students can become self-regulating professionals who can translate and construct knowledge from their workplace experience, thus focusing on learning for the longer term (Boud & Falchikov, 2007).

A central concept here is that post-practicum experiences have the potential to develop students' capacities for 'experiencing': that is, those processes by which individuals bring what they know, can do, and value to make sense of, engage with, and change in reflecting on their particular encounters. As Dewey (1933) stated, "we do not learn from experience. We learn from reflecting on experience" (p. 78), and post-practicum activities are critical for students to understand, crystallise, and make meaning of their workplace learning. This is not only in the sense of the capabilities they enhanced, and the skills and knowledge they applied, but also their developed understanding of the profession, industry, and sector within which they were based, the networks they created, the professional socialisation that occurred, and what all these mean for their own employability and future career goals and aspirations. To optimise students' self-awareness and personal development, post-practicum activities must explicitly address how their experience influenced the different dimensions of their own employability, including their professional connectedness and networks (Bridgstock, 2016), capacity to transfer skills and knowledge across different contexts (Jackson et al., 2019), non-technical capabilities, professional identity, and ability to self-manage their career (Bennett, 2018; Jackson, 2016). Encouraging students to deliberately engage in critical appraisal of their experiences by comparing and contrasting those with others at the conclusion of their WIL experience–which encounters and learnings influenced them, in what way, and what this may mean for their future career–should be integral to every WIL experience.

To engage increasingly diverse student cohorts, post-practicum activities should effectively accommodate different learning styles and enable students to draw on their learning from the full spectrum of work settings. These could range from virtual, on-campus experiences to external, employer-based environments in a range of different sectors and industries. While peer-based post-practicum experiences are highly valued (Billett et al., 2019), these must be effectively adapted for the increasing number of students engaged in online learning, as well as for off-campus students in regional settings. The growth in technology enhanced learning has seen increased use of tools such as Zoom and Blackboard Collaborate, which offer recordable, virtual chat room facilities, although their comparative value when reflecting in small, face-to-face group scenarios may require further exploration. Embedding different types of reflective activities and assessments–such as the written, video, or artistic formats employed by Gribble and Netto (2019)–will cater to different learning needs and the preferences of heterogeneous student cohorts.

As stated earlier, establishing programs that provide students with opportunities to undertake work experience is often mistaken for a complete learning activity and are also perceived in some quarters as 'easy' activities in which the goals are self-evident and tacit, and learning processes that are 'natural' and intuitive. Ostensibly, a novice is assigned to a community organisation, given tasks they are expected to complete, surrounded by models of practice, mentors, and experts as well as the ethical, social, and economic dilemmas facing the host organisation. Skills and insights are largely expected to be caught or taught on the job without formal supervision and assessment. However, this learning space is often a novel learning milieu

for students, many of whom will be challenged in finding ways to succeed in their workplace learning, because their capacities to regulate and manage their own learning have been developed in learning environments that are far more structured than workplaces. Meeting these challenges to provide quality learning outcomes for students is best enabled if underscored by sustained university-industry partnerships.

It appears that post-practicum experiences typically take place on-campus, or virtually, rather than being conducted in the workplace setting. One of the challenges to innovative post-practicum curriculum design is to not merely limit them to traditional academic-led and classroom-based activities. To overcome the previously highlighted issues of timing and legitimacy, post-practicum experiences could take the form of reflective activities with co-workers and assigned buddies in the work setting. Importantly, activities should engage peers who are at a similar stage of development and have recently undergone similar experiences. Small group debriefs could consider the achievement of placement outcomes and goals, and any enablers and inhibitors of these. This could develop students' self-awareness and understanding of their own capabilities, enhance their informal learning of professional norms, inform their coping strategies for arising challenges, and manage encountered differences between theoretical knowledge acquired in the university classroom and their practical application in the work setting.

These small group debriefs are consistent with the 'huddles' described by Jackson and Trede (2019) and align with the value of effective feedback processes highlighted by Antwertinger, Larkin, Lau, O'Connor and Santos (2019). Such work-based post-practicum activities will help students to make sense of their own experiences while simultaneously mobilising the knowledge and experience of seasoned workers to enrich students' discipline-based learning. They may also assist students in deepening relationships with their workplace colleagues, as well as enhance workers' understanding of the importance of reflective learning practice and how this may be enacted. Such activities, however, require careful facilitation and dedicated preparation for participating co-workers beyond that normally provided for workplace supervisors of WIL students.

5.4   University-Workplace Partnerships for WIE

Universities Australia, in collaboration with other significant industry groups, has made a commitment to endeavour to support the enterprise of university engagement with Australian industries and businesses in the National Strategy for Work Integrated Learning (Universities Australia et al. 2015). Their concern is to facilitate university collaborations with graduate employers that will ensure that students of all disciplines can have effective WIL experiences and, in doing so, enhance graduate employability. In particular, they aim to assist universities to identify opportunities for increased scale, breadth, and quality of WIL placements and advocate for the research, scholarship, and development of the evidence base to improve WIL

effectiveness and outcomes for participants. They also aim to identify and address impediments to universities and graduate employers improving the currency, quality, and capability of WIE programs and Australia's global competitiveness.

The importance of university-industry engagement and partnerships to support WIE is embodied in the national strategy's high level collaboration between higher education and industry governing bodies, and raises a number of important questions. First, how might universities engage industry with post-practicum activities? Second, how might mature partnerships be fostered in which both universities and industry understand each other's needs? Finally, how can a significant cultural shift be achieved by both partners, such that collaborating on WIL becomes integral to their institutions to develop the nation's talent?

International examples have been identified where positive and effective partnerships have prevailed and been sustained despite significant challenges. The UK 'sandwich degree' model, in which students complete 2 years of university study, 1 year in industry, and then return to university for their final year of study, is one such example. Despite the Global Financial Crisis and recession that followed, employers remained committed to supporting students in these 1-year arrangements. Evidence shows that "it is unequivocal that sandwich placements add significant value to their beneficiaries, which has been shown in the learning outcomes across all types of university" (Kerrigan, Manktelow, & Simmons, 2018, p. 102), particularly for contributing to upward social mobility. Another example, are the significant numbers of students who have engaged in cooperative education in Canada, completing their degree by alternating terms of university study and paid employment (Haddara & Skanes, 2007). This requires the commitment of large numbers of employers to engage with universities to support the development of the future pipeline of quality talent. These examples provide evidence that productive, reciprocal partnerships can be sustained where all parties know, understand, and experience the long term benefits of sustained and committed partnerships.

The centrality of engagement between higher education institutions and industry is widely acknowledged (see Ankrah & Omar, 2015; Fitzgerald, Bruns, Sonka, Furco, and Swanson, 2016. According to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching:

> Partnership of college and university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good (2006, p. 34)

Dorado and Giles (2004) identify three types of engagement between university and community agencies. The first is engaging in *tentative* partnerships which are episodic and often likely to represent initial engagement between the parties. Where this type of partnership occurs, there can be a high turnover of placements each year due to uncertainty of the other's needs and where the cost benefits of engagement are unknown. The second approach is forming *aligned* partnerships. Usually these have successfully travelled the tentative pathway but, over time, have actively

engaged in seeking a better fit to meet the diverse set of needs of each stakeholder, namely, the students, the industries, and the university. So, while the needs may not align, the pathway to each set of needs can be met through engaging together. Accomplishing this alignment takes time to establish and, thus, is less episodic than the tentative partnership.

The third approach is establishing partnerships which demonstrate *committed engagement* between the university and the host organisations**.** The starting point in establishing these partnerships is characterised by the explicit commitment of both parties to engage with the goals of the other, and to form a sustained partnership that has intentions that last beyond the execution of a particular project or a particular placement. Over time, the goals of each impact on the others and often result in shared goals. Universities are good at establishing such relationships to support research but have seemingly failed to leverage this capacity in relation to education and, particularly, in the context of WIE.

While distinctive, these three qualitatively different pathways to forming university-industry partnerships are not exclusive but are potentially reflective of an incremental evolution of partnerships. In current times, this latter evolution is desirable because it is the basis of relevant and worthwhile benefits for all stakeholders. These findings of Dorado and Giles (2004) provide a framework for WIE leaders to evaluate their partnerships with host organisations and to formulate strategies to enhance them. Little evidence has been found to indicate that such an approach is common practice.

Studies have identified a number of motivators for industry to host university students in work placements, including an altruistic desire to give back to their industry or profession, and to fulfil what they regarded as their corporate responsibilities (PhillipsKPA, 2014). Hosting students in workplace-based WIL is also considered a strategy to improve corporate image, a stimulus for the development of their own staff, and a way to advance their businesses by being better able to recruit graduates in the future (Jackson et al., 2016; PhillipsKPA, 2014). Along the same lines, deeper ties with universities may provide employers with access to new thinking and ideas based on emerging research. Closer industry-educator collaboration on research has attracted significant attention given Australia's lag in translating research into commercial outcomes (Howard, 2016).

Successful linkages between universities and industry require deliberate attention and the allocation of sufficient resources by both the university and discipline-based educational units to prepare university staff for their WIL-related activities that may be unfamiliar to many (Cooper & Orrell, 2016). Engaging with groups outside universities is not limited to WIE and has increasingly been encouraged to foster collaborative research agendas that can demonstrate impact. However, the polarisation of research and education within universities is sustained in both internal structure, accountabilities, and activities that relate to engagement with industries and communities. Greater integration and collaboration between research, engagement, and education portfolios–given their shared agendas–would foster improved success and achieve multi-dimensional, sustained partnerships. A self-evident option for universities is to embed agreements in their research contracts

with external organisations regarding the number of internships and placements that will be made available for students undertaking WIL over the duration of the collaborative research agenda. Other universities report having formed institutional advisory groups with significant representation from external bodies so that, together, universities and industry collaborate on generating strategic means for enhancing partnerships that have reciprocal value. These advisory groups produce guidance for preparation programs for both university and host organisation staff and for students.

There are challenges to building effective links with industry to support partnerships for WIE so that students can gain the benefits they seek. These challenges include developing clearly defined roles for all stakeholders, realistic expectations of students, established lines of communication between employer, student and university coordinator, and finding areas of mutual benefit to both industries and academics (Choy & Delahaye, 2011). There are also legal issues in determining how students can engage so as to work within the legislation related to students in workplaces, as well as forming transparent agreements on who owns the intellectual property on any marketable outcomes produced during the placement.

6 Challenges of Integrating the Needs WIE into University Practices

There is no doubt that there are genuine attempts in universities to provide WIE programs that will enhance graduate employability. Significant changes have occurred in universities in this regard over the past 20 years due to universities adopting a more enterprise approach to management of WIE, but rates of development– are inconsistent across disciplines and across universities. A constraining factor in many disciplines is resistance within the higher education sector to the demands the WIE programs make on infrastructure and curriculum space. Introducing WIE has challenged many taken-for-granted assumptions about the role of universities in society, and how they interact with industries and communities. WIE has also challenged taken-for-granted assumptions about the work and role of university academics and expectations of the purposes and what experiences should be included in curricula. Inclusion of WIE has imposed expectations of change on universities, but change is measured as it must respond to competing demands and available evidence to support the innovations. As a result, those who would like to embrace new and emerging paradigms of university education have to mitigate the challenges of working within university systems, policies, expectations, and infrastructure that often fail to acknowledge the new roles, responsibilities, curriculum goals, and designs that the new paradigm requires.

Effective WIE imposes financial costs to host organisations and is resource-intensive for universities to support new roles and curricula. It is important within this new paradigm to allocate resources that will contribute to sustained

relationships to ensure return on investments with the understanding that producing evidence of impact and value will not be immediate. The robustness of relationships between individuals, universities, and industry needs to become the focus of research to determine the level of business savviness required by academics for engaging with industry. Increasingly, in this age of accountability, governments are seeking evidence of impact and value of university education to society, yet, we find an education systems that is largely reactive in data collection and reporting rather than proactive in managing partnerships that include a commitment to the provision of WIE.

Also of critical importance is that sufficient time and resources are allocated to the explicit consideration and embedding of post-practicum experiences into curriculum and unit structures. This facilitation of post-practicum activities and processes may require a more scaffolded approach to WIL in degree programs of a non-professional nature, or a review of the structure and design of dedicated WIL units. Careful consideration is required as to how post-practicum experiences can best engage diverse student cohorts, and assist and encourage them to make meaning from their experiences. Post-practicum experiences conducted in the workplace may prove useful for programs with crowded curricula and resistance from academics to embed further WIE in degree structures. With careful design and prepared key stakeholders, post-practicum experiences can optimise student learning from WIL, extending it beyond capability development to developing awareness of their own employability and what actions they might take to help achieve their personal goals and career aspirations.

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Part II
Instances and Evaluations of Post-practicum Practices

This part comprises thirteen chapters from the projects that address distinct aspects of organizing, enacting, and evaluating post-practicum experiences for students. These chapters represent a range of disciplines including journalism, nursing, public health care, business, occupational therapy, organizational psychology, marketing, and physiotherapy. Importantly, beyond disciplinary diversity, the projects refer to a range of ways in which post-practicum interventions can be enacted. The focus of these chapters is not to present idealized and sanitized instances of these practices. Instead, what is proposed in these contributions is considerations of the practicalities of implementing such interventions and engaging students in these activities, and in ways that are constructive, focused, and directed towards achieving the kinds of outcomes that students require to make the transition from higher education into effective occupational practice.

Transitions to Successful Careers: Pharmacy, Psychology and Business Students Reflecting on Practicum Feedback

Yasmin J. Antwertinger, Ingrid Larkin, Esther T. L. Lau, Erin L. O'Connor, and Jose Manuel Serrano Santos

1 Feedback

Practicums, placements, or internships are specific types of work-integrated learning (WIL) that typically occur within an external partner's workplace supervised by a member of the host organisation. WIL is a valuable experience for students, allowing immersion into real world workplaces and facilitates application of knowledge and skills from the classroom into the complex world of work. These WIL experiences may also improve learner self-efficacy and increase awareness and capacity for working in professional settings. WIL can include learning through completion of a set project designed with a specific outcome in mind, or can involve the student taking up a placement to fulfil a role within the organisation that may involve different tasks or a cycle of responsibilities across the experience.

While evaluations of WIL have reported mixed findings regarding the development of skills or competencies (see Bates, 2005 for a review), other advantages include an improved understanding of the workplace, including organisational policy and workplace politics (Bates, 2005). WIL experiences also provide the valuable 'past work experience' that employers prefer but is often difficult for students to find (Cullen, 2004), and give students the opportunity to evaluate their fit for a particular career path (Patford, 2000).

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2   Feedback and Work-Integrated Learning

Feedback is seen as crucial way to facilitate students' development as independent learners, so that they are able to monitor, evaluate, and regulate their own learning, allowing them to feed-up beyond graduation (Ferguson, 2011). Typically, feedback is defined as "specific information about the comparison between a trainee's observed performance and a standard, given with the intent to improve the trainee's performance" (Van De Ridder, Stokking, McGaghie, & Ten Cate, 2008, p. 183) and to improve their performance (Lizzio & Wilson, 2008). Feedback can be provided at a range of points across a learning experience and can be provided from a range of sources including peers, teachers or facilitators, and other observers. In this way, feedback provides a bridge between actual and desired learning.

While a great deal of evidence supports the usefulness of feedback in increasing student learning, simply providing information about a student's performance alone is not sufficient to improve outcomes (Lew, Alwis, & Schmidt, 2010). Some authors have raised the concern that there is a potential for feedback to have no impact on practice (Perera, Lee, Win, Perera, & Wijesuriya, 2008) or that the evidence that feedback improves practice is inconsistent (Shute, 2008). There are also concerns that students may not access written assessment feedback, or at least avoid it. Students also expressed concern that the feedback itself may not provide the clarity needed to act upon the feedback, or they did not always understand the comments or suggestions provided (Green, 2019). This discrepancy in how feedback is intended to be used by the provider, compared to the students' ability to make sense of, and their motivation, mindset and capacity to utilise feedback creates a gap. Even when the evaluation of performance and suggestions are of a high quality, the gap can be wide depending on the student's ability to use it.

In part, the problem of feedback has been created due to the origins of the concept. Feedback has its strongest roots in other disciplines, not education, originally arising from biological and then electrical feedback systems or loops. Boud and Molloy (2013) argue that a number of assumptions have been generated as the concept of feedback was borrowed and then cultivated in education. For example, the assumption or nostrum that all feedback is useful to learning. Certainly, there are characteristics of some feedback that make it more effective in supporting learning than other sources and types of feedback (Gedye, 2010). There is also an assumption that more feedback will be more helpful to learning (Lam, DeRue, Karam, & Hollenbeck, 2011). However, Boud and Molloy (2013) observe that now, perhaps more than ever, students encounter multiple sources of feedback over multiple assessment tasks but are "more disillusioned with feedback than ever" (p. 13). Perhaps the most distracting and harmful belief is that 'feedback is telling'. While direct information about how to best work through a task can be appropriate for procedural learning with an approved or single best way to approach a task, it is unclear how effective simple 'telling' motivates or encourages excellence in other

areas. Boud and Molloy (2013) encourage educators to explore the underlying assumptions of this belief. Aligned with the biological or electrical feedback loop, this belief positions learners as passive receivers of information who can automatically adjust their outputs in response to feedback. Clearly, when considering the complexities of human learners, this is not the case.

Boud and Molloy (2013) conceptualise feedback as a process, rather than a single-direction transfer of information. In this re-framing, feedback is a process that learners need to engage in, to develop a shared understanding of their current performance and level of learning and what is required to meet the expected standard of work. Learners are active participants in this process and may be the initiators of the process, asking for feedback based on their own evaluations of their work (Gedye, 2010). This re-framing also means feedback extends beyond the 'telling' part, into revised ways of working or performance and possible steps or stages the learner might attempt to develop this revised way of working. Facilitators of learning share the responsibility for planning these scaffolding tasks. Boud and Molloy (2013) refer to these two ways of looking at feedback is Mark 1 (traditional) and the improved Mark 2 of feedback. They carefully qualify that these two approaches may not be mutually exclusive and admit that in some cases, learners may prefer the straight forward transmission of information characteristic of Mark 1.

3   Effective Feedback, Growth Mindset and Resilience

WIL, including practicum, placement and internship experiences, are critical opportunities for feedback, particularly feedback that is contextualised within the intended setting. However, often students and supervisors involved are not prepared for giving and receiving feedback, and may misunderstand or ignore each other's previous experiences with feedback when evaluating the student's learning. An important opportunity exists for educators to support students and supervisors through work-based feedback within pre- and post-practicum experiences.

Formal education relies strongly on assessment tasks to authenticate the learning of students and to provide feedback regarding the quality of student work in relation to that assessment task. While assessment and feedback in WIL experiences may follow a formal format or may become more fluid and informal. The role of feedback for students in WIL settings is important to learners' transitions to the workplace. However, it is unclear how universities prepare learners for receiving this type of feedback or support learners to interpret and respond to this feedback during and after a WIL experience. As these experiences are still learning experiences hosted by the university, higher education providers have a responsibility to scaffold this transition and help learners prepare for, seek, and respond to feedback.

4   Study Rationale and Objectives

Effectiveness of feedback is also determined by the individual and contextual factors of feedback. For example, the beliefs held by learner and facilitator about learning and the learning process will strongly influence how each party interprets their role in the process (Price, Handley, & Millar, 2011). This can include the students own willingness to persevere at the task or learning (Vermeer, Boekaerts, & Seegers, 2000), and this is informed by students' past experiences with feedback and their own schemas about how they best learn (Weaver, 2006). DeNisi & Kluger (2000) observed that there are three levels of performance goals: 1. *meta-level* which are goals related to the individual's self-concept; 2. *task-level* goals related to task performance; and 3. *task learning-level* related to task details and the specifics of performing it. Learners experienced negative emotional responses to feedback when they misinterpreted task-level feedback at the meta-level. DeNisi and Kluger suggested that this confusion diverts attention from the task to the self where it is perceived as a generalised criticism leading to negative feelings like self-doubt, anger or frustration.

An important element of learning through WIL opportunities is the expectation that the learner will be prepared to engage with, and request feedback. The learner's own personal characteristics also play a particularly important role including their emotional state and their subsequent ability to process the information (Boud & Falchikov, 2007). The personality and psychological attributes of the learner can be important with regards to the way in which a student interprets negative feedback. Learners who believe their abilities and intellect expand with practice are in an advantageous position for learning. This attitude towards education can be described as growth mindset and is believed to increase creativity and improve the learners'attitude towards relationships with peers (Han, Stieha, Poitevin, & Starnes, 2018). Growth mindset describes a belief that capabilities and characteristics such as intelligence, can be developed, while a fixed mindset describes a belief that one's capabilities are static or fixed (Dweck, 2015). An academic environment that instils growth mindset, can encourage students to persevere. A growth mindset may have a direct influence on grades (Blackwell, Trzesniewski, & Dweck, 2007) and can be encouraged and cultivated through educators.

A crucial task for educators is to prepare students to respond with resilience when challenges in learning experiences arise. While some research is available on the relationship between mindset and resilience, some studies position resilience as a moderator between growth mindset and engagement (e.g. Zeng, Hou, & Peng, 2016). Other studies suggest resilience is an outcome of mindset, and there is clear indication that how learners attend to and respond to mistakes is related to their mindset (Yeager & Dweck, 2012). As summarised by Han (2018), learners' growth mindsets have been positively associated with improved academic performance (Pennington & Heim, 2016; Ravenscroft, Waymire, & West, 2012), seeking challenging tasks (Yu-Hao Lee, Magerko, & Medler, 2012), superior drive for academic goals and appraising feedback (Aditomo, 2015; Forsythe & Johnson, 2017; Gheith

& Aljaberi, 2017; Yu-Hao Lee et al., 2012) a drop in stress and a rise in well-being (Holm, 2015; Lindsay, Kirby, Dluzewska, & Campbell, 2015), while also decreasing life dissatisfaction (Waithaka, Furniss, & Gitimu, 2017). These positive outputs of growth mindset are also aligned to defined components of academic and professional resilience as highlighted in the design of the R@W (Resilience At Work) scale developed by Winwood, Colon, and McEwen (2013).

Advocates of WIL such as Boud and Molloy (2013) suggest students should take on a greater role and responsibility in their own learning process. However, this creates an imperative for training for both educators and students in how to give and receive feedback (Carless, 2007; Carless, Salter, Yang, & Lam, 2011; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). In workplace learning, this issue is complicated by the multiple potential sources of feedback and varied levels of experience and commitment from supervisors to the education of the student.

Central to this is also the scaffolding of student self-judgement skills, which are essential to enable improvement independent of an authority figure or 'expert'. While Boud, Lawson, and Thompson (2013) argue that learning must be designed to allow the development of self-judgement skills over time, educators have less scope to influence how these skills are used and generalised while a learner is on practicum, placement or internship. The study in this chapter reports on the development and delivery of a workshop aimed to support this learning. The chapter will also elaborate on the development and iterative refinement of the workshop over a number of semesters, and report on the student responses to the workshop across three different disciplines, each preparing students for different types of WIL and different careers.

5   Approach and Method

Feedback plays a significant role in learning during the professional experiences of students. However, feedback is highly dependent on multiple factors such as the environment, the student's mindset, and how feedback is received and responded to. In this study, we present how feedback relates to experiential learning, specifically WIL as practicums, to a growth mindset and to the impact on the receiver's resilience, as presented by current literature.

The aim of this study was to explore the effectiveness of a post-practicum workshop across the disciplines of business, pharmacy, and psychology. The workshop was deployed into each of the disciplines within existing WIL classes.

The objectives of the workshop were:

– To increase students' awareness of growth mindset;
– To explore changes in students' understanding of feedback; and
– To identify likely changes in students' resilience.

5.1 Participants

Institutional ethics approval was received and students were fully informed about the nature of the class and data collection prior to the workshop. Each participant created their own unique code which was used to link the survey responses and worksheets. The learning approach adopted in the relevant WIL classes was face-to-face workshop activities for students undertaking these experiences as practicums, placements, or internships. The workshop activities were designed to develop students' understanding of feedback, and introduce or reorient them to growth mindset and resilience. Generally, each workshop had between 30 and 50 students participating. The evaluation of the workshop involved the use of surveys (both online and paper; see Fig. 1) and analysis of the student responses to the workshop. Each of these aspects is described below.

To account for the different WIL arrangements across disciplines, the face-to-face workshop was conducted within 2 weeks of students completing their practicum experience. A pre-workshop survey was distributed either as a paper-based survey in classroom prior to start of workshop, or as an online survey up to 1 week before the scheduled workshop. The online surveys were hosted in the learning management system for the students enrolled in the WIL units selected for the
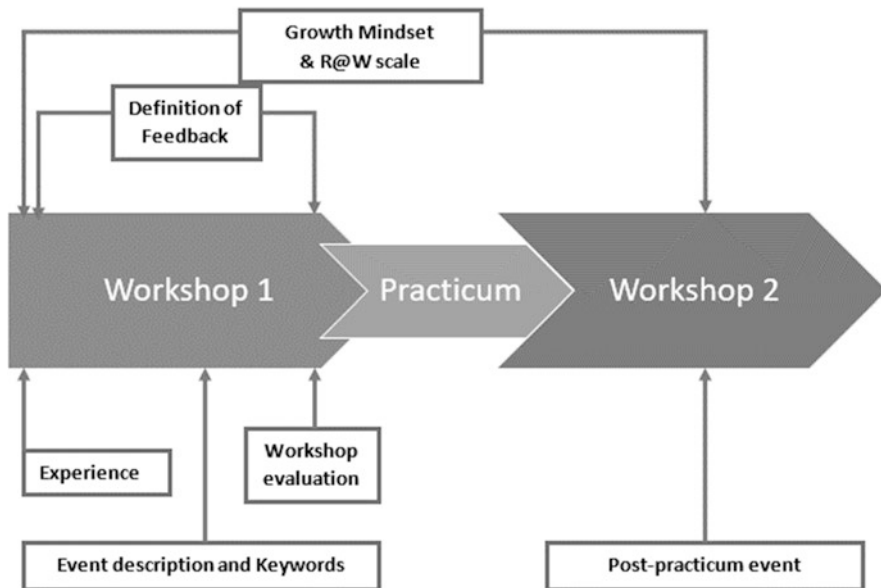
Fig. 1 Project overview and process. Initially, there was a single post-practicum workshop (labelled here in the final process as "Workshop 2"). In later stages of the project, this workshop was moved to pre-practicum with the addition of the pre-practicum R@W scale. Workshop 2 became a reflective debriefing session with completion of post-practicum R@W scale and discussion of positive and negative examples of feedback and mindset

project. The post-workshop survey was made available immediately at the end of the workshop, either as a paper-based or online survey. The pre- and post-workshop surveys were designed to elicit students' definition of feedback, through free text responses, growth mindset and resilience, by using the total scale selected from the Resilience At Work (or R@W) scale ($\alpha = 0.84$) developed by Winwood et al. (2013). Participation in the workshop, and pre- and post-workshop surveys were encouraged, but not mandatory.

To begin the workshop, students were asked to think about a time when they received and learned from feedback in a professional setting. Students shared their stories in a pair or triad, and then from the group, nominated a story to share with the larger group. The facilitator (an academic staff member) used questions to encourage students to explore and share how they sought, received, and responded to feedback. The questions for the facilitator were developed with guidance of the work of Molloy and Boud (2014). Students considered and articulated their feelings before, during and after feedback being provided. Using a paper- based worksheet, participants were also asked to describe the feedback process with up to five keywords. Finally, students were introduced to the concept of growth mindset, using a short video (7 min) developed by QUT Student Success Group, as part of a suite of online modules to support development of enterprise and employability skills. In the final iteration of the workshops the debriefing/reflective post-practicum 'Workshop 2' was introduced. In this session students were asked to reflect on their placement experiences of feedback and their mindset and again share these with their peers. Students had an opportunity to develop a feedback plan to take away with them for use in any future work-experience interactions. At the end of this workshop students were asked to complete the R@W scale again.

5.2   Analysis

The project was undertaken at QUT across two academic years. Students undertaking WIL in one of three disciplines were invited to participate. These classes included final year Bachelor of Business students, Bachelor of Psychology students and Bachelor of Pharmacy students, and 2nd year Bachelor of Pharmacy students. A total of 242 students completed the pre-workshop survey, while 123 completed the post-workshop survey (Table 1).

The participants had different arrangements in terms of time spent at their practicum sites (Table 2). Students had varying levels of work-experience (paid and unpaid). Approximately 60% of pharmacy 2nd years, business and psychology students had some experience related to their courses. While the number of students reporting practicum or work experience was slightly greater from the 4th (final) year pharmacy students at 87%, it should have been 100% since QUT pharmacy students attend compulsory practicums in 2nd, 3rd and 4th years of the course.

Table 1 Numbers of participants returning completed pre-workshop and post-workshop surveys

Area of study	Number of respondents from February 2017 – December 2018	
Pharmacy	2nd year	Pre-workshop n = 92 Post-workshop n = 33
	4th year (Final year)	Pre-workshop n = 36 Post-workshop n = 20
Psychology3rd year (final year)	Pre-workshop n = 54 Post-workshop n = 36	
Business 3rd year (final year)	Pre-workshop n = 60 Post-workshop n = 34	
Total	Pre-workshop n = 242 Post-workshop n = 123 In-workshop activity sheets n = 112 Matchable∗ R@W scores n = 22 ∗Students supplied unique codes which were matched between pre- and post-practicum R@W scales	

Table 2 Student program of study, and practicum experiences

Program of study	Year level (intended duration of full time study)	Time at practicum as a part of the course	Percent of students who have paid or unpaid work-experience related to their course (prior to practicum)
Health			
Pharmacy	2nd year (4 year course)	3 h/week over 8 weeks (24 h total)	57%
Pharmacy	4th year (4 year course)	150 h (4 x 5 day weeks)	87%
Psychology	3rd year (3 year course)	50 h	58%
Business			
Advertising, international business, marketing and public relations	3rd year (3 year course)	120 h	66%

6   Findings

Descriptive statistics and thematic analysis were used to analyse the pre- and post-workshop surveys, to compare the influence of the workshop on student perception and understanding of feedback and resilience in responding to negative feedback (see Table 3).

The three parts of the event description and each of the keywords where tagged with a sentiment in the range of Negative, Neutral or Positive and allocated values of −1, 0 and 1 in order to describe the overall feeling of the cohort (Table 1). These definitions were also assigned a sentiment based on the Negative, Neutral or Positive

Table 3 Examples of student definitions of feedback, and the interpreted level of personal involvement and sentiment

Example of student definition of feedback	Level of personal involvement	Interpreted sentiment
"Returning information regarding performance"	Low – Passive	Neutral sentiment
"Constructive information that a person can build upon to improve their own ideas, thoughts or processes."	High – Active	Positive sentiment
"Reflecting the good or bad experience wanted to share and looking for improvement or development."	Low- Passive	Negative sentiment

scale used above and also allocated a level of active engagement. This 'activity' level was based on whether the definitions given by students indicated any level of engagement with the feedback process, and whether that was passive (receiving of information), active (reflection on or acting on information) or neutral (not possible to assign activity level) using values of −1, 0 and 1 respectively. Table 3 above shows examples of how quotes were coded. All manual coding was performed by two members of the research team independently and discrepancies discussed.

The R@W scale was given to students in workshops before and after placement. Every answer in the 5-point scale from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree' was assigned a score between 1 and 5, where 5 was the most resilient answer and 1 the least. Students' resilience was described in a scale of 21–105 as obtained from the number of points scored out of the 21 questions in the R@W scale.

6.1   How Students Define Feedback

Pre-workshop definitions of feedback varied slightly from post-workshop definitions (Fig. 2). Thematic analysis of sentiment and perceived level of engagement with feedback showed an increase in the positive sentiment towards feedback, but an increase in neutrality towards engagement. It is notable that passivity decreased, however this did not translate into increase active level of engagement but rather a more neutral view. .

6.2   Before, During and After a Specific Feedback Event

A total of 112 students completed and submitted the in-workshop activity sheets containing the 5 keywords. However, only 82 from the total 112 provided a description of 'before', 'during' and 'after' a feedback event. Similarly, some students did not complete all the steps or all the keywords, and therefore the findings are presented as a group of participants, rather than as separate disciplines.
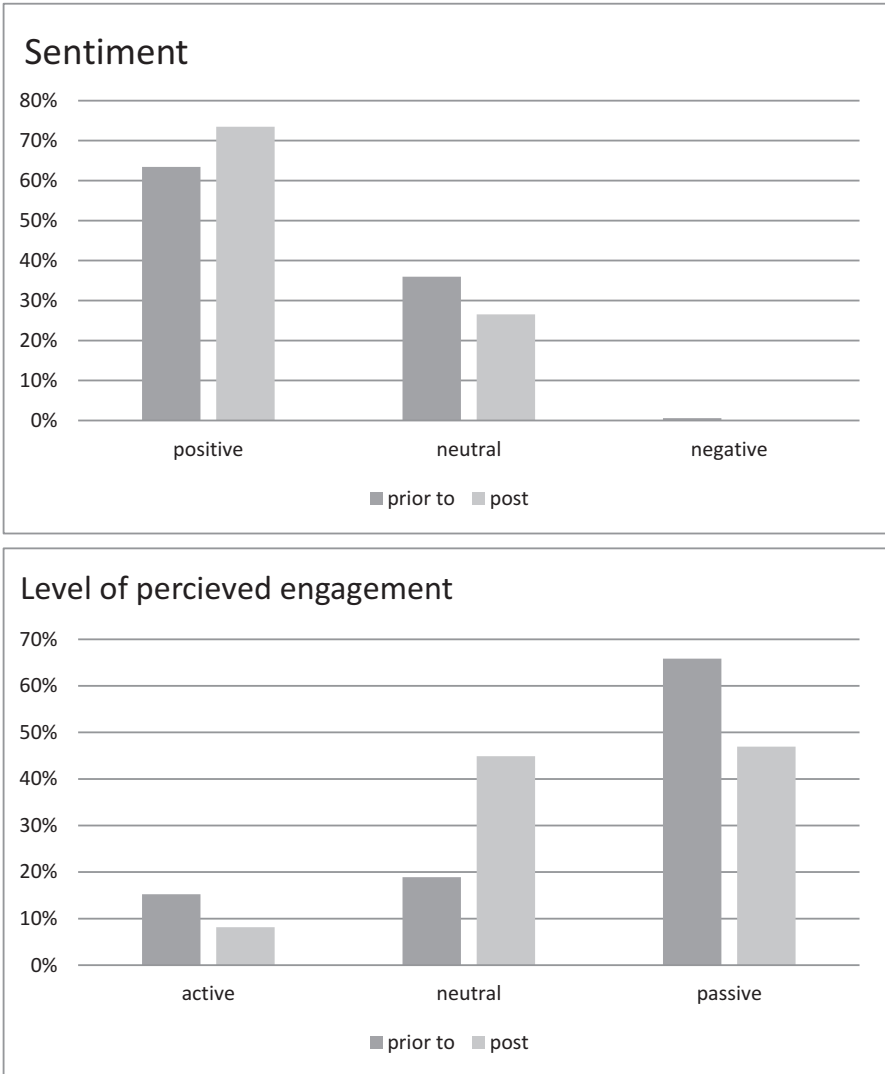
Fig. 2 Students sentiment towards feedback and the level of personal involvement in the feedback process (engagement-level) as interpreted from feedback definitions given by students in 'pre-' and 'post'-workshop surveys. Pre-workshop surveys (n = 242), Post-workshop surveys (n = 123)

As a group, participants highlighted a certain level of insecurity when they were concerned about not having completed a task appropriately. There was usually no sense of self-evaluation that justified the anticipation and provision of feedback. Examples of students' comments about feelings associated with feedback: "*unsure*

of work, whether doing the right thing or not"; "*anxious – surprised – overwhelming*".

Students reported uncertainty during the feedback obtained in the event described, though there was clear trend towards realisation in their comments. This was highlighted with comments like:

> "asked for confirmation if I was doing the right thing. Confirmed by manager" or "This didn't add up. I went back over everything. I did and found a problem with my thought process".

A linear overview of the sentiments clearly highlights the positive realisation that the most participants experienced toward the end of the feedback process (Fig. 3) through comments such as: "*Took feedback and worked to become more proficient in this*"; "*more confidence in work and eager for trying again next time and getting it right*".

6.3 Keywords to Summarise Feedback Events

When nominating keywords to describe their experiences, students used a total of 446 keywords of which 232 were unique words across all students. A total of 19 words were repeated five or more times adding a total of 138 instances. In this list, only four words were labelled as negative and one as neutral, the equivalent of 30 instances out of the 138 (21.7%). Overall, 60% of words were described as positive, 23% were negative and 17% were neutral (Table 4).
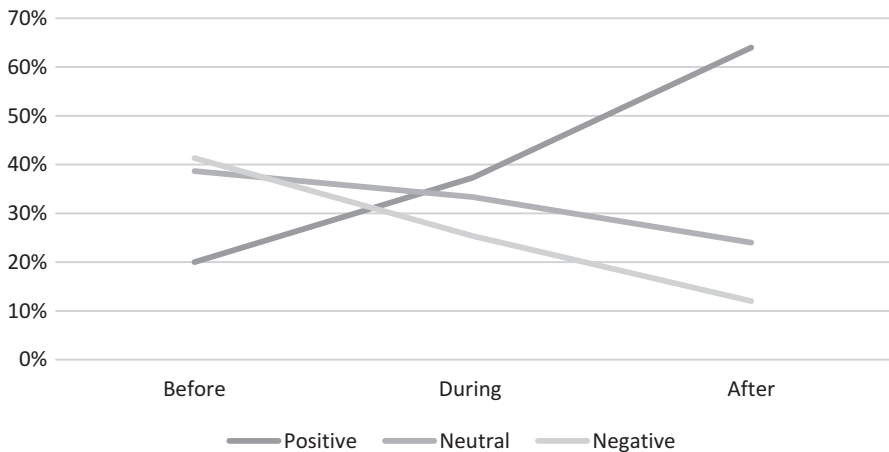
Fig. 3 Change of sentiment across feedback process

Table 4 Keyword coding

Repeated	Word	Sentiment
15	Helpful	Positive
14	Learning	Positive
14	Constructive	Positive
9	Improvement	Positive
8	Humbling	Neutral
7	Positive	Positive
6	Understanding	Positive
6	Thankful	Positive
6	Scared	Negative
6	Confident	Positive
6	Challenging	Negative
6	Beneficial	Positive
5	Unsure	Negative
5	Nervous	Negative
5	Interesting	Positive
5	Insightful	Positive
5	Informative	Positive
5	Growth	Positive
5	Confidence	Positive

6.4   Resilience

The R@W scale was completed by 22 students in pre- and post-practicum workshops. The average resilience score of the participants was 77 (SD 7.55) before the practicum, in comparison to the 80.1 (SD 6.52) after practicum and the post-practicum workshop. This was an average increase of 3% (SD 0.08; Fig. 4). Student scores were generally at the higher end of the scale, with majority of the scores lying between 75% and 85%. Most of the differences between the pre- versus post-practicum survey showed an increase in resilience score. In addition the greatest area of variability in resilience score (from −10% to +10%) was clustered around the 80% level. While the increase in resilience from pre- to post-practicum survey is not statistically significant, it is worthy of note that 15 students showed increased resilience compared to 5 showing decreased resilience between the two survey points.

6.5   Workshop Evaluation

Greater than 90% of pharmacy 2nd year students found the workshop 'helpful', (Fig. 5) closely followed by psychology and business students with approximately 90% of students agreeing. Neutral responses in these three cohorts made up less than 10% (6%, 8% and 9% respectively) while 3% of business and psychology students
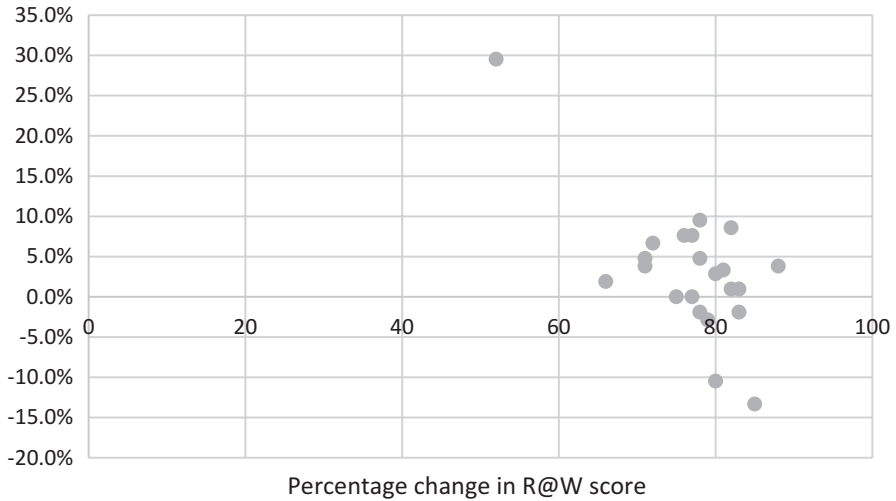
Fig. 4 The percentage change in resilience between pre-practicum and post-practicum workshop surveys

did not find the workshop to be helpful. The 4th year pharmacy student cohort had the largest number of students who did not find the workshop helpful (10%). Compared to the other students, a larger proportion of the 4th year pharmacy student cohort in attendance at the workshops chose not to complete and submit either of the surveys.

When asked if the workshop 'provided tools to help seek feedback' almost all (97%) of pharmacy 2nd year students agreed (Fig. 5). Of the final year students (pharmacy 4th years, and psychology and business 3rd years), the majority of students (~80%) also agreed, with approximately 15% having a neutral opinion and a small number (5–8%) disagreeing with the statement.

When asked whether the workshop 'provided tools to learn from and apply feedback' approximately 90% of pharmacy 2nd year students agreed, as did greater than 80% of psychology and business students. Slightly fewer pharmacy 4th year students agreed with the statement (75%) (Fig. 6). Small numbers of pharmacy 2nd year students and business students disagreed, 3% of both cohorts, while pharmacy 4th year students had 5%, and psychology had 11% of students disagree. Neutral opinions were expressed by 20% of pharmacy 4th year students, 12% of business students, 8% of psychology students and 6% of 2nd year pharmacy students.

Approximately 90% of second year pharmacy students and psychology students agreed that the workshop provided ways to receive negative feedback. Fewer business (~80%) and 4th year pharmacy students (70%) agreed with this statement, with approximately 10% of both of these cohorts disagreeing with the statement. For psychology students 3% of the cohort disagreed. Neutral responses were given by approximately 10% of pharmacy 2nd year students, psychology and business students, while this was much higher in pharmacy 4th year students, of whom 20% gave neutral responses (Fig. 6).
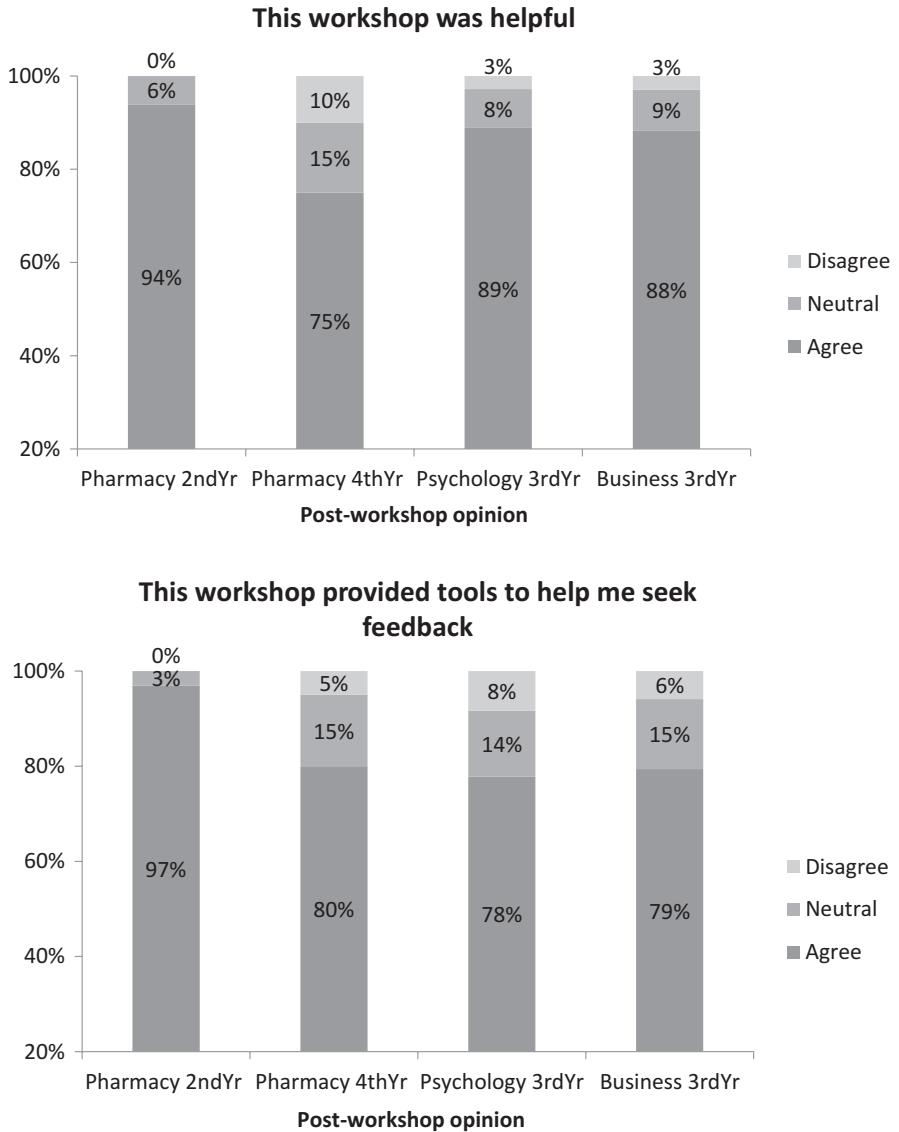
This workshop was helpful

This workshop provided tools to help me seek feedback

Fig. 5 Opinions of students from the four cohorts on the feedback workshop. Numbers of students from each cohort that voluntarily completed the survey are pharmacy 2nd years (n = 33), pharmacy 4th years (n = 20), psychology 3rd years (n = 36), and business 3rd years (n = 34)

This workshop provided tools to learn from and apply feedback

This workshop provided ways to receive negative feedback
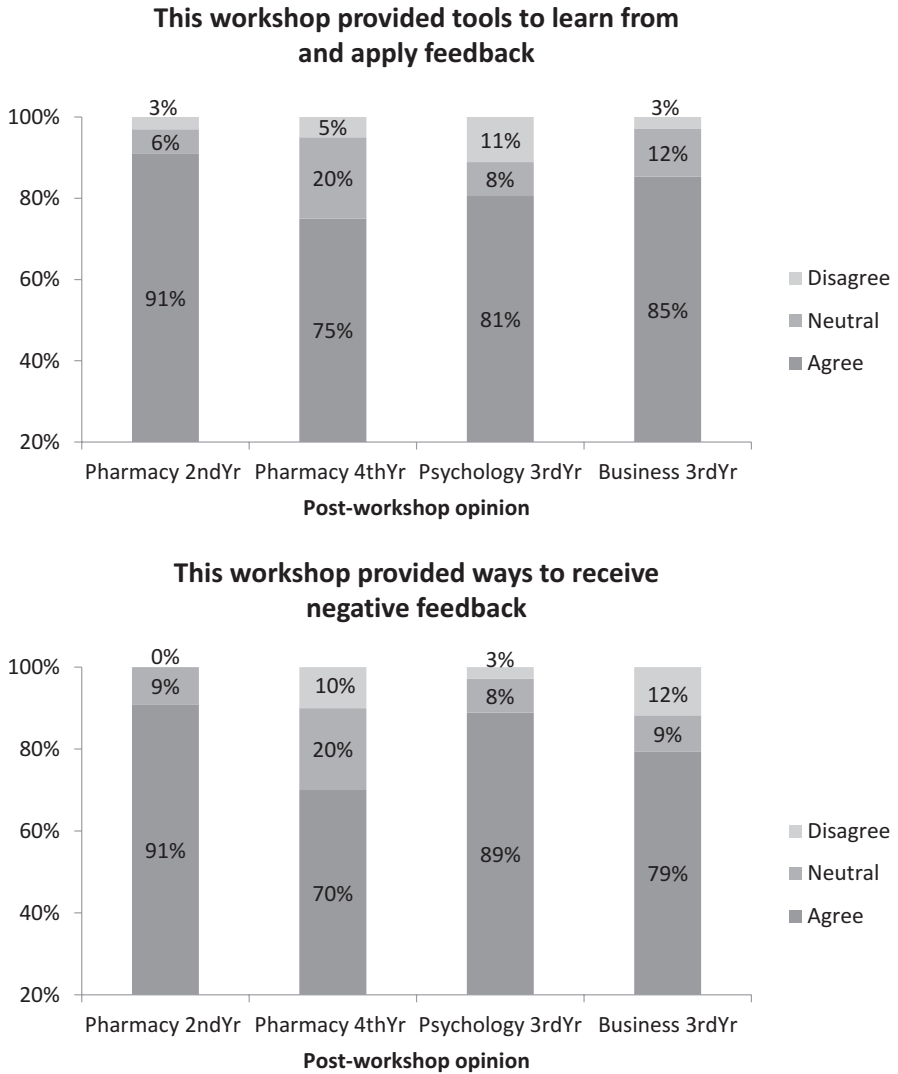
Fig. 6 Opinions of students from the four cohorts on the feedback workshop. Numbers of students from each cohort that voluntarily completed the survey are pharmacy 2nd years (n = 33), pharmacy 4th years (n = 20), psychology 3rd years (n = 36), and business 3rd years (n = 34)

7   Discussion

7.1   How Students Define Feedback

The pre-workshop surveys showed that students generally defined feedback as a passive experience, with most definitions using words such 'information' and 'comments' which are 'given' to them from the supervisor or perceived expert. While students did generally perceive feedback with a positive sentiment, recognising it was for 'improvement' most students did not define feedback with an active component. This passive engagement with the definition of feedback remained true after the workshop, even though the workshop discussed the feedback process and the need for active involvement and self-reflection. This is an area that may need to be strengthened in future workshops or other interventions with a greater emphasis on actively seeking feedback and using feedback including self-reflection for improvement.

7.2   Keywords and Descriptions of Feedback Before During and After Feedback Event

Only approximately 50% of the students who were present in the workshops completed and then shared their feedback stories. It is quite possible that those with a less positive outcome may have chosen not to share or may not have completed the worksheet at all. Nonetheless it is worthwhile for students to complete this activity as a way to contextualise their learning about feedback and in doing so they may become aware that the feedback process is ultimately a positive one for students in a practicum environment.

This study brought awareness of the value of feedback to the students through reflection on WIL activities. The students' tendency to have a positive perception of feedback towards the end of the study indicates that reflective activities embedding a framework of growth mindset may be a successful approach. There is also value in including 'sharing' of feedback experiences in a post-workshop as this encourages students to identify and appraise feedback they or their peers have received during WIL. The findings of the study also indicate that educators can prepare and support learners to pursue feedback by encouraging students to understand how to seek, identify, and respond to feedback during WIL experiences.

7.3   Resilience and Mindset

The growth mindset video was incorporated to explicitly link a positive and active approach to feedback to a person's positive mindset. As resilience has been demonstrated to moderate mindset, this was measured through the R@W scale in the later

stages of the study. While there was a change in resilience noticed at the descriptive level, sample size restricted any further analysis. Further investigation is required to understand the connection between resilience, mindset, and related characteristics such as self-efficacy and dispositional optimism. These future studies should also try to attempt to measure possible confounders reported in the literature, including stressful life events.

7.4 Workshop Evaluation

A strength of the current study was the iterative design approach which allowed the material and support to be modified as data was collected. This ensured that the student feedback was used to adjust the design as the project progressed and attempted to offer optimal support to each cohort. However, the design and the small sample sizes in each iteration limit the quantitative analysis available. In this way, the project reflected a participatory action research model more than a test re-test design.

Overall, the students supported the introduction of the workshop and identified useful learning from the content, but this opinion varied depending on the level and experience of the student. That is, 4th year pharmacy students being the cohort that had completed most WIL experiences were the least supportive of the utility of the workshops. This was in contrast to the 2nd year pharmacy students, 94% of whom found the workshops helpful and 97% agreed that the workshop provided tools to help them seek feedback. For these early-course pharmacy students the workshop occurred after their first brief WIL experience; they perhaps saw greater value in the 'tools' introduced in the workshop due to being in the early years of their studies. These 2nd year students were aware that they had many future opportunities to apply the tools to their work-related experiences. The difference between the 2nd year and 4th year students was also evident when asked to evaluate the workshops provision of 'ways to receive negative feedback'. A large majority of pharmacy 2nd year students agreed the workshop gave them ways/strategies to receive negative feedback (91%), while only 70% of 4th year pharmacy students and 79% of 3rd year business students agreed. Psychology 3rd year students had similar numbers to the 2nd years however, with 89% in agreement, although this may be due to the fact that psychology students are more-equipped to recognise the psychological 'tools' presented in the workshop than the business and pharmacy 4th year students.

The difference in value of the workshop between 'early' and 'late/final-year' students is not surprising, but does suggest that workshops for more-experienced students may need to be tailored to these students. Alternatively, the post-practicum aspect may need to be supplemented with a pre- or mid-practicum component to enable students' who only experience one major practicum generally later in their course to utilise these skills in a WIL environment. This pre-practicum workshop or other intervention would be in keeping with the understanding that learning doesn't just 'happen' while completing a WIL experience, that it takes critical reflection and

re-visiting of an experience for effective learning (Beard, 2013). The pre-practicum workshop introduced late in the iterative design process in this study did show slight increases in positive attitude towards feedback and small reductions in 'passivity' towards the feedback process. These results are encouraging and demonstrate the potential value in having multiple short workshops at different times relative to practicum experiences.

7.5 Future Directions

Further research should expand the measures used to track student development, including self-efficacy and optimism. A strength of this project was the inclusion of several disciplines each with their own approach to WIL. Expanding this project to other disciplines would allow a better understanding of the role of professional approaches. A qualitative study to explore the students' experiences of feedback post-placement is also underway. While some changes in student resilience were reported at the individual level, it is unclear how sustained the impact of this single workshop might be. An expansion of the learning activities would incorporate more mid- and post-practicum support and resources to re-engage with students, and to consolidate learning from the pre-practicum workshop. This would ensure students are reminded to implement learnings whilst on practicum.

The design and timing of all resources in this study was considered in the context of competing demands placed on students. Any future workshops and resources should also consider the learners' needs and capacity to participate. Online and flexible options for supporting students and encouraging reflection on their approaches to feedback is needed.

7.6 Conclusion

The current project demonstrates an iterative approach to responding to students' needs both before and after practicum. The project findings demonstrate that students broadly welcome support to engage in feedback processes and opportunities to adopt a growth mindset, and test and flex their resilience. The findings also identify that students typically think of feedback as a very passive event of 'receiving' information from an 'expert' and they recall approaching feedback with sense of uncertainty about their own skills or abilities. However, after reflecting on past experiences of feedback they are able to identify the benefits and learning outcomes associated with feedback. The study suggests that further development of the workshop is warranted and that incorporation of additional learning activities and support alongside broader evaluation methods would be beneficial.

This project has delivered a framework and set of resources for use across disciplines and types of WIL experiences. Overall introducing and exploring the

concepts of feedback, growth mindset, and resilience provided valuable learning and development opportunities for students. This learning was evidenced across disciplines and is more impactful in early years and during initial placements to support student success.

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The Development of a Competency Trajectory for Successive Work Integrated Learning Placements: A Case Study in Organisational Psychology

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1 Introduction

This chapter describes a new approach to competency assessments within work integrated learning (WIL) to readily measure and depict changes in competence over time. The recognition of competency assessment, in place of aptitude or intellectual ability as a predictor of performance, originated in the 1970s (Mirabile, 1997). Within accredited Australian organisational psychology postgraduate programs, students attain competency across a number of consecutive WIL placements, in combination with coursework and a research project. The areas of competency to be attained during the WIL component of these programs include seven core competencies specified by the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC, 2010). These competencies were designed to ensure students attain the minimum level of competence necessary for full registration as a psychologist.

Given the breadth of areas of practice within the field of organisational psychology (e.g., recruitment, change management, coaching, training/facilitation, employee wellbeing), students undertake placements within a wide range of organisations, within an equally wide range of contexts (public and private sectors, large and boutique consultancies, etc.). Student performance across the core competencies is assessed by their assigned supervisor, who may be either internal or external to the placement organisation. A student will have a number of supervisors across their WIL placements. For this reason, it is important that the way students are assessed is robust, accurate, consistent and representative, thereby minimising the subjective bias of individual supervisors as much as possible. The application of competency-based assessment models to environments of successive yet

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independent learning, such as WIL within organisational psychology, has not been undertaken.

To capture performance across successive placements, a trajectory tool was developed depicting areas where students hold key strengths (i.e., higher competence scores across all placements), areas where they have acquired strengths (i.e., progressed from low to high competence across placements), areas where they have wavering strengths (i.e., a mix of high and low competence across placements), and areas where they need to continue to grow (i.e., lower competence across all placements). The tool enables students' competency development to be tracked across the breadth of their WIL placements, providing students and supervisors/managers with evidence of changes in competency over time, which can inform the assessments of a student's suitability for the transition to employment, while also identifying areas for professional development post-graduation. This approach to placement assessment provides the students with feedback on their practicum assessment, facilitating the enhancement and improvement of their professional learning strategy.

2   Context – Organisational Psychology in Australia

Organisational psychology is a specialist field that examines the psychology of work. The field incorporates a number of disciplines including coaching, consumer psychology, ergonomics, human factors, human resource management, industrial psychology, managerial psychology, occupational psychology, personnel psychology, vocational psychology, and work or business psychology (Australian Psychological Society, 2019). Consequently, the types of roles that Organisational Psychologists may specialise in are equally as varied, including recruitment and selection, learning and development, leadership and talent management, coaching, mentoring and career development, change management, evaluation and workplace research, occupational health and safety, performance management, wellbeing, stress and work-life balance (Australian Psychological Society, 2019). Recent examples of the types of activities undertaken for organisational psychology WIL at Griffith University are representative of the varied nature of the field, including designing recruitment and selection protocols, interpreting and feeding back job applicant psychometric assessments, undertaking usability assessments, delivering team building interventions, commissioning a training needs analysis, delivering learning and development sessions or facilitating training, delivering corporate coaching, implementing program change and evaluation, and undertaking culture interventions such as change management initiatives, safety culture or equity and diversity initiative enhancements. Given this diversity in tasks, assessing competence is complex, especially when different competencies are utilised for the various types of placements, and students are not expected to undertake WIL in every facet

of organisational psychology practice. To this end, performance on WIL activities is typically assessed against a generic set of competencies for psychologists. The organisational psychology program at Griffith University assesses students on the seven APAC (2010)[1] core competencies:

- Knowledge of the discipline
- Psychological assessment
- Intervention strategies
- Research and evaluation
- Oral communication skills
- Written communication skills
- Ethical, legal, and professional matters

Graduates from these accredited programs are eligible for full registration with the Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency (AHPRA), entitling them to call themselves a Psychologist. As Psychologists, these graduates have the safety of the general public as their primary mandate (AHPRA, 2019). For this reason, it is imperative that graduates are accurately assessed as meeting the prescribed competencies to practice as a Psychologist.

Within Australia, postgraduate students undertaking their 5th and 6th years of study in an accredited psychology program (e.g., Master of Organisational Psychology, Master of Clinical Psychology, Master of Forensic Psychology) are required to undertake at least 1000 h of WIL and demonstrate competency across the seven core competency areas specified in the APAC standards. The types of WIL tasks, logs of WIL activity, type and frequency of WIL supervision are prescribed and routinely audited by APAC. For example, WIL students are required to undertake their placements in a minimum of three locations, undertaking 1 h supervision for every 7.5 h of activity, with more than 50% of their supervision needing to be individual and 70% of their supervision being provided by a supervisor who is internal within the placement organisation.

Given the integrated nature of WIL within these accredited postgraduate psychology programs, it is no surprise that WIL typically constitutes 40% or more of the postgraduate program. Consistent with the recruitment literature, WIL acts as a realistic job preview, which we know to be the best predictor of on-the-job performance and therefore graduate employability (Chehade & Hajjar, 2016). For this reason, it is important that performance is accurately assessed within each WIL experience, as well as across successive WIL experiences.

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[1] In 2019 new APAC standards came into effect specifying a new set of psychology competencies. There is, however, considerable overlap with the seven core competencies in effect when the present research was undertaken.

3   Assessing WIL Competence

The significant impact that psychologists can have on individuals and organisations clearly articulates the importance of accurately assessing the competence of students prior to graduation and subsequent registration as a psychologist. At Griffith University, the WIL experience is undertaken through a series of placements within a minimum of three different organisations. Students enrol in practicum courses, with the associated workload for these courses estimated to be in the vicinity of 1100 h – attending practicum classes, undertaking 1000 h of placement activity in addition to supervision, as well as documenting and reflecting on the placement journey through completion of the necessary case-notes and paperwork. Given the large proportion of the program that is dependent upon successive WIL performance, it is imperative that the mechanisms used to assess competence are reliable and valid, while also being suitably robust to adapt to the varying nature of organisational psychology placements, given the breadth of this field of practice.

Assessment provides evidence of a student's capability or outcomes from WIL, and should also help students understand their own learning. However, Yorke and Vidovich (2014) argue that assessment practices in WIL have lagged behind developments in the provision of WIL. The challenge for assessments of WIL is that the full range of specific observable work actions or behaviours cannot be assessed. Yorke (2006) argue that we need to move from standardised grading systems, to an intrinsically personalised component that assesses how the individual uses the knowledge, skills and judgement associated with the profession to perform effectively in the domain of possible encounters defining the scope of professional practice. Furthermore, Hodges, Eames and Coll (2014) argue that the assessment of student work placements has been particularly problematic because the work practices in these settings are inherently interactive, collegial and interdependent, and involve hard and soft skills and a range of assessors.

The successive nature of placements in postgraduate psychology programs is often at odds with the typical assessment mechanisms embedded within many higher education institutions for these professional education programs. The enrolment in courses or units of study that are individually passed hides the dependent nature of these WIL activities and the inherent building of competence that is integral to those programs with large WIL components. Thus, we need an individualised/personalised approach to assessment that moves beyond disconnected assessment, to a process where feedback not only assesses current performance in a placement (summative assessment) but informs future development in subsequent placements (formative assessment). This developmental focus should extend beyond formal learning, with Boud and Falchikov (2006) arguing that assessment activities should not only address the immediate needs of certification or feedback to students on their current learning, but also prepare them for lifelong learning.

We identified that improvements were needed in the way in which student competence was being assessed in organisational psychology WIL placements, with the current method of assessment failing to provide students with the opportunity to

track their competency development over their consecutive placements. This meant that each placement was assessed and regarded independently, rather than as a successive trajectory of competence development that results in greater insight into student strengths. The purpose of engaging in this project was to identify a methodology for evaluating student experiences in placements that could be transferred to their successive placement experiences, and eventually transferred to their future workplace post-practicum, thereby enhancing graduate employability and informing ongoing professional development.

4   Our Approach to Developing a Competency Assessment Framework

We wanted the evaluation tool to be able to be used to gauge student capability at the start of a placement, and then re-assess student capability upon completion of each placement. The ability to reliably and validly assess transitions in student performance as an individual placement progresses enables students to better identify their areas of strength and development, maximising the learning opportunities for students during each individual placement experience. A better understanding of the student's skills and expertise during placements will also enable the student to identify what type of work is best suited to their competency strengths, potentially enhancing future job satisfaction and performance.

We also wanted to identify a competency assessment framework that could be used by consecutive supervisors to assess student development over sequential placements. The resulting competency assessment tool should facilitate the supervisory relationship and enhance each placement experience, by linking performance on successive placements and thereby building a trajectory of competency development. Students can be guided toward choices that either extend strengths or areas where they need to grow, rather than repeating WIL in areas that are already well developed. Such a tool would also identify areas for continued professional development and life-long learning, in line with the mandated requirement of maintaining psychologist registration after graduation (Psychology Board of Australia (PBA), 2015).

It is well documented that any tool assessing competency should meet the criteria of validity, reliability, feasibility and acceptability to all stakeholders. According to Masters and McCurry (1990) within the field of qualitative assessment: validity is often used interchangeably with accuracy, and reflects whether the assessment is measuring what it claims to be, so as to achieve its intended outcome; reliability is often used interchangeably with consistency and measures the extent to each assessor uses the same performance cues when making their ratings, or making assessments of the same competence across difference assessment methods; feasibility refers to the assessment being realistic and practical to implement while imposing manageable demands; and acceptability refers in part to perceived fairness, in

addition to the tool being perceived as providing value to the individual being assessed, including feedback on their level of competence, and actions to be undertaken in areas where competence has not yet been attained. After reviewing the research on recommended competency models, three models for assessing competency were evaluated by our participants: the current Likert rating scale, a Pass-fail rating scale and Miller's pyramid model. Briefly, these models involve:

1. *Likert rating scale:* Likert scales help to establish the importance of a particular competency, the proficiency level for each competency, and the level of competence demonstrated by an individual. However, they tend to produce ratings that cluster around the middle or above the middle of the scale range, a central tendency bias (Albaum, 1997). Likert rating scales are limited in how they can differentiate performance levels. The current placement competency evaluation tool utilised a Likert rating scale.
2. *Pass-fail rating scale:* Despite criticism that a pass-fail grading model results in students reducing their effort to the minimum level required, numerous papers mitigate these concerns by presenting evidence that after implementing a pass-fail grading model, students consistently did not decrease their effort or motivation (Friemuth, 1970). Three rating options are available – pass, fail, and not assessed. The Pass-fail rating scale integrates the assessment of competencies with the current Griffith University organisational psychology postgraduate placement course grades, which also adopt a pass-fail approach, awarding either a 'non-graded fail' or a 'non-graded pass'. This model held merit as it would streamline course gradings.
3. *Miller's pyramid model:* The framework for assessing competence proposed by Miller (1990) involves a scale of competence ranging from different levels of ability (knows; knows how; shows how; does). The model embraces transfer learning theory, while emphasising the role of reflection in allowing students to put theory into practice and transition their skills successfully across different contexts (Yashin-Shaw, Buchridge, Buckridge, & Ferres, 2004) Reflection is recognised as a critical component of the psychology profession with mandated peer consultation a continuing professional development requirement (PBA, 2015).

A total of 59 key stakeholders were contacted and given the opportunity to participate in the interviews, of which 33 participated. Of the 33 participants, 17 were students who had been actively enrolled in at least one practicum course in the period of 2016 to 2017 and 16 were supervisors who had actively supervised at least one Griffith University student in the period of 2016–2017. The research team received approval from Griffith University's Ethics Committee (2017/522) to conduct the evaluation. Interviews were conducted from September to October 2017, with both students and supervisors. Students who were provided the opportunity to participate were at different stages in the postgraduate program, ranging from their first to last placement. Additionally, students could be enrolled in either a Master of

Organisational Psychology and PhD (Organisational Psychology) program. The participant pool was not inclusive of postgraduate students prior to 2016 as a review undertaken in 2015 resulted in a new approach to placements being implemented in 2016, so the applicability of their comments would be limited. Supervisors were from a range of different organisations offering a variety of different placement opportunities. Supervisors interviewed were approved by PBA to provide placement supervision, with 50% of interviewed supervisors also holding endorsement in organisational psychology.

Semi-structured interview questions explored participants' perceptions and experiences of the end-of-placement evaluation rating scale currently implemented in our organisational psychology placement courses. Participants were also presented with the two alternate models, described above, and asked to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each. Sample interview questions included:

- How should competencies be addressed?
- What would be strengths of each measure presented?
- What would be limitations of each measure presented?
- Is there room for improvement of the presented measures?

Interview notes were analysed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The data was examined separately for each of the three models, and then the comments for students and supervisors were compared for each model. These findings will now be presented.

5   Findings

In general, the student feedback centred on needing a competency measure that would help them to learn and enhance their skills as an Organisational Psychologist. As was anticipated, students sought a measure that would provide them with a trajectory for progression and continual development. Three key perceived value additions of an enhanced WIL competency assessment tool emerged, namely:

1. To secure feedback on a student's workplace experience;
2. To inform choices about career, work options or specialisations; and
3. Identification of how these experiences can increase a student's employability.

Aligned with these findings, students also indicated a strong preference for the timing of any post-placement intervention to continue to be after each placement experience, with the potential to provide an indication of competency development over time (across their three or more WIL placements). In contrast, supervisor feedback centred on a measure that would be interpreted equitably by all supervisors and would not impose a significant workload.

Table 1 Definitions of thematic analysis key themes

Theme	Definition of theme
Validity	Measures student competency over and above anything else; scientist-practitioner approach
Inter-rater reliability and subjectivity	The level of subjectivity and variability across supervisors when rating students
Social desirability	The use of a numerical rating scale; the use of positively framed language; connotations attached to ratings; positive skew
Sufficient detail and range	Breakdown of competency; definition, explanation and context of descriptors; the range provided; the level of clarity of each anchor
Usability	The ease of use, and learnability of the scale for both students and supervisors; the format; practicability; conciseness of descriptors; real-world application
Not assessed	A provision for supervisors to indicate if a competency was not assessed on placement, due to project design or constraints
Constructive feedback	Constructive feedback opportunities facilitating student/supervisor conversations, thereby demonstrating a developmental approach aimed to increase student confidence, self-awareness and reflection

5.1 Seven Key Themes

Examining the data across participants, thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) revealed seven key themes (see Table 1): validity, inter-rater reliability and subjectivity, social desirability, sufficient detail and range, usability, not assessed component, and constructive feedback. While themes were discussed by both students and supervisors, as detailed below (see also Table 2), there were both similarities and differences in their views. During the interviews, both students and supervisors were asked to compare and contrast the three proposed assessment models (Likert ratings scale, Pass-fail rating scale, Miller's pyramid model). These comparisons will now be presented for each of the seven themes.

Validity Students and supervisors were vocal regarding the need for high validity of the proposed model, with the model needing to demonstrate the incorporation of a research or evidence based approach to practice (the scientist-practitioner approach), measuring more than just performance. This may include examining the overall suitability of the student for that area of the profession. In general, both students and supervisors strongly believed that Miller's pyramid model demonstrated a scientist-practitioner approach.

With regard to the Likert rating scale, student opinions were divided with 50% of students stating that the Likert rating scale measured what it intended to measure, namely organisational psychology postgraduate practicum competence, and the other 50% commenting that the Likert rating scale was very limited in that it did not provide a rigorous scientist-practitioner approach. Students argued that the use of the words 'satisfactory' and 'competent' as separate levels is not accurate stating, "there is confusion with rating 2-satisfactory, the wording is inappropriate as this is

Table 2 Summary of feedback from students and supervisors on each assessment tool

	Student Comments			Supervisor Comments		
	Likert Rating Scale	Pass-Fail Rating Scale	Miller's Pyramid Model	Likert Rating Scale	Pass-Fail Rating Scale	Miller's Pyramid Model
Validity	50% believed valid	No comment	Differentiates knowledge from behaviour	A number of concerns	No comment	75% believed valid
Inter-rater reliability and subjectivity	Too subjective	Less subjective	Favoured	Too subjective	Less subjective but no normative point	More objective; facilitates a conversation
Social desirability	Ratings feed issues of social desirability	No numerical rating scale is positive	Softer language	Social pressures of numerical ratings	No numerical rating scale is positive	Softer language and positive descriptors
Sufficient detail and range	Insufficient detail; not competent range not required	3 levels is sufficient; definition of competency good	Insufficient detail	Range not used appropriately; sufficient detail	Definition of competency; divided on appropriateness of range	Practical focus; insufficient clarity and detail
Usability	Onerous and lengthy descriptors	Real world and practical	Concise descriptors and softer language; too informal?	Useable	Intuitive and easy to use	Softer language and practical application
Not assessed	Not used consistently	Included	Needed (easily added)	No comment	Included	Needed (easily added)
Constructive feedback	Ambiguous	Tracks growth and development	Facilitates deeper reflection	Good	A number of concerns	Allows coaching by supervisor

technically saying the same things as competent." Supervisors expressed concern that the Likert rating scale merely measured students' performance instead of competency. Supervisors also stated that although the Likert rating scale does acknowledge the student's stage in the course, there are still grey areas making the scale ambiguous and less than ideal.

Neither students nor supervisors commented on the validity of the Pass-fail rating scale. Given the nature of the comments from students and supervisors regarding the alternative models, this lack of comment may be interpreted as there not being any perceived issues with the validity of this scale.

Students identified Miller's pyramid model as being capable of distinguishing the difference between students' knowledge and behaviour, as it measures a student's ability to take theory and apply it to practice. Supervisors felt that Miller's pyramid model explicitly focused on evaluating a student's behaviour. Of the supervisors who commented, 75% commented positively about Miller's pyramid model as it aligned with the values of the organisational psychology profession and the scientist-practitioner model. However, one supervisor argued that the model was confusing as 'knows' doesn't necessarily precede 'shows how.' However, the WIL focus on reflection and developing student's self-awareness is beneficial in addressing this limitation.

Inter-Rater Reliability and Subjectivity Overall students and supervisors both favoured Miller's pyramid model for assessing inter-rater reliability and assessor subjectivity. Stakeholders believed that Miller's pyramid model would facilitate conversation, as it defines elements of practice. It was believed that Miller's pyramid model would demonstrate further objectivity with the inclusion of more detail and clarity for each anchor.

Of the 17 students who participated, 70% believed that the Likert rating scale was too subjective. Students believed the descriptor of 'given the student's stage in the course' was extremely subjective as it "asks supervisors to make judgement calls based on (the supervisor's) experience". Of the 16 supervisors, 75% commented on issues relating to subjectivity and inter-rater reliability. The majority of supervisors agreed that the descriptor, 'given the students stage in the course', was very subjective and relied on a supervisor's definition of what the student should be achieving on each placement. Supervisors highlighted that each student is different and encounters different placement experiences. A student without industry experience can be expected to have very different abilities and skills compared to a student who has returned to university after 20 years of industry experience. Hence, these students would perform at different levels, even if they were at the same stage in the course.

Students were not as concerned about issues with subjectivity and biased ratings in the Pass-fail rating scale. Similarly, supervisors were not as concerned about issues with subjectivity and biased ratings in using the Pass-fail rating scale, however, supervisors did question where the normative point was.

Students reported that Miller's pyramid model removed some subjectivity as it would facilitate a collaborative conversation. This conversation would facilitate the

supervisor and student reaching agreement on the student's rating, thereby assisting student acceptance of the assigned ratings. Supervisors reported Miller's pyramid model as being more objective than the other models, as it defines elements of practice. There were, however, concerns around poor inter-rater reliability due to the lack of clarity and definitions of what constitutes each of the knows, knows how, shows how levels for each of the psychology competencies.

Social Desirability Supervisors commented on the social pressure they feel to score a student highly stating, "[they] don't want to give a two or below due to social desirability, as it flags a negative connotation." This finding is not surprising as postgraduate students are high achievers (having attained high grades in their undergraduate studies to progress to Honours, and then high grades in Honours to progress to post-graduate studies). Moreover, there is a general tendency for work placement supervisors to give inflated marks across capabilities (Jackson, 2018). Students and supervisors agreed that the use of a numerical rating offered no value.

Students commented on the negative focus of anchors in the Likert rating scale, highlighting the negative impact of social desirability on a student's professional development and how this is not constructive for the student's development (e.g., receiving a rating of a '2' on an advanced placement). However, one student felt as though there were no negative connotations associated with receiving a lower rating. Supervisors stated that they feel as if they cannot rate a student as '2' due to social desirability, as it attaches a negative connotation. Adding to this, supervisors consistently mentioned the irrelevance of numerical annotation stating that the numbers are unrealistic and merely buy in to social desirability issues. Further resulting from issues of social desirability, supervisors reported a perception that students get upset if they are not assigned a majority of '5 s', however, supervisors commented that the 'performance equal to or above that of a fully competent professional' rating is too extreme, and they would rarely give students a rating of '5'. Further, some supervisors did not feel that the '5' rating was achievable for any student, although it should be noted that some students are already fully registered psychologists, so attaining this rating is, in fact, feasible. Supervisors also felt that it is hard to identify and define a 'fully competent professional'. Supervisors highlighted issues with all of the anchors being positively positioned, such that this can be undermining for students.

Students and supervisors favoured the Pass-fail rating scale and Miller's pyramid model, as these models implemented positive and growth focused wording, mitigating issues of social desirability. Students liked that the Pass-fail rating scale did not incorporate a numerical rating system and felt that this helped to mitigate issues of social desirability. Supervisors also made positive comments for both these models due to the absence of numerical ratings, reflecting that "not being numbered forces people to think hard about what they are rating." For the Pass-fail rating scale, supervisors highlighted the great use of the terminology 'yet' in 'not yet competent' and 'strength' as opposed to 'expert' in mitigating social desirability issues. However, a minority of supervisors felt that it would go the other way and would be harder to rate a student as 'not yet competent' rather than the currently used anchors

of 'performance below expectations' and 'satisfactory, but would benefit from more experience'.

Within Miller's pyramid model, students liked the use of the descriptor 'developing proficiency' and believed that this softer language helped to mitigate social desirability issues. Students made comment on the absence of the numerical ratings, stating that this was a strength of the scale. Supervisors were not very vocal regarding Miller's pyramid in relation to social desirability. However, of the supervisors who did comment, there was agreement that the use of softer language and the positive positioning of the descriptors was a strength of Miller's pyramid.

Sufficient Detail and Range Overall, students and supervisors agreed that there was no benefit to the breakdown of levels indicating 'not competent' within the Likert rating scale. The Pass-fail rating scale addressed these concerns and included an appropriate three level breakdown of competency, however supervisors held some concerns regarding the definition of competency. Miller's pyramid model was believed to lack clarity and detail in each of its descriptors.

Overall, 70% of the student comments in relation to the Likert rating scale were positioned negatively, indicating that students believed the range was not optimal and the scale descriptors contained insufficient detail. They critiqued the use of two not yet competent anchors, in addition to a lack of specific detail in the descriptions of each anchor. Students did not believe the descriptors were able to effectively capture their individual differences over and above their course stage, yet this may be relevant when making competency assessments. Supervisors echoed the redundancy of the two levels of not competent asking, "what is the point of having a 1–5 range when APAC only require students to meet competency?". Supervisors also stated that the overall scale range was not used appropriately by supervisors due to social desirability issues, as previously discussed. In contrast to the students, however, supervisors believed that the level of description of the anchors was adequate and that the use of the wording, 'given the student's stage in the course' provides a normative point for supervisors. Interestingly supervisors did comment on the presence of a competency range, when accreditation requirements only necessitate a basic level of competence being met.

Students felt that the Pass-fail rating scale labels were less daunting, and the scale followed a clear, step-wise approach. However, although the three-level breakdown of competency was well received by students, there was still concern around the context of competency. Students stated, "[It's] not clear what you are competent against, there is no clarity around what that means and your stage in the course." Multiple students commented that the Pass-fail rating scale did not provide a clear definition of competency. Supervisors responded positively towards one level of 'not competent'. However, there was again contention among supervisors as to the divide of competency into three distinct levels. Of the supervisors who commented, 50% agreed that dividing competency into distinct levels was a strength of the Pass-fail rating scale, and 50% felt that it was redundant. Supervisors agreed that the scale needed to define what competency is. A handful of supervisors commented on the redundancy of the descriptor, 'needs future development', as professionals in

our discipline always require professional development as mandated by the PBA (2015).

Students reported that Miller's pyramid model lacked significant detail and explanation to be utilised effectively by supervisors, with supervisors affirming, "[they] would need training because there isn't enough detail". There was concern with 'knows how' being the equivalent of competent if a student only knows how to complete a task but doesn't actually show how they engage in the respective behaviours. However, other students felt that Miller's pyramid model clearly breaks down student performance. There was some confusion around the terminology used, with specific mention of 'global development'. Students were unclear on the definition of global development and how to identify a student who was demonstrating this level of competence. Supervisors also described Miller's pyramid model as vague and ambiguous, specifically with regard to 'global development'. Miller's pyramid model was described as lacking detail and clarity, however positively, it did maintain a practical focus.

Usability Students and supervisors agreed that the recommended model should follow a simple, practical and user-friendly format. Students stated that the Pass-fail rating scale and Miller's pyramid model conformed to these guidelines the best, in contrast the supervisors believed that the Likert rating scale and Pass-fail rating scale worked best.

Students highlighted the complexity of the scale descriptors used within the Likert rating scale assessment tool, with more than 50% of student comments alluding to the onerous and lengthy scale descriptors. Less than 50% of students believed the current scale was simple in layout, visually appealing, and easy to use. Supervisors did not express concern relating to the usability of the Likert rating scale. All of the supervisor's comments were positive in nature indicating that the Likert rating scale is useable, for example, "the scale works, it's comfortable and usable."

Students agreed that the Pass-fail rating scale offered a user-friendly approach, with 70% of students responding positively to the usability of the scale. Students highlighted the real-world and practical approach that the Pass-fail rating scale offered, adding that it is readily useable, as it incorporated fewer words and simple language. Supervisors agreed that the Pass-fail rating scale was user friendly, with 56% of supervisors reporting a high degree of usability. Supervisor's comments indicated that the Pass-fail rating scale was intuitive and easy to use, as it made great use of a simple layout and simple language.

Students highlighted the usability of Miller's pyramid, with the concise descriptors, softer language, and a practical approach, reducing the demands on the supervisor. There was some minor concern from students that the model was too informal and mimicked that of a school grading system. Contrarily, students suggested improving engagement with the form by using a visual aid, such as the pyramid from the model, in place of a typical table. Supervisors mirrored student comments by also highlighting the use of softer language and the practical application of the

scale. Additionally, supervisors commented on the potentially increased time burden on supervisors when using this scale.

Not Assessed Component There was strong consensus between students and supervisors that the proposed model needed to incorporate a 'not assessed' component. This could be a comments box, similar to that currently used, however, the process for scoring 'not assessed' competencies must be standardised across supervisors.

Students felt that supervisors were forced to give a rating for every competency on the Likert rating scale, yet not all WIL placements provide students with exposure to the entire range of competencies. Students address competencies collectively across their successive placements, as opposed to on each individual placement. It is therefore of no surprise that 59% of students believed that the scale needs to hold provision for a 'not assessed' component. Supervisors as a majority did not comment on a 'not assessed' component for the Likert rating scale. In discussing this issue with the Placement Coordinator, it became apparent that supervisors vary in their use of the 'not assessed' option within this model, with some supervisors using the comments section and not providing a rating, and other supervisors addressing the competency throughout supervision even if it was not related to the actual WIL activities, thereby enabling them to make an informed rating of the student's competence.

Students indicated that the inclusion of a 'not assessed' component was a strength of the Pass-fail rating scale. However, students did not show awareness that the inclusion of a 'not assessed' component will result in having to ensure there is evidence across placements collectively to suggest all competencies have been assessed. Supervisors reported addressing a competency, which a student may not have had the opportunity to demonstrate given the particular project or placement constraints, in a range of different ways. Supervisors were in favour of a standardised approach to addressing competencies which are not assessed on given placements or projects. A minority of supervisors believed that there was no value to a 'not assessed' component, with one supervisor commenting that a "not assessed option wouldn't be used that often as although competencies aren't performed on every placement, they are still all usually discussed during supervision sessions."

Students agreed that the Miller's pyramid model needs to incorporate provisions for competencies that are not assessed during particular placements. This could be ensuring there is a comments box for supervisors to provide justification, as outlined in the above discussion with the Placement Coordinator.

Constructive Feedback There was a disconnect between students and supervisors regarding the value of constructive feedback. Students strongly believed that there was an immediate need for the proposed model to provide constructive feedback to students to inform their placement trajectory and student employability. In contrast, supervisors believed a traditional pass-fail approach was sufficient, as required by APAC and the University. Students identified the benefits of a scale that can track their development and provide future direction for employability. Although onerous

for supervisors, students made comment on how helpful the rating is when also provided in conjunction with comments to support the rating. These findings are consistent with research on how university students' and staff perceptions of feedback differ (Orsmond & Merry, 2010; Savin-Baden, 2010). For example, students believe they are receiving less detailed feedback than staff do and value comments, while staff believe students are more focused on marks or grades than how to improve their learning (Carless, 2006).

The Likert rating scale assessment of '3, competent (given the student's stage in the course)' may represent development, but also may not. The scale introduces a large amount of ambiguity when it is reviewed and interpreted in isolation. Adding to the ambiguity, many supervisors do not provide comments to justify their ratings on each competency. Students also identified a rating of '5, performance equal to or above that of a fully competent professional' as concerning as it can be polarising, and students shouldn't be expected to be at this level. Supervisors did not express a need for the model to inform a student's future direction or strength. Supervisors discussed the strengths and barriers to a student's motivation of an extreme score, either high or low. A high rating could inhibit a student's motivation for growth and development and low ratings (e.g., 1 or 2) can potentially demotivate students.

Student feedback regarding the use of the Pass-fail rating scale was positive, with 65% of students commenting on its effectiveness and its ability to track growth and development, "[it] provides a coaching tool for supervisors to provide feedback." Supervisors agreed with the student's comments; however, a minority of supervisors were concerned that the Pass-fail rating scale lost an element of helpful feedback as the anchors were not clearly operationalised in an organisational psychology context.

Students commented on the ability of Miller's pyramid model to facilitate deeper reflection. They believed that this model will help to increase a student's self-awareness through facilitating collaboration, communication, and, as a result, deeper reflection. Supervisors added to this, concluding that this model creates a coaching space to help students have clarity and confidence in their skills and abilities. Supervisors responded extremely positively to Miller's pyramid model, including that the model, "allows facilitation between students and supervisors and encourages a coaching like space," as well as, "[it] provides students with future direction."

Summary Overall, the stakeholder feedback across the seven themes identified that Miller's pyramid model was preferred, followed by the Pass-fail rating scale. Miller's pyramid model received the most positive feedback in relation to validity, inter-rater reliability and subjectivity, as well as constructive feedback, while also being preferred together with the Pass-fail rating scale for social desirability. No preferred assessment tool was identified for usability, while the Pass-fail rating scale was preferred for both sufficient detail and range, as well as including a not assessed component. In light of these findings, the decision was made to proceed with Miller's pyramid model as the basis of the new competency assessment framework, with adaptations to address the concerns raised by participants.

Table 3 Assessment rating criteria for each postgraduate organisational psychology areas of competence

Assessment rating	Description
Not adequately assessed	The scope of the placement and the supervision discussions did not allow for a valid assessment of this competency
Knows (Not yet competent)	The student demonstrates basic knowledge and limited understanding of the application of knowledge to practice in some contexts
Knows how (Competent)	The student can demonstrate the application of sound knowledge to practice in common contexts with only minor lapses in competence occurring
Shows how (Developing proficiency)	The student can apply and demonstrate the integration of advanced knowledge to practice across a range of contexts
Does (Global development)	The student consistently applies the scientist-practitioner model to demonstrate autonomous and seamless integration of advanced knowledge to practice in a wide range of complex contexts

6 New Competency Assessment Framework – Evaluation Tool

On the basis of the analysis of the interview data, an adapted version of Miller's pyramid model was developed. The new competency evaluation tool (see Table 3) was trialled through a ghosting phase, with supervisors completing the existing competency assessment tool concurrently with the new evaluation tool. In addition, for students commencing placements, supervisors were asked to complete the tool at the start of the placement (approximately 1 month after commencement), as well as at the end of the placement. This provided an indication of the likely change in competency development within an individual placement.

7 Validation

In total 6 supervisors, supervising a total of 15 WIL placement students, participated in a trial of the new competency evaluation tool. Supervisors were asked to rate the student's competence early in the placement and again at the end of the placement. For some students, due to the fact that the student had already commenced their placement when the trial began, supervisors made these ratings at the same time, thus rating where they believed the student was at the start of their placement. Analysis of the data demonstrated variation in competency assessments over time within WIL placement, regardless of which method of assessment (sequential or concurrent) was undertaken.

Student ratings changed over the course of their placements. These differences over time demonstrated that assessments in competence varied from the start to the

end of a placement. It should be noted that no student demonstrated an improvement on every competency during a placement. This finding is important as it demonstrates that the supervisors who participated were not susceptible to a bias in their assessments, such as a halo bias, where all competencies would receive a similar improvement from the beginning to the end of a placement. Interestingly these within placement changes were both positive and negative, namely, both increased competence and reduced competence. These negative changes may indicate that initial assessments of students were not accurate, or that the student demonstrated less competence as their placement progressed. Anecdotal discussions with students suggest that their awareness of these changes over time was not always apparent. As such, the new competency evaluation tool provided additional information to students in relation to their performance. To this end, the longitudinal use of the tool was identified as being highly beneficial.

Anecdotal feedback suggested that the new competency evaluation tool provided students with new and unique information they had not previously gleaned through the supervision process. For some, this was information in relation to which areas of practice they would like to pursue for their career. We suggest that providing students with better guided career options facilitates employability post-graduation, which is a key performance indicator for most academic institutions (e.g., Griffith University, 2017).

Both supervisor and student feedback on the assessment ratings and descriptors within the new competency assessment tool were also positive. This indicated that the new tool was prima facie meeting the seven themes for assessment identified during the initial phase of the project.

8   Competency Trajectory Tool

To facilitate student competency development as a trajectory across their placements, a new visual depiction of competency acquisition will also be implemented. Utilising a radar chart design (see Fig. 1) the competency trajectory tool will be used by students successively over each of their placements to demonstrate their competency development throughout their program of study.

The competency trajectory tool demonstrates to students the areas where they possess key strengths (i.e., higher competence across all placements; e.g., Knowledge of the Discipline in Fig. 1), the areas where they have acquired strengths (i.e. progressed from low to high competence across successive placements; e.g., Written Communication Skills in Fig. 1), the areas where their performance is inconsistent (i.e., a mix of low and high competence; e.g., Psychological Assessment), and the areas they need to continue to grow or focus their professional development (i.e., lower competence consistently across all placements; e.g., Ethical, Legal and Professional Matters in Fig. 1). This methodology enables students to develop a guided learning strategy for implementation post-practicum.
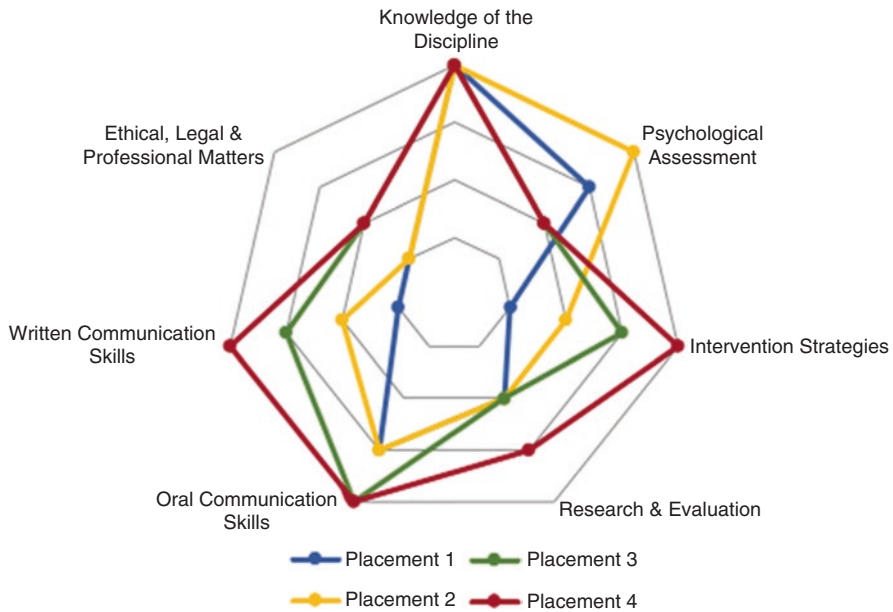
Fig. 1 Example display from the competency trajectory tool

The competency trajectory tool also enables students to not only reframe their approach to placements as a series of enhanced skill acquisition opportunities, but to also see the areas of psychological practice that are their strengths, which can better direct their subsequent placement and ultimately job search efforts. With many of our students being offered their first psychologically related job through their WIL experience, the need for students to be forward focused and see their placements as a trajectory of development becomes paramount for employability.

9   Limitations

Throughout the project there was a strong stakeholder focus on the competency evaluation tool delivering reliable and valid information to the student to inform their real-world learning trajectories. Achieving this focus is difficult, as the competency evaluation tool is used by a range of different supervisors from a variety of different organisations, in a multitude of differing contexts. The competency evaluation tool therefore needs to be robust enough to better inform students of their competence but also sufficiently reliable for a range of supervisors to use and provide congruent feedback to students. To this end, the more specific anchors for competence assessment in the new model should assist in enhancing the reliability of competency assessment across supervisors. In addition, the provision of a guide or training for assessors would improve the likelihood of the assessment

competency framework being implemented successfully. Further assessments of inter-rater reliability (multiple supervisors assessing the same student on the same placement) would be ideal, however only a limited number of placements offer the potential for these types of assessments to be undertaken.

10   Benefits

Given the standardisation of the competencies that organisational psychology students acquire while undertaking their WIL experiences, this research is of benefit to other institutions offering organisational psychology training who want to mould their student perceptions of placements as a trajectory of development, rather than a set of independent WIL experiences. Indeed, such tools for assessing WIL competence for individual and successive placements are of benefit in other specialty areas, as well as for professional training post-graduation.

11   Conclusion

WIL is an integral and substantial component of accredited postgraduate psychology training within Australia. With this increasing reliance on the assessment of competence and outputs, an innovative approach was warranted, that combines both formative and summative assessment to ensure students can continue to attain competence while recognising their strengths and areas for development. Through the integration of seven key themes arising from stakeholder feedback, an improved method of assessing competence was developed and trialled. This new competency assessment tool, based on Miller's pyramid model, provides students with feedback both throughout a placement and across successive placements. The tool thus becomes both an assessment of learning and an assessment for learning (Carless, 2007). Through this improved feedback students can better understand their performance strengths and thereby identify their optimal career paths. This enables students to develop a competency based understanding of performance, so as to assist them as graduates in the workforce, informing their post-practicum professional development.

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Implementing Post-practicum Strategies to Enhance the Professional Identity and Employability of Final Year Physiotherapy Students

Susan Edgar, Stacy Sutherland, and Joanne Connaughton

1   Integrating Work Integrated Learning and Career Development Learning

Work Integrated Learning (WIL) provides real-world experiences with the aim to produce industry-ready graduates. It can therefore be assumed that occupation-specific professional programs, such as physiotherapy, will provide ample opportunities to prepare students well for their transition into the workforce. However, this assumption may be flawed when considering the broad skillset, beyond profession-specific abilities, required to enhance employability. Billett (2009) highlighted the importance of developing 'critical capacities' on top of 'occupational capacities', ensuring graduates are ready for professional practice in their given industry. It has been suggested that these could be developed through post-practicum experiences including 'sharing and drawing out of experiences' within the curriculum (Billett, 2009).

The quality and nature of WIL activities embedded in occupation-specific programs affects the outcomes gained by students, including work readiness (Smith, Ferns, Russell, & Cretchley, 2014). 'Commencement readiness' (Smith et al., 2014) has been identified as a key dimension that could be facilitated through the scaffolding of appropriate WIL experiences in curriculum. The Office for Learning and Teaching 2014 report on the impact of WIL (Smith et al., 2014) highlighted the importance of facilitated debriefing sessions to ensure student reflection on WIL including targeted areas of development. Curriculum design and development is

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enhanced by consideration of how and when 'other' activities to address graduate employability or work-readiness that are associated with WIL are implemented. Smith et al. (2009) highlighted the need to integrate Career Development Learning (CDL) into curriculum. Where previously CDL may have been an extra-curricular or ad hoc activity, an integrated approach has been suggested to enhance the discipline-specific curriculum and ultimately, graduate employability. CDL and employability are inherently linked with CDL being one component of employability in Dacre Pool and Sewell's model (2007). Integration and scaffolding of both WIL experiences and CDL into professional programs, such as physiotherapy, has the potential to optimise employability. Given the recommendations for post-practicum experiences to enhance both WIL and work-readiness (Billett, 2009; Smith et al., 2014), a review of post-practicum activities to facilitate CDL was undertaken to inform the interventions to be included in this project.

2 Post-practicum Strategies to Enhance Career Development Learning

Post-practicum experiences promote the transformation of WIL into profession specific knowledge and skills through students sharing and critically reflecting on their experiences. Ideally these should be linked to educational outcomes associated with the professional (Billett, Cain, & Le, 2018) and to CDL. A review of healthcare discipline students' preferences for post-practicum activities revealed a preference for post-practicum interventions following every practicum experience (Billett et al., 2018). Small group interventions facilitated by teaching staff were deemed the most ideal, with student-led interventions, the least preferred. An example of a small group intervention that has been popularised over the last 20+ years, particularly in nursing education, is the use of learning circles. Learning circles have been highlighted as a useful tool for sharing and critically reflecting on professional issues and incidences experienced in a healthcare setting (Hiebert, 1996). Students share WIL experiences in small groups, with structured guidelines and group rules, allowing equal participation and engagement. Facilitators provide guidance and support as needed to engage learners. Given the role of learning circles in promoting critical reflection and engagement, they would appear to be a useful format for integrating WIL experiences and CDL. Structured learning circles have been trialled as a post-practicum intervention in nursing students to develop intersubjectivity or teamwork (Grealish et al., 2019). In this study students reported that they valued the student-led nature of the activity and the opportunity to identify skills they were developing in practicum experiences. Comparing and sharing experiences enabled these students to further develop their team building skills, enhancing their employability, in a safe environment.

'Skill and identity development' has been identified as a key factor influencing employment outcomes in recent graduates of Australian universities (Jackson,

2014). In Jackson's study (2014), developing one's graduate identity enhanced employment prospects by 10%. Professional identity is key in the healthcare environment where an understanding of roles and responsibilities within the broader healthcare team is essential. Attaining a well-developed graduate identity before entering the workforce contributes to increased confidence and work-readiness. Activities to enhance professional identity may bring about an improved sense of connectedness for students to their profession (Cardell & Bialocerkowski, 2019). Cardell and Bialocerkowski (2019) piloted a program to enhance resilience, self-efficacy and professional identity in Master of Speech Pathology students. Students were asked to identify qualities that exemplified an excellent practising professional as well as identify their own stage of development from novice to practitioner. Post-practicum activities were designed to improve self-efficacy and recognition of their professional identity and ultimately to improve success during the professional program and beyond.

The use of reflective practice tasks in WIL has been linked to improved transition from student to graduate, for final year physiotherapy students (Edgar, Francis-Coad, & Connaughton, 2013). Reflections on clinical practice, written in the STAR (Situation, Task, Action, Result) interview format, provide an ideal medium to develop critical skills and enhance employability. Similarly, the completion of selection criteria tasks, requiring students to provide clinical examples (often in a STAR format) against professional criteria, enhances CDL through the articulation of professional attributes. A previous study where physiotherapy students completed written selection criteria and responded to industry feedback, demonstrated that students' confidence in their abilities to complete written employability tasks improved following the activity (Kirwan, Tuttle, Weeks, & Laakso, 2019). There was a greater likelihood for job interview selection, for those students who engaged in the CDL activity.

In summary, post-practicum strategies to enhance CDL, based on reflection and evaluation as per Dacre Pool and Sewell's model (2007), together with identity development, will provide students with the opportunity to develop the essential components of employability.

3   Background to the Project

Physiotherapy students complete six 5-week full-time clinical placements during their four-year undergraduate degree program. Emphasis through the course is placed on clinical preparation prior to practicum experiences that includes nine weeks of structured clinical preparation in second year prior to the first formal clinical placement and 1–2 weeks of clinical preparation prior to subsequent placements in third and fourth year. To date, post-practicum strategies have focussed on the review of challenging cases in fourth year, assessed in a complex cases 'capstone' unit. Employability is broadly explored in fourth year following an initial ten weeks (two blocks) of practicum, with students returning to university to

complete CDL workshops on CV and interview skills. Students also attend a professional seminar day meeting sector representatives, learning about professional support, opportunities and registration; and additional employment information including superannuation and remuneration. To date, students undertake no additional post-practicum activities and have limited review of their employability skills and needs, linked to practicum experiences. Watts (2006) and Smith et al. (2009) promote the importance of augmenting WIL experiences with CDL and highlighted the lack of structured experiences linking the two in the tertiary sector.

The intervention undertaken in this project aimed to assist physiotherapy students to link practicum experiences in their final year with their development as a professional and guide students through learning activities to address employability. The intervention was designed to increase students' understanding and confidence in their employability and ideally enhance their employment prospects.

4   Post-practicum Intervention

The post-practicum intervention designed and facilitated by The University of Notre Dame Australia School of Physiotherapy clinical education team consisted of two components. Part one was an Employability Workshop followed by part two which involved an opt-in job application task. The following section presents the specific post-practicum strategies employed prior to a review of outcome measures utilised to evaluate the post-practicum experience.

Part one of the post-practicum intervention was a half day Employability Workshop onsite at the university which included a guided review of practicum experiences, professional identity activities and an industry panel to discuss employability. The workshop was undertaken after final year students had completed their initial ten weeks (two blocks) of practicum and was a compulsory element of their curriculum. Of the 73 physiotherapy students enrolled in their final year, 61 (83.6%) attended the workshop.

The workshop supported students to reflect on pertinent learning opportunities from their clinical encounters and incorporate these experiences into the workshop. The workshop included three main components: learning circles; professional identity activities; and an industry panel.

4.1   Learning Circles

The first activity involved formation of learning circles to discuss practicum experiences. Students were randomly allocated to a learning circle of five students. Each learning circle was assigned an area within the lecture theatre where they could undertake activities. Before group discussions commenced, students were given five min to personally reflect on a clinical or professional dilemma. Guidance on the

potential 'types' of dilemma was provided by the facilitators. Students were encouraged to explore a clinical case, a critical incident, a challenging or interesting setting, an aspect of clinical practice that surprised, pleased or disappointed them or the application of a newly acquired skill for the first time. Following the five-minute self-reflection, each student in the group was given five-minutes to present their clinical or professional dilemma and consult with the other members of their learning circle. The peer consultation period provided the student with the opportunity to share their learning from practical experience and gain peer feedback. The facilitators provided prompts to assist with the peer consultation process and these are shown in Fig. 1. Students were asked to make note of two or three specific clinical or professional strategies that came from their learning circle discussions that could contribute to their practice in their remaining two clinical placements.

The students were given three learning circle rules to follow and these are presented in Fig. 2.

In addition to linking clinical placement experiences with their development as a professional, the Employability Workshop also aimed to develop student awareness of areas that could enhance their future employment, as well as increase their confidence with applying for jobs, giving them an 'edge' with gaining employment.

4.2 Professional Identity Activities

Professional identity and attributes of professionals were introduced and explored through learning activities addressing the qualities of practising physiotherapists. Students were asked to reflect on their current skills as a clinical practitioner and identify their areas of strength and areas requiring development.

Students were then requested to rate their progress from novice to practitioner (on a scale of 0–10) to develop a baseline of where they felt they were currently in

How did you react initially? (feelings/behaviours)
What did you do to resolve the dilemma?
Did it help? Why, why not?
Can the group come up with some other helpful strategies?
What could you do differently next time?

Fig. 1 Learning circle prompts

This is peer consultation
Be constructive as a group and don't pool misery
Raise your hand if you want a facilitator to join your group to provide extra assistance

Fig. 2 Learning circle rules

Describe the business model in your health sector/environment and how this model affects
employment/employability of new staff

Describe the career progression in your sector

What do you look for in candidates?

Any tips/tricks for applying for jobs in your sector?

Fig. 3 Industry panel discussion points

their professional development. They were also asked to identify the ideal qualities
of a practising physiotherapist. This concept was further explored with a presenta-
tion on The *Physiotherapy practice thresholds in Australia and Aotearoa New
Zealand* (Physiotherapy Board of Australia & Physiotherapy Board of New Zealand,
2015). Students were asked to consider which roles described in the practice thresh-
olds they were currently including in their practice as a physiotherapy student and
were encouraged to identify any perceived gaps in their development as a
practitioner.

4.3   Industry Panel

The half–day workshop concluded with a panel of two industry representatives
from hospital and private practice settings, providing an overview of employability
in their respective sectors and addressing their expectations in the recruitment pro-
cess for graduate physiotherapists. Industry representatives provided a facilitated
discussion on completing selection criteria relevant to their setting. Figure 3 high-
lights the topics the panel were asked to cover during this session.

5   Outcomes Measured

A pre- and post-workshop survey was distributed in hard copy to all attending stu-
dents and time was allocated for the completion of the survey. Figure 4 illustrates
the list of questions included. Components of the Employability Impact Survey
(Smith et al., 2014) reviewing employability skills and confidence were incorpo-
rated in the survey. The professional identity activities were included in this survey
with students asked to rate their development as a practitioner on a scale of 0–10, as
well as provide qualities and attributes of a professional.

1. **What is your age**

2. **What is your gender**

3. **Rate your ability to**

- **Apply for work relevant to your studies**
- **Identify the expectations employers have of new graduates**
- **Identify your workplace/professional skills**
- **Identify the skills you lack/need to improve to be effective in the workplace**
- **Identify the knowledge you lack/need to be effective in the workplace**
- **Evaluate how well your skills and preferences "fit" different employment opportunities you might consider in the future**
- **Present yourself effectively in selection interviews and processes**
- **Apply knowledge and skills gained in your studies to the workplace**
- **Judge the applicability of the knowledge gained in your studies to the workplace**
- **Identify the standards of performance or practice expected in the workplace**

  (Likert scale: Very poor/ Considerably below average/ Slightly below average/ Average/ Slightly above average/ Considerably above average/ Very good)

4. **How confident are you that you are:**

- **Ready to commence work in the physiotherapy profession**
- **Able to obtain work in the physiotherapy profession**

  (Likert scale: Not at all confident/ Slightly confident/ Somewhat confident/ Quite confident/ Very confident)

5. **Write down 5 words which exemplify the qualities and attributes of a practising physiotherapist**

6. **Mark on the following scale from 0-10 where you are in your development from novice to physiotherapy practitioner**

7. **Do you have any concerns regarding your employability as a physiotherapist?**

8. **Rate your overall feeling of readiness for the workplace**

  (Likert scale: Very poor/ Considerably below average/ Slightly below average/ Average/ Slightly above average/ Considerably above average/ Very good)

Fig. 4 Pre- and post-workshop questions

6   Job Application Task

Part two of the post-practicum intervention was an optional job application task. Students opted-in to respond to written selection criteria for a mock position in one of the two sectors of their choosing. Selection criteria were provided by the industry representatives and are presented in Fig. 5.

Students were given one week to respond to the written selection criteria task. They sent their responses to the industry representative via the project team to allow for de-identification. Responses were coded to allow the project team to re-identify and forward feedback to individual students. Industry representatives provided feedback on individual student responses to selection criteria as well as providing an overall generalised feedback document for circulation to the year group. Students who completed the opt-in job application task were also asked to complete a follow up survey as per the pre- and post-workshop surveys.

Public hospital selection criteria:

- Knowledge of and experience in varied methods of physiotherapy assessment, treatment and evaluation
- Ability to communicate effectively with patients and staff
- Ability to function effectively as a member of a multi-disciplinary team
- Ability to effectively schedule own time and activities

Private sector selection criteria:

- Active listening – The ability to hear, validate, understand, probe with the goal of drawing out the appropriate information from a patient and their peers.
- Communication – Defined as the ability to clearly and concisely paraphrase complex concepts/treatment plans in language understood by the intended individual
- Teachability – Encompasses a combination of humility (the ability to receive feedback positively and openly), self-awareness (the ability to personally reflect and identify one's own strengths and weaknesses), and resilience (the ability to keep on progressing toward a desired goal or outcome through consistent action).
- Initiative – The ability to leverage empathy and social skills to identify problems, develop solutions, and mobilise the appropriate resources to make change.

Fig. 5 Selection criteria for mock public hospital and private sector job applications

7   Outcomes of the Intervention and Considerations for Implementation

The demographic data of final year students attending the Employability Workshop reflected the overall gender distribution and age range of physiotherapy students in the program. A response rate to the survey of 92% (n = 56) of 61 students who attended the workshop, ensured data was also reflective of the overall year group. Seventy five percent (75%) of the survey participants identified as female (n = 42) and 25% identified as male (n = 14). The age of students ranged from 20 years to 34 years with the median age being 22 years.

Twenty (20) students also opted-in to address the selection criteria for a job application. The demographics were again reflective of the program. Sixteen (16) students identified as female (80%) and four (4) as male (20%), with an age range from 20 years to 31 years. The median age of this group was also 22 years. All students completed the post-selection criteria survey giving a 100% response rate.

In order for the Employability Workshop to be successful, participants needed to feel they were in a safe environment to reflect on and discuss professional, clinical or personal issues they experienced while completing their practicum. To assist them to identify their strengths and weaknesses, students were encouraged to discuss these difficult and often challenging situations with their peers. Exposing their shortcomings and discussing their actions, especially if those actions appeared inadequate, can be quite confronting and students benefitted from having clearly defined boundaries set prior to the activity. These peer discussions facilitated the opportunity for participants to hear and learn about different ways to address difficult situations and allowed students to develop strategies to implement in the future when working as a professional. The outcomes measured in this workshop would suggest students were fully engaged with this element of the workshop and a safe environment had indeed been created.

During the workshop students also reflected on where they thought they were in their journey from novice to physiotherapy practitioner. Without knowing what specific attributes and skills are required by qualified physiotherapists this would be an impossible task. The presentation of practice thresholds allowed students to benchmark their abilities at their current stage of development, against professional standards. Students may form ideas about professional skills and attributes when on clinical practicum by observing their supervisors and educators. The nature of clinical practice is such that supervisors and educators are experienced physiotherapists and typically exhibit attributes, knowledge and skills beyond those required of new graduates. After outlining the practice thresholds and allowing time for self-reflection, there were statistically significant changes in where students placed themselves between novice and physiotherapy practitioner. Students ranked themselves further along the journey demonstrating the workshop provided them with a more realistic view of the professional attributes of a new graduate physiotherapist.

The invited panel members outlined two different business models and how each model might impact on the employment and employability of new graduates to their

staff. The panel members also described the qualities they look for in job applicants and provided some tips for new graduates when applying for jobs. Comparing participant survey responses from before and after the workshop, students' perceptions of their readiness to work, confidence to secure work and confidence in their own skills improved. There was a statistically significant improvement in students' perceived abilities against the 10 items from the Employability Impact Survey (Smith et al., 2014). Likewise, statistically significant differences in students' confidence to obtain and commence work were observed.

It is not uncommon for entry level programs to organise for students to interact with industry representatives and/or potential employers to discover what might be expected of new graduates, as well as discuss potential job opportunities. However, these activities do not facilitate students to recognise and rank their own skills and knowledge and better appreciate how 'good a fit' they are for commencing work. To be able to identify professional skills and knowledge and appreciate what if anything might be lacking to be effective in the workplace requires more than just an understanding of what might be expected by a prospective employer. It requires students to reflect on and evaluate their past performance in the workplace setting, in this instance, clinical practicum, and be aware of the professional skills and knowledge expected of a graduate in their profession. After the workshop there were statistically significant improvements in students' abilities to identify knowledge and skills they may need to improve before entering the workplace and to judge the applicability of these skills and knowledge to the workplace.

Prior to commencing the Employability Workshop students were asked for five words they would use to exemplify the qualities and attributes of a practising physiotherapist. The seven most common words or themes that students identified are presented in Fig. 6.

After the completion of the Employability Workshop this exercise was repeated and different words and themes emerged. Hearing from employers and examining

Caring/compassion

Knowledgeable

Confident/independent

Professional

Communicator

Evidence-based

Team collaborator

Fig. 6 Common attributes of a practising physiotherapist identified by students pre-employability workshop

| Communicator |
| Caring/compassionate |
| Listener |
| Initiator |
| Teachable |
| Knowledgeable |
| Professional |

Fig. 7 Common attributes of a practising physiotherapist identified by students following the Employability Workshop

elements of the *Physiotherapy practice thresholds in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand* (Physiotherapy Board of Australia & Physiotherapy Board of New Zealand, 2015) changed students' perceptions of the attributes which exemplify practising physiotherapists. The seven most common words or themes identified are presented in Fig. 7.

Knowledge and professionalism were ranked lower after the workshop and new words such as teachable and initiative emerged. This appears to have been influenced by post-practicum activities, including the presentation and panel by industry professionals. Students would now know to include reference to these attributes in job applications and interviews.

Twenty students completed selection criteria towards a mock job application and their efforts were reviewed by the panel members. Feedback was provided to each student. These 20 students then repeated the survey and responses were compared to the post-Employability Workshop responses. There were no statistically significant differences in the responses to the ten questions from the Employability Impact Survey (Smith et al., 2014), relating to confidence to commence work question nor how they rated themselves on the novice to physiotherapy practitioner scale. However, there was a statistically significant difference in their confidence to obtain work with students losing confidence in their ability to obtain work. It can only be assumed that students overestimated their ability to address selection criteria and after the exercise were more realistic of their own abilities and perhaps how their experiences matched against each criterion. These results would suggest that while the Employability Workshop was clearly successful in boosting students' perceptions of their work readiness, as well as their confidence to obtain and commence work, the selection criteria exercise did not have a significant impact and was more likely to undermine students' confidence to obtain work.

Gender and age did not impact on any outcomes of this activity with no statistically significant differences found between responses of females and males in

surveys taken before the workshop, after the workshop and after the selection criteria activity. Similarly, there were no statistically significant differences in responses based on age.

Feedback from industry professionals reported a few 'excellent' job applications but overall indicated that students didn't target responses specific to their practicum experiences nor to the potential employment sector. One industry professional observed that students weren't open to discussing different clinical placements scenarios in each selection criteria to demonstrate the depth of their experience. The second industry professional wanted students to include more 'real' examples in their applications, so they could better evaluate their experiences and determine how these may translate into performance in the workforce. Overall, students required a greater understanding of how to incorporate and showcase their practicum experiences when seeking employment. Inclusion of CDL workshops in conjunction with post-practicum interventions may further develop students' abilities to present their experiences more comprehensively in selection criteria format.

8   Key Issues to Maximise Success When Implementing Post-practicum Interventions

From the experiences gained from undertaking an Employability Workshop and job application task post-practicum with final year physiotherapy students, the following issues need to be considered to maximise success:

1. Experiences need to be timely, relevant, face-to-face AND embedded in curriculum. Aligning the timing of these experiences with employability needs is essential to ensure engagement. Final year students on the cusp of seeking employment are more likely to be engaged with activities. Relevance through industry engagement will also promote increased participation in learning activities.
2. Links to industry are essential for authenticity and engagement. Although the selection criteria task was not taken up by many students in this project, engagement with industry professionals and student feedback on this aspect of the workshop highlighted the value students placed on this face-to-face interaction.
3. Students are less likely to engage in tasks that are opt-in as opposed to part of the curriculum. Embedding employability tasks in the curriculum in the form of reflective post-practicum discussions and/or writing tasks is essential to ensure CDL outcomes are met.
4. Students place more value on tasks they perceive to be directly related to employability. Attaching relevance to learning activities is essential to ensure students see the link between post-practicum experiences and employability. Industry professionals emphasised the lack of practicum examples drawn on in answering selection criteria, highlighting the need for increased value to be placed on post-practicum review of experiences to enhance employability.

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The Community Internship – A Cohesive Collection of Placement Interventions

Carol-joy Patrick, Fleur Webb, Myrthe Peters, and Franziska Trede

1   Enhancing WIL

Work-integrated Learning (WIL) is an approach that higher education institutions in Australia adopt to support students in developing their professional skills (Patrick et al., 2008). It is considered one of the most effective ways of preparing students for the workplace (Goulter & Patrick, 2010). However, when the structured work placement format is applied to the design of a service-learning (SL) experience there are opportunities for deeper and broader development than just students' professional identities. Such an approach enables Universities to achieve the goal of supporting students to become more than "just trained workers" to become "human beings" in the fullest sense of those words with "good citizenship" being the outcome (Palmer et al., 2010). The Community Internship Course is a SL program structured as a WIL shell course which accommodates students from any discipline, working in a range of not-for-profit organisations. This course has been designed to raise students' awareness of their growing identity, both professional and personal, resulting from their community-based experiences. Although there are many opportunities there has been no explicit way in which to measure this awareness and transformation. This chapter describes this unique SL shell course and its design and it discusses the elements which perform as interventions to support students' recognition of opportunities for growth. The nature of translative learning is discussed, followed by analysis of students' responses, including student feedback from the final intervention; a survey which invites students to one final reflective

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opportunity. It concludes by reflecting on the student responses and how they demonstrate the effectiveness of the cohesive collection of post-practicum interventions which make up this course.

2   A Uniquely Accessible Placement Model

The dominant purpose of work-integrated learning (WIL) in Australia, also known as placement experience is instrumental in focus, and reflects technical skills and work-readiness agendas. However, there is a growing concern in higher education that a focus on work skills do not constitute as holistic an education as graduates will need to face the challenges of the future (Palmer et al., 2010). There is an emerging understanding of the role of universities in also advancing citizenship (Harkavy, 2006), and the related need to develop graduates who are not only technically capable, but also socially-aware and community-minded citizens who are capable to face the challenges of global, complex problems by thinking, acting or seeing the world in new ways (Palmer et al., 2010). Service-learning has been identified as one means of achieving this (Eyler, Giles, & Braxton, 1997), and Astin, Sax, and Avalos (2003 pp. 256–7) identified that "service participation positively affects students' commitment to their communities, to helping others in difficulty, to promoting racial understanding, and to influencing social values". They also assert that SL nurtures the "development of important life skills such as leadership ability, social self-confidence, critical thinking skills, and conflict resolution skills", as well as "unique positive effects on academic development, including knowledge gained, grades earned, degrees sought after, and time devoted to academic endeavours".

Thus, in 2012, Griffith University implemented a university-wide SL program, the Community Internship (CI) course. Initially this course was offered as a free-choice elective where students volunteer in not-for-profit organisations, while studying human rights, the role of citizens in the community and social justice. In the following eight years, it has been adopted as a core course (unit/subject) or a recommended elective in a large number of degrees, while still being available as a free-choice elective to all students. Around 600 students enrol in the course each year and it has been awarded one state award, and two national awards (2016, 2017). For a sustained and demonstrably effective whole-of-university approach to concurrently enhance students' employability and their on-going civic engagement.) This chapter describes the philosophical underpinnings of the course development and reports on research conducted with students to establish their perceptions of the efficacy of the different interventions designed into the course.

One unique element of the course is that it is not attached to any specific disciplinary field in the University, and hence benefits from the freedom to facilitate students' development beyond those mandated for discipline-based work-readiness.

Furthermore, it specifically develops the Griffith Graduate attribute of being socially responsible and engaged in their communities. Fundamental to the course design was the endeavour to respond to the variety of challenges known to be inherent in many WIL opportunities as identified in The WIL Report (Patrick et al., 2008), with many of those challenges still being identified more recently by Universities Australia and their collaborators in their National Strategy on Work Integrated Learning in University Education (2015) and in the Universities Australia Work Integrated Learning in Universities Report in 2019. The challenge most specifically addressed in the CI course is that of ensuring equity and access, with its identified specific equity groups:

(a) International students
(b) Employed students/students with family responsibilities
(c) Students from lower socio-economic backgrounds
(d) Students with a disability
(e) Indigenous students
(f) Students in regional and remote areas

The internship opportunities are not competitive, in so far as students are guaranteed an internship regardless of their academic achievement. Students select from a range of available internships, or can nominate an opportunity themselves, which can be tailored to their employment and family responsibilities, any disabilities, or their desire to complete the course overseas, interstate or regionally. Where available, specific opportunities requiring indigenous students are developed with community partners.

3   Cohesive Course Design

The course has been designed as a cohesive collection of post-practicum interventions to encourage and scaffold a reflection on both the professional and personal aspects of students' experience and guide them to a greater understanding of themselves, their community and their advantages and responsibilities resulting from advantage. Literature indicates that WIL programs and SL environments enhance students' awareness and development of professional and personal skills through exposure to opportunities in the workplace and the community respectively (Kieley, 2005; Mezirow, 1997; Schor, Cattaneo, & Calton, 2017). By combining exposure to workplaces and the community the CI course facilitates transforming student's perspectives about themselves and the world (Mezirow, 1991, 2016) to focus not only on becoming a capable professional but also a socially responsible citizen (Palmer et al., 2010).

Students in the course are provided with the opportunity to volunteer at one of a range of not-for-profit organisations. In addition to completing a minimum of 50 h, volunteering in the organisation, the course requires students to critically reflect on their personal and professional skills through individual, written and oral academic assessments through the lenses of human rights, community and citizenship, theories of social justice and a growing understanding of personal privilege. These assessment tasks are designed take advantage of the self-directed learning that is facilitated by students' voluntary engagement in self-reflection (Cranton, 2016) and supports students to identify their personal and professional growth and the potentially transformative learning that they take from this experience. Collaboration is an important element in the assessment process. Structured activities and peer discussions conducted in workshops offer students a chance to discuss and share their experience which is a powerful form of reflection. Students are supported by both an Academic Advisor as well as a designated supervisor at the community organisation. The high level of scaffolding and support provided by the course design fosters a supportive and safe environment for reflection and growth (Fig. 1).

With the internship design comes a range of challenges and affordances required to facilitate intended learning outcomes that will ensure the experiences "serve as bridges between the curriculum and the world outside the classroom, where problems are ill structured and the stakes are often high for communities and students alike (Fitch, Steinke, & Hudson, 2013 p. 57)." The design and assessment are influenced by four key parameters, that is; it must be available as a free choice elective, it must be flexible, students must volunteer in a not-for-profit organisation that supports disadvantage or the planet and it must follow good practice guidelines for WIL and SL:
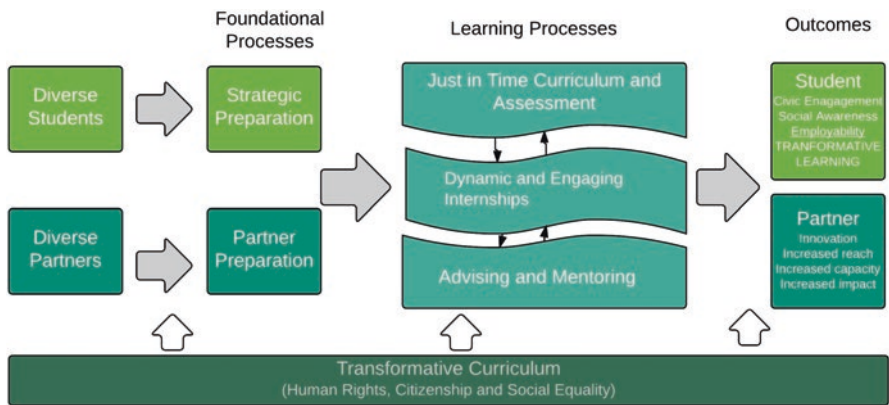

Fig. 1 Community internship system

3.1   Free Choice Elective

The Community Internship course is designed as a free choice elective shell course available across all undergraduate university degree programs. It is also embedded as listed electives or core units, and is a core requirement in some degrees and is available to postgraduate students. Students who have successfully completed two full semesters of their program are able to enrol. This creates a student group that is both varied in its disciplines as well as in the level of achievement within their degree program i.e. a second year accounting student as well as a fourth year bio-medical student could enrol in the course at the same time. It also means the course needs to be accessible and appropriately challenging for students across the full-range of academic abilities. This necessitates that the course and assessment be generic and non-discipline specific as the course cannot guarantee a discipline-based experience in terms of discipline-related content, but does guarantee the opportunity for the growth of transferable professional and personal skills. The proof of the appropriateness of the course design for students from all disciplines is evidenced through its adoption across a range of disciplines as a recommended elective or core course. However, with the diversity of students comes the need for flexibility.

3.2   Flexiblility

The internship experiences require the flexibility to manage not only the diverse student group but also the wide variety of community partners who accommodate them. The partners represent a range of different community sectors addressing a broad scope of community needs such as, families, disability, health, animal welfare, and environment with a large range of discipline-related or generic roles or projects being offered to students. Partners needs also vary from observational type roles to full para-professional interaction with clients or roles whereby a level of discipline expertise may be required e.g. social media/marketing skills. Flexibility in terms of offering students a range of internship opportunities is also critical, especially for those students enrolling in the course as a core degree requirement. In the provision of an SL experience, like most placement courses, the outcomes and impacts vary greatly between students and placement organisations. Even students who attend the same placement experience it in vastly different ways because they are taking individual responsibility for their learning within the specific context of their role or project (Fitch et al., 2013). To design an effective SL course, as with any curriculum, it is important course work, assessment, structure and support guide students to the achieve the same broad learning outcomes, however, unlike other non WIL courses there is the additional requirement of providing equitable experience for the students by minimizing the impact of the variability of placement organisations. and experiences (Cooper, Orrell, & Bowden, 2010, Ferns & Moore, 2012, Hodges, 2011 and Yorke, 2006).

3.3 *Volunteering*

In focusing on whole person development this course aims to encourage students to understand their role within the community by placing them in volunteering positions in areas of need within not-for-profit organisations. These not-for -profit organisations provide students with disorienting dilemmas, via the opportunity to be exposed to experiences that highlight their own privilege and the significance of these organisations in addressing these issues within society. The course intends for students to recognise the importance of volunteers in helping these organisations survive and provide community-improving outcomes. While all WIL-type experiences have the advantage of influencing the development of life skills, and motivating students to a different level of academic engagement, SL in particular is known to achieve a transformation in students in relation to their understanding of the role that service to community plays in creating a more cohesive understanding of community (Astin et al., 2003).

3.4 *Good Practice*

The design of the course and its assessment follow good practice guidelines for both WIL placements as well as the requirements of sound reflective practices inherent to SL curricula to ensure an equitable and effective learning experience for students. The WIL Report (Patrick et al., 2008) distilled some of the elements identified as essential for good practice WIL; preparation of stakeholders, appropriate supervision and sufficient mentoring arrangements. The report also identified "clearly defined and tailored assessment methods and strategies for evaluation and quality assurance…as important elements of a well-designed WIL curriculum" (p. 40).

Cooper et al. (2010) built upon these elements and developed seven key dimensions of WIL to be considered when designing curriculum.

- Purpose – Defining goals, expectations and intended outcomes for each of the WIL stakeholder groups.
- Context: The workplace – Appreciating different contexts that students are exposed to in the workplace as well as understanding that "the value of workplaces is that they can provide sites for learning vocational, professional, disciplinary and service expertise". (p. 40)
- Integration- Ensuring integration i.e. "the process of bringing together formal learning and productive work, or theory and practice, to give students a complete, integrated learning experience". (p. 40)
- Curriculum – Aligning all course and assessment with intended outcomes.
- Learning – Structuring the course and assessment to foster learning. "Learning begins with experiences that allow participants to observe, review and reflect on what they have practised". (p. 41)

- Partnerships – Working with industry. "It is not possible to have work integrated learning without strong partnerships between industry and educational institutions". (p. 41)
- Support – Providing support to stakeholders. "Students and workplaces require support before, during and after any work integrated learning programmes. Students come to higher education with diverse and unique experiences. Support can take a variety of forms, from practical and administrative assistance to educational and emotional support". (p. 42)

SL requires many of the same elements as WIL for good practice but must be designed to equally benefit provider as well as the recipient of the service (Kraft & Eyler, 2002). Scott and Graham (2015) add that SL, in addition to explicit learning goals, also requires responding to community needs, student judgement and consistent reflection by the student. Chambers and Lavery (2017), describe the five interdependent stages which are integral for the implementation of service-learning and could similarly be ascribed to effective WIL: investigation, preparation, action, reflection, and demonstration. While ensuring that these good practice guidelines for WIL and SL are met the course also ensures that students are provided with, and are cognizant of, opportunities for ongoing personal and professional growth. These are embedded within the design as a cohesive collection of interventions to raise student awareness of the impact of the learning opportunities within the course beyond the completion of their placement.

4   Designing and Activating the Interventions

The Community Internship course created a collection of interventions to capture and enhance a sense of growing and potential transformation of personal and professional identity developed over the progression of their placement experience. In the design of these tools the intention is to create an opportunity for transformation and a recognition by students of this change. To enable this, it is important to provide opportunities for students to be offered "powerful participatory experiences" to support their development of new ways of viewing their world and to focus on increasing a student's sense of self-efficacy and agency in terms of how to handle their new world views (Yates & Younnis, 1996).

4.1   Self-Efficacy and Agency

Universities equip students with a broad range of skills, however, entering the workplace and successfully transferring the learned skills is not necessarily a simple process for all students. To be able to develop skills, it is essential to have a sense of self-efficacy, which Bandura (1977) defined as one's belief in their personal

capabilities to succeed in tasks. This means that for students to overcome challenges as presented in new environments, educational as well as professional settings, it is essential to possess a certain sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). Skill application and development by offering, amongst others, 'mastery experiences', such as WIL programs, is incredibly effective in increasing self-efficacy (Bandura, 1982). This is in line with Trede, Macklin, and Bridges (2012) higher education literature examination on professional identity development: which concludes that to enhance students' self-awareness, an active an independent/autonomous (agency) attitude is required to engage in the learning opportunities. Brandenburger (2013) also asserts that service-learning in particular prompts examination of personal agency and identity, drawing on Blasi (1993) to claim it leads to individuals understanding "themselves as responsible or moral persons through being agents in the world" (p. 139). Thus, the design of the intervention tool needed to emphasise self-efficacy and agency to enhance the impact of the service-learning experience on a student's professional growth. However, to raise student awareness of the personal growth and transformational nature of their experience other aspects of the course design required accentuation. Course elements that support self-efficacy and agency are the initial contacts in the workplace required by the student with the community partner to ensure that both are comfortable with the planned internship activities and that through this physical contact, students overcome any disquiet about the novelty of the experience to come. In the first four weeks of the trimester students attend workshops where their allocated academic advisor leads them through what they may expect in the course and they can share as a class all aspects of their internships. These workshops also support them to self-structure the learning opportunities presented by each of their unique internships and the resulting Internship Plan assessment item allows the student to take agency of those learning opportunities. An important design element of the course is the close support students receive from their Academic Advisors which goes beyond the normal tutor-student relationship.

4.2   "Disorienting Dilemma"

A key focus of the course is to facilitate a transformational learning experience that expands students' conception of themselves as citizens. The course is designed to scaffold and emphasise the transformational opportunities of the internship that act as a mechanism to increase awareness of personal and professional development. The SL environment exposes students to new concepts, and, often, such a critical experience causes a 'disorienting dilemma' which needs resolving (Mezirow, 2000). In support of this concept Kieley (2005) classified five consecutive stages for students to deal with the discomfort of a confrontation with only the two final stages of processing and connecting leading to transformation. 'Processing' occurs on an individual reflection level as well as a social, dialogic learning process, where on both levels the learning opportunity is being problematised, questioned and

analysed. The final 'connecting' step is for those previous conclusions/outcomes to be understood within the student's own/personal environment, and, consequently, results in accepted and adapted new thought patterns. These transformational opportunities encourage students to be autonomous and be their own social agents of change in a collaborative environment which is considered a key aspect for the learner to succeed in a twenty-first century workforce (Mezirow, 1997). Based on these concepts to enhance the concept of transformation and personal development the intervention needs to emphasise how an experience impacted the student's ability to process and resolve different situations. Core to developing an intervention that incorporated these aspects is one that encourages critical reflection which is discussed next. Other elements in the course that provide the learning opportunities of disorienting dilemmas include the initial lectures which expose students to the concepts of human rights, citizenship and community, and social justice issues. A range of lecture content provides students with rich exposure to the concept of privilege. Critical to the approach of disorienting dilemmas is the personal support of each student by the Academic Advisor role which is another unique aspect of Community Internship course design. The Academic Advisor is proactive in noting and following up all students throughout the course to ensure they are managing their self-efficacy and agency and managing the disorienting dilemmas they confront in the internship, or in the assessment requirements.

4.3 Reflective Thinking

The model of transformative learning is underpinned by the importance of reflective thinking Mezirow (1991) and Cranton (2016). Through reflection in and on action, the level of personal, professional identity development and, ultimately, transformation can be determined. As Wu and Shek (2018) state, "The process of reflection is also a core component of service-learning. As service-learning is seen as experiential learning and it rests upon the cyclic process of action and reflection on that action, students' understanding is continuously modified with more experiences, thoughts, and information gained from service delivery" (p. 1510–1511). The academic component of the course requires students to critically reflect upon their learning experiences and enhance their awareness of personal and professional identity development. To measure the level of reflective thinking, Kember et al. (2010) introduced a questionnaire where one's reflective thinking can only lead to a transformation of perspective when it reaches the fourth and final level of critical reflection. Kieley's (2005) framework suggests that in a service-learning environment the learning occurs by challenging existing mindsets, processing and, ultimately, shifting towards new perspectives. However, without critical reflection experiences can be missed opportunities for learning. In other words, in order to establish whether students have experienced transformational opportunities, critical reflection has to become a purposeful and conscious part of their process. The transformative learning design, therefore, has to embed critical reflection in its design to augment and

establish the effect transformational opportunities have on students' personal and professional identity development. In the CI, reflections are designed at critical points. Students are required to reflect in advance of the internship by predicting their learning opportunities, identifying the need their community organisation responds to in the community, and predicting the personal and professional learning opportunities presented by the experience. Students then reflect in verbal and written form around the middle of the experience. The verbal reflections occur in small groups of no more than five other students where they can support each other to workshop any problems they have met in their internships. Their final reflection is responding to specific reflective questions in their final written assessment.

5 Developing the Survey Tool

In the process of designing a survey tool to ascertain personal and professional growth it became evident that it was an opportunity to also create an evaluative tool to capture the effectiveness of the course in providing conditions that enable transformational learning. We adapted the work of Kember, Leung, Jones, Yuen Loke, McKay, Sinclair, Harrison, Webb, Yuet Wong, Wong, and Yeung (2010) who developed a quantitative method for identifying transformation. They used a "combination of the literature review and initial testing [which] led to the development of a four-scale instrument measuring four constructs: habitual action, understanding, reflection and critical reflection". We used these four constructs to create a validity tested survey which was repurposed to suit the CI course as a post-placement intervention tool incorporating elements of self-efficacy and agency and embedding reflection. To capture a reflection on overall experience this intervention's designated implementation was at the end of the course. This was to encourage students to reflect on all elements of the course and how these elements supported their raised awareness of their personal and professional growth. The tool required a format that would complement existing assessment without adding too much to staff assessment workload. The survey asks students 20 questions. The first ten questions were to assist in identifying any potentially influential external factors. The remainder were a Likert scale series of questions on a scale of 1–5 (1 being low and 5 being high) that were based on previous research on capturing transformative learning via quantitative methods. These were specifically designed based on Kember et al.'s (2010) four constructs to engender an increased awareness of their personal and professional growth as well as identify transformational aspects of the internship experience.

To assess the design of this tool, that was to act as both a self-reflection tool as well as a research tool in exploring student's awareness of their professional and personal growth, it was piloted with a smaller number of students to adjust the survey items before its full implementation in the following trimester. The tool was then provided to all students who participated in Trimester 1 and 2 2018 with online and paper-based options. The students were from multiple campuses and had

range of different internship workplaces from hands on interaction to clients to more observational roles. It was implemented in the week between their final assessment and the release of their course results so as not to interfere with other assessments and provide the students with an opportunity to have completed the full experience to capture their reflections on the course as a whole. The invitation to participate was sent to students via their Academic Advisors, so that students may be more likely to respond to someone they related to in the course, rather than to a centralised survey request.

6 Participants

Students were informed and asked to consent prior to their participation, via an electronic ethics cover form, that their participation was voluntary and there would be no impact on their relationship with course staff or their grades. Only those who have consented have been included in these data. There were 54 of the 248 students (22%) in the CI completed the survey. Of these students almost half (40.8%) were over the age of 25 with a range of grade point averages (GPAs), albeit 77.6% had GPAs of 4 or 5 on a 7-point scale. International students represented 26.5% of the respondents, a similar percentage to the enrolment of international students in the course in any delivery period. A range of disciplines across areas of science, health, business, education and arts were represented. In terms of how satisfying their experience was 81.6% of respondents indicated they were either satisfied or extremely satisfied with only 8.1% reporting dissatisfaction.

7 Results

In what follows we discuss the results of the nine questions to elicit participants' perceptions of transformative learning, see Table 1.

The first question asked students to state whether, as a result of their internship, they now question the way others do something at work and try to think of a better way. Most students selected the high end (4 or 5) of the scale (69.4%) while less than 1% selected the lower portion (1 or 2) of the scale. This question was followed by one relating to whether students felt that they felt capable of advocating and making socially responsible decisions as a result of their internship. Again, most (79.6%) selected the high end of the scale with less than 1% selecting the low end. Students were asked to identify which parts of the course supported them most with this change. Unsurprisingly, the placement itself was selected by almost all respondents, some also selected lectures (27.3%) workshops (36.4%) and assignments (36.4%). This illustrates that while the placement experience and exposure to the community provide an environment for personal and professional development, students can also recognise the support provided by the course elements to raise student awareness of their

Table 1 Results of the nine questions relating to transformative learning
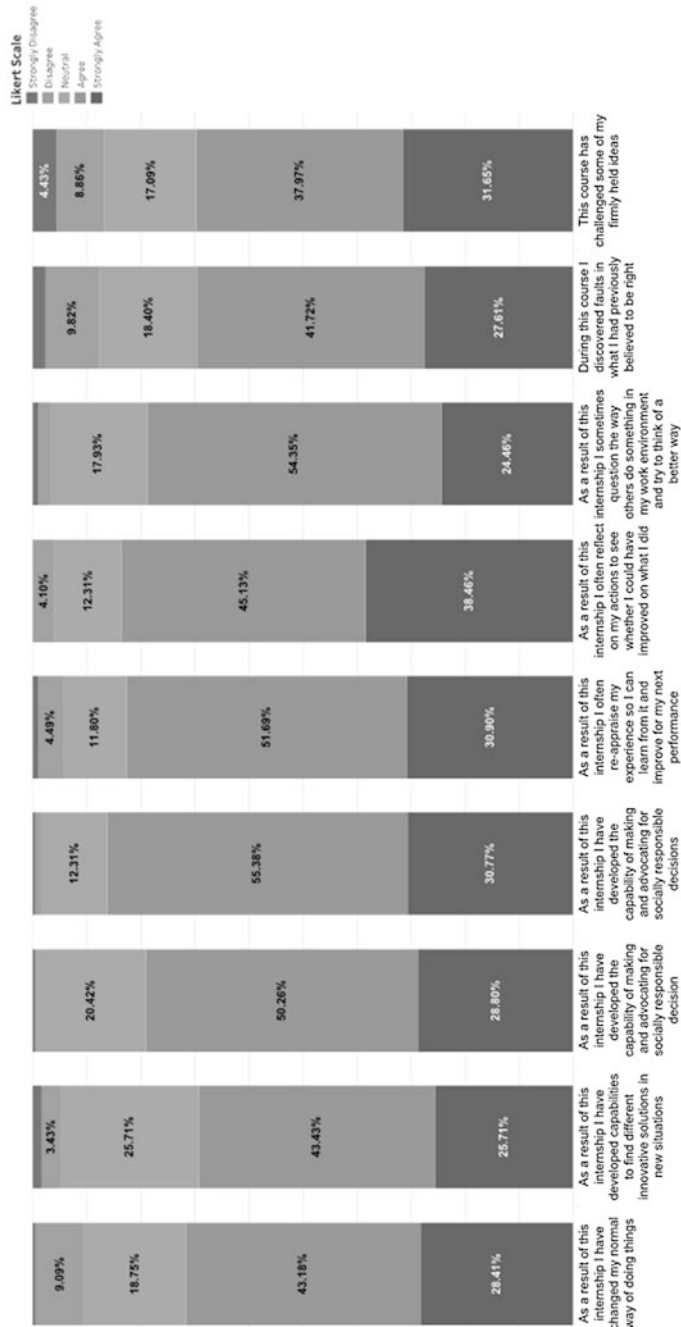
changes. Table 1 illustrates that of the students who responded, 73.5% also selected the high end of the scale (4 or 5) in response to the question of whether they like to think over what they have been doing and consider alternative ways of doing things and again less than 1% selected the low end of the scale (1 or 2). However, in response to the question relating to whether this experience had challenged the respondents' firmly held ideas, the responses were distributed more evenly with 51% selecting the high end of the scale while 28.6% selected the low end of the scale. Again, to explore which interventions had this impact on those students that had selected the high end of the scale, student were asked to identify which part of the course had supported them with this change and it was the placement itself (90.6%) that was most reported as being most supportive, but some also identified lectures (9.4%), workshops (28.1), modules (15.6%) and assignments (25%) as also supporting this change.

Students were then asked if the internship experience resulted in them more often re-appraising their experience so they can learn from it and improve their next performance. In response, 69.4% selected the high end of the scale with only 12.2% selecting the lower end of the scale of their participation in this activity. Similarly, although slightly more evenly spread, when respondents were asked whether students had discovered faults in what they had previously believed to be right 53% selected either 4 or 5 with 24.5% selecting either a 1 or 2. This question was also explored further to determine the impact of individual interventions within the course and in addition to the internship which was selected by 87.5% of respondents; lecture (28.1%), workshops (34.4%), modules (15.6%) and assignments (34.4%) were also acknowledge as contributing factors for some. This again illustrates that these interventions are understood by respondents to influence their way of thinking in both a personal and professional capacity.

8   Discussion

The survey tool has captured a snap-shot of students' perspectives on their self-efficacy and agency (e.g. questioning the way others do things and trying to think of a better way; and feeling confident to advocate for socially responsible decisions), their reaction to a "disorienting dilemma" (e.g. discovering faults in what they previously perceived to be right, and the development of their reflective thinking skills e.g. reappraising their experience so they can learn and improve). These data provide an insight into respondents' transformations and how they understand the part that the interventions and the placement play in their development. It also demonstrates the type of professional and personal development that takes place during this course and how the interventions are supporting them to become both professionally capable and socially responsible. Based on these results, it could be argued that our participants are developing awareness of their personal and professional growth as a direct result of their internship and the supporting course elements. The results provide evidence that the placement and the course interventions provided a satisfying experience overall. This research confirms that the course interventions

can enable transformational learning and a shift in students' notions of, and actions as responsible citizens. These findings align generally with the published literature on the development of employment choices, leadership skills, commitment to communities and on-going civic engagement for students who have participated in service-learning Astin et al. (2003), Cress, Burack, Giles, Elkins, and Stevens (2010) & Warchal & Ruiz (2004), Limitations of the survey were that the survey was applied after the submission of the students' last piece of assessment. However, at that time students were engaged with finalising assessment for other units of study, and their responsiveness was low. Consideration will be given in future to the survey being applied as an anonymous submission at the same time as submission of the final assessment piece, when students have most recently reflected in their final report on some of the elements contained in the survey.

9   Conclusion

This course offers students a cohesive collection of placement interventions. Despite the limitations associated with a small sample, the examined responses indicate that the design of the final intervention tool can engage and guide students to reflect on their personal and professional growth and realise the impact of transformative experiences. It will, however, require further review to ensure that questions are interpreted correctly and better integration within the course to ensure student preparation and participation. The course elements already provide a major focus on personal and professional skill development and the assessment and content of the course provide rich opportunities for students to recognise transformation in their conceptions of themselves and their role in the community, and aid them to become transformative learnings who are more reflective; develop inclusive thinking, are more open to difference of opinion, and are able to use new thoughts to guide action (McAllister et al., 2013). The research which produced this chapter enabled an additional post-practicum intervention to be added, which will embedded intentionally into future course iterations. This enhanced integration into the course will capture and augment students' awareness of how these post-practicum interventions together contribute to a sense of growing personal and professional identity, enhancing their capacity as graduates and as citizens to contribute to creating a better future world.

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Post-practicum Debriefing: Putting the 'Wise' into Wise Practice Within University-Led Work-Integrated Learning Projects

Faith Valencia-Forrester

1   Introduction

Like the journalism industry globally, journalism education in Australia is trying to find its way in a constantly evolving, convergent, and shrinking newsroom culture (Deuze, Bruns, & Neuberger, 2007). There is the growing expectation that the provision of industry experience now lies with universities, and educators are rapidly adjusting to accommodate reduced industry demand and the expanding needs of soon-to-graduate student journalists. Work-integrated learning (WIL) clearly has a role to play in such an environment. WIL is a pedagogical approach that refers to the "intentional integration of theory and practice knowledge" (Orrell, 2011, p. 1). A strict definition is elusive as WIL represents an "umbrella" term that may cover a range of work-based learning activities including internships, industry placements, service learning, and practicums (Patrick et al., 2009). In tertiary journalism education, WIL is widespread and increasingly important, particularly given the demands that industry places on new graduates (Cowgill, 2014; Hirst, 2010; Wahl-Jorgensen & Hanitzsch, 2009). WIL in journalism education has a "key role to play in extending learning experiences" (Forde & Meadows, 2008, p. 5). The dominant internship model, however, presents issues of accessibility and equality, with premium internships often reserved for only "the best students" as "the industry does not see itself as a training ground" (Thomas & Goc, 2004, p. 154). Inclusive education represents a critical challenge, particularly for more specialized pedagogical approaches like WIL (Valencia-Forrester, Patrick, Webb, & Backhaus, 2019). Given the importance of industry experience for new journalism graduates, WIL is an essential educational experience. The question that remains though is how to ensure that these invaluable experiences are inclusive and accessible to all students.

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    This chapter proposes a framework for ensuring that all students have the opportunity to learn and benefit from WIL. A *wise practice* framework encourages a reimagination of these spaces in order to offer equitable learning opportunities to all students. Bearing in mind the challenges facing contemporary journalism graduates and employing a wise practice approach, several new models of university-led WIL have been developed. University-led WIL is defined as WIL activities "occurring within a hybridised space created within a university context outside the internship/placement model" (Valencia-Forrester, forthcoming). This chapter discusses just one of those models, Event WIL, and focusses on one of the critical aspects of university-led WIL that is representative of a wise practice approach: the post-practicum reflective debriefing sessions.

    Reflection and debriefing were incorporated into the model having been identified as important factors that contribute to positive WIL outcomes for students (Billett, 2009; Moore, Ferns, & Peach, 2015). The role of reflective debriefing within a wise practice approach to university-led journalism education represents a distinctly unexplored area within the literature. Expanding upon the work of Forde and Meadows (2011), this chapter examines the role that reflective group debriefing plays in university-led WIL experiences and some of the challenges, such as resourcing and staffing of debriefing sessions. Modeled around professional practice the aim of the post-practicum intervention, incorporated within the Event WIL model, was to affirm students' learning experiences, assist in developing their reflective learning skills through a guided group debriefing, and as a process for students to reflect on the transformational change experienced in undertaking university-led WIL. The intent of the research project was to evaluate the impact of the group reflective debriefing session held at the conclusion of the Event WIL project and to ascertain its significance within university-led WIL as a wise practice framework for journalism education. Specifically, the goal was to explore how reflective group debriefing compounded the learning experience; contributed to student professional identity; and enhanced the student learning experience.

2   Wise Practice

This research applies a wise practice framework to guide both inquiry and practice. Defining wise practice in a tertiary context can be "elusive", as researchers too frequently report on wise practice in classrooms without "explicitly" detailing its meaning (Riley, Wilson, & Fogg, 2000, p. 361). Often discussions around the concept begin with reference to the more widely known notion of 'best practice', which emerged in the 1970s from the manufacturing sector's concern with benchmarking and has expanded exponentially (Druery, McCormack, & Murphy, 2013). Despite its extraordinary diffusion, the idea of 'best practice' has been subject to considerable criticism. UNESCO suggests that the problem with best practice is that while it is "laudable, it is often not achievable or desirable" (2002, p. 51). Adding to this critique, Davis Jr (1997, p. 2) argues that "best practices are never contextualized,

and individuals portrayed as best-practitioners are always exemplary individuals". It is clear from the literature that 'best practice' is often no more than a theoretical possibility, as it does not necessarily address all the constraints on implementation which may be specific to the context.

In contrast to best practice, wise practice takes a more grounded, collaborative approach. Rather than an explicit definition, there are a number of core principles of wise practice in how it applies to teaching. Yeager and Davis Jr (2005) draw on data from several case studies to suggest that wise practice is embedded in content knowledge, enthusiasm, inclusion and collaboration, and critical and analytical thinking. This may involve collaborating with students as partners in teaching and learning, adopting creative and innovative approaches to curriculum and pedagogy, and attending to inclusivity (Riley et al., 2000). The role of context is critically important to wise practice (Davis Jr, 1997; Tyson, 2015). In their participatory action research involving Aboriginal youth and elders in Canada, Petrucka et al. (2016, p. 181) state:

> Within this project, we understood 'wise' practices to be those which are inclusive, locally relevant, sustainable, respectful, flexible, pragmatic, and encompassing all worldviews, and which consider historical, societal, cultural and environmental factors.

Thus, a wise practice approach recognises the influence of contextual factors and the shared experiences that both students and educators bring to learning. Rather than imposing a one-size-fits-all yardstick of best practice, wise practice seeks to encourage learning experiences that are tailored and relevant to the specific needs of each students and the broader learning environment.

In terms of journalism education, adopting a wise practice model would appear to take into account the idiosyncratic, contextual, and inconsistent nature of news production. Adopting a wise practice approach to university-led WIL is centred around providing the maximum range of "affordances" (Billett, 2011) to all students enrolled within an on-campus journalism program, regardless of socio-economic background, individual ability, level of confidence, and personal presentation. Wise practice in WIL "is premised on notions of universal design, equity and inclusion" (Valencia-Forrester, 2019). A wise practice approach to WIL incorporates the WIL objectives of professional skills development and professional experience while placing inclusion and transformation at the centre of the learning experience (Valencia-Forrester et al., 2019). By flipping the traditional work placement model and by bringing industry into the classroom, the whole student cohort stands to learn directly from those who have wisdom of practice (Davis Jr, 1997). The group reflective debrief sessions, incorporated through a wise practice framework, allow students to facilitate the development of their own wisdom and that of their peers.

Wise practice can be difficult to translate from theory to practice, given its elusive, context-dependent nature. Event WIL represents an effort to formally incorporate a wise practice approach into university-led WIL in journalism education as a way to overcome the limitations of some students being able to participate in the traditional placements. Event WIL was designed by drawing on the researcher's own

experiences as a journalist and a journalism educator, and developed alongside the growing body of literature on WIL. Event WIL represents a wise practice framework in action by actively inverting the traditionally dominant placement model in journalism education and bringing industry into the classroom. It involves establishing a unique newsroom/classroom space in which industry representatives, academics and students work alongside each other. It therefore strengthens connections between all stakeholders in journalism education while providing quality learning opportunities for all students centered around a major media event. This approach draws on Björck and Johansson's problematisation of the dichotomies that frame so many discourses about WIL such as "theory/practice" and "university/industry", and instead creates a "third place for WIL" that is truly integrative (2018, p. 10). Wise practice contrasts starkly with best practice. While best practice represents exemplars that fail to take into account the nuances of context, wise practice is wholly driven by contextual factors. Wise practice sees students, the university, community and industry as partners in learning, each bringing a unique set of skills and perspectives that may not necessarily fit within a best practice mould. Instead, wise practice takes a collaborative approach, grounded in the local contextual environment, to develop learning experiences that are both relevant to the world outside of the university and inclusive and accessible to all students. Event WIL is representative of wise practice in action as it is grounded in context, both in terms of the broader journalism industry and the event itself. It encourages collaboration between industry, educators and students so as to yield an enhanced quality learning experience designed and created around a major event that is available to all students not just a select few.

3 Group Reflective Debrief

An emerging WIL strategy is the inclusion of a post-practicum debrief. The practice of debriefing has been identified as one of the most important factors in contributing to positive WIL outcomes for students (Billett, 2009; Ferns, Smith, & Russell, 2014). Debriefing assists students in critically appraising their experiences and acquired learning through the process of facilitated reflection (Ferns et al., 2014). This process challenges students to actively evaluate their strengths and weaknesses by encouraging systematic reflection (Gibbs, 1988; Helyer, 2015). Research suggests that the benefits of reflective debriefing in WIL are further enhanced when individuals collaborate, share, and critically reflect with supportive others (Gray, 2007; Helyer, 2015). The reflective debrief element of university-led WIL conceptualises learning as a social process that takes place within a community of practice determined by the prevailing culture (Eames & Cates, 2011). This draws on both Bandura's social learning theory (1971) where students model behaviours that are observed and learned, and Kolb's (1984) experiential learning model where students cycle through a process of experience, observation and reflection. These theories, alongside the observations of Eames and Cates (2011), also align closely with the characteristics of wise practice, most notably that they acknowledge the

integration of the social, cultural, and contextual aspects of learning. Indeed, reflection has been identified in the literature as a critical aspect of a wise practice framework (Moon, 2004; Yeager & Davis Jr, 2005). Post-practicum debriefing represents an important aspect of both WIL and wise practice, one that has been proven to consolidate student learning by encouraging critical, collaborative reflection on individual and shared learning experiences.

Debriefing and reflections are also an important part of tertiary journalism education. Forde and Meadows (2011) highlight the importance of peer reflective sessions among journalism students who had just completed internships. Drawing on data collected from peer reflective sessions with final-year journalism, Forde and Meadows (2011) also revealed great workplace variability in student experiences of internships. This reinforces the importance of group post-practicum debriefing as part of a wise practice framework because it allows for a greater contextual understanding for students exposed to the range of affordances and experiences being made available for students. Following the successful pilot Event WIL case study for the 2014 G20 Leader Summit, this research presented an opportunity to build on this prior work exploring a wise practice framework for WIL in journalism education with particular emphasis on evaluating the significance of post-practicum reflective sessions, and to further explore the comparative role debriefing played in university-led WIL experiences.

4   Blues on Broadbeach: A Case Study of Post-practicum Debriefing

The role of post-practicum debriefing as wise practice in journalism education was explored through two debriefing sections held at the conclusion of an intensive Event WIL project. Students participated as two distinct groups working over 2 days in the university-led Event WIL newsroom during their final year of journalism studies at Griffith University. The event that this Event WIL project focussed on was a music festival called Blues on Broadbeach.

The Blues on Broadbeach festival is an annual event held at the Gold Coast, and one of the largest free music festivals in Australia, drawing around 160,000 visitors over 4 days. In 2017, Griffith University established a pop-up newsroom at the festival as an Event WIL experience for journalism students. 36 final-year journalism students enrolled in the Television Journalism unit participated over the 2 days of the festival. Students were divided into two groups, with each group allocated to cover 1 day of the festival. Blues on Broadbeach was an opportunity to expose students to a hybridised broadcast and online reporting experience. Students worked in groups to produce a variety of news stories for broadcast. In addition to the television news packages, they had to edit and upload a 30-min television program about the festival, to deadline, as well as publish relevant content online and on social media. Students were required to source and approach talent for interviews, edit and compile a video package, and write and publish another version of the story for

online all while under deadline pressure of producing a program for broadcast. They liaised with publicists of performing artists to arrange interviews and were challenged to identify new and interesting angles to tell different stories about the festival in an engaging and interesting manner. The on-location and field reporting experience presented logistical and practical challenges. These experiences provided opportunities for students to develop some of the "future skills" identified by the World Economic Forum (2016), such as complex problem-solving, critical thinking, judgement, and decision-making, as well as working with others. In this way, they gained first-hand knowledge of how important it is to be able to adapt and be flexible in their approach to journalistic tasks.

In prior offerings of journalism WIL, students participated in impromptu debriefing sessions throughout the semester and were required to submit a written critical reflection as part of their assessment portfolio. What was missing from this approach was the opportunity to benefit from the social learning associated with the reflections and insights of other students. A wise practice approach places significant emphasis on different modalities of knowledge sharing and the role of social learning, not only between students, but also by seeing educators and students as partners in learning. Blues on Broadbeach was the first iteration of a more formal post-practicum debriefing that was designed to consolidate student learning through guided group reflections. A purposeful evaluation of these debriefings led to the sessions being formalised as an integral dimension of our wise practice approach to university-led WIL.

In order to evaluate the debriefing sessions, a mixed-methods approach was adopted, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative focus group discussions and interviews with two student leaders. These methods included tools designed to capture students' perceptions of identity and self-efficacy prior to starting the Television Journalism unit. Students were invited to complete a survey constructed using both the work of Ferns et al. (2014), who explored the impact of WIL on student work-readiness, and the relationships between self-efficacy and professional identity (Cardell & Bialocerkowski, 2019). The questions were further adapted to suit the professional requirements of journalists. Students were surveyed before and after their practicum experiences and debriefings to measure development and transformation in confidence and ability. Before the debriefing sessions, two qualitative interviews were conducted with student leaders. These interviewees were selected, one from each proposed cohort, based on their high level of engagement in the classroom activities, in order to gain insight into student perceptions and expectations of the role of debriefing in WIL. These interviews were used to develop the structure and focus of the reflective group debriefing sessions.

The group debrief session was conducted immediately after all professional tasks had been completed and prior to students leaving at the end of the working day. Students participated in a structured peer reflective debriefing session that was developed based on the student learning priorities identified during the interviews with student leaders. Following the debriefing session, all students were then invited to complete a survey about their experience and perceptions of the debriefing. This exit survey was designed to measure the deeper learning that might have occurred

for the students post-practicum, while also allowing for the evaluation of the debriefing sessions as a learning tool. The data sets resulting from the surveys, the interviews, and the debriefing focus groups were analysed with particular attention paid to learning and transformation. The findings can broadly be categorised into three areas: first, student perceptions of workplace readiness; second, the university-led practicum format, and finally, the value of debriefing.

5   Student Perceptions of Workplace Readiness

The first broad area of findings refers to student perceptions of how their professional skills have developed. A particularly interesting finding related to the self-efficacy of students. While students reported high levels of self-efficacy in their pre-practicum survey, this was revised and contextualised by students in the debrief sessions, with students identifying that they did not know as much as they initially thought they did. This revelation emphasised to the students just how much they learned throughout the practicum.

Particularly valued by students were the practical lessons that emerged as everyday aspects of the professional practicum (for example: how to approach talent, and how to edit and compile a video package under pressure), which they noted they would not otherwise have learnt in the classroom. Despite the associated challenges, students valued the opportunity to learn how to adapt and be flexible when approaching journalistic tasks and challenges. The weather conditions were poor on the first day of the event, so students had to operate camera equipment in the rain while continuing to film stories. Managing time and equipment were also issues along with the noisy background environment in which students were recording interviews. The students also learned how to deal with setbacks and adapt to changing situations. As one student succinctly put it: *"The main thing I learned was nothing ever really goes to plan"*. Such a realisation was a recurrent theme, with students realising the importance of developing cognitive flexibility skills and evolving their approach as circumstances changed and remaining open, agile, and flexible in how they approach journalistic tasks.

Students also developed their practical time management skills. Working within deadlines is crucial for journalists; while the students noted their struggles with the time constraints, they were reminded that 'real' deadlines are often much tighter. One student recognised this challenge but was able to reflect on how it impacted her professional practice: *"I think it was hard, but it pushed us more"*. Many students did find the pressure challenging, but most found themselves more driven and motivated to meet the deadlines. This could be due to the students' increased confidence resulting from the professional setting. Working in this environment and carrying media identification, made the students feel more confident and develop a new respect for the craft of journalism. One student offered the following example:

> *…confidence is a massive thing. Like, first week, I was like I don't want to be behind… I don't want to be in front of a camera at all. I want to be behind it. But, by the fourth week,*

I was standing on the [] Bridge… looking like an idiot trying to make up a story and I didn't care… especially with interviewing, like, I could walk up to anyone and I'd be pretty lax.

The students recognised the trust placed in them as 'real' journalists in a 'real' newsroom and gained the confidence and motivation to rise to the associated challenges. Students reported significant development in terms of their professional identity as journalists. While students appreciated the authentic nature of the experience, it was in the post-practicum reflective debrief session that students began to develop their professional identity. Students referred to themselves as 'real journalists' and articulate their experience, and that of their peers, within a professional context.

The students' perceptions of their own workplace readiness were challenged and solidified through the post-practicum debriefing sessions. Given the opportunity to share and reflect in a safe environment, students felt comfortable admitting that they didn't know as much as they initially thought they did. Realising their own shortcomings helped students to identify the areas that they needed to improve on: whether that be building up the confidence to approach potential sources or learning how to manage their time effectively. This illustrates an outcome of wise practice that Shin, Brush and Saye explain as where "complex learning and knowledge transfer into real-world contexts" (2014, p. 10). This WIL experience allowed students to apply their classroom knowledge into a complex, real-world environment. The debriefing sessions then allowed students to reflect on the disconnect between classroom learning and practical experience, and come to their own conclusions about their emerging professional identity.

6　The University-Led Practicum Format

The second broad area of findings refers to how students experienced the broader practicum and the value they saw in it. Generally, the students considered the practical learning associated with WIL to be 'invaluable'. When asked whether they learned more in the classroom or in the professional practicum, the response was overwhelmingly in favour of the practicum. Students enjoyed the "fast-paced environment" saying they "felt a lot more productive" and believed they were pushing themselves "a lot harder" than they had before. They argued that the "best way to get ready" for a career in journalism was to have their classroom work accompanied by "first-hand" learning. Students were overwhelmingly positive about the experience overall and particularly enjoyed working within a group setting. One student enjoyed the group dynamic and how it allowed them to complement each other's strengths and weaknesses. Another student discussed how he had previously considered journalism an individual activity whereas now he understood the newsroom as a team environment. In these comments, there are two key aspects of a wise practice approach that can be seen. Firstly, the emphasis on social learning and collaboration. Students learned to work together in the newsroom environment and subsequently provide feedback in order to learn from one another. Secondly, there is a clear sense of enthusiasm and excitement throughout the research data. Despite the

challenges, students enjoyed the experience. The value of this cannot be overstated: Yeager writes that wise practice focusses on "the extraordinary" and generating "excitement about the content" (2000, p. 352).

Echoing what emerged throughout the students' reflections on their own workplace readiness, the opportunity to further develop their professional identity was also seen as a benefit of the university-led format. Notably, students appreciated being "taken seriously as a journalist". Overall, they reported a significantly enhanced sense of self-assurance in themselves as journalists. This finding aligns with the literature on WIL more broadly. Bowen (2018) drew on interviews with 12 fourth-year students who had completed an unpaid internship to show that WIL assists with the important negotiations around professional identity. Further, Zegwaard, Campbell, and Pretti (2017, p. 145) have also argued this case contending that WIL gives students the opportunity to "shape their own sense of professional and self-identity". A university-led format allows for all students to receive same affordances and equally benefit from this opportunity to develop their professional identity.

Overall, students almost unanimously found the practicum experience to be more rewarding than time spent in the classroom. The excitement, the fast-paced environment and the challenges of an outside broadcast expedited student learning while the debriefing sessions gave student space to reflect on just how far they had come in such a short time. Despite this, the students did recognised the value of their classroom learning and how they were able to apply it during the practicum. Seen to be of particular value was the scaffolded learning format of university-led Flipped WIL over the years. One student said:

But I think we need, like, kind of maybe just a little bit in the beginning… like, if it was the first week and you threw us in this, I think we would all just die. But now that we've done those other [classes], we know how it works…

Students overwhelmingly valued the practicum and recognised the impact on their learning. They also gained a new appreciation for the scaffolded learning that built up to the practicum.

7   The Value of Debriefing

Students were highly supportive of the debriefing sessions and recognised their value in improving their practice. Students particularly valued feedback given in real-time with an opportunity for discussion after a professional practicum. As one student said: *"We survive and thrive off feedback whether it be positive or negative because that way we can adjust how we're conducting ourselves in a professional setting"*. Group and individual feedback emerged as key desirable outcomes of the debriefing sessions. Several students expressed the preference for additional personal debriefing sessions outside the group session so they could access further individual feedback on what they are doing well and what they needed to improve on.

In terms of format, some students expressed a desire for ongoing written and verbal feedback. Students wanted a combination of oral and written feedback, and suggest using a performance review checklist in order to have a record of their performance, as well as engaging in face-to-face critique. One student suggested that a checklist adds accountability and a point of reference:

> *…when you've got it on a hard piece of paper and you're responsible for that rather than just hearing it. A lot of people, I find, disregard a lot 'cause it comes through one ear and goes out the other. But if it's on a piece of paper, you've both acknowledged it. You're responsible for how you conduct yourself'.*

Furthermore, the students wanted to review specific examples of what was done right and what was done wrong as a group. They suggested the use of visual references for television journalism. As one student put it: **"***I think it's good to have a practical vantage point to say, this is something good, this is something bad. This is an example of what happened here that was good and bad".* The use of examples from the practicum itself is supported by a further finding: that students were able to complement each others' strengths and weaknesses through the process of reflective peer feedback. This demonstrates the value of a wise practice approach and its emphasis on social, collaborative learning. This finding also emphasised the importance of creating a safe environment for shared communication and reflection on authentic experience, which can further contextualise learning (Eames & Cates, 2011; Raelin, 1997).

There was also an expressed desire for debriefing session feedback to relate practical experiences to course content and theory. While students recognised the value of their scaffolded coursework learning, many expressed the desire for feedback on the practical application of their specific coursework. One student wanted feedback on *"…how well we've applied our journalistic knowledge that we've learned through class to the real-life situation".* A common thread throughout the responses was the desire for ongoing feedback, namely during *and* after the professional practicum.

Finally, the majority of students found the post-practicum debriefing sessions to be highly valuable and considered them an integral component of their experience. Students recognised that debriefing and reflecting were crucial to their learning and ongoing skill development. The hybrid format of individual and group feedback was very useful, with one student noting: "*I appreciate individual feedback even if it's harsh. I go, 'Well, [that was] upsetting.' But I kind of learn from it, so I think individual comments for each person is really helpful*".

8 Reflections on Post-practicum Debriefing

Based on these findings, there are a number of reflections and areas for further consideration that can be made about the use of post-practicum debriefing following university-led WIL in journalism education. Rather than suggest a specific format,

which contradicts the embedded nature of context within a wise practice framework, this section highlights several observations resulting from this research that may be applied elsewhere.

Firstly, the group format that was roundly supported by the literature on both wise practice and WIL, was found to be highly valued by students. The group sessions followed a semi-structured format, loosely guided by some facilitator providing feedback and asking questions of the students such as: what went well, what didn't go well, what were the key learnings, what would you do differently, and so forth. A flexible, grounded approach to these guiding questions is also important so as to allow for the exploration of both the unique learnings of individual students within the group, and the group as a collective. The format of these sessions is most effective if they also allow space for the discussion of positive, aspirational examples that are relevant to the tasks being undertaken by the students. While the social learning aspect of debriefing sessions was highly regarded, students also indicated that they appreciate additional individual feedback with some wanting additional written feedback. This could potentially take the form of a checklist that could be distributed after the debriefing.

An essential consideration for the implementation of post-practicum debriefing sessions is the impact on academic workloads. The format of the debriefing sessions placed a lot of pressure on discussion leaders as they were tasked with providing group feedback and individual feedback, while still facilitating the reflective process. This is perhaps symptomatic of WIL more broadly. As Bates (2011, p. 120) observes, the "highly contextualised and individual" nature of WIL adds significantly to the workloads of university educators, but that this is seldom recognised or rewarded by management. Similarly, wise practice must be fostered by a culture that encourages autonomy, flexibility, collegiality, and innovation (Riley et al., 2000). There is little in the wise practice literature about the culture of recognising the additional workload pressures that taking such an approach places on even the most autonomous, flexible, innovative educators. The reflective debrief and feedback sessions undertaken in this research required additional preparation and work from teaching staff, but they also increased the level of pastoral care requested by the students. Post-practicum debriefings have the potential to exacerbate workload concerns, which is a significant challenge that requires further research.

9   Conclusion

The reflective debrief post-practicum intervention for the Blues on Broadbeach Event WIL case study evaluated the experience of all final-year journalism students enrolled in the Television Journalism unit at one Queensland university campus. This project set out to evaluate the role and impact of the group reflective debriefing session within a university-led WIL journalism project by exploring how it contributed to student learning, professional identity, and enhanced the student experience. A wise practice framework for university-led WIL projects suggest group

debriefing sessions highlight student development and transformation particularly around key attributes of journalism graduates: confidence and ability. While the practice of debriefing has been identified as one of the important factors contributing to positive WIL outcomes for students, this chapter critically evaluated the impact of several reflective group debrief sessions incorporated within university-led WIL for journalism students and explored some of the challenges in resourcing and staffing debriefing sessions.

Debriefing sessions were adopted to capture students' perceptions of identity and self-efficacy on commencing study in the television journalism unit. Student development and transformation in confidence and ability was also assessed through analysis of comments made about their learning and transformation during the group debrief session. A mixed-methods approach combined quantitative surveys with qualitative data collection from two small-group peer reflective sessions. In summary, the key findings indicate that students truly value the practicum experience broadly: they recognised how their skills developed through scaffolded learning and then applied in a real-world context, they came to appreciate and understand the challenges associated with working in a real newsroom, and they gained confidence in their own skills and abilities. Of particular relevance though, was the students' appreciation for the value of the reflection, debrief and feedback session at the conclusion of the practicum. Ensuring the debrief sessions are aligned with student expectations for feedback was a major challenge for researchers in designing the sessions. While participants were overwhelmingly supportive of the debriefing sessions, the format and structure of group debrief sessions can place a lot of pressure on discussion leaders to provide group and individual feedback while still facilitating the reflective process for the larger group. The structure and format of group debriefing sessions require careful consideration around delivery to allow for exploration of the unique learnings of the individuals within the group, and the group as a collective. The students overwhelmingly saw the value in the post-practicum reflective debriefing sessions as an integral part of their practice and learning experience. They enjoyed the benefits of ongoing group and individual feedback, and the opportunity to reflect on their practice.

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The Preferred Method of Reflection for Occupational Therapy Students During and After Clinical Placements: Video, Written or Artistic?

Nigel Gribble and Julie Netto

1 Reflective Practice During Clinical Practice and Placements

Health care students, including occupational therapy students, are required to use reflective practice in many coursework assignments, on a daily basis during clinical placements, and when working as health care professionals. Reflection is the cognitive and affective processes that turn experience in the real world into learning that can be used in subsequent situations (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 1985; Lavoué, Molinari, Prié, & Khezami, 2015). Sandars (2009, p. 685) defines reflection as, "…a metacognitive process that creates a greater understanding of self and situations to inform future action". Reflection in health care professionals has been reported to enhance clinical reasoning, foster professional socialisation and identity, consider and resolve ethical issues, enhance critical thinking, and professional skills (Hill, Davidson, & Theodoros, 2012; Karen, Kimberley, & Sue, 2016; Mann, Gordon, & MacLeod, 2009). The outcome of using reflective practice can lead to a transformation within the health care professional, and if health care teams reflect together, this can lead to transformations in the effectiveness of the health care team (Miraglia & Asselin, 2015). Furthermore, for health care students reflection strengthens the linkages between theory and practice and leads to deeper self-awareness (Hill et al., 2012). Reflective practice is considered a critical ability for healthcare professionals as the self-critique process allows them to continually develop and refine their skills and clinical reasoning so that they deliver the highest level of service to their service users.

Reflective practice is considered a cornerstone of practice as it is embedded in many Australian health care professions' competency standards. For example, the

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Australian Occupational Therapy Competency Standards requires that occupational therapists, "…reflect on practice to inform current and future reasoning and decision-making and the integration of theory and evidence into practice…" and that they "…reflect on practice to inform and communicate professional reasoning and decision-making" (Occupational Therapy Board of Australia, 2018, pp. 7–8). Furthermore, reflective practice is a critical employability attribute in the occupational therapy profession and across many health care professions (Dacre Pool & Sewell, 2007; Rodger, Fitzgerald, Davila, Millar, & Allison, 2011; Schell, 2009). Yorke (2006, p.8) has proposed that employability allows students to "…acquire the skills, understandings and personal attributes that make them more likely to secure employment and be successful in their chosen occupations to the benefit of themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy". Dacre Pool and Sewell (2007) positions reflection as the pivotal process that transforms work experiences and ongoing career development courses into the self-belief, self-confidence and self-efficacy that enhances a person's employability. The inclusion of reflective practice within the professional expectations and outcomes of university programs means that university educators have an obligation to teach and assess the skills that allow graduates from their programs to be active and competent reflective practitioners. As such, both coursework assignments and clinical placements are the most fertile ground for students to trial and refine their reflective practice skills.

Clinical placements are a mandatory element of occupational therapy programs where students are required to complete 1000 or more hours of clinical practice hours (World Federation of Occupational Therapists, 2016). During the clinical placements, occupational therapy students are progressively exposed to a variety of patients and healthcare settings where they work with problems of increasing complexity. Placements generally occur in all years of undergraduate therapy programs and tend to vary in length starting with short, primarily observation-based placements early in the program. Placements progress to full-time and can range from a few weeks to a few months in length depending on the university's requirements. For many students, the scenarios they face during placements are new and challenging, meaning the use of reflective practice is frequent and indispensable during these formative experiences before graduation. For example, during a paediatric placement, an occupational therapy student might work with a child who struggles with social skills and their frustrated family; during an orthopaedic placement they might work with a patient who is in pain and distress; and during a mental health placement a patient may be hallucinating or be emotionally labile. Clinical practice confronts students with scenarios that are often complex. Thus, it is imperative that students understand that reflective practice is at the heart of developing professional expertise to cope and make decisions in these situations. In order to develop these invaluable skills, students should be made aware of the various types of reflective practice and when these are useful.

Schon (1987) has suggested that professionals use a combination of reflection types: *reflection-in-action,* which occurs during a task and *reflection-on-action,* which occurs after the task is completed. For a health care practitioner, reflection-in-action occurs during the task and allows the practitioner to make adjustments or

modify the treatment session in real-time (Lavoué et al., 2015). A health care practitioner might use reflection-in-action during a treatment session when something different, unexpected, or unusual occurs. For example, a patent might react in an unexpected way to a treatment modality which results in the practitioner needing to change the treatment session from what was planned. Reflection-on-action, which occurs after completing a task, has been described as having three components: (i) reviewing the experience and replaying what occurred; (ii) evaluating the success of the session, acknowledging the emotional aspects, and drawing on knowledge and/ or theory, which results in (iii) the creation of new approaches for future similar tasks (Lavoué et al., 2015). Reflection-in-action is perhaps a more complex skill than reflection-on-action, as reflection-in-action requires the practitioner to consider whether changes alternative in real-time.

Health care students are novice practitioners and will tend to find reflection-in-action more difficult (Hill et al., 2012). Students need time during clinical placements to acclimatise to the routines and practices of each health care setting. Students need time to understand the array of assessments and interventions that are appropriate with the patients they work within each setting. On a daily basis, students observe their supervisors or other professionals in action where they learn more skills and start to understand the commonly used assessments and interventions that might be beneficial with each patient. Thus, early in placements students have a minimal number of alternative modalities to draw from when something unexpected or challenging occurs. Without an expansive set of contingency ideas, students are less likely to engage in reflection-in-action (Hill et al., 2012). As such, students are more likely to use reflection-on-action. During a clinical placement, a student will undertake a session with a patient. Afterwards they should be encouraged to think about the session and what worked and how the session might have been improved. When the time is right, they should reflect verbally with their supervisor about whether the assessment or intervention session was successful. The student and supervisor will discuss tips and ideas for improvements for the next time or ways to modify their body language to enhance rapport building. They might discuss the student's emotions and reactions to the situation. The student will then think and mull over the discussion, clarifying in their own mind the key points that they did well and other areas to change their practice next time a similar scenario presents. These reflective discussions could take a few minutes or longer, or they could be scheduled to occur at specific points on a daily basis. In different practice settings, there will be more or less time for this type of discussion dependent on how busy the daily schedule. In summary, during clinical placements, students will tend to use reflection-on-action using a combination of metacognitive and verbal formats.

In today's demanding health care settings, most practitioners, including occupational therapists, simply do not have the time to write or type up their reflections. When 842 general practitioners were asked which format of reflection they found most useful, 84% reported that verbal reflection was preferred over written reflection (Curtis, Taylor, Riley, Pelly, & Harris, 2017). Reflection-on-action demands a time commitment, which is often challenging for today's health care professional to find. Professional competency standards compel practitioners to reflect on their

practice before, during, and after interactions with patients as well before, during, and after interactions with their health care team. Another study (Cain, Le, & Billett, 2019) surveyed students about their preferred method for debriefing after practicums. The findings indicated that the students had a strong preference for face-to-face interactions such as small groups or one-on-one with teachers or lead by experienced students. That is, the preference was for verbal reflection. As such, health care professionals tend to either think about their practice or talk to colleagues or other experienced practitioners in order to improve their practice, skills, attitudes, and behaviours.

Contrary to the above findings from clinical practice, university educators tend to demand a written format for reflective practice assignments. The use of written reflections allows students to take their time to understand the theoretical foundations of their selected or preferred reflective model. For example, Gibbs Reflective Cycle is a model that is frequently taught across healthcare programs (Larkin & Pepin, 2010). A multitude of written formats are used to develop and assess health care students' reflective practice skills (Stagnitti, Schoo, & Welch, 2010; Tan, Ladyshewsky, & Gardner, 2010). A systematic review of reflective practice identified that written journals, portfolios, blogs, questionnaires, and diaries are frequently used with students to record their reflections (Tsingos, Bosnic-Anticevich, & Smith, 2015). As such, written reflection may be useful in the early stages of learning reflective practice. However, as written reflection does not mirror how the majority of reflection occurs during clinical practice, reflection should transition to verbal and metacognitive formats as full-time clinical placements approach.

Given the evidence that verbal reflection is more common in clinical practice, as well as the preferred method in clinical placements, university educators need to rethink the tendency to require students to use a written format for reflections. The vast majority of previous research on university students' reflective practice analysed reflections that are presented in a written format (Fragkos, 2016) and more research is needed into the use or video or audio formats for reflection. No previous studies were identified that offered university students a choice of format when using reflection-on-action or investigated why students might choose verbal or written formats when offered the choice.

The following section outlines an assignment task that offered occupational therapy students a choice of reflective format during and after a clinical placement.

2   The Project

The aim of our project was to determine the preferred method of reflection of third-year occupational therapy students when offered a choice of written, video, or an artistic format. Furthermore, the project investigated why students selected the written, video, or artistic format and the benefits and problems with each format. The students in our study were also offered a choice of topics on which to base their reflections, and the project also determined which of these topics students selected.

2.1 The Clinical Placement

Participants in the study were third-year occupational therapy students enrolled in the undergraduate Bachelor of Science (Occupational Therapy) program at one Australian university. The learning outcomes for this unit were for students to: demonstrate professional behaviours and accountability; demonstrate clinical reasoning to a professional standard in a health or human service context; form a productive therapeutic relationship with health consumers; demonstrate ethical practice; and central to our study, to critically reflect upon clinical experiences. The unit consisted of 12 two-hour weekly tutorials and 75 h of clinical placement which occurred over a 12-week period.

During the clinical placement, students spent 1–2 days per week at an aged care residential site and had to submit timesheets totalling 75 h or more by the end of the semester. The placements were designed to be student-lead. Students were allocated an on-site staff member who provided some basic orientation to the facility and introduced the residents to the students. In most sites, an occupational therapist undertook this role, but in other sites, a physiotherapist or nurse assisted the students. Students worked in pairs. Each pair was allocated four residents. Students managed their own caseload, i.e. if a resident passed away or withdrew from the program, the students were allocated new residents. With each of the four residents, the occupational therapy students were expected to develop rapport, complete a few appropriate assessments (e.g. conduct an initial interview with the resident and/or family; Canadian Occupational Performance Measure; functional assessment; leisure checklist) and interpret the assessment results. Then, in collaboration with the resident, family, or staff, create realistic occupational goals that could be achieved over the 12 week period. The students then trialled and implemented strategies to assist each resident towards the achievement of their goals. In the final weeks of the placement, the students evaluated the outcomes of the program and handed any sustainable interventions over to family or staff.

Students attended a two-hour tutorial at the university campus each week for 12 weeks. The majority of the tutorial was dedicated to debriefing and discussion about the clinical placement, residents, and occupational therapy practice. The relatively unstructured tutorial set-up allowed students to share assessment and intervention ideas, discuss challenging scenarios, debate ethical dilemmas, verbalise their clinical reasoning, and learn from each other and the occupational therapist who facilitated the tutorials.

2.2 The Reflective Practice Task

Students completed five reflective pieces during and after the clinical placement, as such, the task called for reflection-on-action. Two of the five reflections were submitted in Week 7 of the semester so that students could receive and learn from the

feedback. The remaining three reflections were submitted after the completion of the 75 h of placement.

Providing a specific purpose for the reflective task is seen as critical so that students foster and build their reflective practice skills (Sandars, 2009). As such, the purpose of each reflective piece was for each student to (i) critique their effectiveness as an occupational therapist and (ii) to critique their clinical reasoning during the clinical placement.

For each reflective piece, students were required to select a topic from a list of 32 topics. (see Appendix A for the full list of topics), with the option to create their own topic. Topics ranged from '*critique your assertiveness skills'* to '*critique why you became frustrated during the placement'* or '*critique your teamwork skills'*. Students then identified and described a critical incident or significant event that occurred during the clinical placement that related to the topic. The critical incident or significant event could have occurred during any interaction with a resident, during an assessment or intervention session/s, when interacting with a staff or family member, or a series of events that occurred over time. The reflective component required the student to discuss what they learnt personally and professionally and to show insight into their emotional reaction to the critical incident or significant event. They were also required to integrate some evidence-based practice and relevant theory. The incorporation of evidence and theory provides the opportunity for the student to gain a deeper insight or new perspective of the critical incident or event. Finally, they were required to research and create an array of strategies they would use to enhance their future practice or deal with a similar critical incident or event in the future. The length of each reflective piece was at the students' discretion. Reflections were uploaded to the unit's course management system site for marking. Marks were weighted towards the integration of theory and evidence and students' planned future actions.

The steps detailed above follow an approach suggested by Sandars (2009) who purported that guided reflection, in our case, the use of suggested topics to drive the reflection combined with the above set of guiding steps, is beneficial in students developing their own reflective practice skills. Sandars (2009) also suggests that reflection should be completed repeatedly. In our case, students completed two of the reflective pieces at the mid-semester point, then received feedback, and then completed three more reflective pieces, and then more feedback. Sandars (2009) also suggested that students should seek further knowledge or information about the incident or event assists in developing professional expertise. In our case, students integrated research about theory or evidence related to the selected topic and/or events into their reflective piece.

Of importance to the study, students were given a choice of the medium they used for the reflective task. For each of the five reflective pieces, students could choose either video, written, or an artistic medium. Students could change the format for each separate topic or use the same format for all five topics. For example, a student could select the written format for three topics, video for another, and artistic for the final topic; or any combination. For the video format, students were instructed to video themselves talking directly to a camera. They could speak in

first-person. Videos were submitted via YouTube (set to Unlisted) or any similar cloud-storage site. For the written format, written pieces could be typed or hand-written and could use first-person. For the artistic format, students were told that they could use any artistic medium that they felt suited their critique and learning style — for example, poetry, painting, drawing, dancing, or song. The artistic piece could also include a written response. For all formats, the unit outline instructed the students, to be brutally honest and to show their emotions. University educators who are embedding reflective assignments into a clinical placement are encouraged to detail a specific purpose of the reflective task that is meaningful to their students. In our case, we asked students to focus on their effectiveness and clinical reasoning as novice occupational therapists. Another recommendation is to weight the assessment of reflection towards the future-oriented actions that the students create, rather than weighting assessment towards the retelling of an incident. In our case, we allocated 80% of the marks to these sections. We also offered the students a large selection of topics so they could focus on elements of their practice that were of concern or important to them. The unique aspect of our study was allowing the students to choose their preferred format. The findings from our analysis of the submitted reflections are presented in the following section.

2.3 Data Collection

The proposed research study received ethics approval from the university's Human Research Ethics Committee.

The study used a mixed methods design whereby quantitative and qualitative data were collected at the same time using the online Qualtrics website. A research assistant emailed all 140 students enrolled in the unit, inviting them to participate. Four email reminders were sent over a 4 week period. Students were presented with a Participant Information Sheet and provided consent at the beginning of the online survey. The online survey asked the following: enrolment status in the unit, age, gender, previous clinical placements in aged care, the format selected for each of the five topics, and topics selected. Participants also used text to write their responses to questions about why they selected the format, challenges and benefits of the selected format, and why they selected each topic.

The reflective pieces were submitted as assessable tasks during Semester 2 of 2017. Data for the study was analysed after the semester was finished, the clinical placements were completed, and all student grades were processed and finalised. The quantitative data were analysed using Excel and consisted of descriptive statistics such as counts, means, and standard deviations. The qualitative data was entered into the QSR International NVivo 10 Software package for thematic analysis and identification of themes (NVivo, 2012).

2.4   Participants

Sixty-eight students (63 female; 5 male) consented and completed the online survey representing a response rate of 49% of the students enrolled in the unit.

Students were asked about their previous work and experiences in aged care facilities. Only one student was currently employed in the aged care sector, and three had previously worked in the aged care sector. Eighteen students (26%) had never been into an aged care facility prior to this clinical placement. As the purpose of the study was to investigate the preferred format of reflection, thus all those students with current or nil previous experiences in aged care facilities were retained in the data analysis.

3   The Preferred Format for Reflective Practice

Each of the 68 students submitted five reflective pierces for a total of 340 reflective pieces. Table 1 summarises the format the students selected. Video was the overwhelmingly preferred format with 276 of the 340 reflections (81%) being submitted in this medium. Only four (0.01%) of the reflections used the artistic format.

The following section will summarise the benefits and negatives of each format using direct quotes from the students.

The video format was the most preferred format of the reflective pieces. The most common reasons reported for selecting video was that video allows for the natural and authentic expression of emotions. Video also allows the student to present more detail about the incident, event, or resident because they can use an array of verbal and non-verbal language including facial expressions and hand gestures that add depth in a short amount of time. Speaking uses the same format of reflection and clinical reasoning used during clinical placements with supervisors, peers, and other health professionals. Video was reported by all students to be quicker to complete compared to the written format.

The following quotes highlight that students found the video format allowed for more natural expression of an array of emotions.

> "The emotional context and *aha* moments were easier to portray in video than in written format" (Subject 20).

Table 1 Format selected by students for the reflective task

Format selected	Number N = 340	%
Video	276	81%
Written	60	18%
Artistic	4	0.01%

Video was the "…truest way to show my ups and downs while working through the incident that occurred" (Subject 41).

"I also found that I was much more likely to be honest in a video rather than writing, as with a video once it was done it was done, it was honest and a true reflection, whereas with a written reflection I could have edited out anything I did not want to include" (Subject 47).

These quotes show that students found the video format allowed for a more authentic and faithful expression of emotions compared to writing, where expressing emotions in the written format was complex and required advanced technical writing skills. Students stated that because they could actively use facial expressions, hand gestures, non-verbal body language, changes in tone and pitch of the voice, and show their own personality, video was a more natural way of communicating emotions to the assessor than written. Many students stated that video allowed them to be honest and express a vast array of emotions using verbal and non-verbal language. The majority of students agreed that it was easier to express negative emotions such as anger, disappointment, dissatisfaction, or frustration, which could have been conveyed by banging the desk, shrugging the shoulders, or changing the pitch and intonation of their voice. On the other hand, students also reported that video allowed them to express an array of positive emotions easier. They reported being able to express genuine concern and compassion for the resident.

Students reported selecting video as it uses the same medium that is required during day-to-day practice in health care settings and with supervisors. Students stated that video allowed them to build confidence in using occupational therapy specific terminology they would be required to verbalise during clinical placements. Using video reflections "…increased my confidence in speaking like an OT" (Subject 12).

Students reported that video was a quicker medium, compared to writing, to explain the background story or context. Students said that writing the same story was tedious and time-consuming. Verbally telling a story was reported to be much quicker than typing, because writing required multiple edits and re-writes to give an accurate portrayal of the background story or context. As this student wrote, "I didn't have to be perfectly correct as I could self-correct when speaking" (Subject 3). This view is consistent with that proposed by Curtis et al. (2017, p. 141) investigation of 842 general practitioners with the authors stating "…written reflection is an onerous process rather than being beneficial to their learning…".

Some students reported that they recorded the videos multiple times and edited together their preferred responses. These students reported that they felt that re-watching and re-recording their videos heightened the depth of reflection that occurred. Students benefitted from watching and listening to their video reflections. As this student noted, "As a result of recording my critiques I was able to replay my video and further reflect on my performance and how I could improve in the future" (Subject 35). Students who used the written format did not report this reinforcement or amplified sense of reflection. Perhaps, when students are editing written work are focussed on spelling and grammar, whereas when reviewing and re-recording video, the students are more focussed on the background and reflection.

The negatives of using the video format included software and technical problems, including having no previous experience using video software, the time it took to edit the video into the final version, and interruptions from family members in the middle of video recording. Some students stated they did not like having to listen to their own voice and that videoing was not a usual format used for assignments.

In summary, the video format was selected for 81% of reflective pieces because the verbal format corresponds to the format used during clinical placements with supervisors, peers, and other health care professionals. An important finding is that all students reported that video allowed the expression of real emotions through multiple communication channels, words, facial, body, and voice, whereas written formats allow emotions to be expressed using words only.

The written format accounted for 18% of the reflective pieces. The main reasons for selecting the written format was that writing was a more manageable format to edit and correct mistakes compared to the video format; and that the written format was reported as safer for students who lacked confidence in verbalising their thoughts.

Students reported that writing allowed them to rapidly edit spelling and grammar errors compared to video where they felt they would have to re-record the entire response. Students who preferred the written format reported they could rapidly and efficiently proofread their responses and insert new ideas or thoughts. Whereas inserting new ideas was difficult and time-consuming when using video format. For example, this student felt reassured by the ability to edit their written work. "I could perfect my critique easier than having to re-record every time I made a mistake" (Subject 51). This quote may also indicate that students seeking to be perfectionistic may tend to use the written format as it offers more control over the final product compared to the verbal format.

Another reason for the preference for the safer written format was that, concerningly, a few students felt under-confident in verbalising their reflections and thus preferred the written format.

> "I am not a confident speaker and still needed to pre-plan what I wanted to say in detail, so written critiques ended up being quicker for me to produce than video" (Subject 40).

This statement should be of concern to the university educators as well as the student, especially given that occupational therapy students are expected to communicate verbally for the vast majority of clinical placements. As a result, university educators are encouraged to move assessments towards a more verbal format as the full-time clinical placements approach in the final years of the university program.

Students who selected the written medium identified the following negatives to this format. The students noted the extended time required to write, proofread, and edit a comprehensive written reflection. They also agreed that it is complex using written language to express the authentic and complex array of emotions that incidents and events produce during clinical placements. As this student stated, "When writing, the assessor can't see facial expressions or hear the tone of voice, which adds value and context to a critique" (Subject 49).

In summary, it is interesting to note that even those who preferred the written format agreed that the written expression of emotions is difficult and lacks sophistication when compared to the video format where the full set of emotional communication tools are available – words, face, body, and voice. Feelings and emotions are a part of many of the reflective practice model (e.g. Gibbs). The data we have obtained for this study is reinforcing the idea that to reflect fully requires the expression of a full set of emotions, which is easier done via verbal and non-verbal communication channels.

Only two students selected the artistic format with a total of four reflective pieces. All four artistic pieces were presented as songs with the student playing their guitar. They had composed the lyrics and music themselves. They reported that the musical format utilised their hobby and kept them engaged in the reflective task. As this student wrote, "I enjoy singing and playing music and this was a way I could use that while thinking about situations and writing about them and then singing them" (Subject 66). Other students reported they did not use the artistic format, despite wanting to, because it was not a method of reflection that was used during clinical placements. Although the health care sector may be in need of more creativity in its day to day operations, the use of artistic formats for reflection such as songs or poetry does not have a place. However, students who learn through more creative mediums should be encouraged to create poetry, songs or artwork as a way of expressing their emotions related to the scenarios they face on placements – although these should probably be done at home and not in the workplace.

4   Preferred Topics for Reflection

Students were given a comprehensive list of 32 potential topics to choose from with the option to create their own topic. See Appendix A for the full list of topics. For each of the five reflective pieces, students selected a topic and then identified a significant event or incident that occurred and then created their response. Table 2 presents the most commonly selected topics. Table 3 presents the topic that students reported as being the most useful. Students could only select one topic.

The three most common selected topics were 'Critique your interpersonal, communication, and assertive skills' with 57% of students choosing this topic, 'Critique your emotional resilience and coping skills' (43%), and 'Critique an intervention you implemented with a resident' (40%). The least selected topics were 'Critique how you dealt with an ethical issue' (15%) and 'Reflect on your preparedness for 4th year full-time clinical placements' (15%). Exactly the same as the most commonly selected topics, the three topics considered the most useful were '*Critique your interpersonal, communication, and assertive skills', 'Critique your emotional resilience and coping skills*', and '*Critique an intervention or assessment you completed with a resident'*.

The most commonly selected topics align with the demands of clinical placements, in that communication skills, emotional resilience, and intervention planning

Table 2 The most commonly selected topics and percentage of students who selected these topics

Topic selected	Number who selected the topic	% of students
Critique your interpersonal, communication, and assertive skills	39	57%
Critique your emotional resilience and coping skills	29	43%
Critique an intervention you implemented with a resident	27	40%
Critique your first 2 or 3 days on the placement	22	32%
Critique why you became frustrated or annoyed during the placement	16	24%
If you had a strong emotional reaction to something that occurred, critique how you coped	16	24%
Critique your initial interview skills	14	21%
Critique how you concluded the therapeutic relationships with residents at the end of the placement	12	18%
Critique your use of evidence-based practice	11	16%
Reflect on your preparedness for 4th year full-time clinical placements	10	15%
Critique how you dealt with an ethical issue	10	15%

Table 3 Topics that the student reported as being the most useful

Topic selected	Number who selected the topic	% of students
Critique your interpersonal, communication, and assertive skills	8	12%
Critique your emotional resilience and coping skills	7	10%
Critique an intervention or assessment you completed with a resident	5	7%
If you had a strong emotional reaction to something that occurred, critique how you coped	5	7%
Critique your initial interview skills	5	7%
Reflect on your preparedness for 4th-year full-time clinical placements	5	7%
All five topics I selected	4	6%

make up a large component of the daily work during occupational therapy placements. These results are also useful to university educators in that students prefer to reflect on topics that impact their day to day work task that they face during placements. It should be a concern to university educators that students appeared hesitant to select the topic "Critique your use of evidence-based practice", as this should be one of the highest priorities to novice practitioners.

The students reported the 'interpersonal, communication, and assertiveness topic' as the most useful because the clinical placement had highlighted that their communication skills were far from fully matured. As this student stated, "…because communication skills are important to have in all fields of OT. You can have solid ideas on interventions but may not be able to deliver it properly because you may

lack the interpersonal skills" (Subject 30). In regard to assertiveness, students reported that they thought they were able to be assertive at their place of paid employment or with family members, but being assertive in a team of experienced health care professionals was far more complicated than they had imagined. This student stated, "I thought I was assertive before starting placement but quickly realised I'm not and this critique helped me realise why and what I need to do to change" (Subject 53). A study that investigated the impact of clinical placements on therapy students' emotional intelligence (Gribble, Ladyshewsky, & Parsons, 2017) also reported students' diminished confidence to be assertive during a clinical placement compared to their personal life. Students reported the 'emotional resilience and coping skills' topic to be useful was because they realised they needed to mature in order to deal with the emotionally complex scenarios that clinical placements presented to them, as this student stated:

> "Because I had not really thought too deeply about my emotional resilience prior to this and how much it would impact my practice as an OT. Therefore this gave me the opportunity to explore the topic more, my strengths and weaknesses and how I can change" (Subject 39).

Another student stated, "…it (the reflection) made me address some internal struggles/grief that I needed to resolve in order to the best OT I can be" (Subject 38). Perhaps these students are also suggesting to university educators that more skill development is needed in the occupational therapy program to develop the array of emotional resilience skills need to cope with the emotional demands of clinical placements.

Given the importance of the communication and emotional resilience topics, it is not that surprising that the preferred format for reflecting on these skillsets was the verbal format that allowed for more expansive emotional expression. And in the process of reflecting on their communication skills, the video format also gave them a place practice their communication skills.

5   Recommendations for University Educators

When setting assessments that include a reflective practice component, either before or during clinical placements, university educators are encouraged to use the following recommendations that have emerged from the analysis of our survey results.

University educators should offer a choice of reflective format – video or written. Our findings suggest that when students complete reflection-on-action assignments, video will be the preferred method if they are offered a choice. Students will tend to choose the format that aligns to their learning needs and hastens the speed of completing the reflective tasks. More so, if university educators expect that the feelings and emotions that are often a part of the reflective models, then video format allows a more authentic expression of these emotions, compared to the written format that requires more technical skill in expressing authentic emotion. Tsingos et al. (2015, p. 499), who investigated pharmacy students, concurs with the benefits of video

reflection stating "…self-reflection through media such as video, can empower a student to view first hand his/her approaches to the task…". Our results indicate that the use of artistic formats of reflection should be avoided as they do not match how reflection is undertaken during clinical placements.

University educators should ensure that a large percentage of reflective tasks are completed in a verbal format, especially in units leading up to clinical placements so that students practice verbalising reflections and clinical reasoning. Students who identify as under-confident in using video formats should be encouraged to practice using the verbal format more often in order to rehearse for clinical placements. Curtis et al. (2017) agree, and go as far to recommend that the use of written reflection as a mandatory part of the licencing of general practitioners in the United Kingdom needs to be critically examined. The views of the students in our study align with Grant, Kinnersley, Metcalf, Pill, and Houston (2006) who reported that general practitioners tended not to be engaged in written reflective tasks because this format does not align with the realities of clinical practice. Their study reported that 85% of general practitioners agreed that there are better uses of their time than doing written reflections.

When setting reflective practice assignments, the *university educator should clearly describe the purpose of the reflection* so that students engage and understand the outcomes of repeatedly practicing reflection. In our investigation of occupational therapy students, the purpose of the refection was to critique their effectiveness as an occupational therapist and to critique their clinical reasoning skills. Reflective tasks should be guided, by providing step by step processes, as suggested by Sandars (2009) or a list of suggested topics to link to critical events or incidents that occur during placements. The list of 33 topics that our students could select from is in Appendix A.

University educators are encouraged to provide more opportunities for students to develop skills to deal with the emotional events (e.g. patients in pain or vulnerable) and scenarios that require students to be assertive with experienced health care professionals (e.g. being forthright and honest in a team meeting).

Further research is recommended to investigate if video is the preferred method of refection in other student cohorts in the health and all other professions. The use of audio could also be explored, although video still offers more of the authentic human channels for exhibiting emotions than audio.

6   Conclusion

This study adds new knowledge about the preferred methods of reflection for occupational therapy students during and after clinical placements. The overwhelming preferred method of completing reflective practice tasks was using a video format, which aligns to ways that practitioners reflect during day-to-day practice. Most importantly, video allowed students to practice reflective tasks using the same format as is used during placement, namely speaking. University educators are

encouraged to offer students a choice of reflective practice medium but to ensure that those students who are under-confident in verbalising their reflection use the video format, as this is the method they use during clinical placements and when the practice after graduation.

Video allowed students to use natural spoken language in combination with the ability to authentically express an array of complex emotions, in a relatively short period of time. Humans express emotions through numerous channels, and the students agree that the written format does not allow for a full array of emotions to be described (except if the student has exceptional technical writing skills). During placements, the majority of scenarios that student may want to reflect on are awash with emotional data and using verbal and non-verbal forms of communication are by far the easiest way to ensure these essential human emotions remain integral to the reflective process.

University educators have an obligation to assist students in learning how to be competent and proficient reflective practitioners before they enter the demands of clinical practice. They can assist students by engaging them in the kind of thinking and acting that will be required for their work, and this includes the kind of problem-solving, rationalising, decision-making and evaluation of their practice that reflective practice secures when done well. At the heart of our argument in this paper is that any reflective assessment should replicate the way that humans express emotions and how reflective practice happens in day-to-day practice. As such, university educators are encouraged to move assessments towards a more verbal format as the full-time clinical placements approach in the final years of the university program.

Appendix A

The 33 topics that students could select from:

1. Critique your use of evidence-based practice.
2. Critique your emotional resilience and coping skills.
3. Critique your interpersonal, communication, and assertive skills.
4. Critique your initial interview skills.
5. Critique your ability to explain occupational therapy to your residents.
6. Critique your first two days on the placement.
7. Critique an assessment that you completed.
8. Critique your ability to interpret information from assessments.
9. Critique your ability to assess occupational performance.
10. Critique a set of progress notes
11. Critique the occupation-based goals that were set
12. Reflect on how you coped when receiving feedback.
13. Critique a clinical decision you made.
14. Critique your clinical reasoning skills.
15. Critique a group activity/session you facilitated.

16. Critique an intervention you implemented with a resident.
17. Critique your ability to deal with stress.
18. Critique why you became frustrated or annoyed during the placement?
19. Critique your time management and organisational skills.
20. Critique your teamwork skills.
21. Critique your confidence in making decisions.
22. Critique how you dealt with an ethical issue.
23. Critique how you dealt with elder abuse – if you observed it.
24. Did one of the residents pass away during your time in the facility? How did you react?
25. Did you have a strong emotional reaction to something that occurred?
26. Critique your ability to deal with workplace politics.
27. Critique how you evaluated the outcome of the OT program.
28. Critique how you concluded the therapeutic relationships at the end of the placement?
29. If you worked on a project, critique the outcome.
30. Select any item or set of items on the SPEF-R. Critique your skills in this area.
31. Critique how you used OT theory during the placement, e.g. OT model, CPPF, occupation as core to occupational therapy etc.
32. Reflect on your preparedness for your 4th-year full-time clinical placements.
33. Other topic was chosen – use free text.

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Developing Self-Confidence: Students' Perceptions of Post-practicum Project Teamwork

Rachael Hains-Wesson and Kaiying Ji

1   Post-practicum Project Teamwork

Due to the increasing demand for higher education to prepare students for the labour market an emphasis on Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) programs throughout the higher education landscape has occurred (Jackson, 2015; Jackson & Wilton, 2016). Work-integrated learning (WIL) has become widely considered as instrumental for equipping business graduates with the required employability skills they need for a complex future of work. However, as Jackson (2015) points out, the evaluation of WIL programs in enhancing employability skill development remains predominantly outcome focused. There is little attention to the process of what, how and from whom students acquire the essential skills needed for a distinctive and rounded self to meet the labour skills gap. In addition, research conducted into the preferences of students undertaking WIL interventions for post-practicum learning experiences suggests that "… a pattern emerged, which highlighted that students preferred educational process to be facilitated by teachers or experts over student-organised interventions." (Cain, Hai Le, & Billett, 2019, p. 28). We, therefore, position that post-practicum learning for improving teamwork skills is also important but requires further investigation to understand which processes of what, how and from whom students are best to acquire teamwork skill development.

In the higher education landscape, often a work placement is the most common type of Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) activity. However, "… universities are moving beyond this historical approach to WIL to offer other opportunities …" (Universities Australia, 2019a, p. 1). For instance, when projects are purposely designed to offer a curriculum where theory is integrated with practice, via medium to high proximity with industry and/or practitioners, it allows students to mirror

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authentic professional practice for improving employability skills for job-readiness. Industry-linked projects are, therefore, an emerging WIL curriculum offering, reflecting the evolving nature of WIL as ascertained by Kaider and Hains-Wesson's authentic assessment WIL typology (Kaider & Hains-Wesson, 2016), Universities Australia *Work-Integrated Learning Final Report* (2019a) and Universities Australia *Career Ready Graduates Report* (2019b).

However, as it presently stands, the available literature provides little guidance on how to best design or deliver post-practicum teamwork learning via WIL projects or how educators are to be guided to make such professional practice choices, that will provide "more potent and secure important associations between [education] and work" (Cain, Hai Le & Billett, 2019, p. 28). In addition, there is little mention in the literature for providing key professional development rationales for post-practicum teamwork assessment tasks for business students or how-to best link interventions for supporting such learning (Billett, 2018). We therefore completed an online search of the terms "post-practicum learning in business education" and "teamwork for post-practicum learning in education" which resulted in only a handful of instances related to the use of teamwork assessment tasks in business-specific, post-practicum interventions or business education WIL contexts. To obtain a general idea of the emerging discussions related to post-practicum teamwork learning, we also used Google Scholar to track research outputs for the terms "post-practicum learning" and "post-practicum learning and assessments". The discussions related to the two key search phrases used were mainly from 2007. It is not until later (2010) that discussions about post-practicum learning and the influence of assessment tasks arise. One explanation for the lack of information gained from the online searches is that more research has tended to focus on the design of WIL curriculum (pre-experience) and the delivery of curriculum (during-experience) rather than on the "post-practicum" phase of such learnings (post-experience). Where certain studies appraise Work-Integrated Learning arrangements for post-practicum learning (Billett, 2015), it was indicated that to optimise the educational benefits for students it requires the following: (i) preparing students prior to their engagement in practicums; (ii) supporting them during their practicums; and (iii) identifying ways to enrich those experiences once students have completed their practicums.

In this chapter, we focus on identifying ways to enrich post-practicum projects for business students, but also note the importance of preparing students for such experiences. To assist with such an exploration, we chose to use a graded, teamwork assessment task that was linked to three interventions to support and enrich students' post-practicum learning experiences. It is important to note, that the graded, teamwork assessment task's outcome was delivered by students in multi-disciplinary teams, and specifically for industry who actively worked with students on solving industry-related problems. It was a group oral presentation worth 20% at the time of writing this chapter. Despite the many benefits, we discovered that integrating a teamwork assessment task as a post-practicum learning experience along with its interventions was extremely time consuming and resource intensive. Yet, we also discovered that when incorporated well, these types of tasks can build student's self-confidence, which in turn provide educators with learning avenues for preparing

students for professional life and empowering them to develop employability skills. We elaborate on how we achieved this in the following section.

2   Industry and Community Projects

In Australia, Business schools have been criticized for not fully developing graduates' employability skills such as teamwork for job-readiness (Alavi, Wheeler, & Valacich, 1995; Daspit & D'Souza, 2012; Pfeffer & Fong, 2004) or producing "career-ready graduates who can effectively transfer and enact their learning in new environments" (Jackson, Fleming, & Rowe, 2019, p. 2). To assist with such a situation, the Industry and Community Projects were offered cross-faculty and university-wide, coordinated with the assistance of a Central teaching team. Business students were either able to enrol in the projects through a shell unit in their degree faculty or could undertake projects administered through other faculties. Students learnt innovative, evidence-based skills that enabled successful collaboration with people with diverse disciplinary, educational, social backgrounds and with different personal attributes. Students worked in teams collaboratively on authentic, problem-based industry-related projects, which were developed with the University's industry partners and teaching teams. The learning goals were to provide students with an opportunity to link what was being taught in university to practice and to develop self-confidence and resilience, critical thinking and problem-solving skills. In the literature, this is also one of the main areas of feedback students provide when they discuss their preferences for educational purposes for integrating post-practicum interventions (Cain et al., 2019). For example, in Cain's et al. (2019) study, students suggested that linking theory to practice and securing feedback from individual performance from educators, industry and peers was highly beneficial for improving their employability for job-readiness.

For instance, the Industry and Community Projects were able to meet students' preferences for learning because they were driven by industry and community needs. Students were, for example, required as part of the assessment to investigate (as a team) an Australian Corporate Bank's needs for creating and integrating a new App for enhancing employees' cultural competency or they assisted clients at a not-for-profit micro-financing company to complete a business plan and budget for establishing a family-run bakery. During the program, students engaged directly with the industry partner attached to their project, accessing valuable insights that they were provided with, such as company's evaluation statistics, assisting them with the identification of specific problems to be solved. Evidence-based and collaborative approaches to teaching were also used to facilitate students' understanding of working with industry, their diverse needs, different knowledges and biases as well as a focusing on facilitating multi-disciplinary knowledges to solve problems. The projects were designed to be delivered for a full 13-week semester and summer and winter intensives, locally and internationally. At times, students undertook small, negligible-risk research for the projects, such as carefully constructed

surveys or questionnaires to elicit clients' needs. Educators were responsible for assigning students into multi-disciplinary groups of around five students each, overseeing small research tasks, mentoring the student groups, overseeing the industry partnerships with students and for specific agreed-to deliverables, as well as designing and delivering the content and marking the assessments. To assist students with preparing for the post-practicum teamwork assessment task, students took part in three interventions and at set points of the learning experience. The three interventions are now discussed in detail.

3 Interventions

For interventions to be effective, the structure and facilitation of such appraisals must be carefully aligned with the learning outcomes and assessment items. In addition, students have been noted in the literature to suggest that interventions that best allow them to develop coping skills for workplaces as being high on their list for positive experiences (Cain et al., 2019). Students have also suggested that small groups facilitated by educators and professionals are also ideal, when these occur face-to-face and after professional practice learning. Students have also said that there is value for regular interventions during and/or mid-professional practice (Cain et al., 2019). In the case of the three interventions presented here, the purpose was not only to benefit the current student cohort but also to provide helpful feedback to the program team, improve preparation for students' learning and to offer training for students who were new to working in multi-disciplinary teams. The interventions were an experiment to see how they could add value to future deliveries of the program, and for all students. The three interventions were incorporated into the curriculum for a variety of reasons. First, to support students with meeting the learning outcomes, which required student teams to develop and deliver a group oral presentation to industry for feedback (post-experience). Second, the interventions were purposely incorporated into the curriculum pre-, during and post-students completing the post-practicum teamwork assessment task (see Table 1).

Table 1 A description of the three interventions that were linked to the post-practicum teamwork task

Number	Type	When	Graded/Non-Graded	Compulsory or not
1	Ways of thinking with Legitimation Code Theory (LCT);	Pre	Linked to a graded reflective assessment (1500 words) worth 20%	Compulsory
2	Complex problem-solving workshop;	During	Non-graded	Not
3	Career Development Learning workshop.	Post	Non-graded	Not

The first intervention was set-up to allow students to take part in an online learning module to understand the theoretical concept for 'ways of thinking with Legitimation Code Theory (LCT)'. The online module included online resources, such as videos, podcasts, literature readings and reflective learning activities. The LCT is a widely-used educational framework for understanding different kinds of knowledge and knowers when working with others from diverse learning and disciplinary backgrounds. LCT has been designed and developed using extensive research and evaluating practice from an international community of scholars and educators, and across the disciplinary maps, from physics to ballet, dentistry to design, journalism to jazz (Maton, Hood, & Shay, 2015). Once, students completed the online module, they then undertook a workshop facilitated by their educator to help further unpack the theory before progressing with small group discussions on what they had discovered. To finalise the intervention, students submitted an individual reflective statement of 1500 words for a 20% weighting in week 4. Students' reflections were to focus on the LCT by answering a set of questions, which were:

1. Giving reasons, code the ways of thinking about research problems you bring from your educational background.
2. What are the strengths and weaknesses of your code(s) for conducting an industry project in comparison to other codes and why?
3. What problems might arise from working on an industry project with collaborators with different codes to your own? What strategies could you use to avoid those problems?

The LCT assessment provided students with the means for discussing (in a written form) the different ways of thinking about problems, which is influenced by their diverse educational and disciplinary backgrounds. For example, how does different ways of thinking impact interaction and discussion while working on a project; how best to explore different ways of thinking and how it can reveal or conceal ideas and thus, why collaboration is valuable for addressing problems. Or, how to identify and avoid potential issues arising from the collaborative nature of working in multidisciplinary groups and with industry partners who are important stakeholders.

The second intervention that was piloted was conducted via student workshops, which were facilitated by an external consultant who was the founder of *Ponder*. *Ponder*'s website states:

> At Ponder we research, distil, develop, compile, and share practical techniques for complex problem solving. We do this because we agree with the OECD and the World Economic Forum – complex problem solving is the most important skill we need this century. And we help people and organisations to apply these techniques to develop strategies to achieve outcomes for the complex challenges they are grappling with.

The workshops were designed to allow students to undertake a non-graded, complex problem-solving event that was offered multiple times throughout the professional learning experience. The workshops were provided to students after the LCT intervention had been completed. They were facilitated in a way that was based on a tested formula and allowed students to undertake a hands-on seminar experience

for diverse teams to solve problems, strategically choose/decide upon ideas and discard less strategic ideas when working in multi-disciplinary teams. The formulae involved introducing students to *Ponder's* practical guide for solving complex problems and developing strategies for complex challenges that focused on answering 20 set questions around critical thinking and problem-solving. The workshops also encouraged students to actively participate in group discussions.

The third intervention was a non-graded workshop that focused on supporting students with evidencing and articulating the employability skills that they developed from participating in the project. This workshop was instigated by the Business School at the University where this study took place and was not compulsory. The intervention was a 2 h debrief seminar for students that included focusing on processes to advise students about the range of occupational and career options, understanding and developing the capacities for effective transition from being a student to an employee/er, and assisting student employability development for career planning. The seminar was offered to students once they had completed all necessary assessments and the professional practice experience. The seminar was facilitated by an expert in career development learning from the Business School's Career and Employability Office. The seminar provided students with the opportunity to review experiences via reflecting on specific examples about team experiences (positive and negative) and showcased an example of a student's quality LinkedIn profile that was submitted as one of the assessments during the professional practice experience.

The overall framing of the three interventions (refer to Table 1) was important to the post-practicum teamwork assessment task, because it allowed students to reflect deeply, continually self-measure their employability, make mistakes without always being fearful of grading (i.e. via the non-graded interventions) while also receiving educator, peer and professional feedback.

Often, teamwork assessment tasks that have a strong link to industry involvement, engagement and outcomes are difficult tasks to undertake for undergraduate students. Therefore, by purposely designing interventions (such as, what has been presented here) to assist students with such tasks, students' ability to "effectively transfer and enact their learning in new environments" increases, which is a noted phenomenon in the literature (Jackson et al., 2019, p. 2).

4   Aim

The study focused on evaluating a multi-disciplinary, practicum-based WIL learning experience for business students that was linked to three interventions for measuring impact.

5   Context

In 2018, in semester 1, two hundred and fifty-one (N = 251) students took part in the program with ninety (N = 90) being business students. Of the total cohort there were 60% females. The projects involved companies, such as government organisations (111 students), Consulting firms (36 students), Community organisations (31 students) and Corporations (73 students). There were 82% domestic and 18% international students. Students preferred to be allocated to a project (24%) that was linked to the government via organisations that were focusing on innovation in technology, such as disconnecting from the grid. In semester 2, three hundred and fifty-seven (N = 357) took part with one hundred and eighty (N = 180) being business students. Of the total cohort there were 63% females. The projects that were offered covered government organisations (42 students), Consulting firms (40 students), Community organisations (29 students) and Corporations (238 students). There were 69% domestic and 31% international. Students suggested that they preferred project allocations (21%) that involved commercial and corporates and/or consultant-orientated organisation that focused on investigating digital disruption and/or topics on the future of work, for example.

6   Challenges to the Study

First, the Work-Integrated Learning Program that forms a large part of this investigation's context of operation and therefore the data collection process became challenging, due to the first author no longer being involved in the pilot program from 2018. Second, due to ethics' requirements, the results of this study can only focus on business students' perceptions and their beliefs of completing the post-practicum teamwork assessment task. Finally, national data shows a continuing decline in the willingness of participants to respond to surveys. We also found that this was the case for this study. This trend is troubling given the central role that our surveys played in collecting data for investigating students' perspectives about their experiences (Dey, 1997). We did however receive a 22% response rate to the surveys and used the focus group interview to combat the less than average response rate.

7   Methodology

We chose to implement an evaluation research framework for this study. This methodology has been used more broadly in areas outside of business education research, such as when investigating audience participation and perceptions for improving theatre marketing, theatre performances, 'visitors' satisfaction of theatre (Boerner & Jobst, 2013), "subjective experience in theatres" (Boerner, Moser, & Jobst, 2011,

p. 877) and the impact of audiences' responses when visiting multiple types of the-atres (Boerner et al., 2011; Boerner & Jobst, 2013). This methodology has also assisted educational scholars to understand students' learning experiences for assessment designs for active learning (Gibbs & Simpson, 2004; McDowell, Wakelin, Montgomery, & King, 2011), undertaking commissioned evaluation reports (White & Coventry, 2002; White & Mason, 2003; Wilson & Wright, 1993) as well as evaluating practicum-based assessments for learning (Billett, 2009; Boud, Cohen, & Walker, 1993; Calway, 2006; Coll & Chapman, 2000; Eraut & Hirsh, 2007; Gibbs & Simpson, 2004; Jones, Higgs, De Angelis, & Prideaux, 2001; Orrell, 2011; Richardson, 2005; Yorke, 2006). It is, therefore, a tested methodology that has wide applications. On this basis, we determined that an evaluation research framework was a good choice for a study such as this, because it aided us to explore the mechanics of what works and what does not work when focusing on students' perspectives for a post-practicum teamwork assessment task, especially when it is linked to the three interventions. Finally, the methodology of choice allowed us to identify, what we are doing, valuing why we are doing it, and to understand how we might make improvements in the future (Walter, 2011).

8   Methods

Due to our methodology choice, we chose a mixed methods approach to the study. First, students are central in such learning experiences and are expected to reconcile what they have learnt and why. Second, without their participation in this study we would struggle to identify better ways of improving post-practicum teamwork assessment tasks or how to better provide interventions that align to the learning outcomes of the program. Therefore, a mixed methods approach was ideal, because it allowed us to "provide statistics and stories that complemented and contrasted to inform our thinking about the problems at hand" (Watkins & Gioia, 2015, p. viii). Eliciting students' views and opinions was therefore crucial for deciding which type of intervention/s would be recommended for future long-term gains. The target population consisted of students enrolled in a Business course, such as Bachelor of Commerce or a Master of Commerce at a large University Business School in Sydney, NSW Australia. The demographic distribution of students who enrolled in the Business School is presented in Fig. 1, below. The participants who took part in this study did so either via participating in a semester long (13 weeks) or an inten-sive study (6 weeks) period (which was for credit) from 2017 to 2018.

The participants were invited to take part in a pre- and post-survey about their experiences of a post-practicum teamwork assessment task for a multi-disciplinary WIL program. We also invited the same students to take part in a focus group recorded interview. The focus group interview was beneficial in that it helped us to further elicit students' perspectives about their experiences. Students who took part in the study noted that they had minimal exposure to the workplace and/or

DEMOGRAPHICS

■ Domestic ■ International ■ Male ■ Female

GENDER	47%	53%
BACKGROUND	47%	53%

Fig. 1 Demographic distribution of students who enrolled in the Business School where this study took place
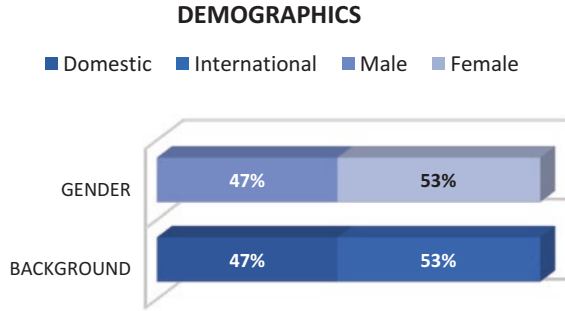
professional practice associated with their courses. The data were analysed using standard mixed methods analysis techniques with two key themes emerging. These were:

1. purpose and approach to post-practicum teamwork outcomes;
2. working in diverse multi-disciplinary teams alongside industry.

9   Data Collection

9.1   Surveys

The survey questions were designed by first investigating the literature on post-practicum learning to ascertain the knowledge gaps. We also sought peer-review feedback on the design of the questions, receiving advice from an external expert in post-practicum learning for higher education. The final survey instruments were also tested by students and peers. The surveys consisted of several closed- and open-ended questions that focused on collecting students' responses on their expectations of completing a post-practicum teamwork assessment task. The questions also centred on asking students about the challenges and benefits associated with the interventions. We also sought and received appropriate ethics approval to undertake the study.[1]

9.2   Focus Group Interview

The recorded focus group interview questions were developed and designed to complement the survey questions. In addition, the focus group interviews were instigated to elicit qualitative narratives from participants on how they believed educators

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[1] Please contact the first named author for a copy of the pre- and post-survey questions: rachael.hains-wesson@sydney.edu.au

could improve post-practicum teamwork assessment tasks and why. Six students participated in the recorded focus group interview. Students were asked to answer the following questions:

1. What do you believe were the key challenges when engaging in a post-practicum teamwork assessment task and why?
2. What would make an effective and fair post-practicum teamwork task for assessing what you have learnt through a placement/industry-based project and why?
3. How should educators work with students and industry partners to create effective and fair post-practicum teamwork assessment tasks and why?
4. How can students work more professionally with industry to create effective and fair post-practicum teamwork assessment tasks and why?
5. How can teamwork assessment tasks be used during a placement/industry-based project and after a placement/industry-based project to promote your employability more effectively and why?

The authors also met regularly (once per month for 6 months) during and post-collection of data to undertake critical friends' meetings. These meetings were used as part of the data collection process and to inform the overall data analysis. We also reviewed the literature on Work-Integrated Learning for post-practicum education to inform these meetings (N = 15). Therefore, the survey instruments, recorded focus group interview, critical friends' meetings and the authors' literature investigations informed the mixed method data collection process. We analysed the data for the emergence of themes and in accordance with previous tested evaluation research methodology and frameworks suggested in the literature (Hains-Wesson & Campbell, 2014).

10 Findings

In the next section, we discuss the findings of the study and in terms of each method instrument that was used.

10.1 Survey Results

Twenty-seven students (N = 27) completed the pre-survey and 15 students (N = 15) completed the post-practicum survey. The demographics of the participants are presented in Table 2. The majority (N = 19) of participants noted that prior to completing the three interventions that were linked to the teamwork assessment task that they had previously undertaken five or more teamwork assessment tasks.

We conducted a Word Cloud Analysis of the participants' responses. We achieved this by utilising NVivo's key word function. This is a type of key word analysis utility, which aids in presenting a visual representation based on key word frequencies.

Table 2 Demographics of the pre- and post-survey participants

N = 42		Degree/Discipline	
Gender		**Degree**	
Male	11	Undergraduate	34
Female	31	Postgraduate	8
Age group			
Under 20	3	**Disciplinary area**	
20–24	34	Finance	14
25 and above	5	Accounting	10
Background		Business analytics	6
Domestic	19	International business	4
International	23	Other	8

Fig. 2 The top non-technical skills students expected to achieve prior to undertaking the post-practicum teamwork assessment task

For instance, in Fig. 2, the main learning expectations that students listed, before completing the three interventions and the teamwork assessment task, was that they desired to improve their communication skills as well as other types of communication-related skills, such as public speaking, presentation skills, negotiation and the skills required to explain ideas in a group context, confidently and persuasively. Additionally, other non-technical skills noted by students were: improving efficiency in teamwork, problem solving, conflict resolution, leadership, organising and management skills, interpersonal skills and cultural competency. The results of this finding correlate with previous research, such as those that focus on competency skills, and which are most desired by industry (Allred, Snow, & Miles, 1996; Brown & Latham, 2002).

Many of the participants (N = 22) who took part in the pre-survey suggested that completing the post-practicum teamwork assessment task was essential or very important to their overall learning experience for job-readiness. In addition, participants' responses (N = 25) were future-reflective, because they also believed (as does industry) that they would need (Mean 4, Std.D. 0.95 on a scale of 1 to 5)

non-technical skill development to improve employability. Students also expressed that the post-practicum teamwork assessment task was either going to be extremely challenging or quite challenging (N = 14) with several students (N = 13) articulating that it would be challenging or not very challenging (Mean 3.6, Std.D 0.8).

Overall, the pre-survey data matched what others have also said about teamwork, such as teamwork behaviour is a complex task (Brown & Latham, 2002; Wood, 1986). Therefore, developing and integrating interventions along with evaluating their effectiveness (Cain et al., 2019) can potentially achieve strong student learning outcomes for post-practicum education.

In the post-survey, when participants were asked to reflect on how challenging their post-practicum teamwork experience was, the average response dropped to 3.3 (Std.D 0.65). This finding proposes a decrease in students' perceptions of the difficulties for completing a teamwork assessment task. However, the results also point to an increase in their self-confidence, but only once they had finished a post-practicum teamwork task for improving relevant employability skills. For instance, in Table 3, the data presents the participants' expectations (in the pre-survey) and their reflections (in the post-survey) about their top challenges, which they believed would occur while undertaking the post-practicum teamwork assessment task. We discovered from these results, that the participants were mostly lacking confidence in their communication skills prior to undertaking the experience. Participants were concerned about their communication skills in a professional working environment, public speaking, being able to explain ideas clearly and persuasively. A few of the respondents were not sure about which types of communication skills would be most required during conflict. For instance, when pressure was placed on them due to working with diversified multi-disciplinary groups. International students whose native language was not English were highly concerned about their communication skills when working with English speakers. Other challenges, that were noted by

Table 3 Students' expectations (pre-survey) vs. reflections (post-survey) for the top challenges while undertaking the post-practicum teamwork assessment task

Pre-survey	No.	Post-survey	No.
Communication	13	Research	9
Public Speaking	2	Industry knowledge	7
Expressing opinions	4	Communication	6
Language	3	Presentation	1
General	4	Academic writing	3
Time management	10	General	2
Organising and managing	8	Managing diversity	5
Managing diversity	6	Organising and managing	4
Conflict resolution	6	Limited guidance	3
Industry knowledge	6	Time management	2
Decision making	4		
Effective collaboration	4		
Limited guidance	2		

participants and according to the ranking of the responses, included: time management, organising and managing teamwork, conflict resolution, lack of industry knowledge, decision-making, ensuring effective collaboration and limited guidance on the assessment task. These result, further emphasise, the important requirement to prepare students for Work-Integrated Education, which can then augment post-practicum learning, because preparation for pre- and post-experience learning can have a direct impact on the way that teaching and learning takes place (Billett, 2009, 2015; Brown & Latham, 2002; McTighe & Emberger, 2006).

When we compared the results from the post-survey with the pre-survey data, we found that some challenges that were previously noted by students had disappeared, such as those relating to task-orientated specific skills. For example, participants no longer mentioned language, conflict resolution, decision-making, or effective collaboration as their top challenges when reflecting on their post-experience learning. Instead, we noticed that there were new challenges being highlighted by students. One new issue related to students expressing that they felt that they did not have enough research skills, especially when they reflected on being in a professional setting or presenting in front of industry experts (see Table 3). Students went on to suggest that they struggled with the following research-related skill areas: how to conduct research for the group project work, reviewing relevant literature and identifying gaps for contribution, conducting data analysis, and undertaking academic writing. All too often, the student perspective is underplayed when evaluating curriculum (Cain et al., 2019). Therefore, this finding suggests that the program's academic skill area requirement needs further development and student support options.

Other participants expressed that they felt they lacked industry knowledge as well as how to manage diversity, organise and manage teamwork roles and instigate effective time management. Additionally, participants noted that they felt that they had limited guidance from teachers and industry partners on how to complete post-practicum teamwork assessment tasks. Despite the noted challenges by participants, students however, stated that they had improved upon the required skills by taking part in the interventions, actively communicating with their team members, seeking advice from peers and friends who had similar experiences. Participants felt that the intervention approaches helped to reduce their stress and enhanced their ability to problem solve. The participants also noted specific areas for further improving the post-practicum teamwork assessment task, such as the need for additional teaching support, assistance with conflict resolution, how to encourage team motivation and incorporate time management skills. Students felt that additional support options, such as the areas noted earlier, would effectively help them to navigate future post-practicum teamwork experiences. Thus, the findings not only point towards students' perceptions around post-practicum teamwork assessment tasks as being challenging, but that these are not negative or surprising. This result is not a new discovery *per se*. However, what it does shed light on, is that when interventions (prior to students undertaking post-practicum learning) are clearly aligned to students' non-technical and technical needs, learning benefits will arise. For example, participants suggested that educators could do the following:

1. Articulate and showcase to students the variety of challenges (via real stories from students) of completing post-practicum teamwork assessments successfully and with a focus on positive failure;
2. Articulate and showcase the support options (early) that will be provided, highlighting what will not be provided and why;
3. Provide students with non-graded but compulsory interventions that will support a post-practicum teamwork assessment task and its outcomes, which are relevant, fun and engaging.

The above points are useful when considering future improvements for the program as well as addressing and reconciling interventions that can assist with reducing stress and anxiety around teamwork assessment tasks (Cain et al., 2019). As one participant noted, 'I expected everyone working together in a peaceful and supportive environment' and 'be able to hear different perspectives and share one's opinions' via an 'assessment that everyone is satisfied and excited about'. This is not always the case though, and especially for teamwork presentations, which are often complex and resource intensive for educators to support (Brown & Latham, 2002).

10.2   *Focus Group Interview*

From the results of the focus group data analysis, we discovered three themes that emerged: (i) students' preparedness of post-practicum teamwork learning; (ii) managing students' expectations; and (iii) uncovering interpersonal employability skills. Whilst undoubtedly not exhaustive, these issues are discussed in the following section.

10.3   *Preparedness*

Acknowledging and understanding students' abilities and work experience (Brown & Latham, 2002) when working in teams is paramount for preparing students adequately to undergo post-practicum teamwork projects, especially when industry outcomes/deliverables are of a focus. When starting a teamwork project unprepared, the experience might be overwhelming and lead to dissonance, rather than enabling effective learning post-practicum to occur (McTighe & Emberger, 2006). For instance, students indicated in the focus group interview that the following areas required additional preparation, suggesting that this needed to occur prior to undertaking a post-practicum teamwork experience. Firstly, students were anxious about working in diversified multi-disciplinary teams. One student suggested that when working with team members from different disciplines, cultural backgrounds and/or with different levels of work experience that they became very concerned. They were concerned about conducting effective communication, incorporating

collaboration techniques for resolving conflict, ensuring equal contribution amongst team members and encouraging commitment from team members who were less engaged. Students readily acknowledged the complications resulting from such situations, its complexity and the various challanges associated with diversity, especially when being observed by industry partners. For instance, increased anxiety levels, which were suggested by one participant who stated, 'students from different backgrounds may have very different norms and beliefs', and 'the same sentence may be interpreted in different ways in different cultures and religions.' Furthermore, students expressed that they found it challenging to 'bring people from different working styles, standards, and motivations to the same page', especially when an industry client changed the scope of the expected deliverable. This finding is no different to what students might find in industry as a professional upon graduation (Allred et al., 1996). However, what we found interesting was that students felt less confident to act like a professional in an industry context, especially when they felt that they were not adequately prepared to do so. To offset unrealistic expectations, to minimise anxiety and stress levels, students suggested that they had found the interventions helpful. For instance, participants expressed that the interventions supported them to address feelings of being unprepared, to better participate in the post-practicum teamwork assessment task, prepare for self-directed learning, such as understanding urban planning, marketing strategies for art galleries, or working in unfamiliar workplaces, such as the children's hospitals, for example.

10.4 Managing Expectations

Managing students' participation and engagement expectations for the three interventions and the post-practicum teamwork assessment task proved to be a key challenge for educators. Practicum-based programs that include a placement and/or industry-based project add additional elements that consumes educators' time and resources (Billett, Newtown, Rogers, & Noble, 2019). For example, students highlighted in the focus group interview that team management, especially when trying to keep team members motivated, on track or engaged persisted to be a challenge. Frustration often arose when team members were demotivated when the tasks 'seemed to be less relevant [to the assessments]', repetitive, or too difficult. Free riders often existed, and the teamwork task mainly relied on students who 'were the most motivated or the most desperate'. This caused problems with timing, organisation and advancing progress for the post-practicum presentation experience. These concerns are also a known phenomenon for teamwork in the higher education literature (Hains-Wesson, Pollard, & Campbell, 2017). Students commented regularly that the educator, for post-practicum learning, plays a crucial role in setting-up the expectations and standards early, and that this should be completed prior to the program's first assessment task. This finding augments previous studies about the importance of the educator's role for post-practicum learning in the area of interventions when they are conducted in small groups and mediated by more experienced individuals (Cain

et al., 2019; Lindgren, Brulin, Holmlund, & Athlin, 2005). Furthermore, students requested that educators regularly monitor the progress of the teams, encouraging educators to do this throughout the program and especially during post-practicum learning. Students suggested that this does not have to be graded, but rather should focus on students being accountable for post-practicum learning. This in turn, would encourage less motivated students to feel obligated that their involvement was essential. Students' perspectives on this point was also observed, for example, when we noted that very few students turned up to the third intervention, which was the career development workshop. Therefore, without this intervention aligning to an assessment or becoming compulsory, low attendance numbers will remain.

10.5 Interpersonal Skills

In the post-practicum survey, when participants were asked 'How helpful, overall, were the group assessment/s of learning for your career development?', 83% of students chose 'essential', 'very important', or 'important' (Mean 3.75, Std.D. 0.97, 5 being essential and 1 being irrelevant). This finding also correlated to the focus group interview data. Participants highlighted that the post-practicum experience had largely improved their communication skills (noted by all participants), time management skills, problem solving skills, team management and organising skills. Some informants mentioned that working in diverse teams, such as multi-disciplinary groups, while also being involved in a professional industry environment allowed them to practise articulating ideas and to persuade others to consider ideas. This is an important finding, because it suggests that students' employability improved, and was based on the theory of learning from experience by Boud et al. (1993). Overall, students noted that working in diversified, multi-disciplinary teams was beneficial for improving employability skills and developing resilience. Participants believed that they had acquired the knowledge, understanding and practice to learn that diversification equates to better brainstorming, resulting in important innovation outcomes that hase meaning for team members and industry partners. Although, as one student noted, 'it's challenging to reconcile everyone's ideas, especially when there were conflicts and arguments', which requires respect and open mindedness. Furthermore, students suggested that they had learnt to deal with challenges and unknowns that arose from the post-practicum teamwork experience. For example, a student commented that navigating complexity, challenges and undertaking additional learning requirements (i.e. the interventions) 'did make me look at group work in a different way and, [reflecting on my experience and approaches], I am better aware of my strengths and weaknesses as a group member.'

Therefore, the results of this study support Billett's (2015) research where students' opinions of feeling 'uneasy' or "overwhelmed' is often associated with the scale and complexity of the industry-linked learning experiences. Consequently, the students' post-experience reflections in this study further support the need for integrating interventions into the post-practicum curriculum. This in turn, will aid in

relieving feelings of anxiety and supporting students to prepare for issues or challenges throughout the learning cycle.

11   Outcomes

From the set findings, we will now discuss the benefits of the interventions that were used to support the post-practicum teamwork outcome.

11.1   Improvements to Student Teamwork Processes for Post-practicum Learning

The post-practicum teamwork assessment task, investigated in this chapter, meets the definition of being dynamically complex due to the ongoing changes in the acts and information cues required to perform the tasks (Brown & Latham, 2002). Therefore, ensuring that there is an adequate and appropriate level of structure in the post-practicum teamwork experiences, including the sequencing of the interventions (whether they are graded or not) and the management of students' progress pre-, during and post-experience, are important elements to consider. Part of that structuring could include more compulsory and hands-on interactive, online, preparation activities and/or activities that provide opportunities for students to discuss perceived and/or actual issues of immediate interest. Therefore, part of any future structuring for post-practicum learning experiences could be used to develop the students' capacities to engage effectively in teamwork activities when failure occurs. Of course, such structured processes should leave open the options for educators to facilitate the areas of uncertainty or lack of clarity that is often common practice for the workplace. This in turn, would allow students to feel confident to raise and discuss failure before and after it has occurred. We believe that this would be most advantageous for students learning about the workforce if industry were involved. We would also posit that such processes should be followed-up at some point by graded assessments. This would ensure that what was learnt was appropriate and in accordance with the domain of learning, and that was most desired.

11.2   Issues of Student Engagement for Post-practicum Learning

Clearly, if students are being expected to do something for which they are not adequately prepared to productively engage with, the learning outcomes will likely be inferior or negative. The other key issue with students' engagement for post-practicum teamwork is their willingness to participate as an active team member

when they are demotivated, stressed or unsure about what is required. Another major concern is that students might merely respond to the assessment criteria, in a superficial and intentional way, rather than engage in the learning process, and in this case the three interventions.

12 Considerations for Curriculum and Pedagogy

From the findings discovered, it is now possible to identify some key considerations for curriculum and pedagogy when developing and/or improving post-practicum teamwork experiences. It is these points that conclude this chapter.

12.1 Relationship Between Interventions and Graded Assessments

An opportunity in which to prepare students to actively take part in post-practicum, graded teamwork learning outcomes is for the educator to initially observe teamwork practices, in action or attend student/industry meetings where teamwork outcomes are discussed first. This will assist students to develop a level of readiness, motivate engagement and prepare them for post-practicum learning interventions. The key observations made from this involvement with student groups could then be infiltrated into future intervention activities. The interventions could then be utilised to review student learning to ascertain if students lack readiness to engage in the teamwork activities or assessment tasks. For example, the interventions mentioned in this study might be better orchestrated via students contributing to the delivery structure of what is to be learnt. This in turn, would re-focus the interventions on what is most topical or of an issue, meeting the call for students to decide on how to engage with the interventions (Cain et al., 2019), which need to support post-practicum teamwork assessment task and the relevant outcomes.

We also discovered that the post-practicum teamwork assessment task had several advantages. These included, the potential of the interventions to be directly related to the intended outcomes of the course or unit. However, there were also some disadvantages. These included, students' responses being constrained to a specific focus or topic that related to the graded assessment task, rather than on learning for learning sake. From our experience, we found that most students will always be more concerned about grades. This in turn, provides the kind of student responses, which they conclude their educators want, rather than what is most important, which is to be a life-long learner and an evolving professional over time.

13 Recommendations

Based on the findings, we now present some recommendations for advancing the three interventions as well as discuss how educators might further improve upon these. The recommendations can be graded or not, but we believe, at the very least, they should be compulsory to combat low attendance rates and include the following:

1. As part of the LTC intervention – allow students to develop a best practice model for preparing teamwork outcomes when working with industry. This can be completed pre- and post-practicum with the results of the outcome being compared and reflected upon for deeper employability skill development and articulation;
2. As part of the problem-solving workshop – provide online support options that are student-centric when working with industry, such as examples and opportunities for students to discuss mistakes, errors and successes by turning these opportunities into authentic story telling artefacts. This can be completed pre- and post-practicum with the results of the outcomes being compared and reflected upon for deeper employability skill development and articulation;
3. Create and develop interventions that students note as being interesting, relevant to what needs to be achieved and that students would want to complete as part of an assessment or outside of it, because they are also fun;
4. Allow students and industry to help co-design the career development learning debrief workshop. This should be compulsory but only if it is relevant, engaging and fun.

In addition, we add to the research by Billett (2015, 2019), but with the added emphasis on improving post-practicum teamwork assessment activities, which are:

1. Discuss experiences that students have found worthwhile/interesting/complex during teamwork meetings with industry partners;
2. Link what is expected for professional practice about how to work as an effective multi-disciplinary/disciplinary team member to what is taught at university;
3. Allow students to learn more about teamwork practices in their preferred occupations;
4. Allow students to learn about other students' teamwork experiences during the professional practice with industry as a key partner in this learning process;
5. Allow students to learn how preferred teamwork practices are completed for multi-disciplinary versus disciplinary outcomes;
6. Secure feedback from industry and peers for post-practicum teamwork assessment experiences;
7. Support students through career development learning expertise on how to articulate effective teamwork experiences as well as when things do not go to plan;
8. Incorporate an evaluation process that can assist with improving the teamwork experiences for post-practicum teamwork assessment tasks and its interventions for the next cohort of students.

14 Conclusions

In this study, we discovered that students did not always feel confident when undertaking pre-, during or post-practicum-based learning experiences for developing their job-readiness for teamwork. Nor, did they understand how to effectively collaborate with peers from diverse disciplines when working in teams with industry. Therefore, by understanding students' perceptions about these challenges and how they perceive the post-practicum teamwork assessment task as well as the interventions, we discovered new ways for supporting students' self-confidence building. This study also provided an avenue to gather students' responses to assist us with improving the program for future iterations, because we agree that "all too often, the student perspective is underplayed and undervalued" (Cain, et al., 2019, p. 28). It was therefore vital that students' perspectives were elicited when establishing how to enhance the curriculum.

We also observed that many business students found it challenging to present their ideas verbally or to communicate their personal and professional thoughts in both the written and verbal form. We found that this was especially the case when these thoughts/narratives needed to focus on employability skill development when things did not go to plan, i.e. articulating failure as a positive professional quality. To assist with further understanding such student-centric challenges and obstacles, how-to best support students with taking negative experiences and re-positioning these into opportunities, we investigated students' perceived self-confidence levels pre- and post-practicum learning experience. We mainly focused on understanding students' strengths and weaknesses around communication and interpersonal skill development when undergoing a post-practicum teamwork assessment task. We believe, along with Billett (2015, 2019), that without understanding students' perspectives about these challenges and the many obstacles of undertaking such teamwork activities as part of post-experience initiatives, we cannot continue to assume that graded post-practicum assessment tasks for teamwork (i.e. presentations and reports) are enough for acquiring employability skills.

We discovered, from the results of this study, that supporting students with interventions that are aligned to assessments, that are engaging and fun will continue to be difficult unless attendance rates for ungraded interventions are improved. The interventions and the post-practicum teamwork assessment task that were illustrated in this study, allowed students to be encouraged to lead, manage and shape the experiences for themselves and their peers. This approach, when the students elected to engage with it, seemed to be the one that elicited the highest engagement outcomes. However, there were concerns that such processes can lead to challenges and upsets. That is, students became distracted by previous negative teamwork experiences, such as negative group think, lack of engaged team members and unresolved conflict. These challenges may have been some of the reasons for the low attendance rate at the non-graded interventions. Finally, we advocate that an educator's competence for preparing, engaging students and augmenting their work experiences through interventions, which firmly link to a post-practicum teamwork task, can

optimise educational provisions, promote employability beyond graduation and provide a bases for students to be confident, active learners throughout working life.

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Becoming a Teacher: Scaffolding Post-practicum Reflection

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1 Introduction

The quality and supply of teachers in Australia is an emerging challenge for policy makers. Increased attrition rates for those entering teaching programs and early career professionals exiting before their fifth year is impacting on the supply of quality teachers (Weldon, 2018). Concern about the quality of graduate teaching programs has led to the establishment across many universities of two-year postgraduate study programs. These program changes were mandated by accreditation requirements agreed at national and state level (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), 2015). Teacher education has become a highly regulated environment with many calls for teacher educators to reclaim the accountability agenda (Ambrosetti, Capeness, Kriewaldt, & Rorrison, 2018; Cochran-Smith et al., 2018). This study responds to this call by developing mechanisms to facilitate pre-service teachers' reflective practices about their work-readiness, with a particular focus on resilience, self-efficacy, and role-efficacy. Many universities express their aspirations for work ready graduates through the articulation of a set of general employability skills that are embedded in curriculum development and approval processes as graduate attributes (Daniels & Brooker, 2014). In this context our aims were two-fold: first, to investigate pre-service teachers' perceptions of their work-readiness at different stages of their university program; and second, to use these reflective practices to make students self-aware and workplace-aware about what is expected for resilience, self-efficacy and role-efficacy for teachers. Of interest, findings from this study developed our understanding of how teacher educators can

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support students entering two-year Master of Education programs make the transition from their previous profession into teaching.

Students entering a Master of Teaching program are making a life transition to become a teacher making a shift from their previous profession to a new career. One of the challenges of teacher education is to support students through this transition. Often this transition is identified as moving through three stages of liminality (Turner, 1967, 1974). Stage one preliminary is the initial separation from the previous state; in this case, their previous professional identity, the second stage is liminal identified as the in-between space. While lacking status and authority, the liminal space offers significant opportunities to engage with ideas and develop identity. Post-liminal is the third stage, where the aggregation of identity as a teacher occurs. Teacher educations students on placement are described as occupying the liminal space. However, the transition through the stages is more complex and multifaceted that a linear trajectory through the three stages (Chang, 2018; Head, 1992; McNamara, Roberts, Basit, & Brown, 2002; Wood, 2012). Little was known about how postgraduate students experience the transition to becoming a teacher and how post-practicum interventions could scaffold and facilitate navigating the liminal space. Hence, our work sought to use data generated from teacher education students to understand how our teaching and learning programs can support the transition from undergraduate degree holder to a fully qualified teacher in two years of study. The study also engaged us as teacher educators in responding to the call to reclaim our professionalism in the context of increasing regulation and accountability in teacher education as we designed innovative post-practicum experiences (Heck & Ambrosetti, 2018).

2   Employability and Higher Education

In the past, the term 'graduate employability' was used to describe the skills a graduate would be required to possess to secure employment in their chosen profession, with an emphasis on technical, discipline-specific skills (Bridgstock, 2009). This definition represents a human capital view of graduate employability with the emphasis on higher education, developing work integrated learning to support skill and competency development. Higher education development of graduate attributes for all programs of study are examples of the human capital response in the sector. Clarke (2018) advocates for a broadening of this perspective to include social capital, individual behaviour and attributes that all need to be considered in the context of the current labour market. Increasingly employers concerns go beyond cognitive capabilities with calls for personal and interpersonal employability skills (Sheehan, de Bueger, Thorogood, Sitters, & Deo, 2018). Shifting labour markets also have a significant impact on employability. Increasingly graduates need to navigate nonlinear career pathways in a rapidly shifting employment market. Hence, graduates

need to develop a range of different skills from those of previous generations. Jackson and Edgar (2019) suggest that students do not value career development learning unless it is integrated into their coursework. Hence, developing meaningful learning experiences that facilitate students to draw on their work experience will support their future employability. Work integrated learning in the health sector has responded to these challenges with the development of core concepts incorporated into each of their courses to support a common language between the university, placement providers and the community (Pennbrant & Svensson, 2018). The core concepts of the work integrated learning healthcare pedagogics are "(1) learning, (2) knowledge (3) competence, (4) communication, (5) culture, (6) organization, and (7) socialization" (Pennbrant & Svensson, 2018, p. 186). Hence, the health care sector has taken steps to incorporate Clarke's (2018) broader notion of employability, including human capital, social capital, individual behaviours and attributes within the context of the community.

These definitions and approaches are in stark contrast to the methods used by the government to measure graduate employability in Australia. The current process is calculated based on the number of graduates in full-time employment and the time taken to secure this employment. The yearly results are published in the Graduate Outcomes Survey (Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching, 2018, 2019). Graduate Outcomes Surveys over recent years have identified a 1% increase from the 72% of Australian undergraduates who secured full-time employment within four months of graduating in 2017 to 73% for 2018 (Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching, 2018). These figures are substantial increases from 2013 when only 30% of graduates had secured full-time employment within the first four months of graduating (Graduate Careers Australia, 2014). However, the use of a measure solely dependent on timely employment does not recognise the concept of graduate employability with longer term career management. It is limited to the initial stages of a career without specific consideration of the skills necessary for advancement, longevity and maintenance of a career (Kinash et al., 2015). Longer term career management skills are becoming more necessary in order to keep abreast of the pace of change experienced in the modern world (Bridgstock, 2009). Some institutions are beginning to make a differentiation between employability and employment, thus moving away from a short-term focus on securing permanent employment post-graduation. Many Australian higher education institutions have made employability a priority and begun to implement strategies supporting wider-ranging skill-sets in their course offerings, not only aiming to achieve a high percentages of graduates securing timely employment (as measured by the Graduate Outcomes Survey) but also producing graduates ready to adapt and adjust to future workplace changes (Kinash, Crane, & Judd, 2016). Strategies implemented include embedding and resourcing employability through career advisors, embedding foundational career elements in programs and connecting where possible to professional practice and reflection. This study contributes to knowledge that supports the latter two categories of university response.

3   Teacher Education and Employability

As graduates approach the transition from tertiary education to professional employment, work-readiness and employability increasingly become their focus of attention. Graduates focus on gaining and securing employment while employers look to attract and retain competent and skilled and reflexive employees. The release of The Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) report (Craven et al., 2014) highlighted concerns in Australia about initial teacher education courses and graduate readiness along with attraction and retention of quality teaching staff. These concerns continue to be addressed in the media (Bahr & Jo-Anne, 2018: Doyle, 2017; Maher, 2014; Pendergast, Ferreria, & Bahn, 2018; Schipp, 2017). Increasingly, prospective employers are requiring their new graduate employees to have specific academic qualifications, good personal and communication skills as well as more general attributes such as integrity, courtesy, positivity, resilience and flexibility (Caballero & Walker, 2010; Holland, Sheehan, & De Cieri, 2007; Patterson, Boyd, & Mnatzaganian, 2017). Research suggests that not all employers are entirely satisfied with the degree to which recent graduates are prepared for the workplace (Caballero & Walker, 2010; Masole & van Dyk, 2016). McKenzie, Weldon, Rowley, Murphy, and McMillian (2014) reported that while early career teachers indicated that they had found their initial teacher education courses generally helpful in preparing them for classroom teaching many also reported that they felt they required more knowledge and skills to equip them for employment. Evidently, in addition to cognitive demands, work readiness extends to including resilience and efficacy.

Initial teacher education courses provide the theory and discipline specific skills necessary for a teacher and as they complete these courses preservice teachers being to develop teacher identity. During their university course work and supervised professional experiences (SPE) preservice teachers continue to shape their beliefs about teachers as professionals and perceptions of themselves as potential education professionals (Beltman, Mansfield, & Price, 2011).

On successful completion, initial teacher education students in Australia are required to provide evidence that they have both the necessary theoretical knowledge and associated practical skills in order to fulfil their professional duties as a classroom teacher (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), 2011, 2015). These skills are assessed using the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST). Preservice teachers must supply evidence of their capabilities against each of the seven standards detailed in this national framework (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), 2011). From 2018, preservice teachers must additionally complete a Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA), an assessment that is designed to prove classroom competence and is also measured against the ASPT. Before commencing employment, graduates must also pass the Literacy and Numeracy Test for Initial Teacher Education Students (LANTITE) in order to prove their personal proficiency in literacy and numeracy. These recent measures have been put in place by the government response

(Australian Government, 2015) to the TEMAG report (Craven et al., 2014) in order to improve public confidence in the teaching profession. However, these measures do not address the specific employability skills identified as being required by the profession, nor to a great extent, the development of teacher identity and this is the gap that this work responds to for initial teacher education students in our context.

The role of the teacher is complex and multi-dimensional and involves many diverse stakeholders' expectations (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Department of Education, 2017). A teacher must be able to plan, prepare, teach and assess content, be sympathetic to the communities they serve, communicate with various professionals and parents, work both independently and in a team, cope with change and additionally perform many of these duties under pressure whilst catering for the individual needs of the students in their classes (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Pfitzner-Eden, 2016). To begin and then to continue to thrive in the profession, a preservice teacher must feel confident in their ability to meet the variety of challenges they may face. The optimum timing for students to engage in education experiences that allow them to share, compare and critically consider their experiences are following their placement experience (Billett, 2015).

4   Value of Post-practicum Experiences in Higher Education

Work integrated learning has been widely embraced in higher education in response to the employability agenda. The contribution of post-practicum experiences in higher education offers the opportunity to shift the employability agenda beyond a human capital focus into a broader interpretation of employability. Billett, Cain, and Le (2018) have identified four key outcomes that benefit students when they engage in post-practicum experiences. First, it provides scope for students to translate their experiences into adaptable knowledge. Second, meaningful post-practicum activities offer ways for students to share and critically engage in connecting theory and practice. Third, it offers ways to optimise learning about what might be unforeseen and unexpected on placement and share this amongst the group. Finally, the post-practicum experience offers students and academics the opportunity to align placement experiences for the group with the learning outcomes for the course. However, these authors also identify the benefits for academics in terms of their ability to adapted and develop the course and placement experiences based on their engagement with students when they return from placement.

To achieve outcomes for students and academics, carefully planned post-practicum interventions are required. Billett et al. (2018) identify the use of reflective tasks and seminars and de-briefing sessions as examples of structured experiences that facilitate student reflection and the development of awareness of themselves and others in the workplace context. These experiences support the fundamental focus of higher education, the development of "reflexive, socially responsible and action-oriented future professionals who can contribute to a better future"

(Trede & Jackson, 2019, p. 1). Trede and Jackson (2019, p. 2) call for deliberate professionals defined as "someone what can think for self, considers others and is curious to explore with others how things could be otherwise." The deliberate professional has four key characteristics (Trede & McEwen, 2016). First, they engage with and deliberate on the complexity of workplaces, including culture and the environment. Second, is the capacity to explore and understand what can be changed through an exploration of the probably, possible and impossible. Third, they can make decisions based on their viewpoint or stance. Finally, they can take responsibility for the consequences of their action or non-action in the workplace.

The outcomes of participation in post-practicum activities and the development of deliberate professionals are well aligned. Trede and Jackson (2019) identify the value of work placement reflection that has clear intent and purpose. However, they suggest that one of the challenges of reflection tasks is that they are often individual. In group contexts, one of the tasks is maintaining the quality of the discussion that students engage with to develop quality reflection. Billett et al. (2018) note in their research with health students that they valued the ability to reflect with knowledgeable others rather than with their peers. Hence, the challenge remains to develop scaffolded practices that support students to develop their ability to critical reflect on their developing professional practice. Trede and Jackson's research used informal student huddles to discuss work integrated learning identified student capacity outside of their formal curriculum to take responsibility for their own learning and understand their professional stance (2019). However, they also noted that without further support and scaffolding the students had less capability to engage with the complexity of the workplace and examine and weigh up the probably, possible and improbable change in the workplace. These agenda aligns with the call to embed practitioner inquiry in teacher education to engage a workforce with the capacity for critical inquiry (Wrench & Paige, 2019).

5 Study Design

The study explored practicum experiences that could be embedded in teacher education courses to enhance pre-service teacher reflective practices to bolster both graduate outcomes and future employability. Literature suggests that teacher identity, self-efficacy and resilience have significant roles to play in the successful transition from pre-service to in-service teacher and connect with teacher attrition and retention (Johnson et al., 2014; Le Cornu, 2009; Morris, 2010; Pfitzner-Eden, 2016). Therefore, to achieve our aim and develop useful post-practicum reflection tools and assessment to support the Master of Teaching (Secondary) students, we needed to understand the perspectives of current students. We sought to gain an understanding of the students' feelings of self-efficacy, their developing teacher identity, their perceptions and understanding of work-readiness and also their feelings of

resilience. In addition, we sought to understand how these feelings and perceptions change throughout the liminal stage. The study employed a mixed-method approach to gather the required data (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). To do this, we employed several previously validated survey instruments. Caballero, Walker, and Fuller-Tyszkiewicz (2011) identified a need to measure work readiness that encompassed not only discipline specific skills, but also other skills and attitudes as articulated as imperative by potential graduate employers. They developed and validated the Work Readiness Scale (WRS) with nurses in the health sector. Permission was granted for this study to use and modify the existing instrument to better suit the measurement of work readiness in the education sector. Bandura (1982) extensively researched self-efficacy and (Pfitzner-Eden, 2016) used some of this work to develop a scale to measure self-efficacy in preservice teachers. We used this scale to gain an understanding of the feelings of self-efficacy in participants. We also used the General Self-Efficacy Scale (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995) to measure self-efficacy and the brief resilience scale (Smith et al., 2008) both were measures of a general population. Ethics approval was sought to generate data from students using an anonymous electronic survey via the Survey Monkey online platform.

SPSS™ (a quantitative data processing software package) provided descriptive statistical analysis for data collected from the questionnaires. Tables and graphs were generated and analysed, providing information on student engagement, efficacy, work readiness and resilience. The data was further analysed by separating the responses using the number of supervised professional experiences (SPEs) in which participants had participated. The analysis allowed the study team to gain an insight into the effect on perceived readiness of the initial and subsequent SPEs during liminality for use in the development of the post-practicum intervention.

6   Charting the Student Experience

The student survey identified a decline in student general self-efficacy after one professional experience, indicating that students generally felt less ready after one professional experience than when they began their studies. However, after their second and subsequent practicum experiences, students began to feel more confident and better prepared. The students identified that they learned more from participating in professional activities than in observational activities and that they began to develop a sense of mastery of necessary skills as they continued through subsequent practicum experiences. Data from the Personal Resilience Scale (Smith et al., 2008) indicated that students felt more able to respond to educational stressors as they moved through their courses (See Table 1). Qualitative data collected highlighted student teacher relationships, working as a teacher, working with the class and mentor and developing lessons as themes generated from preservice teacher's perceptions of workplace and classroom readiness.

Table 1 Summary data from student survey

Scale	Completed no SPE		Completed 1 SPE		Completed 2 or more SPE	
	Range	Median	Range	Median	Range	Median
Self-efficacy scale N = 14	N = 40		N = 62		N = 42	
	25–40	33	22–39	32	22–40	32
Resilience scale N = 105	N = 22		N = 51		N = 32	
	2.0–5.0	3.67	1.7–5.0	3.67	2.3–5.0	3.75
Teacher self-efficacy scale N = 97			N = 58		N = 39	
Mastery experiences			2–9	7.50	3–9	7.52
Vicarious experiences			2–9	7.63	1–9	8.25
Verbal persuasion by mentor			2–9	8.00	1–9	8.50
Verbal persuasion by other			2–9	7.00	1–9	7.68
Physiological and affective states			1–9	3.00	1–9	3.33
Work readiness scale N = 106	N = 22		N = 51		N = 33	
Personal work characteristics	2–8	4.31	1–8	4.32	1–8	4.63
Organisational acumen	8–10	9.34	2–10	9.13	1–10	9.31
Work competence	6–9	7.46	4–10	7.50	3–10	8.00
Social intelligence	6–9	8.13	4–10	8.00	3–10	7.75

General Self-Efficacy Scale – reported as total score, sum of 10 items with response scale 1–4. Total score range 10–40 with higher score indicating more self-efficacy (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995)

Resilience Scale – reported as an average, six items with response scale 1–5. Higher average indicates higher degree of reported resilience (Smith et al., 2008)

Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale – reported as an average by sub-scale, 15 items with response scale 1–9. Experiences and persuasions subscales positively worded, higher score indicating more positivity. Physiological and affective subscale negatively worded, higher score indicating higher levels of discomfort (Pfitzner-Eden, 2016)

Work Readiness Scale – reported as average by sub-scale, 46 items with response scale 1–10. Personal work characteristics scale negatively worded, higher score indicating more of an issue. Organisational acumen, work competence and social intelligence positively worded, higher score indicating a perceived strength (Caballero, Walker, & Fuller-Tyszkiewicz, 2011)

7 Developing the Post-practicum Experience

We began our exploration of the liminality of student experiences of becoming a teacher to understanding how students engage with practicum experiences. After analysing collected data, course outlines and feedback from course coordinators and other staff associated with professional experience courses, the first stage of the process for developing the post-practice experience was the development of a framework. The purpose of the framework was to scaffold student reflection and optimise the outcomes from the learning experience (Billett, 2015). The 'Becoming a Teacher' framework incorporated the use of the findings and a redevelopment of the Workskills Development Framework (WSD) (Bandaranaike & Willison, 2014, 2015) and Research Skills Development (RSD) framework (Willison & O'Regan, 2007) (see Table 2). The 'Becoming a Teacher' framework includes six dimensions

Table 2 Becoming a Teacher: Facets of Preservice teacher (PST) professional development

Facet	Description	Disposition
Embark and clarify	PST are motivated to identify and clarify the cognitive and noncognitive knowledge required to undertake their role as a teacher. Including setting goals and identifying approaches to embark on the breadth of aspects of their role as a teacher.	Curious
Find and generate	PST know how to use the most appropriate approaches to find and generate information for both the cognitive and noncognitive aspects of their role as a teacher.	Determined
Reflect and learn	PST critically evaluate the cognitive and non-cognitive aspects of their role as a teacher. They can reflect on a variety of sources of evidence and feedback with a focus on lifelong learning and continual improvement.	Discerning
Plan and manage	PST organise, plan and manage information and data for application in the context of their role as a teacher as an individual and as part of a team of education professionals. PST can positively manage and influence difficult situations.	Harmonising
Problem solve	PST critically analyse and synthesise information to create coherent understandings and innovative solutions as individuals and teams of educational professionals. PST have self-direction, drive, and adaptability and strive for professional excellence.	Creative
Communicate and collaborate	PST discusses, listens, writes, presents and performs the role of the teacher in collaborative contexts with a range of professionals. PST has the cognitive and noncognitive capacity to build relationships and apply ethical, cultural, social and professional standards required of teachers.	Constructive

involved in the development of teacher identity including – embark and clarify, find and generate, reflect and learn, plan and manage, problem solve, and communicate and collaborate.

The 'Becoming a Teacher' framework makes salient the non-cognitive aspects of teaching and triggers conversations and reflective practices regarding the demands of the profession early in the pre-service teacher program of study. In this way, its development and implementation are in direct response to the findings from students that demonstrate the role of the teacher is complex – much more complicated than pedagogy, curriculum, assessment and lesson planning. The 'Becoming a Teacher' framework generates conversations around the emotional demands of the profession and the need for developing organisational acumen. Employers value qualities like self-confidence and proactivity, and this is captured in active verbs in the left column of Table 2. The importance of being a self-starter and reflective practitioner is captured in the organisation of the 'Becoming a Teacher' framework, where the first column identifies the proactive behavioural facets of a teacher's role, the second column describes how these facets might be enacted, and the third column describes the dispositions associated with these enactments. One of the strong points of this framework is the clear link between teacher qualities, as described in the third column, and teacher behaviours, as described in the first and second columns. When discussing the qualities of teachers and what comprises work-readiness,

university lecturers and tutors can make links between the quality's employers are looking for, and the behaviours that evidence such qualities. In this way, this framework can be used as a reflective self-appraisal too. We are also able to discuss the qualities of mature and leading teachers, explaining that the development of teacher qualities extends throughout one's profession, they are not for the sole purpose of employment, but are essential to a productive and fulfilling career.

To this end, the 'Becoming a Teacher' framework facilitate conversation and reflection around the emergence and development of teacher identity, as depicted in Fig. 1. This process is iterative, cumulative and developmental across the pre-service teacher program of study and could be argued into a teacher's career. One does not merely adopt traits to become ready, but instead traits serve as evidence for the embodying of professional acumen and the formation of professional identity (Bridgstock, 2009; Hinchliffe & Jolly, 2011; Holmes, 2013; Jackson, 2016).

Our challenge in the design of the post-practicum experience was to align our work with the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST). Much of the reflection undertaken higher education program of study is focussed on individual written work that limits the opportunities for students to engage with and learn from others. Hence, limiting the ability to achieve the more collective outcomes of the post-practicum experience including sharing the varied experiences that students encounter during their placement, providing opportunities connect theory and practice in the context of unforeseen or unimagined practicum experiences.

The post-practicum intervention was a debriefing session and reflection task completed after the first ten days of professional experience in the Master of Teaching (secondary) program. During the ten weeks of coursework, students were introduced to the 'Becoming a Teacher' framework to connect theory with practice. During the placement, students were tasked with collecting evidence of the six facets of 'Becoming a Teacher' that related to their course content. In this instance, course content included an understanding of school context, classroom organisation and structure, and the connection between student engagement, the syllabus, and classroom teaching and learning strategies. At the conclusion of the placement, students selected three to five artefacts from their work placement that illustrate their engagement with the framework and course content. The post-practicum experience was a two-hour tutorial following the ten-day placement where students in diverse groupings of teaching areas and schools shared the examples of artefacts and engaged critically in discussions about the connection between theory and practice in small groups. The lecturer then facilitated a final group discussion to consolidate the learning and discussion in each group with the course outcomes. Three days following the post-practice meeting students submitted a 1000-word reflection on their placement experience that documented (1) the understanding they developed,
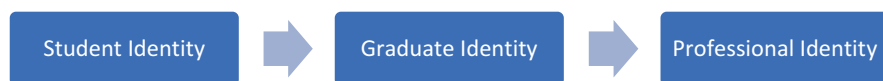

Fig. 1 The evolution of professional identity

(2) three examples that connected education theory and professional experience (3) future areas of professional growth.

The implementation of the post-practicum experience provided the teacher educators with a rich context to reflect on how we are engaging with the accountability agenda in teacher education. The 'Becoming a Teacher' framework offered a scaffolding for preservice teachers and teacher educators to guide reflective practice in the context of the post-practicum meeting and reflection task. It responded directly to the call for 'classroom readiness' to be interpreted as the ability to become a reflective practitioner (Larsen, 2017). Cochran-Smith et al. (2018) challenge teacher educators to reclaim the accountability agenda in teacher education. We feel that our work in this project, in particular, the development and focus on reflection using the 'Becoming a Teacher' framework as part of the post practice experience and assessment serves the democratic purpose of accountability in teacher education. Hence, teacher educators can reclaim accountability and develop productive ways to engage with government and university accountability agendas while also contributing to the development of a broader interpretation of employability (Clarke, 2018).

8   Discussion and Conclusions

The post-practicum tutorial and reflection task provided scope for the four outcomes of a post-practicum intervention to be achieved (Billett et al., 2018). During the two-hour post-practicum tutorial, students worked in small teams to discuss the artefacts they collected across diverse school sites. Using the 'Becoming a Teacher' framework as a scaffold, students engaged in critical discussions that connected connect theory and practice. The course lecturer then facilitated a feedback session to further consolidate the learning for the group and connect the placement experiences directly with course learning outcomes. Following the discussion, students developed their own 1000-word reflection task response based on their engagement with the framework, artefacts collected to identify their learning and future professional development requirements. Hence, the post-practicum intervention allowed students to connect theory and practice and translate their learning into adaptable knowledge. Using the 'Becoming a Teacher' framework provided a scaffold for students to critically engage during and after placement, both individually and part of a team. The post-practicum tutorial and sharing provided scope for students to openly discuss unforeseen and challenging issues that could then be incorporated into individual reflections. Finally, the face to face discussion provided a means for the collective learning across the group to be connected to the learning outcomes for the course by the course lecturer. All of these processes provided the course lecturer with valuable feedback to support the ongoing redevelopment of the coursework and practicum for the future (Billett et al., 2018).

The approach adopted in this context responds to two criticism in the literature regarding post-practicum and employability. The first is a concern that work integrated learning makes use of individual written responses as a reflection (Trede &

Jackson, 2019). The inclusion of the post-practicum discussion of collected arte-facts, while not assessed, did provide the opportunity for more of the post-practicum outcomes to be achieved. The discussion provided crucial moments for sharing unforeseen and unexpected instance, opportunities to share the collective experi-ence across a range of different schooling contexts and gave the lecturer the scope to reconnect these experiences with the course content aligning and developing the theory practice connections for students. The second concern identified by Billett et al. (2018) involved the need for scaffolding of student experiences with critically discussing placement so that they value peer review and develop their own ability to evaluate professional learning. The use of the "Becoming a Teacher' framework provided scaffolding for student discussions in small groups that had been modelled and exploring during the coursework before the placement experience. Applying this approach during the post-practicum tutorial allowed students to freely and criti-cally share their experiences. The final check in facilitated by the course lecturer ensured that the sharing occurred across the whole cohort of 30 students.

A further innovative outcome of this study was the adaptation of the work-readiness scales for use with preservice teachers. A work-readiness scale had previ-ously been developed by Caballero et al. (2011) for the nursing profession, but at the time that this study commenced, there were no similar tools for preservice teachers (or teachers). With the permission of the authors, the scale was adapted for preservice teachers. This work-readiness measure was implemented alongside two self-efficacy scales: one explicitly designed for preservice teachers (Pfitzner-Eden, 2016) and a general self-efficacy scale (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995). These three scales were combined in one survey tool to investigate the work-readiness, efficacy and developing identities of preservice teachers. A limitation of the study was the size of the cohort of students who participated in the initial survey, and further research will need to be undertaken to further validate the survey instruments in the context of education. However, based on the survey tool, the research team now has baseline data for understanding preservice teachers' views of their work-readiness and efficacy. In a landscape of strong political statements like 'classroom ready', this data, along with interview data and critical incident data generated in this study, provides significant insights into the perspectives of preservice teachers, newly graduated teachers and their employers. This industry-based research provides insights into ways of supporting preservice and graduate teachers in the transition from student to employee.

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The Role of Reflection After Placement Experiences to Develop Self-Authorship Among Higher Education Students

Denise Jackson and Franziska Trede

1 Introduction

The importance of higher education (HE) empowering students to develop the capabilities for achieving their goals and developing a successful career permeates across institutional strategies, operational planning and curricula. In line with notions of the contemporary university (Connell, 2019), it is important for HE to advance disciplinary expertise and transferable non-technical skills deemed essential for individual and organisational achievement, such as collaboration, communication and problem-solving (Business Council of Australia, 2017). It is becoming clear, however, that HE must extend beyond human capital in preparing students to succeed. Innovation and rapid change means industry needs critical and reflective professionals who can take a positional stance to drive innovation and achieve organisational success (Foundation for Young Australians, 2016).

Graduates are not employed to 'follow' but are expected to use initiative – and eventually lead - across diverse functions, sectors and industries, augmenting continuous improvement through the evaluation of ideas and information, complex problem-solving and creation of new working practices. While enterprise skills – 'the ability to problem solve, communicate effectively, adapt, collaborate, lead, create and innovate' (Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand, 2017, p. 4) – are important, graduates also need the maturity and authority to enact their capabilities and vision in unfamiliar work settings. This means graduating students must develop the confidence, competence and sense of professional belonging

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(Adams, Hean, Sturgis, & Clark, 2006) to flourish in the workplace. They must not be bounded by others, meaning their actions should be informed but not defined by others. Students' transition from accepting existing realities to creating new practices and ways of working is foundational to professional success (see Hodge, Baxter Magolda & Haynes, 2009).

Baxter Magolda's (1998) theory of self-authorship provides a useful framework for the development of professional confidence and maturity among HE students (Jackson, 2017; Nadelson et al., 2015). Baxter Magolda asserts that students' progress through four stages to self-authorship: first, *following formulas* where they lack understanding of their own values and identity and seek approval from authority and others, allowing them to shape their own opinions and actions. Second, they proceed to *crossroads* where students may feel unsettled as they realise the importance of developing their own beliefs and values and the need to evaluate knowledge posited by authority, rather than simply accepting it. Next is *self-authorship* where students begin to realise what is important to them, are developing the ability to listen to others yet not be bounded or constrained by them, and begin interpreting and evaluating knowledge and forming their own perspectives on its purpose and value. Their enhanced confidence means they have greater insights into self, others and the workplace which enables them to contribute their perspectives appropriately to advance and improve current practices. Finally, *internal foundations* is where individuals are driven by their sense-of-self, act on their own values and contribute to their disciplinary field. The framework conceptualises how individuals interpret and draw meaning from their different experiences and interactions with others, such as family or management, and how this augments professional self-efficacy and capability.

Although critical for producing responsible graduates, self-authorship is often overlooked in literature relating to graduate employability (Daniels & Brooker, 2014), problematic given academic success does not guarantee self-authorship (Baxter Magolda, 1992). Developing self-authorship among HE students will better equip graduates to navigate the uncertain world-of-work, strengthening their confidence and enabling them to seek a purposeful good match between self and organisational values and aid a promising a life-wide career.

Pivotal work on how to foster self-authorship among students includes Baxter Magolda's (2004) Learning Partnerships Model where a new partnership between educators and learners is formed based on 'sharing authority, mutually constructing meaning, and facing complexity squarely' (p. 29), bringing students' internal voice to the fore. This underpins Hodge et al.'s (2009) engaged learning philosophy where students grow through 'continuous self-reflection, seamless and authentic curricular and co-curricular experiences that steadily increase in challenge, and appropriate levels of support' (9). However, student development of self-authorship appears limited to following formulas, where few critique current thinking and draw on their own knowledge to identify better ways of working (Jackson, 2017). To explore this further, our research aimed to, first, evaluate the progress of students in the latter stages of their degree towards self-authorship and, second, identify strategies for augmenting self-authorship among HE students.

We start this chapter with a discussion of theoretical ideas about self-authorship and highlight its complex relationship with social, professional structures and established professional practices. Self-authorship is located in the socio-cultural perspective that recognises individuals are closely connected to others and the cultural context within which they live, learn and work. We then present our empirical study that aimed to explore students' progression towards self-authorship. Student participants were in the later stages of their degree program and had just completed an authentic workplace learning experience. We gathered qualitative data from workshops in two geographically dispersed Australian universities. Collaborative reflective activities explored how students interpreted and drew meaning from their workplace experiences. We discuss how the experienced work placement proved useful for gauging and developing self-authorship, exposing students to situations which demanded an internal voice and invoking, in partnership with deliberate reflective activities, complex meaning-making of their learning experiences. We conclude with implications for work placement design that enables students on their journey to self-authorship and consider directions for future research.

2 Theoretical Framework for Self-Authorship

Baxter Magolda's (1998) four stages of self-authorship – *following formulas*, *crossroads*, *self-authorship* and *internal foundations* - assert that individuals will progress from followers to leaders, developing a sense-of-self that allows them to understand their own values and identity and trust their professional judgement on presented information and knowledge in context. As their self-confidence matures, they are no longer solely defined by others and they shift away from continually deferring to authority and seeking approval from others. Progressing from following formulas (replicating the processes adopted by authority, such as managers or seasoned professionals) to self-authorship involves managing challenges at the crossroads stage where students realise that simply accepting knowledge and following orders without questioning and understanding them is not always beneficial (Billett, 2009). To become professionals, students need to learn to think for self by bringing their own beliefs and values into a relationship with organisational values and cultures (Trede & McEwen, 2015). Crossroads are characterised by 'key incidents' (Meijer, Oolbekkink, Pillen, & Aardema, 2014) that create uncertainty and panic, or 'practice shock' (Veenman, 1984). Developing trust in one's internal personal and professional voice and identity indicates their progression to self-authorship. Students are no longer dominated without reflection by the values and interests of others and are able to interpret and articulate their professional reasoning processes, offering new perspectives to contribute to their professional community.

Nadelson et al. (2015) argue the student's journey to self-authorship is critical, enabling them to 'be self-reliant and more discerning in their perspectives, judging claims using multiple inputs, and pondering different perspectives' (p. 4). Indeed,

the transition from theory to its application in the workplace is complex and challenging (see Hutchinson & Kettlewell, 2015) and developing self-authorship is an important aspect to preparing for work. Students not only need disciplinary expertise and non-technical capabilities to succeed but must also develop 'a frame of mind that allows students to put their knowledge in perspective; to understand the sources of their beliefs and values; and to establish a sense-of-self that enables them to participate effectively in a variety of personal, occupational, and community contexts' (King & Baxter Magolda, 2011, p. 207). Parallels may be drawn between self-authorship and the notion of professional self-efficacy (Tan, van der Molen, & Schmidt, 2017). The latter is a dimension of professional identity, where students 'feel they are in the process of becoming the new practitioners who can make reasonable professional judgments, and adequately address each given professional situation with the relevant array of knowledge, skills, tools and resources' (p. 1509).

Although empirical analysis appears limited, the expectation that students can make meaning independently from authority and become self-authored is ambitious (Baxter Magolda, 1992). They need the necessary exposure to crossroads situations (Jackson, 2017) and support to make appropriate professional choices when they do encounter conflict and tension (Pillen, 2013). It may not be desirable and even unrealistic to assume graduates can assert their own knowledge to drive change without meaningful practice prior to graduation, particularly in the uncertain and fast-paced nature of today's work. Further, while stages of self-authorship feature in both Baxter Magolda (1998) and Nadelson et al.'s (2015) models, its development may not always be a linear process. Individuals can experience career changes which require them to rebuild their confidence and knowledge and high levels of mobility, horizontal career progression and portfolio working (McCrindle, 2015) may mean more back-and-forth movement among individuals between different stages of self-authorship.

3   Fostering Self-Authorship in Higher Education Students

Hodge et al. (2009) posit that HE must focus on three key areas of development to foster self-authorship. First, epistemological knowledge (intellectual maturity) to enable students to create new ideas and knowledge from critically evaluating knowledge during their studies. Second, intrapersonal knowledge (personal maturity) where students learn to understand their values and sense-of-self, can distinguish these from others' perceptions and use them to guide their choices. Third, interpersonal knowledge (interpersonal maturity) where their dependence on, and need for, affirmation from others transforms into an ability to engage effectively with others to contribute to the professional community – yet not be bounded by them. Addressing each of the three maturity aspects, Hodge et al. (2009) argued 'a carefully sequenced and developmentally appropriate curriculum can help students develop self-authorship while in college' (4).

Hodge et al. (2009) emphasised that developing self-authorship should be a key focus for HE to produce responsible graduates who are prepared for their chosen careers. They described this as a state where students have 'cultivated a secure sense-of-self that enables interdependent relations with others and making judgments through considering but not being consumed by others' perspectives' (p. 2). As noted by Pizzolato (2005), self-authored students are able to use 'their internally defined sense-of-self and goals to direct their decision-making and knowledge construction' (p. 624), meaning they will be equipped to evaluate knowledge, generate new ideas and engage in informed problem-solving. These are highly desired in new graduates (FYA, 2017), particularly in an increasingly complex working environment that requires autonomy yet collaboration, accountability as well as the confidence to lead.

Progressing beyond following formulas requires students to critique, and understand the importance of their own ideology and how it may differ from others. This is underpinned by student-centred learning where students question what they experience, think critically about self and others, and start to take a positional stance on knowledge presented to them. Hodge et al. (2009) outlined particular ways this may be achieved, such as encouraging debate and comparison of perspectives among students using authentic cases through simulation, small group debates, role-plays, case studies or written reflections. They developed an innovative learning strategy with students being asked to write an imaginary dialogue between themselves and an important figure in their lives on a topic they differ on, asking students to consider how they could assert and act upon their own views while maintaining good relations.

Pizzolato (2005) focused on how HE can enable students to experience and manage crossroad experiences, as well as fostering their development of self-authorship. She argued that a provocative moment – resulting from a series of experiences – can induce students to commit to drawing on their own ideology, rather than others, in their interpretation of knowledge and experiences. Tension at the crossroads stage may arise from encounters in the work setting where misalignment between personal and professional values becomes pronounced for the individual (Pillen, 2013). These tensions are critical for developing self-authorship (Smagorinsky, Cook, Moore, Jackson, & Fry, 2004), encouraging students to make meaning of arising situations and construct new perspectives based on their own knowledge and understanding.

Pizzolato (2005) highlighted that the crossroads often resulted in 'intense discontent and dissonance arising from dissatisfaction with formula following' (p. 630) and noted that students with certain characteristics were more likely to self-author. First, those with higher levels of volitional efficacy, staying focused on the achievement of a particular goal, and those who self-regulated their behaviour rather than relying on others such as family and peers. Hodge et al. (2009) argued educators should treat students as thinkers, negotiating goals and supporting them through mentoring and coaching. They also encouraged ongoing critical reflection of workplace experiences and their influence on career aspirations.

Barber, King, and Baxter Magolda's (2013) continuum of 'Developing Positions in the Journey toward Self-Authorship' provides a useful tool to evaluate students' progress in developing self-authorship. The continuum was adapted from Baxter, Magolda and King (2012) and comprises ten developmental positions, ranging from *Solely External*, where individuals 'consistently and unquestioningly rely on external sources without recognizing possible shortcomings of this approach' and *Solely Internal*, where individuals 'trust the internal voice sufficiently to refine beliefs, values, identities and relationships. Use internal voice to shape reactions and manage external sources' (p. 874). Barber and colleagues describe these positions as reflecting a 'particular structure a person uses to construe knowledge, identity, and relationships at a particular point in time' (p. 872), with each position representing more complex meaning-making than the one before. They also acknowledge that this progression is not necessarily linear and more aligned to a helix, with time at each position varying among individuals.

4   The Value of Critical Collective Reflection After Work-Integrated Learning Experiences

Work-integrated learning (WIL) involves students' participation in authentic learning with industry and/or community partners that forms part of their degree studies (Jackson, 2018). Examples of WIL include work placements, practicum and internship, where students are physically immersed in the work setting. WIL is an ideal learning environment for students to experience crossroads because WIL occurs in authentic professional settings where personal, professional, cultural, economic, ethical and organisational interests meet and at times collide (Trede, Markauskaite, McEwen, & Macfarlane, 2019).

Pizzolato (2005) found that while students often have the 'provocative' moments required to progress to self-authorship, and may respond well during targeted reflective activities, these rarely happened in highly didactic lectures in classrooms. WIL provides a useful pathway for developing self-authorship, exposing students to the challenges of 'ill-defined problems and multiple perspectives' which 'can be shaped into opportunities for growth through journaling assignments that encourage reflection or engaging in discussions that encourage students to juggle competing knowledge claims to make complex decisions' (Creamer & Laughlin, 2005, p. 26).

Jackson (2017) confirmed that WIL helps students develop a clear understanding of professional ideology in the following formulas stage and found certain WIL design principles assisted in progressing students towards self-authorship. These included combining observation with active engagement; facilitating networking with internal and external stakeholders; encouraging goal setting and accountability; placing students in challenging situations where they could draw on appropriate support and feedback; and facilitating exposure to different work areas. Jackson's

study highlighted, however, that simply completing WIL or undertaking work experience is not enough to augment self-authorship. Aligning with the broader notion that critical reflection can trigger transformative learning (Mezirow, 1997), she argued students benefit from facilitated critical reflection to help them make sense of what they had experienced and learned. Explicitly considering whether they had reached the crossroads stage and, if so, what triggered this could therefore lead to a greater sense-of-self and development of self-authorship.

Post-WIL reflective activities allow students to 'share, compare and critically consider what they have experienced and address important educational goals associated with the development of occupational knowledge' (Billett, Cain, & Le, 2018, p. 2). According to Barber et al. (2013), 'the achievement of higher-order learning outcomes is associated with complex meaning-making, those students who more quickly adopt increasingly complex forms of meaning-making will be advantaged in learning' (p. 868). Developing capabilities in meaning-making is essential for professional success, meaning creativity, critical thinking and capacity to innovate. This study was designed to encourage students to reflect collaboratively on their exposure to professional life and their crossroad situations. It aimed to evaluate students' advancement towards self-authorship and identify strategies for its development through encouraging them to make explicit links between what they experienced, how they responded and how they could better find their professional voice in the future.

5   The Study

In this study, WIL consisted of a 100 to 150-hour work placement, structured in either block format or as one to two days per week over the academic semester. The first institution operates multiple campuses with the study conducted in New South Wales. Students undertaking a WIL placement as part of their undergraduate degree in Communications, with majors in Public Relations, Marketing and/or Advertising, were invited to participate. In the Western Australian-based institution, both postgraduate and undergraduate students completing a WIL placement in Business were invited to participate. Both institutions are similar in size, with 36,000 and 27,500 students respectively. The first performs relatively well in graduate employment outcomes and the second is above the national average in ratings for teaching and learning quality and course satisfaction (Social Research Centre, 2016). Characteristics of all participating students are summarised in Table 1.

Students in both institutions completed their WIL experience during 2017 and the post-WIL intervention was conducted immediately afterwards. In accordance with ethics approval, a workshop was held on each respective campus, designed as a post-WIL intervention comprising collaborative reflection in small groups. The workshop was referred to as a *huddle*, a term referring to an informal means for communicating in small-groups (see, for example, Fogarty & Schultz, 2010). Kuh et al. (2005) advocated *intergroup dialogue* to develop meaning-making capacities.

Table 1 Participant demographics

Characteristic	Sub-group	Institution 1		Institution 2				Total	
				UG		PG			
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender	Male	3	13.0	14	42.4	7	35.0	24	31.6
	Female	20	87.0	19	57.6	13	65.0	52	68.4
Age (years)	0–24	20	87.0	20	60.6	2	10.0	42	55.3
	25–29	1	4.3	5	15.2	11	55.0	17	22.4
	30–39	1	4.3	6	18.2	7	35.0	14	18.4
	40+	1	4.3	2	6.1			3	3.9
Residency	Domestic	23	100	22	66.7	3	15.0	48	63.2
	International	0	0	11	33.3	17	85.0	28	36.8
Current working status	Working			19	57.6	10	50.0	29	54.7
	Not working			14	42.4	10	50.0	24	45.3

Collaborative reflection can help students consider their experiences in a wider context and answer questions they would not normally ask of themselves (Tigelaar, Dolmans, Meijer, de Grave, & van der Vleuten, 2008), such as their response to critical incidents. Similar to Meijer et al.'s (2014) 'At-tension program', students were asked to share their moments of tension with peers, what emotions they experienced, how they coped and responded, and then discuss collectively other ways they could have managed the situation.

In the first institution, the huddle was organised as a voluntary session by the research investigator and students were invited to attend by their academic WIL coordinator. In the second, the huddle took place during the on-campus, debrief session. While attendance was not mandatory, students were encouraged to participate by their WIL coordinator. The huddles commenced with the facilitator (respective research investigators) briefly explaining the importance of learning from WIL experiences via collective reflection that is open, honest and critical. The notion of self-authorship was informally introduced and, as emphasised by Meijer et al. (2014), students were reminded the huddle was a respectful, ethical and safe environment for them to share their experiences. It was emphasised that the research was not part of the course but relevant to developing their employability and career success.

Students were placed into small groups by their facilitator and were asked to discuss their response and management of a crossroads scenario that arose during their placement. Students recorded discussions on poster-sized paper and, approximately 30 minutes later, transitioned to a second topic that they selected from a choice of two. Following the small group discussions, the group shared what they considered their most important discussion point in a two minute debrief to the larger class. The research investigator was on-hand during the discussions and periodically encouraged all students to contribute. Following the huddle, students completed an individual evaluation to elicit the perceived value of collective reflection.

Table 2 Huddle discussion points

Discussion points	Huddle activity
1. Reflect on an/any unforeseen situation(s) that you found confronting and describe how you responded.	How did you react initially (feelings and behaviours)? What did you do to resolve this dilemma? Did it help? Why, why not? What could you do differently next time?
2. Describe some differences that you encountered between theory learned in the classroom and actual practice observed/undertaken in the workplace	How did observing/experiencing these differences make you feel? How did you cope with these differences? How could you have managed the differences better and why you did not do this initially?
3. Describe a situation where you encountered conflict between your personal values and ones in the workplace. This could mean identifying conflict around culture, religion and ethical values	What was the tension/problem? How did you react initially? How did you manage this? What could you have done differently and why did you not do this?

In their small groups, students were asked to reflect on the first discussion point listed in Table 2. They were then asked to choose and discuss a second topic from the second and third points listed in Table 2. Adopting the basic principles of qualitative research (for example, Mishler, 1990), poster paper entries were transcribed verbatim into a word document and then reviewed and themes identified using inductive coding methods for a) the types of crossroads situations; b) student reactions to the situations; c) resolution tactics employed by students; and d) alternative strategies generated by the group.

The framework of themes developed for each point was reiteratively reviewed by both authors. Data were re-examined for any areas of difference, which were notably few, until consensus was reached on the final set of presented themes. An audit trail was kept of any issues encountered and decisions made during the analysis. Emergent themes were then examined to assess students' progression in self-authorship, interpreted using Barber et al.'s (2013) continuum of developmental positions.

6　Findings

Here we present the results of the study. More specifically, the types of crossroad situations experienced by students, their responses, adopted resolution tactics and other helpful strategies for augmenting self-authorship that were identified during the collaborative reflective activities.

6.1 Experienced Crossroad Situations

Findings indicated that students were exposed to five types of crossroads situations. The first was internal workplace conflict, caused by personality clashes, cultural differences, bullying, inappropriate relationships and parties not listening to one another. These did not appear to be evidenced frequently but were more isolated incidences that students witnessed during their WIL experience. The second, noted only by two students in their small-group discussions, was a shock event. One was the death of an internal stakeholder and the other a co-worker being fired from their position. The third type involved difficulties coping due to inexperience or a lack of knowledge. Some key examples included tight deadlines for complex tasks; being invited to social functions or informal events with clients and not knowing how long to stay, protocol with drinking alcohol or what role to play; and feeling lost regarding certain tasks due to a lack of understanding of organisational structure, culture and/or operations.

A further type was students feeling challenged due to specific characteristics of their workplace or WIL experience. This included unclear task instructions; insufficient scope or depth to assigned work; managing work/life imbalance due to excessive demands on time; poor supervision and mentoring; and inadequate feedback. Finally, differences between classroom theory and workplace practice created challenges for students. Some witnessed practices which were in conflict of the theories they had been taught and some felt business models were antiquated or strategies were not delivering the return-on-investment which they could. Some expressed surprise at the pressures of the working environment, commenting on how difficult it was to satisfy customers and clients.

6.2 Responses to Crossroad Situations

There was some congruence in student responses to their crossroads situations and seven themes were identified, with illustrative examples, see Table 3. There were some instances where students discussed a particular situation yet did not record their emotions. This was interpreted as not following the activity instructions for many reasons, for example, not feeling comfortable sharing emotions, rather than simply not feeling anything from the arising situation.

The types of situations that triggered the given responses were also recorded on the butcher paper. All who reported *tension* cited situations where they had advocated a particular viewpoint to their supervisor or senior management. For most, this lead to confrontation such as for one student who commented 'I felt none of their strategies were worth using. I generally asked them, do you track your investment of money? They didn't like me talking … because I was a student. Things got tense and I could not speak further. It felt very uncomfortable in the room and afterwards'. Another described their boss as 'stuck in old ways and not willing to

Table 3 Student reactions to *crossroads* situations

Crossroads situation	Types of situation	Types of reactions
Querying senior management about strategies used Supervisors/managers not listening due to assumed lack of experience and knowledge Dealing with challenging personalities Difference between workplace practices and classroom theory	Internal workplace conflict Difficulties from inexperience (lack of knowledge) Difference between theory and practice	Tension
Being asked to complete unfamiliar tasks Being left unsupervised for long periods Not receiving feedback on performance Feeling overloaded with tasks Uncertainty about workplace culture and professional conduct	Difficulties due to inexperience (limited learner agency) Difficulties from specific work characteristics Difference between theory and practice	Uncertainty and confusion
Techniques and practices in the workplace not 'matching' classroom theory Unanticipated disregard for theoretical and professional reasoning Limitation on creativity and ideas Observing poor practice Insufficient allocation of work or inability to complete assigned tasks Inability to apply theory to practical work.	Difficulties from specific work characteristics Difference between theory and practice	Frustration
Realisation that practical work holds more value than theory. Work is a high-pressure environment and it is difficult to satisfy customers	Difference between theory and practice	Resignation
Lack of experience and opted not to ask for help but keep practising Draw on inner resources to complete tasks	Difficulties from inexperience (lack of knowledge) Difference between theory and practice	Determination
Death of an internal stakeholder Following the firing of a co-worker	Shock event	Awkwardness
Evidenced conflict between employees Direct confrontation from someone in the workplace due to cultural/religion differences	Internal workplace conflict Difficulties from inexperience/lack of knowledge	Upset and shock

change'. *Uncertainty* was reported with students feeling overwhelmed and confused by arising situations. One student was given a major task that they could not complete prior to the end of placement, 'this caused a lot of stress as I was worried it would impact on my mark for the unit and also made me feel worried that I was not performing as I should have'. Others commented on feeling lost, nervous, confused, neglected, worried and withdrawn as they tried to cope in their various situations.

The third theme was *frustration* and was particularly apparent where students felt unable to apply their theoretical knowledge, leading them to question the length, worth and necessity of the degree. One observed, 'workers did not seem to apply

theory in real life. They just did what was told to them, the way it was 'always done' inside the organisation copying past work'. Another commented, 'the workplace was informal and just cared about end result, not how you got there… Uni emphasises how vital theory is in every situation, but not many 'outside' people will agree'. Interestingly, some considered the workplace's emphasis on natural reasoning rather than theory to be inefficient and ineffective, with participants stating, 'everything was underwhelming and more basic than expected', 'there were so many more limits on ideas/creativity than expected, just do what the clients want', and 'employees only knew about their role, not whole organisations'. Other participants, however, were concerned that theories were no longer relevant for contemporary work practices. For example, 'I feel like the theory is a bit outdated, and does not match the continuous development of the digital space'. Some expressed their frustration at not being given sufficient work to complete and having to continuously 'intrude' on their supervisor for additional tasks, 'this made me feel useless as I wanted to contribute but did not have anything to give'.

A further theme was students experiencing *resignation*, which closely related to the theme of frustration because this emotional response was prompted by evidencing differences between theory and practice. Students commented on practical work holding more value than theory, the focus being on 'getting the job done', and there was an underlying sense of disappointment as they interpreted this as belittling what they had been doing for the past few years. The theme of *determination* was evident only in a small number of students who chose not to seek assistance but draw on inner resources to achieve task completion. One, for example, stated '[I] had to use research skills [and] creativity to fulfil the task and professional judgment as managers did not have time to review'. *Awkwardness* and *upset*, or shock, were both expressed by only a small number of students.

6.3   Resolution Tactics

Resolution tactics adopted by students are summarised in Table 4, along with illustrative quotations on how students managed their different situations. Participants reported that they opted to *avoid conflict*, and only when they realised after an extended period of time that avoidance was not working did they chose to speak with co-workers or their supervisor. Students wishing to draw on theoretical knowledge were not willing to overtly critique current practice and were bounded by usual workplace practice. When participants openly suggested their theoretically informed approach may work better, responses were not favourable and resulted in tension. Resignation to *identify pragmatic solutions* was therefore a resolution tactic.

Those who chose to *seek assistance* from others appeared to do so with assurance and believed that asking questions was the norm. They turned to graduates, junior workers and, less occasionally, senior management for help and guidance. The outcome of their resolution tactics was positive for most while some found their strategies did not help. One noted their approach generated an email to all WIL

Table 4 Student resolution tactics to *crossroads* moment

Type	Illustrative quotes
Avoid conflict	"Overwhelmed and just tried to manage on my own without saying anything". "Found a shoulder to cry on – Spouse at home and waited for emotions to calm down before discussing further". "Keep quiet, not having the courage to speak". "I queried as to best practice with my superior. I questioned the necessity of theory. I also tried to educate my superior the correct way to prompt responses in a non-leading way. Otherwise I just went with it and did what I was told because obviously they know best". "I thought some changes could be made to their current business model. This resulted in conflict with boss regarding making overall process more efficient. I tried to speak with the boss but he was not listen*ing* [sic]".
Identify pragmatic solutions	"Using a lot of common sense theory". "Go with it. There are moments were theory is not always applicable to real life". "Theory has a short memory span compared to practice. Theory sets the foundation but practice is the building. Practice helps in enhancing skills useful for future. Practice gives you an idea of strengths and weaknesses. Perception is classroom in different than practical".
Be patient and rational	"Had to be sympathetic and understanding and patient". "Communicate patiently and explain in detail". "The only thing that helped me was to try to be rational and I found this helped eventually".
	"Best resolution [was to] follow the procedure".
Persist	"I was persistent and this helped as I was able to find a task". "Just kept giving it a go without help and improve".
Seek assistance	"Tried to resolve by talking to other employees and finding out how best to stop it". "Resolved this by just being confident that no question is stupid question, so you might as well ask rather than being unsure and doing the task incorrectly". "Saw a situation of workplace bullying. Discussed with manager. They had a meeting. I don't know any more than that and didn't like to ask". "Solved by asking graduates/junior people for advice. Asking as many questions as possible". "Ask heaps of questions – Feel expected to ask questions because still learning.
Take initiative	"I learnt that I had to use initiative / improvise, build skills by being 'thrown in the deep end'. Patience from mentors helped. Let me put degree into action. Built confidence – I was scared of adults". "Joining into workplace culture with Friday afternoon drinks and finding out how to fit in with that and how much to drink".
	"It became clear that ignoring theory was not effective in this situation. So I attempted to continue using theories I had been taught, but also going along with what had become the norm".

students advising them of the correct process (electronic message via internal platform) if they needed support. Another retrospectively realised they should have approached their immediate supervisor with their concerns regarding inadequate feedback, rather than senior management that resulted in undue tension. Some found that speaking to their supervisor simply did not help and they still felt

unsupported or had insufficient, meaningful work to complete. Students who took *initiative*, tended to use a trial and error approach rather than explicitly working in a guided fashion. Although isolated to only a few cases, some could not identify a way of resolving their encountered situations, if it broadly related to placement design or the industry within which they were based.

A limited range of alternative strategies for managing crossroads situations were identified. Several felt that seeking help earlier would have been beneficial. Some spoke of the importance of building mentoring relationships and drawing on co-workers for support to avoid confusion and to help them contribute earlier in WIL. Some groups discussed the importance of asserting their theoretical knowledge, 'try and apply elements of a known theory and explain how this could help do things better', while others felt demonstrating emotional intelligence was important. They spoke about not getting offended, not seeking justice and being more diplomatic in the workplace. Some groups also recognised the importance of being more confident and taking initiative.

6.4   Progression to Self-Authorship

Using Barber et al.'s (2013) ten-point continuum of developmental positions, progression towards self-authorship was evident during the students' meaning-making process. Barber and colleagues classified the first three points on the continuum as 'solely external' with students at the first point relying only on external sources and not recognising inadequacies in this approach. This level of self-authorship was not apparent in the group discussions but the second point, where students 'consistently rely on external sources but experience tensions in doing so, particularly if external sources conflict; look to authorities to resolve these conflicts' (p. 874), was evident. Shock events and internal workplace conflict caused upset, tension and awkwardness among students who 'left' it to others to resolve these issues. An example was, 'I concentrated on my work and tried to ignore conflict between other people. It helped because I was not directly involved but it did not stop it occurring'.

At the third point on the continuum, individuals remain reliant on external sources yet are mindful of the limitations of this approach. This was evident in participants' discussion around the tension caused by depending on the knowledge, feedback, input and support of co-workers, supervisors and managers. Dissonance was apparent due to inconsistencies between workplace practice and theoretical knowledge, prompting students to engage in deep reflection on the value of learning classroom learning and the overall worth of completing a degree. In alignment with Baxter Magolda (1992), students at this point assumed those in authority were correct and, despite their frustration, continued to be guided by others.

Equally evident was students actually entering the crossroads stage, spanning the fourth and fifth points on the continuum, where students demonstrated awareness of the need for an internal voice to manage their frustration with having to rely on others. They wished to operationalise their knowledge more quickly and freely and

seek independence and autonomy in the workplace. Choosing to avoid conflict as a resolution tactic (see Table 3) aligns to the fourth point as they demonstrated uncertainty in how to proceed, 'giving up' and reverting to accepting usual workplace norms and practice. Feelings of despondency from not being able to demonstrate knowledge and skills - due to insufficient workload, needing more information or inability to apply theory – can also lead to feelings of resignation.

The illustrative quotes in Table 3 for *draw on theoretical knowledge*, aligned to Barber et al.'s (2013) fifth position, 'actively work on constructing a new way of making meaning, yet 'lean back' to earlier external positions' (p. 874). Here students tried to use their own knowledge to introduce new ways of working yet were bounded by established practice. Participants experienced responses in the workplace that ranged from dismissal to tension. Students' commentary demonstrated intellectual maturity and, perhaps to a lesser degree, the personal maturity associated with self-authorship. Their interpersonal maturity, however, was limited as they still sought affirmation and were bounded by others.

The sixth and seventh points on the continuum focus on students developing their internal voice to leave the crossroads. At the sixth point, the internal voice is listened to carefully yet this is made difficult at times by the strength of external influence. Participants' commentary regarding drawing on theoretical knowledge to 'educate' their supervisors to improve processes, apparently without success, resonated here. At the seventh point, concentrated effort on strengthening the internal voice does not allow external influences to overpower one's knowledge and values. While participants appeared capable and willing to add meaning and value to the workplace, positive change did not eventuate.

7   Implications for Higher Education

Findings affirm that WIL can be a 'developmentally effective experience' for nurturing self-authorship (King, Baxter Magolda, Barber, Kendall Brown, & Lindsay, 2009), particularly when students are explicitly encouraged to collaboratively reflect on and make meaning from their experiences. Crossroad situations appeared, however, to challenge students in two main areas. First, navigating tensions between workplace practice realities and their theoretical knowledge and second, managing their desire to add value in the workplace through self-directed learning and autonomy while being reliant on others for meaningful work, feedback, and guidance. Many students appeared aware of the importance and value of their internal voice and acquired knowledge, but struggled with navigating well-established norms and resistance from others to optimise their learning in the workplace.

Although progressing through these feelings of discomfort is inherent to the crossroads stage, it appears some adjustment among both industry partners and those responsible for WIL curriculum design may aid students on their journey to self-authorship. Shared understanding of everybody's roles in WIL, including responsibilities and expectations, would enhance conditions for students to develop

their professional voice and agency (Henderson & Trede, 2017). This is critical for developing confident and capable future professionals who - with enhanced self-authorship - can drive creative and innovative practices. Students or graduates entering the workplace need to be encouraged to share their thinking and theoretical learning. Of those keen to engage in improving practices, many were frustrated by their inability to contribute to creativity and change.

Educators should focus on pedagogy that develops students' self-awareness, confidence, and emotional intelligence so that they can effectively draw on their internal voice in diverse contexts and in an appropriate and productive way. Identifying how theory can be applied in different practical contexts is just the first step in developing adaptability, the next is having the self-awareness, confidence and prowess to navigate contextual factors and assert their knowledge where appropriate. Educators must find ways to better prepare students to make sense of applying theory in practical situations. This may include developing a broad appreciation among students of the distinct cultural differences between industry, inherently focused on knowledge creation, and the university classroom which is intent on knowledge building.

Mentoring students through this process could be achieved by tutor-based systems where every WIL student is assigned an active tutor who is both familiar with theoretical concepts and has industry experience to understand and articulate different forms of application. While WIL provides a vehicle for such practice, it is often undertaken in the latter stages of one's degree. Where workplace immersion is not interwoven into early stages of curriculum, such as in Education and Nursing, other pedagogies – such as action-based or project-based learning – could be used to prepare students in this area.

Industry must also encourage students to grow their knowledge and apply their thinking and ideas to aid their development of future work capabilities. In addition, industry needs to enhance it own capabilities in mentoring students to develop their self-authorship. Ensuring those in the workplace actively listen to students' concerns and ideas in supportive forums which promote collegiality could further develop students' confidence and a willingness to speak up. Workplaces should embrace, and not limit, the creativity of upcoming talent by usual practice, inspiring experimentation in students (and new graduates) through feedback, mentorship and work that encourages collaboration, autonomy and the operationalisation of new knowledge. The study does highlight unease among students of the relevance of classroom theory for contemporary working practices, affirming concerns with the relevance of HE curricula (Manpower, 2015), and highlighting the need for enhanced collaboration among educators and industry (Trede & Mahinroosta, 2018).

Although WIL is widely considered to enhance resilience (Drewery, Nevison, Pretti, & Pennaforte, 2017), its design should explicitly prepare students to the exposure of stressful events and challenging circumstances to promote development of self-authorship. With this, it is important that universities sufficiently induct and prepare industry partners on mentoring and supporting students to learn to cope with real-life, real-time experience where the unanticipated must be accommodated. WIL design should also ensure that students are provided with meaningful work of

appropriate scope and challenge and there is regular review of assigned workload. Encouraging workplace supervisors to support their students in drawing on acquired knowledge may foster personal agency and confidence in completing tasks and enhance students' learning and self-worth. In a bid to strengthen their volitional efficacy and self-regulation, clarifying tasks and ensuring students are suitably skilled and resourced will facilitate independence while incorporating collaborative working will build confidence in seeking support. It is also important that educators liaise with workplace supervisors to ensure they have realistic expectations of student capabilities (Henderson & Trede, 2017), aligning with previous studies in WIL (see, for example, Jackson, Rowbottom, Ferns, & Mclaren, 2016).

Giving students valuable insight into organisational structure and mission will help them understand culture and operations, providing context to their work and enhancing their contribution. Clarity around reporting lines and how students should raise concerns, and with whom, may guide them in their work and could avoid inactivity that invokes feelings of despair and a lack of worth. It is also important that workplace supervisors are aptly skilled to facilitate student learning, including being able to identify meaningful tasks for completion, provide useful feedback and be committed to supporting their assigned student. Additional strategies include providing opportunities and support, within both the curriculum and the workplace, for managing one's time could improve workplace performance. Enabling students to learn the latest software and digital tools also appears important. While work placements completed by distance can be more inclusive for regional students or those with logistical constraints, purposeful use of digital tools may facilitate just-in-time mentoring and lessen disconnectedness between students and critical others (Trede et al., 2017). Connecting and working collaboratively online may enhance a sense of belonging among students who attend the workplace irregularly or only on a weekly basis.

8   Concluding Remarks

As traditional graduate roles dissolve in the face of digital disruption, the gig economy and portfolio careers, designing and implementing curricula to foster self-authorship is critical. Progression towards self-authorship was evident yet students largely remained bounded by others and constrained by structural issues. The WIL experience provided a useful platform for gauging and developing self-authorship among students, exposing them to situations that demand an internal voice and invoking, in partnership with deliberate reflective peer activities, complex meaning-making of their learning experience. The study contributes to the limited empirical research on student development in self-authorship and presents important collaborative strategies for HE and industry to enhance self-authorship among higher education students. The study also highlighted the value of the huddle activity for encouraging students to explicitly consider their experiences and progression in self-authorship post-WIL, and how they may further develop this as they prepare for future work.

This study highlights pathways for improvement yet has limitations. Data were gathered only on the crossroad experiences that students wished to share and the sample size is not representational and confined to business and communication. A longitudinal study on how students develop their own professional voice may enrich data and findings further. Future research could extend to exploring employer perspectives of student responses to challenging situations and how curricula and workplace design can deepen learning and enhance student self-authorship. Comparing the development of self-authorship across discipline groups may add value. Finally, examining social and cultural capital (O'Shea, 2016) that students bring to self-authorship would also be useful (Wawrzynski & Pizzolato, 2006), particularly given self-authorship is demonstrated earlier in students from marginalised groups (Barber et al., 2013).

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Fostering Peer learning and Self-Reflection: A Two-Pronged Strategy to Augment the Effectiveness of Work Integrated Learning Placements

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1 Introduction

Getting the most out of work integrated learning (WIL) placements cannot rely on a single strategy. This chapter describes a two-pronged strategy trialled with final year public health and environmental health students transitioning to professional work. The first component acquaints students with the principles and practices required for effective transition, including self-efficacy, developing a professional identity and building resilience. The second, introduces learning circles as a means of fostering critical thinking (Hiebert, 1996) and peer learning. We argue that this combination of preparatory discussion and participation in regular learning circles prepares and supports students to gain the most from their placements. This chapter describes the theoretical underpinnings of this two-pronged approach, how it was implemented and the findings of its evaluation.

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2   Supporting Resilience, Self-Efficacy and Professional Identity Building During Placements

Placement can be demanding and stressful for students. The first prong of our approach included preparatory discussions acquainting students with principles and practices to help students manage these demands and stressors. Three qualities are believed to be core: resilience, self-efficacy and a clear sense of professional identity (Bialocerkowsk, Cardwell, & Morrissey, 2017). Dornan, Boshuizen, King, and Scherpbier (2007) also recognise that a student's ability to participate in real world practice requires what they call 'state of mind' qualities, as well as practical competence (p. 84). Resilience refers to a student's ability to bounce back or recover from stress while on placement (Smith et al., 2008). Just as important as the ability to bounce back is the ability to move forward. Placement is an experiential opportunity with the potential to strengthen perceived self-efficacy and confidence. The term 'self-efficacy' was coined by psychologist Albert Bandura to describe a person's beliefs in his or her ability to perform capably in a particular circumstance. Performance and functional accomplishment are key influencing factors on an individual's perceived self-efficacy. According to Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory, an individual's cognitive processing of efficacy expectations can also be influenced by vicarious experience, verbal persuasion and emotional arousal. Self-efficacy is recognised as a measure of one's capacity to cope with learning and performing, which can be applied to both a university and a workplace setting (Freudenberg, Cameron, & Brimble, 2010). Thomson, Bates, and Bates (2016) highlight that offering WIL is particularly important for students with low work self-efficacy so that they can 'develop greater confidence in managing professional practice' (p. 9). Finally, professional identity, that is identifying as a member of a professional group, positively contributes to transitioning to that profession. Accordingly, a delay in developing some level of professional identity can present a psychological barrier to transitioning from the role of a student to that of a professional (Crossley & Vivekananda-Schmidt, 2009).

This study confirms that while it is important to provide sessions aimed at preparing students for the stresses associated with transitioning to WIL placements, this is not sufficient. A second approach is required to give students the opportunity to engage cognitively at all levels of development. This is achieved using learning circles. This addition can not only support positive change in perceived self-efficacy but also reduce dysfunctional or defensive behaviours that may otherwise prevent learners from realising the full potential of the placement experience in relation to role transition.

2.1   Learning Circles

Learning circles emerged as a strategy to increase critical-thinking skills during practicums (Hiebert, 1996), and have been used for a variety of purposes, including strengthening change processes (Scriven, 1984); promoting a collaborative approach

to professional development (Collins-Camargo, Sullivan, Murphy, & Atkins, 2015; Percy, Vialle, Naghdy, Montgomery, & Turcotte, 2001); and encouraging the development of learning organisations and learning communities (Cartmel, Macfarlane, Casley, & Smith, 2015). As a method used in various settings, learning circles have been described as both 'a peer consultation model' (Collins-Camargo et al., 2015, p. 33) and as a process of 'guided conversations' (Cartmel et al., 2015, p. 5). Learning circles involve facilitating reflective thinking processes within discussions. Cartmel et al. (Cartmel et al., 2015) detail the four reflective process steps required for practice: deconstruct (describe the situation from the learner's perspective); confront (describe how they feel about the issue); theorise (share the sources of the ideas, linking to their study, research and others' ideas); and think otherwise (describe how their thinking has changed and how they will act in the future). Participants are able to use the learning circles to 'reflect on and share their insights, tensions and dilemmas' and grow their understanding (Peters & Le Cornu, 2005, p. 1). The methodology provides both an opportunity to engage in co-construction of knowledge and a structure to help manage the emotional dimensions of being in a changing world or changed learning environment.

Learning circles have emerged recently as a strategy used by higher education degree programs to augment post-placement experiences. Pedagogically, learning circles provide a process to connect experiences with the communication skills required to develop shared meanings, critical thinking and professionalism (Grealish et al., 2017). Harrison, Molloy, Bearman, Newton, and Leech (2017) found that these group-based reflective activities not only facilitate the generation of shared and new knowledge but also have a positive influence on learning behaviour.

2.2   *Theoretical Value of Learning Circles*

Kolb and Kolb's (2005) work contributes valuable insights into academic discourse about utilising learning circles in association with WIL placements as an opportunity for experiential learning. According to Experiential Learning Theory (ELT), learning is 'the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience', resulting from 'the combination of grasping and transforming experience' (Kolb, 1984, p. 38). WIL placements undertaken as part of higher education programs constitute significant experiential learning experiences. Accordingly, students should be able to demonstrate the reflective capacity to assimilate the concrete experiences gained during placement and transform them into thought and new ideas, conclusions and connections for future practice. Developing reflective capacity aligns with the call for higher education to emphasise deep learning, learning to learn how to achieve goals and to master content by engaging in critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration and self-directed learning (Johnson et al., 2016). Reflection is increasingly recognised as an important part of WIL strategies. Reflective practice supports students to develop their capacity to build cognitive bridges between classroom and placement learning in preparation for future work

(Harvey et al., 2014; Wingrove & Turner, 2014). Building work-readiness requires learning not only in the cognitive but also in the affective domain, as emotional readiness is part of developing a true preparedness for work (Bandaranaik & Willison, 2015). Engaging with strategies informed by the ELT model might assist students to deal with and learn from the complexity of an experience and can contribute to development on several levels: affective, perceptual, and behavioural (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). However, while some students have a natural inclination to be reflective about their learning, a core element of ELT, many others will try to complete steps provided for formal reflective tasks without developing any deep meaningful level of reflective practice capability (Wong, 2016).

According to Kolb and Kolb (2005), creating 'learning spaces' offers a mechanism to foster deeper engagement with experiential learning and may engender more effective reflective practice (p. 208). Learning circles are an example of operationalising these learning spaces to support learning from the placement experience. Kolb and Kolb (2005) have also used Situated Learning Theory to extend our understanding of learning spaces beyond the physical context to include transactions between the person and the social environment. This builds on ELT and develops the idea of learning through socialisation and becoming part of a community of practice, which contributes to identity formation and a sense of transitioning towards a professional role. According to Kolb and Kolb (2005), principles for creating social learning spaces that enhance experiential learning include: respect for learners and their experience; using the learner's experience of the subject matter as a starting point for learning; creating and holding a hospitable space for learning; and making space for conservational learning, for development of expertise, for acting and reflecting, for feeling and thinking, for 'inside-out' learning (motivated by learner's interests), and for learners to take charge of their own learning. Thus, in theory, implementing learning circles based on these learning spaces and situated learning principles might augment the value of placements by using reflective and social processes to consolidate the individual's placement-related learning.

For optimal impact, the learning circle may need to be operationalised at a time and in a space separate from the actual placement experience. Learning circles have been used to facilitate open discourse between students and staff in the placement environment and to develop an active learning community in the workplace, however, their impact in these settings is limited by the ability of staff and students to attend due to competing job commitments (Walker, Cooke, Henderson, & Creedy, 2013). In addition, trying to fit this activity into the actual work placement may be a drawback to the realisation of the 'power of learning conversations' as it doesn't truly allow the 'space' or 'time out' needed to reflect and make sense of things (Le Cornu, 2004, p. 5). By necessity, the focus during placement is the concrete experience, the student's practice is their own responsibility and they are required to control 'most of their problems independently by reviewing their own practice repeatedly' (Khanam, 2015, p. 688). Augmenting the placement experience with an on-campus learning circle should support experiential learning and assist students to engage in adaptive and critical thinking to consolidate the experience as learning. Billet (2009) explains that a key role for university educators is to guide the

student's critical thinking so that it is directed in productive ways, rather than leading to disillusionment related to confronting or uneasy experiences in workplaces.

A central requirement for realising effective integration of on-campus and off-campus learning is supporting students' agency as active learners. This aligns with a key concept of the meta-cognitive experiential learning model of 'a learning identity' (Kolb & Kolb, 2009a). It follows that, if students use the cyclical processes that ELT describes in the context of placement tasks, they will be able to recognise learning experiences, adjust their practice and deal with challenges. This, in turn, can be key to developing their resilience in the placement setting. Billet, Cain, and Le (2017) point out that engaging students in discussion about their authentic WIL experiences places them in a strong position to evaluate actively and learn from them. In order to make these meaningful connections, students need opportunities to feel that they have a 'voice' in constructing the learning narrative, which will in turn help them to take on and handle the difficulties of practice (Wong, 2016).

The learning space helps to facilitate and guide the cognitive monitoring and control of the learning occurring (Kolb & Kolb, 2009a). While students can distinguish between what has been learnt and what has been experienced, skilled facilitation is needed to help them 'explore their ideas, to share and integrate their knowledge and insights about professionalism and to expand their emotions' (Trede, 2012, p. 163). A conscious effort is required to challenge students to be active and agentic learners as, without support, many would simply attend and attempt to learn 'by osmosis' whilst in the WIL placement environment. The risk is, that without embedded opportunities for reflecting on practice experiences and drawing critical meaning from them, learners might develop poor standards and bad habits unintentionally. Providing a learning space and guiding the conversations, when needed, allows for social relations and discourse to raise awareness of, and question, standards, habits and even self-doubts.

To support placement students' engagement with experiential learning, the teacher may need to adapt their teaching style. Both pedagogy and andragogy exist within the scope of learning and teaching in higher education. Between pedagogy and andragogy the maturity of the learner is growing, and the style of learning moves from teacher-led to self-determined, with the learner taking on more control and responsibility (Blaschike, 2012; Halupa, 2015). Transformational learning occurs with the growth of learners' autonomy and is driven by critical reflection and the development of self-knowledge (Halupe, 2015). Heutogogy is an expansion of the andragogy concept where the learning becomes more self-regulated (Blaschike, 2012). At the point of transitioning from undergraduate learning, the graduate should have the lifelong learning capabilities required for autonomous adaptation to workplaces and their evolving learning needs. Consequently, teaching that augments placement experiences needs to scaffold a style that is less structured, more learner-directed and more focussed on the learning process. The collaborative learning that learning circles seek to develop is a heutagogical course design element that can assist in the development of self-determined learning (Blaschike, 2012; Halupa, 2015).

2.3   Augmented Learning Activities in This Study

For this study, the two-pronged strategy described was introduced to augment the third-year undergraduate public health and environmental health WIL placement programs at Griffith University. The specific aims were to:

1. Develop professional identity, self-efficacy, and resilience dialogue in placement preparation; and
2. Increase student engagement in sharing learning from their placement experiences.

Students in these programs undertake placement during the second trimester (T2) of their final year. Twelve students were enrolled in one of these placements in 2017 and a further 19 undertook them in 2018.

In line with recommendations by Bialocerkowski, Cardwell, and Morrissey (2017), workshops that specifically addressed resilience, self-efficacy and professional identity were introduced prior to placement 'as an inoculation' to help learners to manage their placements (p. 67). Pre-placement sessions were modified to include more explicit discussion of professional identity, resilience, self-efficacy, stress and conflict management. Specifically, students were asked to label and discuss what professional identity was and share perceptions of what ideal professional qualities were. A session was also scheduled where a professional counsellor discussed approaches to developing resilience and managing stress and conflict whilst on placement.

Further augmentation of the placement experience in the classroom occurred through the introduction of five guided learning circles during tutorial times throughout the trimester. For each, the students were asked to prepare brief points on a placement experience to share with the group, such as something learnt, a challenge, a mistake, or how the unit with which they had been placed works. At the end of each learning circle students were asked to reflect on and document what they had learnt from the discursive experience and how they could put that learning into practice. The intervention was designed to strengthen student engagement in sharing and articulating the learning they identified as important to their practice and employability. Learning circles were also used to promote vicarious learning through students sharing their learning with others. Convenor-facilitated group discussions provided a mechanism for constructive feedback and a platform to reinforce students' belief in being able to cope and handle new contexts and situations. This is what Bandura refers to as verbal persuasion (Bandura, 1977, p. 191).

The key focus of the study was to examine how students undertaking the placement course perceived the value of the deliberate educational strategies introduced (the pre-placement sessions and the learning circles), which were designed to enhance engagement in learning and support the development of identity, self-efficacy and resilience. A mixed methods approach was adopted, including several ways of collecting both quantitative and qualitative data.

1. Survey instruments measuring the specific constructs of identity (utilised prior to the first intervention and at the end of the placement); and self-efficacy and resilience (measured pre- and post-placement).
2. Learning notes submitted by students in 2017 after at least three learning circles.
3. A course experience survey administered in 2018, at the end of the placements, aimed specifically at gauging the perceived value of the learning circles.

Survey instruments consisted of a variety of questions measuring several key constructs. Questions to measure identity were based on an approach developed by Bialocerkowski, Cardwell, and Morrissey (2017) for their 'Bouncing Forward' post-placement workshops. This approach included asking a series of Likert-style questions that produced a score (administered pre- and post-placement) as well as an activity that involved getting them to mark a point where they felt they were at on a 10 cm line representing a continuum between "student identity" and "professional identity" and answering two open-ended questions about why they did not rate themselves higher or lower (undertaken pre-, during and post-placement). Questions to measure self-efficacy came from Chen, Gully and Eden's (2001) New General Self Efficacy Scale (GSE) and Subramaniam and Freudenbery's (2007) task-specific self-efficacy items. Questions to measure resilience aligned with the Brief Resilience Scale (BRS) developed by Smith et al. (2008). The study protocol had ethical approval from the Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee (protocol reference number 2017/142). In addition, open-ended questions in the survey instrument, as well as student learning notes, were analysed utilising thematically-oriented qualitative processes (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

2.4 Findings: Self-Perceptions of Identity

In both years, learners' professional identity ratings improved following placement. With the single median scores derived from the Likert questions, this improvement was only marginal (Figs. 1 and 2). The "mark along a continuum" activity provided a finer grade of self-rating and valuable insights about their reasoning.

Interestingly, two students rated themselves lower midway through placement compared to pre-placement. This may reflect them questioning their professional identity when experiencing the real-life world of work, integrating learning, and comprehending the need for further development. By the end of their placement, all students believed they had moved forward from being a student towards being a professional. The growth in the 2017 cohort's perceived professional identity ranged between 10% and 34%, with an average growth of 21%. These perceptions of professional identity are clearly subjective but do indicate that the final trimester in which these students completed their placement was an important period for their professional identity development. The findings support that the student's professional identity development, while not complete, was occurring during their higher education life phase.
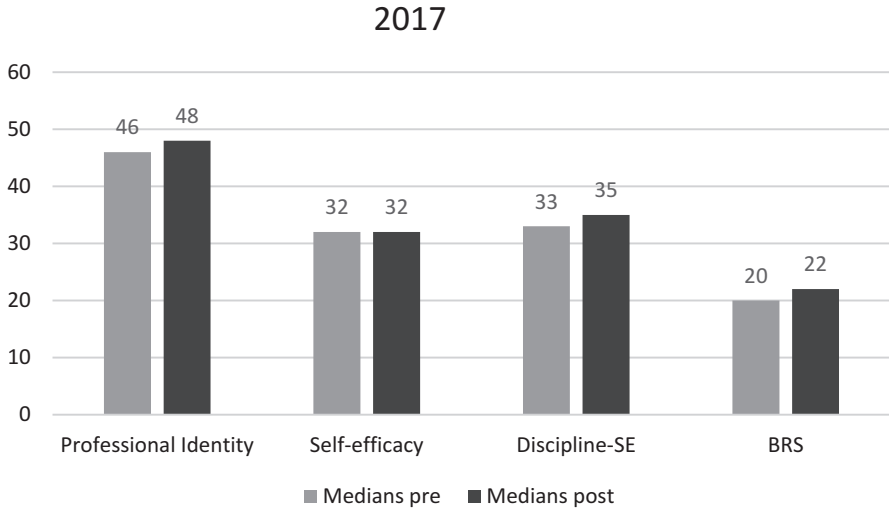
2017

Fig. 1 Median self-rated scores for professional identity, self-efficacy, discipline self efficacy and brief resilience score in 2017

2018

■ Medians pre   ■ Medians post
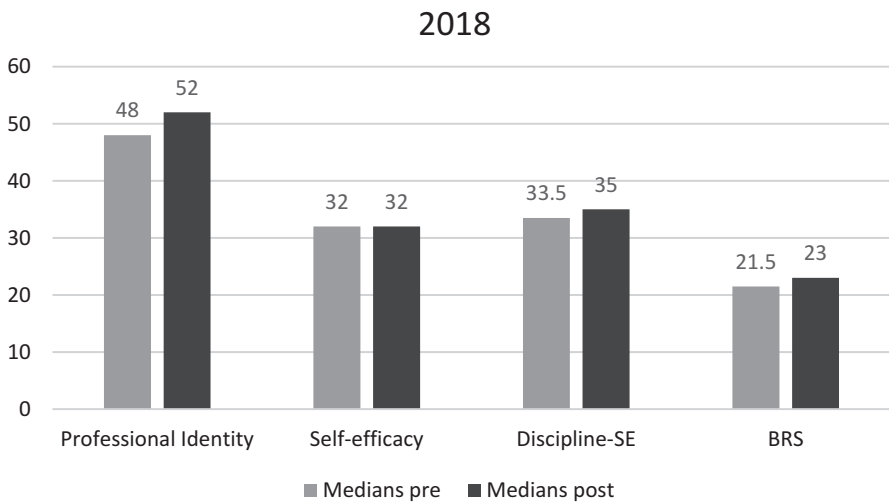
Fig. 2 Median self-rated scores for professional identity, self-efficacy, discipline self efficacy and brief resilience score in 2018

The reasons provided by the students about why they would not rate themselves higher (professional identity) or lower (student identity) provided further insights. Reasons related to the following: their extent of practical experience; progression through their degree (e.g. 'enough studies to have somewhat of a thorough understanding'); perceived extent of learning; and confidence. These reflect key

influences on participants' reasoning and cognitive processing in forming a professional identity.

The dominant theme emerging across the three sample points was the importance of the amount of placement or experience the student had. Lacking sufficient or any previous placement experience appeared to influence students who did not rate themselves highly prior to enrolling in the placement course: 'haven't completed placement, haven't put into action theory we have learnt, haven't experienced "real world"'. At a point midway through their placement, the extent of placement or experience appeared still to be relevant and was reflected in comments like 'I still have more experience to gain on practicum to better enhance my skills, therefore, I do not feel professionally competent in some areas'. However, by the end of their placement, there were more students referring to their placement experience as a determinant of why they rated their professional identity development more highly and why they felt able to demonstrate their capabilities: 'throughout my placement I have been able to demonstrate and develop my skills and knowledge further' and 'because now after all my practicum I have more experience on what a [name of profession] does and I am capable to do some of these things'.

However, for some students, there was also a sense of anxiety about having had insufficient experience to rate themselves as 'a professional'. For some public health students, this reflected their perception about the breadth of public health work: 'I feel there are so many different aspects of being a public health professional and I have only experienced a little bit of that'. This suggests that there can be emotional (meta cognitive identity – *I can do*) barriers to be overcome when transitioning out of the higher education environment. This was also expressed by an environmental health student at the end of their program with the words 'still feel like I need more work experience in order to consider myself an Environmental Health Officer'. A strong connection to a student identity may also hold students back, with some comments illustrating a struggle with letting go of their student role at the end of their studies: 'I still feel that I am in that student phase where I still have more skills, knowledge and experience to gain', or simply stated by a student as 'student mind'.

It was typical for participants to perceive that the journey between being a student and becoming a professional required two essential and related elements: completing both the placement and the whole degree. Participants felt they could track the journey by the extent of completion of each: 'Although I have not completed my studies I have gained some experience in the profession. I am on track to becoming a [name of profession]. Participants' perceptions about the extent of their learning, and how much more there may be to learn, emerged as another theme: 'I am still learning different things whilst on placement, so I feel I still have to develop some skills'. These comments reflect that part of engaging in WIL was seen to be testing, self-auditing and developing skills. This emphasises the importance of this time for dealing with the socio-emotional aspects of self-development and employability. However, at the end of their program there were still some comments that reflected self-perception of a need for more learning to rate themselves as being a professional. While some could have associated this with continuous improvement, for others the perception may represent a cognitive barrier to seeing themselves as

closer to being a professional: 'I still feel that I am in that student phase where I still have more skills, knowledge and experience to gain'.

Two potential barriers were evident: perceptions of the extent of learning and confidence. By the end of their program, the gaining of confidence influenced how high a participant rated their progress towards being a professional, and the gaining of confidence was typically associated with having undertaken placement: 'Placement has helped me to transition into a more confident student/graduate, overall helping me to feel like an actual … professional'. A student's perception (or fear) of not having learnt enough (and not recognising their capacity for future learning and development to meet these needs) appeared to be a dysfunctional or defensive behaviour that blocked moving forward. This highlights a key role that augmented post placement activity can play: normalising emotions and encouraging engagement in developing self-efficacy and resilience.

Metacognition has played a role across the WIL experience for these students. At a subjective level, an individual's learning on placement can be stifled by their meta-cognition (Kolb & Kolb, 2009b). Learning self-identity is a key concept in metacognitive models of experiential learning. Kolb and Kolb (2009b) explain that our self-identity is the sum of fixed and learning beliefs (*I am a learner*) and every time a student comes up against something that can trigger their assessment of an ability to learn, the self-identity is determined by the balance point of characteristics that reinforce a fixed self (e.g. negative self-talk, avoidance, or being threatened by others' success) and characteristics of a learning self (e.g. trust in their ability to learn from experience, mistakes and others' successes). Placement educators can encourage the tipping point towards the learning self if they incorporate learning activities that support embracing and trusting the experience, the learning process and redefining relationships with perceived failure.

2.5   Findings: Self-Efficacy and Resilience Ratings

The median General Self-Efficacy (GSE) score at the start of T2 for both cohorts in this study was 32. This median was maintained at the end of placements. While there was no significant growth in general self-efficacy it did indicate that the students were in a good position to start placement (Figs. 1 and 2).

Based on the self-efficacy items added to gain insights about specific measures of belief in ability to succeed in their chosen discipline, the starting median was 33 in 2017 and 33.5 in 2018 at the start of T2 and 35 in both years at the end of T2. Not only did the cohorts start with strong discipline-orientated self-efficacy, but they increased slightly in both years (Figs. 1 and 2).

At the start of T2 in 2017 the group resilience median on the BRS scale was in the normal range at 20 and increased by 2 points by the end of T2 (Figs. 1 and 2). Likewise, in 2018, the resilience median increased from 21.5 to 23 over the placement period. The students generally started with a normal level of ability to cope with difficulties and this did not increase significantly from the start to the end of the trimester.

2.6 Findings: Learning circles and the Types of Learning Occurring

The thematic analysis of the 2017 cohort's learning circle notes revealed which types of learning and development the strategy appeared to assist the most. Students prepared both functional (how to) and dispositional (behaviour, thought and emotion) topics to discuss in the learning circles (see Table 1).

Many entries could be coded across several categories and subthemes. For example a student may have shared an aspect of a case and highlighted good practices, challenges or both. Many students wrote that they had prepared to share details or aspects of a case or project on which they were working. However, analysis of the notes students made on what was learnt from the Learning Circle revealed that no one focused on specific case details that someone else had shared. Instead, the dominant theme regarding perceived learning was that of good practices, followed by dealing with emotions and tensions and working on self-confidence. These all fall into the category of dispositional learning. Interestingly, while not many students wrote about presenting a tension or challenge, they were experiencing or had observed for discussion, how to deal with tensions was one of the dominant themes in both the responses for 'what was learnt' and 'what learning could be taken away and applied'.

The types of difficult situations or emotional tensions shared included: observing or personally dealing with client aggression (e.g. 'I learnt interpersonal skills remaining professional even when they were emotive'); frustrations over jurisdiction (e.g. 'it is challenging most you can do is …'); conflicting with personal values (e.g. 'feelings while imposing enforcement of legislation')*; dealing with work day stresses (e.g. 'fatigue'); self-confidence (e.g. 'self confidence in interactions') and not knowing how to voice concerns with supervisors (e.g. 'not knowing how to speak up about my frustrations')*.

It was clear that exposing challenges, frustrations, emotions and difficulties is easier for some than others, however, being exposed and part of a discussion about them has learning, self-efficacy and resilience benefits for both the individual who brings the challenge to the learning circle and those who become part of the ensuing discussion. For example, when an environmental health student raised frustrations about the confinement of jurisdiction, another student acknowledged in their notes that, as part of a 'helping profession', it can be hard not to be able to respond when a concern is not in their jurisdiction and discussed what actions they could take if they came up against this type of situation. This created new learning that appears likely to help participants with self-efficacy if confronted by the particular 'tension' in future work: 'Ability to be the middle man between the community and other government organisations'. Future action that students felt they could apply from this learning included: 'even though an issue might not be under my jurisdiction I can still go speak to the community members to put them at ease whilst also helping the other organisation'; and 'reassure customers and collect data to then pass on to the relevant authority'. This demonstrated that the learning circle process has been

Table 1 Key themes that emerged through learning circles

Types of Learning	Aspects that emerged through learning circle notes	Example quotes
Factual or procedural	Cases or projects (or an aspect of) Processes and technology used Organisational information e.g. structure Assessment tasks	'An outbreak has occurred across {} and {} jurisdictions. Learning of the outbreak control procedures and who is in the team' 'Learned the whole process of water sampling: Preparation of equipment (containers, gloves, plastic bags, onsite water testing machine); sampling, sample lab submission.' 'Process of collecting evidence (photos, samples, notes)' 'Shadowed EHO during community pharmacy inspection. Completed my own compliance report during inspection. Improved my knowledge of Health (D&P) regs 1996. Requirements of pharmacy such as keeping certain patient records, safe requirements (controlled drug storage). Surprised amount of detail EHOs need to look at …" 'Methodology process, how to structure it'
Cognitive disposition and capacity to engage as a professional	Good practices e.g. preparation Dealing with emotions and tensions, namely self-confidence, difficulties or difficult situations Time management Communications Working in a workplace team and with a workplace supervisor Role and boundaries Discipline values	'Ensuring all people involved in the project are kept up to date' 'I learnt that it is important to know what resources you have access to and how to use them' 'When completing a task for an organisation the expectations and audience need to be clearly established prior to the completion of the task' 'Student on placement authority on client' '… they were emotive, one in particular because he had a terminal illness and needed to sort this issue asap. I learnt interpersonal skills remaining professional even when they were emotive. Worked as a team, (name) took a lot of the aggression and …" 'Feelings while imposing enforcement of legislation (Tobacco)' 'Fatigue in research and breaking up what you are doing during the week' 'The importance of communication between co-workers to organise tasks so that they are time efficient and productive'. 'A challenge: wanting to move forward with my project, however, not having access or an orientation to software. Additionally, not knowing how to speak up about my frustrations.' 'How I am learning to define and relate Public Health to non specific PH jobs'

able to support students to share experiences, reflect upon them and to create new understanding with or from their peers' experiences. Our findings also suggest that agentic self-directed learning capabilities can be supported by encouraging students to reflect on and share their experiences. They emphasise how important it is to allow the inclusion of contentious experiences and how they were reconciled, allowing the students to develop meanings from their experiences and judgements about how to deal with challenging situations (Billet, 2009; Nagarajan & McAllister, 2015). Facilitating peer learning through sharing, questioning and resolving tensions emerges as an important aspect of integrating work-based learning supported by learning circles.

Resilience building was also evident. For example, when an environmental health student expressed that they were struggling with not being permitted to be part of a confidential investigation or to view confidential information and that they were taking it personally and were frustrated about being blocked from essential learning, the student writings demonstrated the value the learning circle provided for working through these emotions. Several students noted aspects of this discussion as a key learning including learning about 'confidentiality in investigation processes'. If they were to come up against the same type of situation in the future, they had learnt to avoid dysfunctional thinking that might disrupt moving forward during placement: 'when EHOs don't want to share confidential information, which is part of an investigation, we cannot take it personally and [need to] understand the reason why'.

2.7　*Findings: Learning Circles from the Student Perspective*

The 2018 cohort was asked whether learning circles had added value to their placement experience. Of the 68% who answered, all agreed or strongly agreed that it had. When asked what was good about learning circles, student responses indicated that they appreciated the opportunities to share experiences (e.g. 'share knowledge and learnings and discuss as a group why certain approaches are taken'); to hear and learn from others' experiences (e.g. 'sharing information is so valuable because I can apply techniques to situations that may arise'); and one student raised being able to practice having a 'voice' in terms of 'good practice for students to [become] used to participating/have their say'. The learning circle process used was connected to: feelings of accomplishment from being able to contribute (e.g. 'nice to talk about what we've learnt and feel accomplished – nice to discuss it among peers who <u>know</u> what we're talking about')*; reduced stress from knowing that others were having the same issues and had found learning strategies to deal with them (e.g. 'It was good to talk to everyone and see how they were coping … normally I thought I would be the only one feeling confused or stressed, but after the group talks I felt more relaxed and calm'); and gaining deeper insights from questions raised, reflection, and feedback (e.g. 'it's good to share experiences to relate to other

students on prac … it helps to talk about issues or barriers during prac and discuss feedback and advice').

In 2018, students were also asked if they felt there were any drawbacks from being involved in the learning circle process. Their responses indicated that they believed the main drawback was time requirements and competing demands, including placement activities. Some also made comments suggesting that they were challenged by finding a specific learning to contribute and felt more confident in value-adding to the discussions of other students (e.g. 'sometimes it was difficult to come up with a key learning to contribute … you could have a discussion about other people's learnings'). Another said that they 'would like to combine the sections covering "what did you learn" and "how could you put into practice" stating that those "sections tend to link together/don't double up on notes'. This suggests that they were not comfortable separating the learning itself from how they could apply it in the future. This demonstrates the importance of encouraging students to separate and distinguish between analysis (conceptualisation) and use (utilisation) as they represent two different and important aspects of the reflective and recursive learning cycle.

2.8   Implications for the Educator

While students may rate themselves as resilient, we believe that it is warranted to have learning activities that support this resilience at times when they may be tested by difficulties on placement. Learning circles provide an important learning space. In the context of the metacognitive models of ELT (Kolb & Kolb, 2009b), learning circles could be seen as a space nested within social systems. As such they create a social environment that can influence the learner's experience. These learning spaces support the 'experiential learning process' and the generation of new knowledge by supporting conscious resolutions of the dual dialectics of action/reflection and experience/abstraction (Kolb & Kolb, 2005, p. 194). The concrete experience of placement provides the platform for observations and reflections. Reflections can then be assimilated and distilled into abstract concepts in the learning space, from which new implications can be drawn. The learning circles demonstrated that conversational learning strengthened reflection and conceptualisation. The learning phases of the learning circle include the student having a concrete experience on placement, thinking about it, sharing it with the learning circle, and finally, the ensuing dialogue leading to collective interpretation and the development of shared meaning that can be used to construct future action. The group conversation about placement in our learning circles stimulated reflection and deeper interpretive learning.

Active reflection is believed to deepen learning from experience. Consequently, reflecting on actions and practice should be integrated into placement learning activities. This may require helping learners to work through feelings and emotions as 'negative emotions such as fear and anxiety can block learning' (Kolb & Kolb,

2005, p. 208). This reflects what Kolb and Kolb (2005) term 'making spaces for feeling and thinking' in their principles for the promotion of experiential learning in education (p. 208). Also, making the learning spaces places where students can take control and responsibility for their learning is believed to enhance their ability to learn from experience (p. 209). Accordingly, it is important to involve them in the process of constructing their view and knowledge and to promote the development of the meta-cognitive skills used in active learning and the capacity for self-direction. This not only empowers students to take responsibility but also supports the development of skills to learn from uncomfortable experiences, in a way that connects to Boler's (1999) work on the pedagogy of discomfort. As demonstrated, peer group discussion can provide opportunities to create new ideas on how to deal with and learn from difficult situations. Students will be more empowered by this type of learning than if the placement convenor directed them on how they should deal with something and prescribed what they believe the relevant learning to be. Kolb and Kolb (2005, p. 209) label this principle 'making space for learners to take charge of their learning'.

Allowing for the narrative to play out is important and separates learning circles as a meaningful mechanism for reflection. Wong (2016, p. 7) points out that the narrative becomes a way 'for practicum students to translate knowing into telling'. Discussion in the classroom is considered important to integrating the work experience to the learning space. As in this study, Wong identifies that the crises that students experience on placement often involve 'confidence, self-doubt, identity, and everyday difficulties encountered during practicum'. These crises provide opportunities to make meaning from experience and reflection.

At an heutagogical level, the classroom starts to become a community of practice. For teaching to augment learning from placement effectively, it needs to be well facilitated, to foster trust amongst the teacher and the learners, and to create a safe learning space in which students can share their narratives. This aligns with another of Kolb and Kolb's (2005, p. 207) principles for the promotion of experiential learning in education: 'respect for learners and their experience', described as 'the learners feel they are members of a learning community who are known and respected by faculty and colleagues and whose experience is taken seriously'. The facilitator has a role in building this into the process and keeping the other end of the continuum (alienation, aloneness, feeling unrecognized and devalued) at bay.

Learning circles can be mechanisms to create social learning spaces. When integrating placement into curriculum, educators can promote the capacity for developmental learning by acknowledging that learning spaces are not defined by the concrete experience alone, but also by social learning and the ability to make connections between the two. Interestingly a student in this study recognised that learning circles allowed students to practice participating and to have a voice. This active practising of being part of problem identification, solution formation and having a voice is an aspect that Wong (2016) has argued assists in developing skills to handle difficulties in the workplace. So, how do we create a space in which students feel they can participate and have a voice? A hospitable learning space for conversational learning relates to creating space where the learner feels psychologically safe

and supported to face challenges and learn from expressing and confronting differences experienced between personal practice and expectations, between ideas, beliefs and values that can lead to new understandings. Creating space for conversational learning is recognised as a mechanism for providing opportunities for reflection and making meaning about experiences and thus improving the effectiveness of learning related to placement (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). However, this can be dependent on creating psychologically safe conditions and the integration of 'thinking and feeling, talking and listening, leadership and solidarity, recognition of individuality and relatedness, and discursive and recursive processes' (Kolb & Kolb, 2005, p. 208).

Our findings suggest that just the right amount of facilitation is essential. This supports the group learning and reflection through initiating discussions and modelling reflective questioning. Drawing back the facilitation when appropriate is also critical to allow students to take control and develop organically the reflective and group skills that will stand them in good stead to handle difficulties in the workplace, un-facilitated, into the future.

Another key finding was that learning circles need to be incorporated as an intentional, in-class activity to support group sharing and learning becoming a social norm. Students mentioned competing demands for their time as a drawback. The small allocation of marks given to the task and the provision of some flexibility by not making it a requirement to attend all the learning circles supported the buy-in that did occur. Students also appreciated that they were fortnightly rather than weekly (e.g. 'a great experience and having them every two weeks was good'). It is questionable whether students would have attended the initial learning circles if there were no marks allocated, not only due to the competing demands but also to uncertainty about the process. However, from our observations, and evidence from student comments on the value of the learning circles, it is clear that students became more confident in the process after participating and wanted to be part of the evolving discussions and learnings. Some voluntarily attended more than the required number of learning circles. When previous cohorts were asked if they wanted to share and discuss aspects of their placement experiences with the class they had been less willing to. Learning circles have made this a named and accepted practice.

The success of the strategy is reliant on buy-in on the part of the student. Hiebert (1996) asserts that it is the story telling that provides the mechanism for sharing knowledge and supporting socialisation. Koenig and Zorn (2004) expands that story telling is a teaching and learning approach that develops from the lived experience of the student, helps them explore personal roles and make sense of the lived experience and is an approach that helps a diverse range of undergraduates with various learning styles. Le Cornu (2004) points out that in a learning circle the conversation is not an ordinary conversation or exchange as it should go beyond describing to making meaning or deeper understanding, to be a 'learning conversation' (p. 7). While the facilitator can help provide a structure and environment for this, individuals need to be willing to learn 'from and with others' and to contribute to the learnings of others (p. 7). Le Cornu argues that the 'locus of control in the learning process remains with each person' (2004, p. 7) and probably the most powerful

aspect of conversational learning may be lost if students do not take it on and develop responsibility for the learning (Le Cornu, 2004, p. 7). In recognising that the principle of making space for conversational learning (Kolb & Kolb, 2005) is important to making experiential learning meaningful, it is also important to note there are underlying social dimensions that need to be developed, such as group acceptance and participation. In this study, the facilitator observed this growth and the learning circle process became a valued and social norm over the trimester, but we are also aware that it can be limited by the motivations of those involved.

A limitation of the study was its size. The sample sizes were small and did not support statistical analysis of the measured constructs. The strength of this research emerged through the subjective accounts, which provided insights into self-perceptions of professional identity, resilience and self-efficacy in the placement context, as well as the usefulness of learning circles as perceived by students. It is also worth noting that the learning circles typically involved six – 12 participants in size, which supported the conversational style. However, where resource-limitations necessitate larger groups, involving everyone and timing would become more difficult.

3   Conclusion

Helping students get the most out of their work integrated placements has been enhanced by the two-pronged strategy trialled: preparatory discussions acquainting students with principles and practices required for transitions to professional work, namely self-efficacy, building resilience and developing a professional identity; and regular learning circles. Learning circles offer a learning strategy that augments placement with conversational learning. A critical success factor is design and just the right amount of appropriate facilitation, which reduces over time. They are successful when they reflect Kolb and Kolb's (2009a) principles for promoting experiential learning, namely respect for the learner and the experience; creating a hospitable space for learning; and making space for conversational learning; acting and reflecting; feeling and thinking, as well as learners taking charge of their learning. This requires conscious and deliberate facilitation: leading when needed and drawing back a little when cohesive and supportive social norms develop. However, at the time when students are transitioning from traditional learning and have many competing demands, we believe that, without making this a required activity with marks being allocated, many students would not readily take up this learning opportunity. Students' self-identity often wavers during placement, with real life work triggering uncertainty over whether they have the skills to succeed. Preparatory discussions and learning circles offer a way to engage in dialogue and allow co-creation of new and deeper learning, which supports meta-cognitive development (*I can do this*), overcoming personal blockages and moving forward with responsive goals and actions.

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Reflection Revisited: Educational Interventions for Advancing the Professional Disposition of Postgraduate Nursing Students

Debra Palesy and Tracy Levett-Jones

1 Working and Learning as a Postgraduate Nursing Student

"I want to be able to tailor the subject information to my specialised setting" (Kim, postgraduate nursing student)

Intensive professional education programs in tertiary education settings, e.g., Master of Advanced Nursing, require students to develop their professional identity, including the associated expertise and attributes, in a relatively short time frame (Cardell & Bialocerkowski, 2019). Postgraduate nursing students' practicum experiences are often undertaken in their existing workplaces, without a clear set of learning objectives or related learning activities. Consequently, there is often a disconnect between knowledge learnt in tertiary education settings and enactment of this knowledge in the workplace. Postgraduate students may be aspiring to become advanced practitioners (e.g., nurse managers, clinical nurse educators) as a consequence of their postgraduate study, yet receive little direction on how to achieve this.

The benefits of postgraduate nursing programs e.g., attitude change, practice change, acquisition of knowledge and skills have been widely reported (Ng, Eley & Tuckett, 2016; Ng, Tuckett, Fox-Young & Kain, 2014). Personal and professional growth, increased confidence in clinical decision-making, enhanced self-esteem, career advancement and increased job satisfaction are considered to be potential outcomes of postgraduate nursing education (Cotterill-Walker, 2012; Ng et al., 2016; Ng et al., 2014). Improved problem solving, critical thinking, leadership and clinical skills, along with better management of complex situations are also attributed to postgraduate education programs (Ng et al., 2016). Ultimately, nurses with postgraduate qualifications are well placed to contribute to better quality care and safer outcomes for patients (Kinsella, Fry & Zecchin, 2018; Ng et al., 2016).

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Conversely, a number of inhibitors for nurses taking up postgraduate programs are reported. Postgraduate education programs may not adequately prepare nurses to work in their clinical area (Ewens, Howkins & McClure, 2001; Johnson & Copnell, 2002). Some postgraduate nursing students find the traditional academic practices of teaching, learning and assessment (e.g., essay writing) to be challenging and disconnected from their work practice (Burrow, Mairs, Pusey, Bradshaw, & Keady, 2016), while others consider online learning modalities e.g., discussion boards, podcasts, email, information searches, video conferencing as a major source of stress (Ng et al., 2016). The challenges in finding a work-life balance when studying, financial burden and lack of support from employers are also barriers to postgraduate nursing education (Ng et al., 2016).

Making connections between postgraduate nursing education and the workplace can be a positive (Ng et al., 2016) or negative emotional endeavour (Illingworth, Aranda, De Goeas & Lindley, 2013). Many nurses perceive postgraduate education in terms of professional requirements and accountability, feeling positive about the contribution that these programs make to their own personal and professional development, and to the nursing profession overall (Ng et al., 2016). Others are concerned mainly with reconstructing their professional identities in preparation for their advanced nursing roles, secondary to the acquisition of skills and knowledge (Illingworth et al., 2013). Consequently, this calls for a curriculum approach that can accommodate a variety of learning styles, facilitate the development of a professional disposition for an advanced nursing role, and make strong connections between tertiary education programs and actual clinical practice. Part of this approach may be reflection.

This chapter draws on a project in which two separate, guided reflective activities, both aimed at assisting postgraduate nursing students to augment their 'practicum' (i.e., work undertaken in clinical settings as part of their everyday practice) and facilitating development of their professional disposition for an advanced nursing role, were implemented in a postgraduate university subject. Clinician Peer Exchange Groups (C-PEGs) (Harrison, Molloy, Bearman, Ting & Leech, 2019) were implemented as a largely unstructured in-class activity and structured Online Reading/Resource and Reflective Discussion Activities (ORaRDAs) (Harrison, Molloy, Bearman, Marshall & Leech, 2017) were a mandatory activity between classes. Through an account of why and how the C-PEGs and ORaRDAs were implemented, the level of student engagement with these activities and implications for professional disposition development, some conclusions are drawn and recommendations made for the best ways of augmenting the learning and post-practicum experiences of postgraduate nursing and other higher education students.

2   Reflection in Nursing

*"So how do you feel about that?" (*Hargreaves 2004*, p. 196)*

The concept of reflection has been extensively researched and theorised over the past few decades. Mann, Gordon and MacLeod (2009) cite the key works of Dewey

(1933), Schön (1983), Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985) and Moon (1999) in defining reflection as "purposeful critical analysis of knowledge and experience, in order to achieve deeper meaning and understanding" (p. 597), and as a tool for revisiting and workshopping complex problems in professional practice (Mann et al., 2009). From these (and other) key works, Mann et al. (2009) established two major dimensions to reflection: an iterative dimension (i.e., an experience triggers reflection, new understandings arise as a consequence) and a vertical dimension (i.e., varying levels of reflection, from descriptive, surface levels, to more in-depth analysis). Yet reflection, and related notions such as critical reflection and reflective practice, are located within "a messy and complex field" (Fook, White & Gardner, 2006, p. 4), characterised by ambiguity and a lack of conceptual clarity both within and across academic disciplines (Van Beveren, Roets, Buysse & Rutten, 2018).

In the health professions, reflection and reflective practice are considered essential for the preparation of clinicians to function in increasingly complex and dynamic work environments (Mann et al., 2009). Reflective activities are incorporated into undergraduate (e.g., Callister, Luthy, Thompson & Memmott, 2009) and postgraduate nursing programs (Chirema, 2007; Glaze, 2001), clinical practice (Miraglia & Asselin, 2015) and, in many cases, evidence of reflective practice comprises part of initial and continuing licensing requirements (Dubé & Ducharme, 2015; Hargreaves, 2004). Patient case studies, critical incident debriefing and post-simulation debriefing (Harrison et al., 2019) in both verbal (e.g., focus groups, reflective sessions) and written (e.g., reflective journals, learning portfolios) (Dubé & Ducharme, 2015) are common strategies used to encourage reflection in the health professions, and are appreciated as a learning tool for many nurses (Dubé & Ducharme, 2015). However, these curricula interventions are often not well described, informed or supported by evidence (Dubé & Ducharme, 2015; Mann et al., 2009; Van Beveren et al., 2018).

Guided reflection (i.e., support from another person such as a peer group member, facilitator or mentor) can be important for health care students to help them make sense of and learn from stressful or traumatic situations, such as patient deaths or adverse events (Sandars, 2009). However, there are ethical considerations when including reflective activities in health care curricula, including privacy and confidentiality of information shared during reflection, and support for participants who are sharing and/or reflecting upon their vulnerabilities as clinicians (Norrie, Hammond, D'Avray, Collington & Fook, 2012; Sandars, 2009). Important questions that need answering are whether reflective activities in postgraduate health programs such as nursing should be mandatory (e.g., formal, assessable, students instructed to reflect) or allowed to develop more organically (e.g., informal, non-assessable, level of engagement optional). The value of individual and group reflection, along with online versus face-to-face modes of reflection should also be considered. Motivations for engaging in reflection, including how reflective activities may shape the development of professional disposition and subsequent career progression of postgraduate nursing students, need to be explored.

3   Motivations for Engagement

*"We all reflect, but why?" (*Van Beveren et al., 2018, p. 1*)*

The utility and purpose of reflection in higher education may differ between educators and students. Developing a professional disposition for a role is a widely cited educational purpose of reflection (Van Beveren et al., 2018). In the health professions, promoting a sense of legitimacy and value in a profession (Glaze, 2001; Platzer, Blake & Ashford, 2000), meeting role demands and expectations (Fisher, Chew & Leow, 2015) and upholding professional status (Cropley, Hanton, Miles & Niven, 2010) are some reasons why educators use reflection as a teaching and learning strategy. Desired learning outcomes such as integrating theory and practice, exploration and response to unique and complex situations, development of empathy and improving patient experiences also motivate educators to include reflective activities as part of their pedagogical approach in health-related higher education (Dubé & Ducharme, 2015; Glaze, 2001; Platzer et al., 2000; Van Beveren et al., 2018). However, one of the challenges in implementing reflective activities in an education program is the lack of student engagement. Many students have questioned the relevance of reflection, have approached reflective tasks superficially and, when forced to reflect, have reportedly hated it and even 'faked it' (Hobbs, 2007; Griggs, Holden, Lawless & Rae, 2018). This raises issues around the kinds of reflective activities used in higher education, student engagement, assessment and the subsequent impact of such activities on work (e.g., professional disposition, career progression).

Billett (2016) suggests that beyond practice pedagogies (i.e., the activities, experiences and interactions afforded to individuals to augment learning for work) are personal epistemologies (i.e., "what individuals know, can do and value" [p. 124]), which may influence how postgraduate students learn in and for health care professions. This learning is premised on subjectivities such as dispositions (i.e., personal attitudes, values, affect, interests and identities), intentionality and agency (i.e., critical and purposeful action) (Billett, 2010). Consequently, personal epistemologies are central to how postgraduate nursing students engage in reflection, in their university programs, and during and beyond their practicum.

Some studies report that health professions students reflect deeply to increase their situational awareness, improve their clinical skills, avoid errors and effect change in their practice (Dubé & Ducharme, 2015; Harrison et al., 2019). Harrison et al. (2019) recount the reflection of a medical student who, on their clinical practicum, observed one of their senior medical officers breaking bad news to a patient in a perfunctory manner, causing the patient some distress. The student's reflection, shared with his peers, emphasised the importance of person-centred care and communication with patients (Harrison et al., 2019). Others report the "illegitimate narratives" of reflective activities in education programs (Hargreaves, 2004, p. 200). For example, Hargreaves (2004) refers to a nursing student whose honest reflection on caring for a particular patient cohort was "…that they loath[ed] the client group and vow[ed] that they [would] never work in this sector once qualified" (p. 200).

Yet, the student did not submit this reflection for academic grading "even if they [felt] this [was] the most valuable thing they have learned" (p. 200), for fear of failing the assessment and/or having their beliefs exposed to scrutiny. In these two examples, both person-dependent (e.g., wanting to make a positive impact on a patient's experience) and socio-cultural factors (e.g., all reflections must demonstrate positive attitudes and outcomes) have shaped the personal epistemologies of students and have either positively or adversely affected their engagement with reflective activities.

Consequently, there appears to be a clear and negotiated relationship between students' reflections and actions, and the sociocultural setting in which they reflect and act (Palesy & Billett, 2017a). This is important when designing and implementing reflective activities for postgraduate students who may already have strong connections to their workplaces. Not only do we need to consider the personal epistemologies of the student, but also the teacher (Billett, 2016), along with the social world (e.g., health care facility, supervisors, colleagues, patients, fellow students) which may be part of the reflective process (Palesy & Billett, 2017b). Pedagogical approaches that consider these three factors and the interdependencies between them, encouraging postgraduate students to embrace their personally-unique worker identities, may well support the development of a professional disposition (Palesy & Billett, 2017a) and career advancement.

4   Implementing the Reflective Activities

> *"There is no surer word than 'reflection' to elicit plaintive groans from students" (*Harrison et al., 2019, p. 96*).*

The positive experiences that arise from reflective activities (discussed in preceding sections), along with encouraging findings from projects utilising reflection in postgraduate health professions education undertaken by Harrison et al. (2019) and Harrison et al. (2017), made for a strong case for implementing the two reflective activities which are the focus for discussion in the remainder of this chapter. These two activities were (a) on-campus Clinician Peer Exchange Groups (C-PEGs) (Harrison et al., 2019); and (b) Online Readings/Resources and Reflective Discussion Activities (ORaRDAs) (Harrison et al., 2017). With their different modes of engagement (i.e., formal and informal, face-to-face and online, group and individual), the two guided reflective activities were intended to accommodate a range of learning styles, enhance student participation, and assist postgraduate nursing students to make connections between the activities, their practicum and beyond. Accordingly, the reflective activities also aimed to encourage students to consider their personal epistemologies, including career advancement, and support the development of their professional disposition for advanced nursing roles.

The C-PEGs and ORaRDAs were implemented in one postgraduate nursing subject focused on acute care. The 23 students in this subject attended four full day

workshops spread evenly over one semester. For the C-PEGs, on-campus workshop activities were designed around the development of a professional disposition for an advanced nursing role and career progression. Students were divided into small groups of five or six, and around 45 min were allocated on each workshop day for C-PEG activity. In Workshop One, this activity comprised establishing the attributes of advanced practitioners and professional goal setting. The C-PEG activities in subsequent workshops drew on acute care content covered in the subject, making links between specific sessions (e.g., ethics, deteriorating patients, roles and accountability) and students' professional goals, experiences in the workplace and professional journeys. In the fourth and final workshop, students were also encouraged to revisit their professional goals set at the beginning of the semester. C-PEGs were peer-led, with input from the facilitator only as required.

Three separate ORaRDAs progressively rolled out between on-campus workshops were also designed to support the development of a professional disposition. Each ORaRDA addressed a key topic: (a) leadership; (b) interprofessional and multidisciplinary collaboration; and (c) education, adapted from definitions and hallmarks of advance practice nursing roles (Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia, 2016). For each topic, students were provided with one resource e.g., a reading, national guideline or a video clip. Key questions to guide learning and reflection accompanied each resource and were used by students to structure their online discussion board posts. Students were also provided with guidelines for responding to other students' posts. These questions and guidelines prompted students to share and explore specific work experiences in light of each topic, identify gaps in their own practice and suggest strategies for improvement. Participation in the ORaRDAs, including one original post and one response post to each of the three separate topics, comprised a mandatory assessment item for the subject. To 'contain' the online discussion and avoid overwhelming students with multiple posts, small online groups of five – six people were formed for the ORaRDAs. While students were instructed to post within their groups only, they were also afforded access to the posts of other groups, to gain insight into others' experiences and professional disposition development. Table 1 provides an overview of the key characteristics of the C-PEGs and ORaRDAs.

In summary, both the C-PEGs and ORaRDAs were carefully and specifically designed to support students to augment their practicum in light of their studies. In doing so, students were encouraged to consider their personal epistemologies, develop their professional dispositions for advanced roles and consider opportunities for progressing their careers.

Table 1 Reflective activities for advancing professional disposition: key characteristics

Activity	Inclusions	Sample guided reflective questions
C-PEGs	Non-assessable Face-to-face Voluntary individual reflections within group Small groups of 5–6 people (groups remain consistent over semester) Peer-led – Input from subject coordinator only as required Semi-structured – Open reflective questions posed to group Questions linked to professional goal setting, professional journey and workplace experiences in light of acute nursing care topics Consider rules of engagement e.g., maintaining student/patient/facility confidentiality, creating a safe space for sharing and learning from vulnerabilities, avenues for counselling and support if reflection raises any distressing or sensitive issues	**Workshop One: Goal setting** What kind of nurse are you right now? What kind of nurse would you like to be? What steps will you take this semester to achieve your professional goals? **Workshops Two and Three: Professional journey** Share with your group a situation of an acutely deteriorating patient in which you were involved. What happened? What was the outcome? What, if anything, would you have done differently? How does this relate to your professional goals/development? **Workshop Four: Moving forward** Think back to the professional goals you set in Workshop One. What opportunities are you seeking to realise these goals? What areas do you need to focus on?
ORaRDAs	Assessable Online Mandatory individual reflections shared in group Small groups of 5–6 people (option to engage with others outside of group) Moderated by subject coordinator Semi-structured – Open reflective questions posed to individual before sharing with group Questions explore key topics considered hallmarks of advance practice role Consider rules of engagement e.g., maintaining student/patient/facility confidentiality, creating a safe space for sharing and learning from vulnerabilities, avenues for counselling and support if reflection raises any distressing or sensitive issues	**ORaRDA One: Leadership** Following the key reading (e.g., 'whistleblowing' in health care), consider a situation where you or a colleague has experienced moral distress. What action, if any, did you take in the situation? What effect, if any, did your moral distress have on patient care? If faced with this same situation again, would you take the same action, or would you do things differently? **ORaRDA Two: Interprofessional and multidisciplinary collaboration** Following the key reading (e.g., clinical pathway for managing sepsis), reflect on a situation that you have encountered in your own practice where sepsis has been suspected in a patient. What happened? How was the situation managed? If faced with the same situation again, would you do things differently? Why/why not? **ORaRDA Three: Education** Following the key resource viewing (e.g., clinical supervision/debriefing post-cardiac arrest), reflect on a situation where you have received or provided mentoring from/for another clinician. What skills specifically helped or hindered in this situation?

5   Positive Student Feedback

"…this is a great way to become a more confident nurse" (Terry, postgraduate nursing student)

All 23 students enrolled in the subject agreed to participate in pre- and post-semester surveys and also agreed to analysis of their online posts as a means of gaining feedback around how the two reflective activities advanced their professional disposition. A 5-point Likert scale ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree' rated questions around students' professional disposition, skills and knowledge development, and the C-PEGs and ORaRDAs as a teaching and learning strategy. Online posts were analysed for professional disposition development. Demographic data (not reported here) were also collected.

Responses related to the development of professional disposition over the semester were encouraging. Nursing career advancement was strongly reported as a reason for undertaking postgraduate studies. All 23 participants who completed the pre-semester survey stated that they were undertaking postgraduate studies for career purposes. Eighteen participants also indicated pre-semester that they were intending to apply for an advanced position at the end of their program. At the conclusion of the subject, 22 of the 23 participants who completed the post-semester survey considered that they had made progress towards becoming an advanced nurse, and 21 reported that the subject had helped to advance their nursing career. Free text responses in this survey included references to enhanced learning in the subject through *"shar[ing] different working experiences"* and becoming "*more confident in my practice"*. Fifteen participants stated that they were ready to apply for an advanced nursing position because of their studies in the subject, and nine of the 23 participants had already applied for such a position.

The C-PEGs and ORaRDAs were viewed positively by students. Table 2 presents the number of participants who responded either 'agree' or 'strongly agree' to the post-semester survey questions about the two reflective activities.

The data presented in Table 2 depicts the face-to-face reflective activities (i.e., the C-PEGs) as facilitating more professional development and being more highly valued than the online activities (i.e., the ORaRDAs). In view of these data, fundamental pedagogical differences between the two activities: (a) verbal versus written;

Table 2   Positive responses post-semester in relation to reflective activities

	C-PEGs		ORaRDAs	
	Number/percentage of participants reporting			
Facilitated development as an advanced nurse	21	91.3%	17	73.9%
This activity is generally valued	21	91.3%	17	73.9%
Engagement with others in this activity enhanced learning	21	91.3%	21	91.3%
Learning from this activity has been integrated into nursing practice	19	82.6%	20	86.9%

(b) face-to-face versus online; and (c) optional versus mandatory reflection, are worthy of consideration.

6   ORaRDAs or C-PEGs for Advancing Professional Disposition: Which Is Best?

*"…student nurses appreciate their reflective practice experience overall, regardless of whether the [approaches are]…verbal…written…or mixed…" (*Dubé & Ducharme, 2015*, p. 95)*

The merit of different pedagogical approaches remains a frequent topic of inquiry in the reflective practice literature (e.g., Dubé & Ducharme, 2015; Fragkos, 2016; Miraglia & Asselin, 2015; Norrie et al., 2012). Norrie et al. (2012) found significant emphasis on portfolio production (paper-based and/or electronic) as part of the health professional's reflective activities and subsequent professional development. However, Dubé and Ducharme (2015) consider that the significant amount of time needed to reflect using written strategies (e.g., portfolios, critical incident reports, journals) often detracts from this format. Nevertheless, written reflective activities remain a favourable pedagogical approach to reflective practice in the health professions (Chirema, 2007; Fragkos, 2016; Norrie et al., 2012). Epp (2008) proposes that once students are motivated to use a written strategy such as reflective journaling, their writing and learning improves over time. This improvement is dependent though, according to Epp (2008), on a good facilitator, who is able to establish students' trust in the reflective process and foster the development of critical thinking. Consequently, with their semi-structured design around key topics in advanced nursing, along with moderation by the subject coordinator, as a written reflective activity, the ORaRDAs may be a useful tool for learning and professional disposition development.

Online reflective activities such as the ORaRDAs are an area of increasing interest (Harrison et al., 2017; Norrie et al., 2012). While online study benefits those students who are geographically isolated (Norrie et al., 2012), online programs are also favoured by postgraduate nursing students because they provide flexibility to balance study around stressful work and family commitments (Smith, 2010). So, an additional benefit of the ORaRDAs may be their convenience and flexibility.

However, while some postgraduate nurses consider traditional classroom environments inconvenient in terms of finding time to attend, others value the emotional support, encouragement, reassurance and constructive feedback from peers afforded by face-to-face reflective practice groups (Platzer et al., 2000). Group reflective activities, such as those undertaken in the C-PEGs, may facilitate behaviour and attitude change amongst nursing students, encouraging them to examine their professional assumptions, become more open-minded, self-confident and think more critically (Dubé & Ducharme, 2015; Platzer et al., 2000). Applying knowledge to the workplace and implementing changes to practice have also been identified as advantages of face-to-face group reflections.

Unlike the ORaRDAs which were moderated by an experienced subject coordinator, the C-PEGs were peer led. Core assumptions in designing and implementing the C-PEGs were that as practicing registered nurses, these students would have valuable knowledge and experience to share with their peers, along with the ability to teach each other, especially in non-clinical domains such as communication, ethics and professionalism (Harrison et al., 2019). With these assumptions in mind, the C-PEGs may have been designed differently for an undergraduate cohort.

Noteworthy in the data presented in Table 2 is that there were no significant differences in the number of postgraduate nursing students reporting to have integrated learning from the C-PEGs and ORaRDAs into their practice. Moreover, engagement with others during both these activities was reported as key in enhancing learning. Thus, it appears that both of these reflective activities are valuable in terms of professional disposition development. The absence of significant preferences for one approach over the other is also reported by Norrie et al. (2012). Regardless of their format, nursing students appreciate the positive contributions of reflective activities to their professional practice (Dubé & Ducharme, 2015). What is emphasised in the literature, however, is the importance of embedding multimodal reflective activities across the whole curriculum, rather than taking a compartmentalised, ad-hoc approach (Miraglia & Asselin, 2015; Norrie et al., 2012).

7   Open and Honest Reflection: Can It Be Forced?

"I felt that I was failing my patients, but I also did not know what I should do…" (Lily, postgraduate nursing student)

Besides the verbal and written, face-to-face and online differences between the C-PEGs and ORaRDAs, another key difference is the mandatory versus optional approach to the activities. A key concern here, is whether the obligatory, assessable ORaRDAs were as supportive of honest and open reflection as the face-to-face, optional participation in the C-PEGs.

As they were peer-led and not assessed, it is difficult to determine whether the C-PEGs encouraged honest and open reflection. What was evident in these 45-min sessions, however, was the enthusiastic level of engagement in the small groups. The classroom was arranged in a way conducive to small peer group discussion e.g., configuring chairs and tables to maximise visual and verbal interaction, subject coordinator sitting off to the side, available for clarification if necessary, but appearing disengaged from the groups. Students were observed to be leaning in and any conversations overheard by the coordinator were mostly related to the reflective questions. There did not appear to be any negative participators (e.g., monopolisers of the discussion, disagreeable or disengaged students) and most people appeared to volunteer contributions to their C-PEGs. In fact, as these groups were scheduled just prior to breaks in the workshop timetable, many of the groups seemed to want to continue their discussions well beyond the allocated times, despite a reminder from

the subject coordinator that it was time for a break. Whether the C-PEGs encouraged genuine reflection, or whether they were simply a means of networking with other clinicians, is unknown in this case. However, post-semester survey responses from students such as *"I enjoyed working with my peers and learning from their experiences"* and *"I value stories highly as a learning tool"* suggest that the C-PEGs were a worthwhile reflective learning activity.

Hargreaves (2004) claims that the imperative for students to perform well academically discourages candid, truthful reflection and because of this, reflective activities should not be assessed. In the formally assessed ORaRDAs, however, discussion board posts were suggestive of genuine reflection. This may have been due to two factors. Firstly, the ORaRDAs were considered a low-stakes assessment item, accounting for only 20% of students' final subject grade. Marking criteria were provided, although there was nothing in these that assessed honesty, professional knowledge or skills. Instead, students' reflections were assessed for such criteria as critical thinking and participation in the forum. Therefore, perhaps students felt as though they could risk a low mark but gain maximum benefit from participation: they had almost nothing to lose. Secondly, there were narratives to prompt the reflection. The key readings or resources that informed each ORaRDA highlighted experienced clinicians' vulnerabilities. In the same way, the postgraduate nursing students who took part in the ORaRDAs were all practicing health professionals and yet they too, revealed their vulnerabilities. Two main categories of responses emerged from their discussion board posts: reflections that openly discussed their professional weaknesses, and subsequent changes to practice or disposition. Sample responses in relation to these two categories are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 ORaRDA sample responses: vulnerabilities and subsequent professional development

Vulnerabilities
"This was poor practice on my part, I really should have known better" (Lily)
"It was an emergency, I was panicking" (Kim)
"I was particularly intimidated by this RN [registered nurse]…" (John)
"I felt extremely embarrassed and incompetent that I did not know how to do this" (Rose)
Subsequent professional development
"[I] learnt from this…studied clinical teaching and became an educator" (Matt)
"I reflected on the case in a systematic way and presented it at a clinical case meeting…" (Bec)
"I've initiated post-critical incident debriefing in our unit…" (Terry)
"I learned that patients in my care rely on my ability to speak up" (John)

Responses in Table 3 suggest that the nurses displayed self-awareness, openness to others and their professional practices, and also expressed emotions such as fear and anxiety. These displays are indicative of honest and well-developed reflective skills (Chirema, 2007; Dubé & Ducharme, 2015; Glaze, 2001). Whether these vulnerabilities and self-reported professional development as a result of the reflective activities were genuine, or simply fabricated for the purpose of assessment remains unknown. Nevertheless, students are less likely to fake or resent their reflective activities when strategies such as low stakes assessment, minimal subject coordinator input, a relaxed environment, and relatively brief episodes of reflection evenly spaced over the semester are implemented (Hobbs, 2007). These strategies were employed in the C-PEGs and ORaRDAs.

8   Integrating Personal Epistemologies and Contributions of the Social World

"The [nurse] was a great model for how not to be." (Zoe, postgraduate nursing student)

As foreshadowed earlier in this chapter, consideration of the interdependence between the personal epistemologies of the student, the teacher, and the social world are important for designing and implementing educational interventions (Billett, 2016; Palesy & Billett, 2017b) to support the development of a professional disposition. Like many postgraduate nursing students, the personal epistemologies of participants in this project were shaped by the goal of career advancement (Cotterill-Walker, 2012; Ng et al., 2014; Ng et al., 2016), and most students considered the C-PEGs and ORaRDAs to be helpful in achieving this goal. Changes to clinical practice, increased confidence and firm career choices were also reported as positive outcomes of these interventions.

These students also seemed to value the recognition and acknowledgement as an advanced nurse that was afforded by the reflective practice activities. Perhaps due to the content of the ORaRDAs (i.e., leadership, collaboration, education), words and phrases such as *"teamwork", "communication", "patient safety"* and *"patient advocate"* were used frequently by participants. Using this kind of language is not surprising, as it underpins all levels of nursing practice (Levett-Jones, Oates & MacDonald-Wicks, 2014; Stone, 2009). However, students also referred to themselves as *"experienced"* or *"senior"* or referred to others in their various work settings as *"junior".* When recounting various experiences in their workplaces, quotes included *"As a senior member of my team I understand…"*, and *"While communicating to junior medical and nursing staff, I always…"* These quotes do not suggest that professional disposition had developed because of the ORaRDAs, but perhaps this activity encouraged postgraduate nurses to express their dispositions more openly.

Acting professionally and ethically featured strongly in the ORaRDA posts. Reflecting on and responding to others, students responded with comments on the

discussion board such as *"Your practice was very professional in this situation…"* They also valued and explicitly referred to reflection, both as part of their development as advanced nurses *"I have reflected on this scenario many times and feel I still would've done the same thing no matter what position I was in"*, and also as a professional requirement: *"The fact that reflection is all through our Code of Conduct really sticks with me"*. These (and other) comments posted in the ORaRDA forums suggest that reflective activities are a worthwhile exercise in postgraduate education. Career progression and professional disposition development comprised part of students' personal epistemologies.

Harrison et al. (2019) note the tension that students may feel between 'maintaining face' and acknowledging their professional shortcomings when participating in reflective activities. However, by the time they undertake postgraduate studies, most nursing students should be accustomed to all forms of reflection, having undertaken it in undergraduate programs, as part of their clinical practice, and perhaps even as part of their annual licensing requirements (Callister et al., 2009; Chirema, 2007; Dubé & Ducharme, 2015; Miraglia & Asselin, 2015). Consequently, this regular exposure may have been a socio-cultural factor that affected postgraduate nursing students' participation in the C-PEGs and ORaRDAs: these nurses accepted and engaged in the C-PEGs and ORaRDAs as part of their everyday work life. However, an experienced facilitator, along with establishing the 'rules of engagement' for the C-PEGs and ORaRDAs i.e., creating a safe space for sharing and learning from other clinicians' vulnerabilities, may also have positively affected postgraduate nursing students' engagement with reflective activities.

Besides these person-dependent factors, a number of contributions from the students' social world (i.e., their workplaces) also featured in the ORaRDA posts. Table 4 outlines those workplace contributions most commonly identified by students as being either supportive or inhibitive of their professional disposition development.

Van Beveren et al. (2018) consider that "[d]ifferent ideas about becoming more professional" is a desirable outcome of reflection (p. 4). The factors listed in Table 4 that support or inhibit this outcome are consistent with those identified by Mantzoukas and Jasper (2004). Their study of nurses reflecting on and in their daily work found that a supportive environment (including a positive organisational culture), an authentic setting, mentoring and group discussion were among the most influential factors in enabling reflection and reflective practice. Effective supervision and interdisciplinary respect in the workplace are also identified as facilitators of reflection by Mann et al. (2009). Conversely, those who trivialise nurses' input into clinical situations, along with perceived political and power imbalances between doctors and nurses, and nurses and their managers, negatively affect reflection (Mantzoukas & Jasper, 2004). These factors were reported by the nurses in this study. Consequently, acknowledging contributions from the social world (i.e., the workplace) is important in postgraduate reflective activities. Both supporting and inhibiting factors could be used as triggers in the C-PEGs and ORaRDAs, to guide authentic reflection and advance the development of professional disposition.

Table 4 Professional disposition development: workplace contributions

	Contributions	Specific examples
Supporting factors	Formal workplace directives and guidelines	Nursing Code of Conduct, Nursing Code of Ethics, National Standards, clinical pathways, local facility policies
	Positive peer interaction in the workplace	Ward in-services, clinical simulations, clinical supervision/mentoring, critical incident debriefing
	Supportive senior staff	Nurse Unit Managers, Clinical Nurse Consultants, Clinical Nurse Educators who listen/discuss concerns and assist with escalating concerns
Inhibiting factors	Dismissive medical officers	Dismissing concerns about deteriorating patients or potential compromises to patient safety
	Dismissive nursing colleagues	Intimidating behaviour, dismissing concerns about deteriorating patients or potential compromises to patient safety
	Unsupportive executive management	Ignoring requests for more staff/resources

9 Reflective Activities for Advancing Professional Disposition: Where to from Here?

*"…continued study of reflection and its effect on professionals and on professional practice is important and worthwhile." (*Mann et al., 2009, p. 615)

In summary, career advancement is a major goal for nurses undertaking postgraduate studies. As much postgraduate nursing education offered today is not accompanied by a formal clinical practicum, there is potential disconnect between knowledge and skills taught in tertiary education settings and the workplace, leaving postgraduate nursing students to bridge this gap and forge their own career paths. One important means of providing the necessary direction for this professional growth is reflection (Hargreaves, 2004). Nurses are accustomed to reflection as part of their practice, and many reflect deeply on workplace situations, to improve their clinical skills and practice, increase their situational awareness, develop empathy and enhance their patients' experiences (Dubé & Ducharme, 2015; Glaze, 2001; Harrison et al., 2019; Platzer et al., 2000).

However, simply including reflective activities in a postgraduate curriculum is not enough to facilitate this kind of development. Accordingly, four recommendations are briefly proposed here. Firstly, rather than taking a fragmented, ad-hoc approach to their inclusion, a variety of reflective activities should be embedded across the whole postgraduate curriculum (Miraglia & Asselin, 2015; Norrie et al., 2012). Such approaches discussed in this chapter as part of the C-PEGs and ORaRDAs include face-to-face, online, group, individual, written, verbal, assessable and non-assessable reflective activities.

Second, given that nurses want to progress their careers and develop their professional dispositions through postgraduate studies, these activities need to be carefully planned to take this goal into account. This plan should include postgraduate subject facilitators making explicit exactly how they will assist in progressing nurses' professional dispositions and career advancement, and how the outcomes of reflection might be operationalised in practice (Van Beveren et al., 2018).

Third, when designing questions, triggers or prompts for reflection, facilitators should consider the interdependencies between students' personal epistemologies and the social world of work. This design should challenge students to consider how their own unique personal identities e.g., their knowledge, abilities, values, interests and attitudes is likely to influence their reflections and subsequent professional disposition development. It is important, too, to be sensitive to some of the enablers and barriers in the social world e.g., organisational culture, politics, peers, superiors, mentors, directives and guidelines that may also facilitate this development.

Finally, much of the success of reflective activities in postgraduate education hinges on the subject facilitator (Hobbs, 2007). Like students, facilitators, too, need to acknowledge their own personal epistemologies (e.g., their attitudes to reflection as a pedagogical approach) and the social world (i.e., the challenges and constraints of the tertiary education setting) in which these activities are enacted. Facilitators need to be skilled at instilling confidence in students in the reflective process, at creating and maintaining a non-threatening atmosphere, at monitoring reflective activities and knowing when to intervene and/or refer if there are risks of harm to students as a result of the reflective process.

The C-PEGS and ORaRDAs implemented in this study were well received by the students. They valued the engagement afforded by these activities, and especially enjoyed hearing and learning from other peoples' workplace experiences and stories. The majority reported integration of this learning into their nursing practice and considered that the C-PEGS and ORaRDAs had facilitated their development as an advanced nurse. Changes to clinical practice (e.g., introduction of case presentations, debriefing), increased confidence and career moves (e.g., into education) were also reported as a result of these two interventions. However, the small sample size (n = 23) may render the generalisability of the results as uncertain. For this particular study, a larger cohort, and methodological procedures which gathered more comprehensive data around exactly how the C-PEGs and ORaRDAs assisted students to link their studies to their practicum, both in the short term and beyond, may have yielded more informative results. The conclusions drawn from this chapter represent only one experience – a 'snapshot' of two educational interventions. When combined with further research, however, it is hoped that the discussion here might contribute to a holistic picture of the issue (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982).

Much more research is needed into the kinds of educational interventions that may advance the professional disposition of postgraduate nursing (and other) students. This research could take the form of qualitative studies, where focus groups and/or interviews with postgraduate nursing students may better understand factors that support professional disposition and the teaching/learning interventions that best facilitate this. Longitudinal studies could elaborate how professional

disposition develops on a continuum, including links to career progression. More specifically, the very nature of reflection means that assessing its effectiveness is challenging (Mann et al., 2009). Again, a range of study designs, methods and cohorts are required to further understand how reflective activities facilitate professional disposition development over time.

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Listening Circles Provide Model for Students in Disrupted Journalism Industry

Alexandra Wake

1 Introduction

It was almost five months after the murder of 11-year-old Luke Batty (Williams, 2014), after a cricket training session in a small Victorian town, that I became aware that at least three of my internship students had been sent to the site and taken part in a news conference that shook even seasoned journalists to their core. Luke had died at the hands of his father, who was then fatally shot by police (Hawley, Clifford, & Konkes, 2018; Ross, 2014). It had taken five months for me to become aware of their attendance at the news conference. Although I was in online contact with the students during their professional placements, covering such traumatic events is so normalised in Australian newsrooms that none of the students thought to raise it with me. It was mentioned, only in passing and in the most superficial way, in the students' final (assessment) reflective pieces at the end of semester. None of the students had been offered any support from their newsrooms, and frankly they did not expect it. It wasn't a one-off. In the past few years, journalism students on internships have found themselves at the scene of all kinds of traumatic events – from fires to road crashes and even mass murders – and many have been intimately involved in the production of deeply distressing news items, such as being asked to find the best angle for camera operators to film dead women and to help edit out the "gory bits". Most would not have it any other way: Being at the centre of the news, however confronting, is the very career that many have signed up for. However, some – those who wanted to be sports or fashion reporters for example – had never considered that they would be covering such horrors. Almost all were concerned that none of the employers had thought to include the students in post-trauma counselling sessions, even the few employers that organised help for permanent staff.

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To support these students an intervention was needed, but it needed to be carefully conceived. Journalism is different to many other professions. Firstly, the work is embedded with trauma (Derienzo, 2016; Ricketson, 2017). Studies have found that the prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder is higher among journalists that the general population, with 33% of reporters suffering vicarious trauma after interviewing victims or listening to survivors of violence (Aoki, Malcolm, Yamaguchi, Thornicroft, & Henderson, 2013, p. 380). Like a number of other first-responder professions, journalists are expected to confront the worst of humanity, but there is not a professional habit or regulation, like psychology or social work, that has embedded self-care into the work and there certainly is not a habit or a regulation to ensure support of the unpaid student intern. Secondly, journalists, in particular female journalists (Barton & Storm, 2016), are the target of abuse by those who do not understand their job, nor the value of it to democracy. Student journalists who are starting to promote and distribute their work in the online space are also targeted as part of these attacks. Thirdly, like many industries right now, journalism is going through a period of rapid change and disruption. Thousands of journalism jobs have been lost in the past decade in Australia alone. This disruption means news organisations are constantly being restructured, making it a massive administrative task to keep up to date with employers and the skills required for entry level journalists. It is also now common for news organisations to have multiple people in charge of supervising journalism interns in the space of a semester, for organisations to shut their doors, or for staff to disappear with little or no notice. When a news organisation unexpectedly closes, or announces redundancies, it's rare for someone to think to call the intern.

This chapter discusses the introduction of listening circles for students during and post their practicums to provide support for students and peers while on internships particularly around issues of trauma, abuse and disruption, but also to provide a model for future support that could be taken by students into their working lives.

1.1   *Disruption*

Changes to the way people access information through digital technologies has hastened the decline in journalism jobs in Australia, despite a strong economy and growth in population. As a result, journalism students often find that the places where they are interning are in the middle of disruption. Suddenly, staff are made redundant, closed down or merged and what was a happy placement one day, can suddenly become a distressing workplace. It's not a small problem. News organisations and news managers are under stress. The number of journalists employed by traditional print media businesses fell by 20% from 2014 to 2018. The new market entrants, the so-called 'digital natives' (Crikey, The Conversation, The New Daily, etc.), employ fairly small numbers of journalists and many start-ups in the digital space are financially vulnerable. Although there has been less disruption to

journalists working in radio and television, there have also been job cuts in both commercial and public broadcasters (Digital Platforms Inquiry Final Report, 2019).

The limited availability of highly competitive internships and timing of semesters has meant that journalism students often find they must attend several workplaces to complete the 15 day minimum internship requirement of their degrees, at different days and times over the space of 8 months. This means they are often required to do their placements over the university holidays, including the long summer holidays. Students can be required to do shift work, including starting as early as 3 am or finishing at midnight. They are often required to work weekends and public holidays. During non-standard work hours, students may find there is little or often very junior supervision available. While the majority of the placements require students to attend a newsroom setting, some are done virtually, using online communication and, generally, but not always, at least one face-to-face meeting.

Appropriate supervision and support for students while on journalism internships varies greatly for a range of reasons including the demographics of the profession, digital disruption, and the place of interns at the bottom rung of news organisation. Journalism is an occupation of the young, with 45.5% of Australian journalists in the 25–34 year-old age group (Josephi & Oller Alonso, 2018) which means reporters are young, and they have fewer experienced supervisors.

Adding to the pressure, is the trauma experienced by journalists on the job, and the personal abuse they receive when they are seeking information or promoting work through posts on digital media. Journalists report that they are often abused online and are subject to attacks that reference rape, death and hurting their children. A study of women in Australian media in 2015, for example, found that two out of every 5 journalists had experienced some kind of harassment, with three in five saying it was worse for women (Mates Over Merit, 2016). The Australian Human Rights Commission has also reported that rates of sexual harassment was highest in the media (81% of employees in information, media and telecommunications in the last five years) and women (66%) were more likely to be harassed than men (33%). (Everyone's business: Fourth national survey on sexual harassment in Australian workplaces 2018, pp. 9, 58).

1.2   The Intervention

It is against this background that the listening circles students were introduced, to support student journalists while on internships and to model life-long work habits of listening, reflection and support among peers. The listening circles were adapted from a similar, small, peer-led learning circles used by medical students to share experiences and learnings from placements in a confidential and supportive setting. Placements for trainee journalists and doctors are similar, in that students in both cohorts often work in isolation from student peers, often deal with traumatic

situations and, because of the diversity of the workplaces on offer, often have vastly different learning experiences.

There was also an underlying desire by the author to normalise the listening circles among journalism students so that, in a deeply disrupted industry, they had access to a model to seek support from peers, even outside their immediate workplace. They were described as supportive groups of peers where there would be continuous support. How the circles were perceived by the student body was deemed essential for their success, and as a result the name was changed from learning circles to listening circles to emphasise that the circles were safe spaces for students to listen and support each other, rather than a formal learning activity or assessible piece of work. In this they also differed from debriefing sessions where it could be seen as having an element of "reporting back" to employers or to university bosses.

The journalism students were deliberately told that listening circles were an adaptation of a model used by for medical students in a bid to develop life-long habits of professional engagement that would prepare them to start and continue such activities across their professional working lives (Harrison, Molloy, Bearman, Newton, & Leech, 2017). They were also told that other professions – such as social work, nursing, mental health, allied health and psychology – routinely use peer support and supervision techniques. It was hoped that by telling the journalism students that learning circles were already accepted as a useful tool by medical professionals, that they would see them as an "informal, co-operative way of learning that is based on natural patterns of human interaction" (MacGregor, 1993).

There were a number of set goals for the listening circles in the intervention which are described and discussed here. The first was to provide support for students outside normal classroom activities specifically around issues of trauma, abuse and work disruption. One of the significant issues for internships with journalism students is that – because they are organised often before or after the teaching semester begins – there is often not a formal opportunity to include classes or group reflective practice. It was hoped that, by using the listening circles, students would be able to meet more informally, listen, reflect and learn about each one of their different experiences in a safe and supportive environment, as they completed each of their internships outside of the assessment periods. The second goal of the listening circles was to share information between students. It was hoped that students who followed each other into an internship with the same news organisation would be able to share information and skills ahead of their placements and to provide support for each other. It was also hoped that students doing vastly different internships would be able to share their experiences and perhaps find some synergies. For example, students who were predominantly working with social media might be able to share skills with students who have been working with video editing, and vice versa. The third goal of the listening circles has been to provide greater support from peers and from teaching and work-integrated-learning staff about serious matters, including providing a triage system for other services if required. It was hoped that issues arising while on internships could be workshopped in a nonjudgmental, caring manner, so that interns might have strategies to take back into the workplace.

Six listening circles were initially piloted in 2017 and 2018. Each was an hour-long voluntary activity in which a total of 30 journalism students undertaking internships for course credits signed up to take time to share their experiences and/or a particular learning point from their internships. Because the numbers attending for each of the listening circles were small, only a single group was formed on each occasion, which differed from the Monash model which had multiple simultaneous circles. It had been hoped that a number of circles could be formed at each meeting, but attendance did not justify this outcome.

Students were given a sheet of Do and Don't discussion-starters (adapted from Harrison et al., 2017). Originally, the plan was for the groups to lead their own discussions in the same manner as the Monash students. However, the small size of the gatherings saw the RMIT discussions facilitated by the lecturer who became the facilitator, with input at relevant times from the work-integrated-learning officer. This decision was influenced by resource availability rather than the maturity of the students, or the potential for some educational benefit from student-led discussion. The discussion prompts were:

Do: Ensure everyone has an opportunity to contribute; share something with the group: **a** story**;** something you were taught; a mistake; what kind work did journalists do at your placement (features, broadcast); something that surprised, pleased or disappointed you; summarise a common problem at your work placement; describe something that you did the first time; a challenging situation; what kind of journalist do you want to become; and, was there an ethical issue that arose.

Don't: Share misinformation **or** Pool misery – try to be constructive as a group.

Under the guidance of the facilitator and a work-integrated-learning officer, each journalism student was given an opportunity to speak on whatever issue they wanted to raise, and other students were encouraged to respond or to further engage with the issue. This again differed from the medical model which encouraged student-led discussion, arguing that the students in that model felt better able to discuss their errors, away from the ears of instructors (Billett, 2019, p. 39). However, the small size of the journalism groups allowed each student to have adequate time to raise issues of concern and to respond to issues as they wished and put the facilitator in a role to add to the knowledge being shared. The students were told the discussion (although being recorded for research purposes) was being done under a "cone of silence" or "Chatham House Rules". These familiar restrictions are well-used by journalists, and student journalists, who must become used to being told information that they cannot directly share or attribute.

1.3   Conceptual Premises

The listening circles were unashamedly adapted from learning circles, which have long been used for professional development, particularly in education. They have been defined as "small communities of learners among teachers and others who

come together intentionally for the purpose for supporting each other in the process of learning" (Collay, Dunlap, Enloe, & Gagnon, 1998, p. ix). Learning circles are used in a variety of settings and often bring together diverse groups of people who have a unique take on a situation or issue, as is the case with journalism students working in a wide variety of roles during their internships. The learning circle model can "serve as an opportunity to develop new relationships, share ideas and experiences, and brainstorm new solutions" (Dyck & Sommers, 2012, p. 2). The defining characteristic of a learning circle is a joint interest in the subject being discussed. There is no one way to correctly run a learning circle. However, it is generally understood that a facilitator will guide the group through any discussions. Collay et al. describe six essential conditions for creating optimum conditions for learning circles: "… building community; constructing knowledge; supporting learners; documenting reflection; assessing expectations; and changing cultures …" (p. 8). Collay also provides a list of practical considerations: "… initiating, maintaining, sustaining and transforming the learning circles over time …" (p. 118). The learning circles were renamed listening circles for this intervention to emphasise the listening element of the activity and to avoid suggesting that just one person in the room had the wisdom or that the activity was some kind of mandated class. It was hoped the name would help ensure that they listened to each other and adapted the information heard to their own individual needs. Unlike debriefing sessions, which often occur in groups at the end of internship experiences, the listening circles were designed to occur through the semester allowing students to listen to each other, to pool knowledge and to improve their experiences by allowing them to modify their workplace behaviour, if necessary, based on the knowledge and wisdom of the student group.

1.4   Method and Sample

A total of 30 students took part in the pilot learning circles in six separate sessions across 2 years. Students came from the Bachelor of Communication (Journalism) or the Graduate Diploma of Journalism programs. All were enrolled in their final year of study in a mandatory internship course. Students are required to undertake a minimum of 15 days of internship (with one or potentially several employers) to successfully pass their course requirements. Often these internships occur in non-teaching times, particularly the long summer break, and therefore outside of normal class times.

Some students attended more than one circle. With university ethics approval, each student was also asked to complete a written survey at the end of each session. With the students' consent, recorded discussion sessions were transcribed and thematically grouped into areas of interest. In the following discussion students are identified only by gender (Male or Female) plus a number (1, 2, 3 etc) to indicate who was talking. The names of all internship providers and were removed.

2   Discussion

2.1   *Role of Facilitator*

The role of the facilitator and workplace administrator was important to the listening circles, to ensure an appropriately supportive tone was maintained in the discussions and that when conversations veered off to other areas (such as complaints about university processes) the interns were brought back to the speaking points. The facilitator used a number of phrases such as "maybe there is some wisdom in the room, from the others" to direct the conversation away from the loudest voice. The work integrated placement officer – who had professional experience across other industries – was also able to provide interesting perspectives on issues. In all the recorded listening circle conversations, the students maintained a respectful attitude towards each other, asking genuine questions and offering potential suggestions to issues, in a gentle manner.

At times, the conversation allowed the facilitator to use humour to raise concerns about workplace behaviour. One student (F1) gave a detailed explanation of how the cameramen, "really macho young men" spent time "fiddling with my hair and putting it up and down". This allowed a joking response from the facilitator: "Now, you do realise that (was) probably (because they were) trying to sleep with you?" To which (F1) responded: "You know what, if it helps." Although lighthearted in tone, the exchange did raise an important point for both the facilitator, in her duty of care, as well as the student intern to consider that reaction in light of the #metoo movement (*Everyone's business: Fourth national survey on sexual harassment in Australian workplaces* 2018).

The listening circles highlighted the students' reluctance to seek advice from their cohort, even within a closed online group, unless it was from their closest friends. (F14) noted: "It is a little bit harder if you aren't in friendship groups." This was despite online communication being established within their year level in advance via a closed social media group. More-confident students said they went to the online group when they were struggling at work, with (F12) saying: "I found myself looking back and try(ing) to figure out who had been there before me to ask for advice." However, another (F14) noted that she didn't like the online arena because "it could be a little bit difficult to just be totally honest in that space".

Many of those who attended the listening circles identified themselves as less-confident students, although all were competent. Journalism students generally mirror the general university student population, in that there are always high-achieving and super-anxious students. Internationally, there has been a recorded increase in the general study population of recorded issues with anxiety, panic attacks, fatigue and inability to cope with deadlines (Andrews & Wilding, 2004; Scott-Young, Turner, & Holdsworth, 2018). Any cursory examination of a self-efficacy survey would see a number of journalism students agreeing with the statement that they: feel overwhelmed by their studies; rely on others to support their placement development; that the placement situation is daunting; and that the placement demands

are seen to be more stressful than the academic demands. In one listening circle there was a particularly supportive conversation about jealousy within the cohort. One urged her peers:

> Don't pay attention to everyone else's achievements. You don't get to see their struggles. So, I think just focus on your own story. (F8)

Almost every listening circle had a discussion at some point of a traumatic event that was attended by students, be it a shooting, a car accident, suicide, a drive-by killing, etc. Several students called out the need for "resilience" and "courage" as key skills required for all interns. Only one talked about having management intervention to ensure he was not exposed to trauma. The student, (M3), was upset that more than 40 min into a commute to reach the scene of a child's death, he got a call saying head office did not want him to do the job. He was told 'They don't want to send you out there. They're worried about you know, safety, and all this stuff'.

There was vocal and repeated support for the listening circles at each meeting, with several students returning for more sessions because, as (F4) noted: "These listening circles are good, because we come in and we talk to each other. And I think that's what we really need." And (F15) noted: "I have the issue right now and I don't know where to find someone to help."

The role of the facilitator was seen as valuable for being able to bring their industry experience to solving issues, to provide guidance on how to handle some more troubling work behaviours, and importantly to ensure the students remained on track with the discussions. Being able to point students to appropriate support services when necessary was therefore important.

2.2 Placement Choice

The news outlets where students were placed as interns had a huge impact on how they were treated and, often, how they responded to the placement. Although one might have expected the high-profile mainstream news organisations to have had the best practices to support interns, the reality was, these bigger employers often had an endless stream of interns and many on-the-ground reporting staff did little more than tolerate their presence, which to be fair, is understandable with shrinking newsrooms. Many of the larger news organisations no longer have cadet staff training, and many new employees do not have much oversight at all. But, in smaller news organisations, with a younger staff, student interns generally reported a better learning experience. One student was delighted:

> The people (at a regional news outlet) were really lovely as they were just so friendly. I really loved it. I was going out on three or four stories every day … (and) … any problems I had in terms of like, using programs and anything, I just asked straight away anyone around me, and they were always really happy to help. (F12)

Another enthused:

"It was really fun. Just in terms of the workplace culture, it's just amazing at (a news organisation) how they treat interns. It's just incredible. Because, you know, they must realise that, we're not getting paid for any of this. So there, they sort of tend to acknowledge the help that they receive, and the you know, all the contributions you make, no matter how small it is, which is great." (M1)

Meanwhile, another declared:

"All the journalists I worked with were really welcoming. (They're) the sort of people (who) don't forget that they were once in the same situation." (M2)

Ensuing the students realized that each news environment had a distinctive work culture and that the newsroom staff may, or may not, be welcoming for a range of reasons unrelated to the students was a key understanding from the listening circles. Many placement options look good from the outside, but the reality was that many of the smaller newsrooms, or lesser known news organisations, provided a more supportive internship environment. Giving students the chance to talk about internships while during internships allowed some of them to rethink their future internship options.

2.3   Overlooked in Newsrooms

A very clear discussion theme emerged in most listening circles about the difference between how news editors told students to behave on internships and the expectations of day-to-day newsroom supervisors. After a lecture from one news editor, the students were animated in their listening circle discussion about how the lower-level staff completely disagreed. One news editor told all students that they were expected to pitch ideas in editorial meetings, but one noted the normal newsroom staff did not want that:

I found everything he said was very contradictory to what actually goes on. One of the older journos told me 'God help you if you interrupt their meeting. I wouldn't say anything if I were you.' And I can't imagine them listening either. Because it's a very, like, intense sort of circle. (F12)

Other students agreed that they had been told to come with ideas but it was clear in many places their ideas were not welcomed:

I was mostly having a panic attack about pitching stories. But, in the end, like I just had to, and it's sort of like, once you get off that diving block it's okay. (F6)

One intern spoke about finally getting a story accepted, although most of the newsroom got her name wrong – every single day:

It was actually just in the last couple days, and they turned to me and said: 'The intern has a story'. Everyone was like, coming up to me like (incorrect name), that's a good story. (F10)

There was a clear theme in the listening circles that in many places there were different expectations of newsroom bosses and those whom they worked alongside. The students understood that while they were being encouraged to speak up and to

make themselves stand out during the placements by editors, they were clearly discouraged from doing so by others around them. This contradiction left many perplexed.

2.4 Value of Internships

As reported by the students, there were many helpful and wonderful people in newsrooms, and students had magnificent opportunities in many news organisations. The listening circles were filled with the excitement of young people looking to enter a thrilling career, and stories abounded of genuinely lovely people who had helped students get a story in the paper, on-air, or simply let them record something over and over again. But, as modern newsrooms have a large turnover of staff and redundancy rounds, it was not always possible to know, from semester to semester, what kind of experience the students might have. As (F8) noted: "It's a lot to do with just like the luck of the draw, who's there."

In the listening circles, students were able to talk about how those experiences had clarified their career choice:

> You can obviously tell people what a typical journalist would do in a day … but it's impossible to get a real sense of it until you're in a newsroom. (M1)

> I've actually absolutely loved the experience of being in newsrooms … it's kind of reaffirmed the fact that I want to be a reporter. (F12)

Even when the internship experience was not great, some students could see the benefit of attending. As one said:

> As much as there were a few slow days or slow moments, I did kind of sit there and go yeah, 'This is it. This is why you are doing what you're doing'. (M4)

The placements provided an insight into the reality of the profession, which included stressful situations, long hours, weekends, public holidays and 24-h shifts. With all journalists using smartphones, there was an expectation that interns, too, were "always-on". For some, this was exciting, as one noted:

> It's one of those jobs where you never look at the clock, going it's 10 minutes to clock-off time. You always have to be on your toes and ready to go. (M4)

But for others that level of commitment was daunting. Some quickly realised that their lifelong dream to work for a particular news organisation would not be a good fit. As one young man discovered:

> I didn't really like it that much. I think it was just me. I didn't really feel like I fit in there that well, which I think reflected in my overall (experience). (M3)

The listening circles significantly gave space to those who had decided against the profession, with (F1) declaring: "I don't think I want to become a journalist." The value of the internship for crystalising career choices was stark. This allowed the facilitator to explore problems further, and to discuss other, related career or future study options, where appropriate.

2.5   Hard and Soft Skills

The listening circles provided the opportunity for interns to share advice on practical matters, such as swapping passwords for casual logins, doing deep research before turning up to an internship, handling conversations with "silent" colleagues on long car rides, and even on how to groom hair for television presentation. However, most discussion was about dealing with difficult people-to-people interactions in stressful environments.

Personality seemed to have a lot to do with how students survived in their placements. For instance, (F12) was clear in what she wanted: "I just want them to get me to like me." Students interning in more competitive newsrooms (F9, M3,M4, F8) spoke of the need to be:

> really persistent with stories, even if the staff seem really pissed off with you annoying them or whatever, just keep going and keep persisting until they eventually say yes (student name). (F9)

Developing relationships with individual reporters was considered more valuable than more senior people, even though the more senior staff were the ones who would ultimately make decisions on hiring. As (M4) noted: "The chiefs-of-staff might not be great, but the journos are. They've sat in the (intern) chair before." Still, in some places, even the reporters weren't all that helpful. Having been in a broadcasting internship, (FI2) noted: "there was about six producers, and not a single one of them was interested in what you were doing" and "none of the producers in news came to help me".

Although it had been anticipated that there would be a lot of discussion of hard work skills, the listening circles proved useful far beyond the sharing of concrete knowledge (such as passwords). They were particularly useful for sharing intelligence about how to deal with tricky people, and who the best people to work within a newsroom might be. These soft skills are often under estimated by students until they hit the workforce.

2.6   Digital Disruption

As outlined earlier, journalism, like many other industries, is going through massive disruption and technology transitioning. This has not only resulted in the reduction of traditional newsroom jobs, but the rise of more precarious forms of employment, a feature of the gig economy. This has had a flow-on affect on interns, who found that no longer are internships solely in a physical space. Some are now in a virtual space (i.e., online) with minimal contact. One student, (F15), noted that she had not yet been to the office of the organisation for whom she was working, although she was close to producing her first piece of publishable work. The student noted it was "challenging" and sought the advice of the listening circle about the self-discipline required to work while not in an office. She noted that she expected her future work to be conducted remotely.

Another student raised concern in her listening circle about the stressed nature of the employees in a small online publication. Describing what she saw, (F17) made several comments about her line supervisor being "very stressed" and "constantly saying; 'I'm sorry. This is just right now very stressful time'." A lack of time to provide appropriate supervision for interns was noted in most listening circles. Another student agreed:

> I came into the office and said: 'I have a few ideas', and they were like: 'Not now, not now'. They don't really have time to discuss or (even to) look at other stuff. (F15)

Even large newsrooms have been going through massive redundancy rounds, again with flow-on impacts on interns. Full-time staff were often blinded by their own stress to be concerned with any impact on interns. One student, (F10), reported that in one of the nation's largest newsrooms she wasn't shown how to use any of the computer systems, even though there were logons for interns to use. The student used her personal mobile and personal email while working on a story that was eventually not only used in Victoria, but led news bulletins in every state of Australia:

> I actually ended up hacking into the (intern) computer one day by just trying to put passwords in. I knew the username (for interns) but no one would show me. I actually would go up to people and ask: 'Can I just have five seconds. Can you just show me?' And they'd say: 'No, sorry, I can't help you'. (F10)

Although workplaces were vetted well in advance of internships occurring, it was clear from the listening circles that newsrooms were often very stressful places for current staff, who often had little capacity to provide guidance for others. It was clear that this was an issue in the larger, better funded newsrooms, as well with smaller outlets, and this had a serious impact on the experience of the interns and their experience of the industry.

2.7   The Most Vulnerable

Interns are the most vulnerable people in most news organisations. Not only are they not being paid, they have often given up paid employment to complete their internships. Most felt they were constantly being assessed for a potential job and, therefore, felt that they could not say "no", even to the most unreasonable requests. Within the listening circles, students shared stories of being asked to illegally extend their internships, sometimes by hours, days or even weeks, on the promise of a potential job. They were all aware of the Fair Work Commission rules around internships:

> Legally, it's supposed to be a three-week internship, (but if I complain or ask to be paid) there goes all opportunities of me ever been employed. So, it's kind of like in those situations, you have to kind of shut up and suck it up. (F6)

Others found they were putting in 13- or 14-h days straight without a break. As (F2) pointed out, they were already doing long days: "We'd get there early and we leave well after the bulletin." As one young man said:

> There's moments where you feel like you should say something, but the point is they are in the strong(er) position and you know it's not going to play so well, so you're not gonna say 'no'. (M4)

Other students agreed with (M4) that: "You are an intern, but you are an adult as well. You have a voice." But few knew how to respond to unreasonable requests. One intern was unexpectedly asked on a Friday night to work over the weekend but replied no. When she got home, her own father told her to go. The student explained:

> (The news boss) said in a way, like, 'oh, like you don't have to', but it's kind of like 'if you say no, we will judge you'. (F8)

The feeling that the internship was an audition for a job was real. Students told the listening circles of spending considerable amounts of money on new work clothes and grooming, in the hope of gaining a job. As the female students in particular noted, it was worth the effort and expense:

> It's like almost a uniform. It's a lot of clothes you'd never wear outside of work, either, like certain colours and stuff. I did spend a lot of money on clothes. Like, this is a job interview every day of my life. (F2)

> There is definitely the expectation that you (will) have full makeup on. And, you know, you have to look the part. Even if you are the intern. (F1)

Male students also needed to consider their grooming, with (M1) taking seriously the direction to shave off his beard: "You've got to do what you gotta do to get into this industry. So, you know, you've gotta sacrifice to get into these sort of things."

The listening circles provided an opportunity for students to workshop answers to employers who had unreasonable expectations about working hours, and for the facilitator to remind them that calling the university for assistance was also an option. The link between internships and future job offers was clearly made.

2.8   Rudeness to Interns

Although the listening circles were established with a firm guidance around learning journalistic skills, discussions focused for more than 70% of the time around dealing with soft skills, in particular dealing with difficult people at their workplace. Many students had negative experiences, which (F10) described as "degrading and humiliating every day" and (F1) noted: "Oh, they are quite rude." One (F2) was introduced to someone on staff who responded: "Why the fuck are you interning here?".

The rudeness was far beyond busy people not remembering their names, or not remembering the time. The students all recognised that in a busy news environment, that it could be difficult to find time to be helpful, but as (F1) noted: "There's only

so many times you can ask people? Can I help you? Can I learn something from you?" One student, (F10), was prepared for a poor experience, after speaking to another intern. She said she went in with low expectations and wasn't at all surprised to find in a major national newsroom that on her first day, "no one met me and I actually ended up getting yelled at by security".

The listening circles allowed for students to discuss resilience and to more generally discuss the workplace culture of news outlets. For many the behaviour of newsrooms was a sharp contrast to the supportive and caring environment of schools and university classrooms, although even post-graduate students who had worked in other environments found some of the blunt newsroom behaviour challenging.

2.9 Ethical Standards

Listening circle discussions proved particularly useful for students who had been confronted with an ethical dilemma in the workplace, especially if what transpired was different to what they had been taught in the classroom, or what they had expected to experience. There was much amusement at the lengths some reporters would go to get an exclusive story, including physical pushing and shoving at news conferences. Many interns were used for legwork in such situations, which saw (F1) observe: "Yeah, like, chasing down poor footballers as they are trying to go to the bathroom." Some found that they quickly adapted to avoiding work that they found distasteful, with (F1) telling her bosses: "Sorry. My battery died. I didn't get it."

The listening circles allowed students the chance to discuss with their peers what was and wasn't ethical behaviour in the real world. The discussions were enlightening (and rather encouraging) for students and the facilitator. The students clearly found this useful and many were clearly pleased to see that their own ethical decisions had been vindicated, or their discomfort at a situation had been echoed by others.

2.10 Support from Outside the Internship

Several interns noted that returning to bad work environments day after day had an impact on their mental health. Showing some wisdom, they urged their peers to:

> Spend time with people who support you and stuff like that outside of the internships because it can get really tough sometimes, especially if you're in like a shady workplace. (F10)

> Don't sacrifice your mental health … you don't realise how much energy it actually takes out of you. And, even if you're just at one internship, if you're in a really bad place, don't take on more than you can handle. Because it gets really tough. (F8)

Having support from friends or loved ones outside of the internships, or the workplace for that matter, is considered vitally important to the processing of traumatic events. However, many internships were in places away from students' homes or the internship had put them in a situation where they were unable to see friends or family to decompress. Post-listening circle surveys showed those who interned in their hometowns, or were able to regularly stay in contact with their friends, reported higher levels of satisfaction with their internships. For instance, (F5) talked about it being "easier" to "make suggestions about already existing stories" because she already knew the locations. Meanwhile, one was hoping for a far better reaction to an internship in his home town because:

> it's probably going to be laid back and really, really relaxed … because I'm more familiar with (the town) as well as (there is) probably stuff that I could pitch because I know about it. (M3)

Even for interns who were not in their hometowns, they often found that smaller regional news organisations with younger staff were much more supportive:

> Because they are smaller newsroom, having an extra person in there really changes things for them. So, they, I think they sort of took me under their wing a little bit. (F12)

The listening circles were a really good venue to emphasis to the students that needed to have support outside of journalism to succeed, not just in their internships but in the future working life. It was clear that the students did better mentally when they were supported well, and that was often in smaller news organisations or a regional centre, particularly if it was in their hometown.

2.11   Not the Work Experience Kid

In some places, the university interns, sometimes at the end of a three-year bachelor degree, or others even completing a postgraduate degree, felt that they were given little more to do than Year 10 work experience students would have. The listening circles heard stories of students producing online work for news outlets, only – in (F8)'s experience – for it be "pulled down" from the publication because "it was 'too big a story for an intern to write'". In larger metropolitan newsrooms, interns realised they would not be given work to do that was needed. As (M3) realised: "They kind of don't really trust you."

Interestingly, at just one listening Circle did the conversation turn to how much the news organisations were missing by not listening to interns. They felt they had a contribution that shouldn't be overlooked, as (M4) observed:

> We don't have their experience, but we're kind of the future, so you believe in yourself, put yourself forward. (M4)

Several students who had interned at the same place, an award-winning long-running news outlet, noted that they needed modernising. Another said:

> They need someone, not me, who knows how to work social media, to take that program
> and bring it up to speed. They're, like, too in their own heads about it. They're, like: "This
> has always been really old school journalism. They do it. They do what they do well but,
> like, it's not working. They have a really old audience. Young people just won't watch it,
> and young people are really engaged in news. (F8)

The listening circles provided a fascinating insight into some news operations from
the perspective of young people. Many of the news organisations that were losing
viewers and readers in droves did not ever consider that the intern might have some
valuable insight.

2.12   Safe Spaces

Although the listening circles are built around the concept of being "safe" places
where students could feel validated but appropriately challenged, there were times
when issues arose that needed to be referred to campus experts. Listening circles
were not designed to be, and should not, replace professional psychological or med-
ical help. During one of the listening circles, a student (F17) raised issues she was
having with her paid work and her ability to manage university deadlines. The stu-
dent spoke of a "family crisis" and made it clear she did not want to discuss the need
for counselling with students who were employed to work on the university help
desk. The facilitator and students respected the "safe" space of the listening circle
and, without probing into the nature of the issue, gave her strategies for getting on-
campus help without going through to the student help desk.

Concerns about being able to balance paid work, university studies and unpaid
internships were universal. Inflexible employers for the students' paid work
were common:

> It's not always the internships … my work wouldn't cut my hours. They weren't flexible.
> Every other aspect of your life isn't going to be as flexible. (F3)

Another student, (F12), asked how others were managing, because she was no lon-
ger passing her academic work: "I got to a point where I had to drop my elective.
And I'm not passing my contextual either." Yet another spoke of becoming really
sick trying to balance work, internships and study. And (F4) said her work would
not vary her hours so she was working until 6 am "and then I was going to (the news
organisation), straight away at 7 am. Then trying to hand in assignments." However,
in a different listening circle conversation, (M2) argued that students needed to
manage their own affairs:

> Considering everything that you told us, if people are still willing to do those kind of simul-
> taneous internships, they're aware of the risks, they understand what they understand the
> impact is going to have on them. If they are still willing to do that, then either, there's noth-
> ing you can say to help them or that is something that they actively want to do. (M2)

The facilitator was able to use these conversations as a way of pointing students to
help services available within, and external to, the university. This strongly spoke to
the value of having a facilitator with knowledge of available support networks
involved in the listening circles.

3   Considerations for Curriculum and Pedagogy

Prior to the introduction of the listening circles, students were supported on their internships via online discussion forums and occasional classes. The only way problems were raised were in the reflective logbook of their daily activities. Students were specifically asked at the end of the internship – well after any intervention could occur - to respond questions about their placement, including queries about being given appropriate supervision and guidance; meeting their supervisor regularly; and whether they had someone to talk to about any problems or concerns.

The listening circles were overwhelmingly considered valuable by students and staff. Students responded that the listening circles were interesting, worthwhile and, where it was appropriate, they reported that they could incorporate some of the learnings/strategies from the discussions into their future internship work. Students overwhelmingly wanted the process moderated by an academic or facilitator. In the open-ended question at the end of session survey, one noted that it was "Informative. Interesting to compare experiences" and "a great experience" and several said they would have liked to have attended more sessions.

There were distinct differences between each of the listening circles. Students who attended the listening circles in 2017 often used the discussion to raise grievances with particular placements and processes, more than to share tips and skills about workplace skills for other interns. However, students in 2018 found that the listening circles, which were built into their learning schedule time, provided ongoing support for internships they were still undertaking. It is not clear if this was because of the make-up of the groups and their experiences, or more adroit focusing of the conversation by the facilitator.

Survey group data revealed that students' most preferred topics were discussing ways of handling challenging people and stressed supervisors. Students said that the listening circle activity impacted positively on aspects of their learning behaviour. However, as Harrison et al. (2017) found, it only took one student to dampen the enthusiasm for the rest, and one of the 2017 listening circle sessions was best described as "pooling misery". The lesson for facilitators is to attempt to steer the conversation back to the discussion points.

4   Potential Improvements

Listening circles were found to be a useful pedagogical tool for improving learning and better supporting journalism students during, and post, internships. However, it was interesting that the initial impetus for initiating listening circles (experiences of trauma) was discussed little at any of the sessions, particularly compared with other discussion of workplace culture and behaviour. While trauma was, and remains, a big part of journalism, and students did witness events while on internships, it did not come up as a major issue for them. There was not, however, a specific traumatic incident – such as the Luke Batty murder – in close proximity in time to the

scheduled listening circles. If a major issue had occurred it would have allowed not only for a debriefing of the event, and given the facilitator an opportunity to remind students of available help.

The digital disruption on newsrooms, and the resulting stress on staff, by far took up the most discussion time. Sharing strategies for dealing with stressed and rude people was particularly useful for students. The students certainly appreciated knowing that they were not the only ones on the end of some pretty poor behaviour in particularly stressed newsrooms, but particularly difficult individuals. Online harassment and harassment more generally was also not specifically raised, although one anecdote from a student allowed a discussion of #metoo, and the types of behaviour that were or were not acceptable in a workplace, as well as ways of handling them. It was also clear that along with the actual internship experiences, the listening circles had a role in clarifying students' career goals. The vast majority determined that they wanted to continue in their chosen path as a journalist, despite any difficulties, but at least one was clear that journalism would not be her future direction, and this allowed an individual discussion with that student outside the formal circle meetings.

There were key issues which need to be addressed within the listening circles to ensure that they worked successfully in other settings. Firstly, a key to the success of the listening circles was their incorporation into the teaching schedule, i.e. at the same time and room as the lectures. Students require both time and space to attend, and setting the circles at a time they had free in their learning schedule was important. By setting the meetings at the same time and place to formal classes (on alternative weeks), students could plan to maximise their attendance. Using incentives such as free food and t-shirts were useful in encouraging attendance for some cohorts. However, interest in the listening circles grew in 2018 as students talked among themselves about the value of debriefing after their experiences. A number of students who were not able to attend the session because of their scheduled internships formally asked for more sessions to be held.

Secondly, academic staff and/or the facilitators needed to ensure that the purpose of the sessions, the role and processes were clear, to ensure students felt they could safely share mistakes and experiences with peers. Confidentiality was important. A "cone of silence" is possible when there is a clear person in authority, emphasising this requirement in the room, but this is not necessarily enough. A sense of camaraderie within the cohort is also a useful way of ensuring students maintain confidentiality of the process. A sense of safety can also come from students understanding that discussions are not assessed, so there is no danger in losing marks from sharing a mistake with their peers, lecturers or other staff.

There is a third issue for competitive industries such as journalism, in that some students may fear that sharing information could give their peers an added advantage if they undertook an internship at the same organisation at a later date. However, there was no evidence during the listening circles that students were holding back in their discussions for fear of advantaging others. There was some concern that more-confident students might overshadow less-confident ones. However, this was not witnessed in the listening circles. In fact, it appeared to be far more beneficial for

less-confident students to hear that others had similar issues, or to get advice about how to appear more confident in the workplace. Building listening circles into the assessment process in future years would ensure a larger attendance. However, as outlined above, there are many good reasons not to have it as a non-assessable activity, to create that feeling of a safe space, and to allow the free flow of ideas and admissions.

With the current disruption to the journalism industry, plus increasing numbers of young people working in smaller newsrooms or as freelancers, there could be value in instigating a process of listening circles into their regular work routines. Just as doctors regularly meet to discuss cases, and nurses, mental health workers, social workers and psychologists are required to talk about their work with supervisors, there could be great value in journalists adopting the same practice. It is hoped that the lessons of the listening circles provide a framework for students to carry into their working careers, and perhaps create a new attitude to learning in the future. Listening circles certainly made a considerable impact as a post-practicum learning enhancement strategy for internship students, and are now a valued but still non-assessed part of the placement programs.

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Increasing Employability Through Programmatic Sustainable Assessment Practices and Familiarity with Recruitment Practices

Rachel Bacon, Jane Kellett, Yui Ting Chan, and Jie Yie Yong

1 Introduction

This chapter makes a unique contribution to this book as it offers a curriculum model for achieving the outcome of augmenting student learning through post-practicum interventions. This chapter proposes a system of assessment to achieve a continuum of learning across a whole course of study. Given that university health programs aim to develop graduates for specific job roles (Germov, 2014), a competency-based framework provides an appropriate approach to develop this intervention (Ash et al., 2011). It begins by describing the healthcare context and employment characteristics of the dietetics profession. It argues that, while competency-based education does provide an appropriate framework for workforce development (Palermo, 2017), the profession's traditional processes for course accreditation, practicum supervision and competency assessment may not adequately prepare graduates for changing workforce demands (Palermo et al., 2018). This paper proposes the *Consensus Model* (Bacon et al., 2018), – a programmatic competency-based system of assessment (Palermo et al., 2017), that incorporates sustainable assessment tasks (Boud, 2010), as an alternative solution. This work builds on earlier research (Bacon et al., 2018) that presented the development, pilot implementation and evaluation of the *Consensus Model*. This system of assessment is appropriately positioned within this book as it sequences planned learning experiences and post-practicum debriefing. These sustainable assessment tasks aim to

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strategically enable students to augment their placement learning, while at the same time developing lifelong learning capabilities. As a part of this process, students take part in authentic assessment tasks that align with employer recruitment practices including developing a professional e-portfolio and attending a panel interview.

This model demonstrates a connection between assessment and post-practicum debriefing. Prior to each debriefing students map their learning and self-assess their performance against the professional competency standards. Students then engage in critical dialogue with a more knowledgeable other/s, usually their work site educator. These conversations aim to: (1) support students to take responsibility for their own learning; (2) develop a shared mental model of performance expectations; (3) moderate their self-assessments using a consensus approach; (4) focus on assessment 'for' learning, strategically targeting future learning experiences; (5) enable students to transform their learning across contexts; and (6) help students in their transition to the workforce.

Development of the *Consensus Model* has used an iterative approach using feedback from key stakeholders. This study evaluates the second iteration of the model using data from students, graduates and work site educators. For this version, students and work site educators received online resources to help them to deliver the model as intended. This study collects data on employability skills and graduate outcomes to provide evidence to show if this programmatic system of assessment, incorporating, sustainable assessment practices, can augment post-practicum learning experiences and assist students in their transition to the workforce.

1.1 The Current Workforce Context

Nutrition and dietetics contribution to health is becoming increasingly clear, with a growing body of evidence demonstrating the critical role of nutrition in sustaining wellness and the impact of dietetic interventions on mortality and morbidity outcomes (National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), 2013). Aligned with this demand, the growth in the nutrition and dietetics workforce has continued. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS, 2017) predicts the number of nutrition and dietetics professionals will grow from 7500 in 2018 to 8900 in 2023. Yet, whether this workforce is sufficiently diverse and adequately prepared to meet future workforce demands is questionable.

The dietetics workforce is predominantly female (97.4%) and younger in age when compared to other industry groups. (The average age is 32 years, compared to the all jobs average of 40 years.) In addition, many dietitians are under employed, with only 51% of dietitians in full-time employment (ABS, 2017). A mismatch has also been identified between graduate outcome capabilities and workforce requirements (Morgan, Reidlinger, Surgeant, Crane, & Campbell, 2019). A recent study

(Morgan, Reidlinger, et al., 2019) has suggested that the traditional accreditation practices have resulted in dietetics courses that are non-responsive to workforce requirements, with graduates poorly equipped to pursue work in non-traditional settings.

Healthcare is rapidly changing due to an ageing population, increases in chronic lifestyle diseases and dementia, changes in social diversity and health inequalities, technological advances and increasing consumer expectations (Hickson, 2017). Hickson (2017) predicts that advances in artificial intelligence will demand new approaches for managing these complex health and social care systems. Future dietetic graduates are likely to work beyond traditional clinical roles, incorporating industry, private practice, primary and secondary care, higher education and global nutrition, as well as, extended roles beyond the profession (Hickson, 2017).

This dynamic context calls for a future workforce that is flexible and diverse, made up of critical thinkers, transformative practitioners and lifelong learners (Hickson, 2017). Dietitians will need to embed research activity into their professional practice to have local, national and international influence. Graduates will need to show leadership and advocacy, creativity and innovation (Hickson, 2017). The next question then becomes, how do we design learning and assessment practices that support graduates to develop and demonstrate these capabilities?

1.2 Competency-Based Education and Workforce Development

In Australia, the dietetics workforce has developed using a competency-based education framework (Ash, Palermo, & Gallegos, 2019). The dietetics profession described competence according to the Model of Skills Acquisition (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1980; applied to the health context by Benner, 1984), where competence is mid-way on a performance development continuum between novice and expert, and marks the point at which a student is work ready. Professional credentialing associations are responsible for developing National Competency Standards (NCS) to describe minimum practice standards (Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA), 2015). Within the dietetics profession, the NCS (DAA, 2015) inform the curriculum of, and standards for, accredited university courses (Australian Dietetics Council (ADC), 2017) and provide the criteria to assess students' readiness to practice.

NCS aim to reflect current workforce needs and to captures emerging areas of practice. The functional analysis methodology used to develop the NCS, while led by experts, also involved practitioners, new graduates, academics and regulating authorities in their development (Ash et al., 2011; Palermo et al., 2014). Consistent with the dynamic workforce context, in the latest version of the NCS (DAA, 2015), there was also a move away from preparing graduates for specific areas of practice, towards emphasising professional attributes applicable in any setting.

1.3   The Challenges of Competency-Based Learning and Assessments in the Practicum Setting

According to the 'Assessment Framework for Clinical Competence' (Wass et al., 2001), assessors can only judge competence from observable performances in simulation and work settings, as, here students must engage in the complex tasks that integrate knowledge, skills and attitudes and that bring into play intangible attributes, such as, clinical reasoning and critical thinking (McAllister et al. 2010). As such, the DAA Accreditation Standards of Dietetics Education Programs (Standard 5.2) includes a minimum of 100 days of practicum, with mandated experiences in medical nutrition therapy, food service systems and public health nutrition (ADC, 2017).

Assessment drives learning (Wass et al., 2001), significantly influencing (both positively and negatively) the students' learning experiences and outcomes. It powerfully frames what and how they learn (Boud, 2010). In the practicum setting some competency-based assessment models are poorly aligned with workforce development needs. For example, research in physiotherapy (Kell, 2014) reported on supervision approaches and summative assessment models in which students adopted passive learning approaches and perpetuated the practises of their work site educators, even in the face of inherent conflict. Similarly, within dietetics, a national study (Palermo et al., 2018) found a disconnection between summative assessment practices and workforce development.

Traditional assessment practices may be preventing students from taking responsibility for their learning. Although within the purview of the universities (ADC, 2017), individual work site dietitians have previously been responsible for assessing student's competence within discrete practicum units (Bacon, Williams, & Grealish, 2015). Firstly, making assessments only within individual placements, has made it more difficult to enable feedback loops and continuous learning across a whole course of study. Secondly, the inherent subjectivity of workplace placements may require greater consideration (Bacon, Holmes, & Palermo, 2017; Govaerts & van der Vleuten, 2013). The frames of reference used by assessors are complex, dynamic and highly variable (Kogan et al., 2011), include assumptions and contextual factors (Bacon, Holmes, et al., 2017; Bacon, Nyamayaro, et al., 2017) and use personal schemas (Govaerts & van der Vleuten, 2013). Similarly, observed performance is also a variable trait influenced by many factors, such as, the student's emotional and physical state, their familiarity with the work environment, their relationship with their supervisor, and even the act of being assessed (Khan & Ramachandran, 2012). Research by Trede and Smith (2014) shows that even experienced work site educators, supported by competency standards, descriptions, policies and a national assessment form, experience dilemmas in judging and interpreting workplace performance. The student is the expert of their own experiences and maybe best place to judge their own capabilities, when this judgement is moderated by the expertise of experienced others. Similarly, making assessments within discrete units has made it more difficult to enable feedback loops and continuous learning across a whole course of study. There is a need to explore new approaches to

competency-based education that are sufficiently robust to meet the challenges in practicum-based assessment, while also flexible enough to adapt to the demands of the future workforce.

1.4   A New Approach to Competency-Based Practicum Assessments

As a profession, supported by the Community of Practice for Dietetics Educators (Palermo, 2016), there is now a national movement in Australian dietetics education towards a programmatic competency-based system of assessment (Bacon et al., 2018; Jamieson et al., 2017; Palermo, 2016). This approach, rather than just assessing competence during discrete practicums units, incorporates a series of interdependent elements of learning and assessment that are intricately linked. It requires constructivist alignment between competency standards, learning outcomes, program content, assessment strategy and methods. It focuses on assessment *for* learning, closing the feedback loop between assessments tasks, constructive feedback and future learning goals. The final high stakes decision of competence is ultimately made based on a longitudinal body of evidence, from a variety of simulation and practicum contexts, by multiple appropriately trained assessors (Palermo, 2016). Within a programmatic system of assessment, adopting sustainable assessment practices post-practicum may help to develop dietitians who are critical thinkers, transformative practitioners and lifelong learners.

Boud (2010) recommends sustainable assessment practices to equip students with the capabilities required for the future workforce. He defines sustainable assessment practices as, "assessment that meets the needs of the present [credentialing, immediate tasks, content] without compromising students' ability to meet their own future learning need [self-assessment, the learning process, learning transformation] (Boud, 2010, p.151)". A shared understanding of performance standards, moderated self-assessment practices that function as a catalyst for future development and the opportunity to practice and transform learning across contexts characterise sustainable assessment practices (Boud, 2010).

Critical conversations post-practicum are likely to augment student learning. Students highly value conversations with a more knowledgeable other, such as their work site educator, when focused, rather than descriptive, and offering structured guidelines (Sweet, Bass, & Graham, 2019). Research has shown that when assessors sharing their assessment judgments, they must justify their decisions, identify their assumptions and learn from the observations of others (Bacon, Holmes, & Palermo, 2017; Bacon, Williams, Grealish, & Jamieson, 2015). These outcomes are also likely when a work site educator and student share their assessments of the student's practicum performance. Using this process, the students and educators can gain a shared mental model of performance expectations, moderate the student's self-assessment, identify learning gaps and identify future learning goals. These critical conversations also enable the student to demonstrates their capacity for

reflective practice and provide insight into their thinking and decision-making (Sweet, Bass, & Graham, 2019).

Post-practicum interventions that require students to transform their learning across contexts are also likely to augment student learning. Learning across a whole course of study (as in programmatic system of assessment), rather than in discrete practicum units, requires students to conceptualise their learning at an abstract level, recognising patterns or connections between work setting, enabling deep rather than surface learning (Larsen-Freeman, 2013). As articulated by Carraher & Schliemann, 2002, p.18), for students to transform their learning across practicum contexts they 'do not simply upload a prior solution from their storehouse of knowledge. They have crafted it on the spot, adjusting and adopting their prior knowledge process'. Such an approach is likely to develop graduates who are innovative thinkers, able to create new knowledge, to challenge current practices and meet our future healthcare demands.

Students are likely to favour post-practicum experiences that emulate employer recruitment practices. Recent research exploring the benefits of post-practicum interventions reports that students highly valued authentic experiences that are directly relevant to their current situation (Clanchy et al., 2019). Cain et al. (2019) found that students prioritise post-practicum experiences that focus on their particular occupation, are concerned with their performance in the workplace and led to or help them to being more employable. Such experience may also help to augment practicum learning and improve graduate outcomes.

This introductory section has provided an overview of the chapter. It has also provided contextual information, arguing that traditional curriculum practices may be stifling innovation and resulting in a mis-match between employment opportunities and graduate capabilities. Assessment drives learning and therefore well-designed outcome-based assessment models are critical to providing the learning required to equip graduates with the capabilities required to meet workforce demands. A programmatic system of assessment, incorporating sustainable assessment tasks, may offer a potential teaching solution that is able to work with the inherent subjectively of workplace assessments and also enable a continuum of learning across the university and practicum settings. Post-practicum experiences may play a critical role in this assessment system, augmenting student's learning experiences, empowering students to become transformative learners and improving employability outcomes. The next section introduces, the *Consensus Model* – as an example of such a system.

2   The Consensus Model

This section describes the *Consensus Model* that offers a curriculum approach to achieve the outcome of augmenting student learning through post-practicum interventions. In 2016, an Australian post-graduate dietetics course piloted the model. The details of the implementation and its evaluation are available elsewhere (Bacon

et al., 2018). This chapter, provides a brief overview, highlighting details of the post-practicum intervention.

The *Consensus Model* includes a sequence of post-practicum interventions, including reflective practice and critical conversations, to achieve the following learning and assessment objectives:

1. To integrate students' learning across the course of study, using the NCS framework to link student learning outcomes to workforce expectations;
2. To moderate students' performance expectations and self-assessments, strategically guiding their future learning process; and
3. To transform students' learning across practicum contexts; and
4. To increased students' familiarisation with employer recruitment practices.

2.1 Course Structure for the Consensus Model, as Illustrated by Fig. 1

In the first year of the Master of Nutrition and Dietetics course, students complete seven university-based units [see Table 1 (1)]. These units include authentic assessment tasks. For example, the final exam for the unit, *'Counselling and Communication for Dietitians',* is a simulated counselling consultation using an actor as the client. Although academics assess these units traditionally, assigning a grade for each unit discretely, students are able to view their learning across these units, as a continuum, by mapping their learning against the NCS. This process helps students to
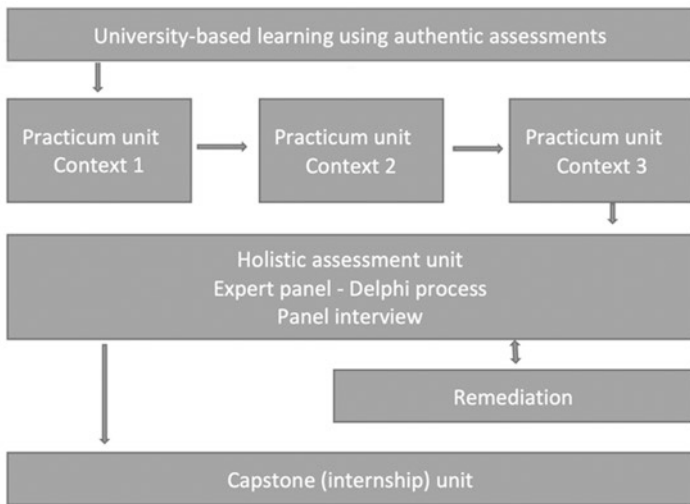
Fig. 1 Course structure for the *Consensus Model*

Table 1 The *Consensus Model*

Units	Moderated self-assessment practices
(1) University-based units 　1. Community and Public Health Nutrition 　2. Epidemiology 　3. Research Project 　4. Dietetics 1 　5. Dietetics 2 　6. Counselling and Communication for Dietitians 　7. Food Service Management *Graded units*	Students mapped graded authentic assessment tasks against the competency standards (DAA, 2015) and identified: 　Evidence of competence (assessed work samples, e.g. research manuscript, simulated nutrition consultation, simulation program plan etc.) 　Areas for development (used to inform personal learning goals for first developmental placement unit)[a]
(2) Practicum units 　Public Health Nutrition 　Medical Nutrition Therapy (community + hospital) 　Food Service Systems *Formative assessment only (designed to support the change in role of the work site educator from 'assessor' to 'coach'.*	Students: 　Used a *Competency Tracking System* (Bevitt et al., 2016) (modified to include the DAA NCS and a 'reflection in action' column) to regularly self-assess performance of job tasks completed during placement against the NCS. This was informed by evidence that included, but was not limited to: 　　Compulsory work-samples (set out in the Assessment Unit Outline) that had been independently mapped by academic staff, as part of course development, against the NCS. 　　Multisource feedback [using, with permission, tools developed by Jamieson et al., (2017) and Dart (unpublished data)]. 　Completed a written moderated self-assessment of their overall practice using the *Global Assessment Form* with both the student and work site educator required to independently formatively assess the student's performance. 　Together at a *Reflective Practice Meeting* this form was used to discuss the student's learning goals and strategies[a, b].
(3) Assessment Unit 　Assessment of Dietetics Competence *Summative panel assessment with a focus on future learning and development.* *A remediation placement is offered to students if further development is required to reach competence. These students are then required to repeat the panel assessment.*	Students: 　Developed and submitted a course e-portfolio with the onus on students to provide evidence to demonstrate their professional competence. 　Attended a panel interview that offered an opportunity to speak to their e-portfolio and any concerns raised by the panel[a]. The assessment panel consisted of two academics familiar with the student's practicum experience, an industry representative who was experienced in assessing students' performance in the workplace, and an external moderator with expertise in competency-based assessment.

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

Units	Moderated self-assessment practices

(4) Capstone Unit
  Nutrition and Dietetic Professional
  Internship
Assessed
Using a mentoring model emulating the
new graduate DAA Provisional
Accredited Practising Dietitians (APD)
program (DAA, 2019)
	Students:
	  Used a learning contract
	Aimed to consolidate learning and assist transition to
	the workforce
	Required to make an autonomous contribution as a
	dietitian

[a]Throughout this process, students were supported through online resources, email and individual appointments with the University Placement Coordinator
[b]Prior to the commencement of the Developmental Placement Units work site educators attended training workshops on the new assessment forms and processes
Bacon, R., Kellett, J., Dart, J., Knight-Agarwal, C., Mete, R., Ash, S., Palermo, C. (2018) A consensus model: Shifting assessment practices in dietetics tertiary education, Nutrition and Dietetics, 75(4), 418-430

reflect 'post-simulation' and identify evidence that demonstrates competence, as well as, gaps in their knowledge, skills or attitudes.

The final year of the course includes three practicum units, each undertaken in a different practice context, as mandated by the dietetics professional accreditation standards (ADC, 2017). These contexts included, '*Public Health Nutrition',* '*Medical Nutrition Therapy'* and '*Food Service Systems'* [see Table 1 (2)]. The students' learning across these units is continuous. Here again, students map their learning against the NCS. Mid way and at the end of each of these units, student engage in the following post-practicum interventions: (1) Students self-assessed their own performance using a rating scale (novice to competence) which they justified with a qualitative description; and (2) Students engage in critical conversation with their work site educator to moderate this assessment and to develop strategies to inform their future learning experiences.

Following the practicum units, students complete an assessment unit, as a post-practicum intervention, where an expert panel holistically assesses each student's competence against the NCS [see Table 1 (3)]. In this unit, students present their work, from simulation and practicum settings, in a course e-portfolio. While there is some flexibility in what students included in their e-portfolio, the assessment unit outline mandates some predetermined work-samples that have been independently mapped by academic staff, as part of course development, against the NCS. The four panel members, who are all experienced dietitians and assessors of student performance, used a two-round process of assessment. Rounds one requires all panel members to independently assessment the students e-portfolios. Between rounds one and two, each student meets with the panel at an interview to gain further insight into the student's perspective and to explore any areas of contention. In round 2 the panel makes a final holistic consensus decision about each student's readiness for independent practice.

The *Consensus Model* also provides students with experiences that increased their familiarisation with employer recruitment practices. The students e-portfolio includes a statement of claim supported by evidence demonstrating their fulfilment of the NCS. The student's panel interview emulates recruitment practices. Students also participated in a workshop run by the University's Careers Service to further develop skills in networking, writing job applications and attending job interviews. Finally, students completed a capstone unit based on the professions graduate provisional credentialing program that uses a mentoring model [see Table 1 (4)]. This unit consists of an internship which enables students to showcase their capability and develop networks with future employers.

2.2   Pilot Evaluation

The pilot implementation of the *Consensus Model* was evaluated after 1 year (Bacon et al., 2018). This study included analysis of assessment data and qualitative feedback from key stakeholders (personal interviews with students n = 29; focus groups with work site educators n = 4; n = 5 and n = 8, from sites representing more than 80% of the placement hours and across the practice areas of medical nutrition therapy, food service systems and public health nutrition). Overall, stakeholders reported that the model was a fair method to assess competence, with the capstone assessment data suggesting that students were work-ready and able to make an autonomous contribution as a dietitian.

The qualitative data also showed that the *Consensus Model* supported sustainable assessment practices, as evidenced by the following:

1. Students and work site educators reported that they shared critical conversations about the NCS that clarified performance expectations.
2. Through the students' self-assessments work site educators were able to gained insight into students' interpretations of their feedback and the students' reflective practice skills.
3. All stakeholders agreed that the assessment tasks themselves contributing to the learning process.
4. The model shifted the power balance within the student work site educator relationship, encouraging students to take greater responsibility for their own learning.
5. Students reported being supported in their development of life-long learning capabilities.

This section has presents previous research (Bacon et al., 2018) that describes the development, pilot implementation and evaluation of the *Consensus Model*. This system of assessment sequences planned learning experiences and post-practicum debriefing. These sustainable assessment tasks aim to strategically enable students to augment their placement learning, while at the same time developing lifelong learning capabilities. As a part of this process, students have taken part in authentic

assessment tasks that align with employer recruitment practices including developing a professional e-portfolio and attending a panel interview.

While these evaluation findings of the pilot implementation are encouraging, the effectiveness of the *Consensus Model* to meet the recruitment and work demands of the future healthcare system cannot be determined without data on employability skills and graduate outcomes. Any successful model also requires ongoing evaluation processes to ensure the course is implemented as intended. The next section of this chapter will outline the second iteration of the *Consensus Model* and its evaluation.

3   The Second Iteration of the *Consensus Model and Its Evaluation*

The first section of this chapter argued that traditional accreditation processes, practicum supervision and assessment practices used, in Australian, for dietetics university courses may constrain the innovation necessary to adequately prepare dietitians for future workforce demands. The following section presented previous research (Bacon et al., 2018) that described the development, implementation and evaluation of – the *Consensus Model*, however, here the emphasis was on how the model sequenced post-practicum interventions to augment student learning. Graduate outcomes, data that is currently lacking across the profession, (Morgan, Kelly, Campbell, Hughes, & Reidlinger, 2019) is now need to determine the credibility of this approach, and, if justified, to provide the defensibility to maintain the support of students, educators, industry bodies and accrediting agencies.

3.1   The Consensus Models' Areas for Development

Development of the *Consensus Model* has used an iterative approach using feedback from key stakeholders. The initial evaluation (Bacon et al., 2018) identified the following areas for development:

1. The qualitative data from key stakeholders suggested that some work site educators focused on the summative assessment of student performance rather than assessment *for* learning.
2. More training was needed to ensure all students and educators were adequately equipped to implement the model as intended.
3. More refinement was required to improve the model's processes and resources.

3.2   Post-practicum Interventions and Supports

This invention focused on three particular aspects of the *Consensus Model:*

1. *Critical conversations post-practicum:* The model required students to use critical conversations with their work site educator in a post-practicum reflective practice meeting to develop goals and strategies to target their learning and development for their subsequent placement experiences. These experiences could occur in the same practicum setting or require the transformation of learning across settings.
2. *Familiarisation with employer recruitment practices:* The model required students to participate in authentic assessment tasks that align with employer recruitment practices to improve their employability including: developing a professional e-portfolio; participating in a panel interview; attending a careers workshop and participating in an internship capstone unit that simulated the provisional credentialing program of the profession.
3. *Online support resources:* This implementation of the *Consensus Model* required better supports and resources to optimise its benefits. New resources included completed exemplar forms and videos for the reflective practice meetings. These videos were developed using a co-design model with input from practice educators and students

3.3   Evaluation Aims

The evaluation of the second iteration of the Consensus Model had the following aims:

1. To measure the graduate outcomes of students (2015–16 cohort) who participated in the first iteration of the *Consensus Model* and employability skills of final year students who participated in second iteration (2016–17 cohort);
2. To evaluate how work site educators implemented the second iteration of the model; and
3. To evaluate stakeholder satisfaction (work site educators and students) with the online resources and supports provided to support the delivery of the model.

3.4   Evaluation Methods

The following section outlines three separate studies implemented as part of the second iteration of the *Consensus Model*. The first study considers the employment outcomes of the Master of Nutrition and Dietetics graduates who participated in the first iteration of the model (2015–2016 cohort). The second study measures the

employability skills of the final year students (2016–2017 cohort) who participated in the second iteration. The third, and final, study invites work site educators who participated in the *Consensus Model,* in 2017, to share their perception of the post-practicum experiences undertaken with the final year dietetics students and to provide suggestions for future improvements to the assessment system.

Ethics approval was obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC 16–74) for all three studies. Participation was voluntary and implied consent. Anonymity of all respondents was maintained throughout the data collection, analysis and reporting for all three studies.

The *first study* was conducted in September 2017. All 29 graduates from the 2015–2016 cohort of the Master of Nutrition and Dietetics course were invited, via email, to participate in a telephone survey. The survey instrument was based on a purpose-built survey that had been used in a previous research study to determine the graduate outcomes for students enrolled in the same Master of Nutrition and Dietetics course from 2010 to 2015. Four additional open-ended questions were added to explore whether the new *Consensus Model* had assisted the graduates in their preparation for the workforce. These questions were tested with two graduates from the 2014–2015 cohort with minor modifications made to improve readability. The final survey included 31-items (19 open-ended and 18 close-ended questions). A descriptive approach was used for all data analysis with open questions categorised and counted.

The *second study* was conducted in 2017, with all 23 final year students (2016–2017 cohort) following their assessment panel and careers workshop. All students were asked to complete a written survey that included an 18-item validated 'Employability Impact Scale (EIS)' that used a 7-point *Likert* scale to self-assess work readiness pre- and post-placement (Calvin et al., 2014). Given the small population size, ordinal data and matched pairs, the Wilcoxon Signed Rank nonparametric statistical text was used to measure the difference in the students' employability after participating in the *Consensus Model.* In addition, the students were asked whether the online resources, that had been provided, were adequate to prepare them for their practicum program.

The *third study* was conducted in November 2017. The primary contact at all work site practicums (n = 16) was emailed details and a hyperlink to an online survey. This educator was then asked to re-distribute the survey to all dietitians in their work site who had previously been involved in the dietetics practicum program in 2017 (n = 50). The self-administered questionnaire using *Qualtrics* (*Qualtrics*, LLC, Sydney, Australia, 2017) was developed through an iterative process of discussion with two researchers, based on the placement guideline resources provided by the University. The survey instrument was piloted with two experienced external educators, to limit question ambiguity and increase face validity, with revisions made to capture all relevant information. A mixed-method design was adopted, with a combination of qualitative (n = 5) and quantitative (n = 12) questions. The questionnaire comprised of three parts including: (1) Demographic data about the work site educators' settings [3 questions]; (2) Educators' experiences with the reflective practice meetings and perceived effect on student employability incorporating the

EIS [7 questions]; and (3) Evaluation of the accessibility and efficacy of the online placement support resources [7 questions]. A descriptive approach was used for all data analysis with open questions categorised and counted.

In this section the aims, post-practicum interventions and evaluation methods used for the second iteration of the *Consensus Model* have been presented. In the subsequent section, the results for each study will first be reported separately and then presented collectively. Finally, these findings will be discussed together, in light of the background literature and the findings of the initial evaluation of the *Consensus Model*, to provide a more holistic evaluation of the post-practicum interventions.

4 Stakeholder Experiences with the Second Iteration of the Consensus Model

This section presents the graduate outcomes for students who participated in the first iteration of the *Consensus Model* and the employability skills of final year students who participated in the second. Given that competence is defined in terms of a person's overall capability to perform a job role in society (Brownie, Bahnisch, & Thomas, 2011), this data provides a measure of the credibility and defensibility of this assessment system. To ensure the model has been implemented as intended, data has also been collected from work site educators, on the practices used to implement the model. Finally, stakeholder satisfaction with the resources and supports used in the delivery of the model have been evaluated.

The results will be presented here, initially based on the evaluative study design, and therefore according to the contributions from each key stakeholder (graduates, final year students and work site educators). The results will then be collated together to directly address these project aims.

4.1 Graduate Employment Outcomes and Feedback

The first study was completed with graduates who had participated in the 2016 pilot implementation of the study. Of the 29 students enrolled in the course 17 completed the online survey giving a response rate of 62 percent. The results showed that within 12 months, almost all graduates (94%) were employed as dietitians or in related positions. As an example of a related position, one student reported her employment to be as a research assistant, rather than as a dietitian, however in this role she used the research skills she had developed directly from her postgraduate dietetics qualification. Not all students were in full time employment. On average students work 34 h per week. The work settings were variable and included private practice (n = 9), community or indigenous health (n = 2), traditional hospital roles (n = 4), government

positions using their dietetics knowledge (n = 2) and tertiary education or research n = 3. All graduates were working in Australia. Most were in Canberra, although five students were working in New South Wales (NSW) and two in Queensland.

All students reported the professional placement experiences had helped them to be job ready for their dietetics positions, emphasising how the sustainable assessment approach had supported: (1) their familiarisation with the professional competency standards; (2) their ongoing self-assessment and engagement in life-long learning practices; and (3) their ability to articulate relevant capabilities to future employers. In particular, the students acknowledged the benefits of the competency-based tracking system, the reflective practice meetings, the e-portfolio and the panel interview.

All graduates reported that the course adequately prepared them for the workforce, listing the following aspects as directly useful in their current roles: (1) communication and counselling unit (n = 10); (2) placement and internship units particularly noting the acute, outpatient and community settings (n = 8); (3) clinical dietetics units (n = 6); (4) research unit (n = 2); (5) group assessment tasks (n = 1); and (6) the 'Meal Mates' clinical preparation program (n = 1). The Meal Mates program was a voluntary feeding assistance program that students were involved in as part of the first Clinical Dietetics unit.

The graduates spoke very highly of the course but also identified a number of areas for improvement including: (1) strengthening the clinical course to incorporate more content on mental health and bariatric surgery (n = 2); (2) strengthening the indigenisation of the program (n = 1); (3) earlier orientation to the acute setting prior to placement (n = 2); (4) an increased emphasis on inter-professional collaborative practice (n = 1); and (5) more direct instruction on writing selection criteria (n = 3). One student reported the panel experience as stressful.

4.2 The Employability Skills of Final Year Students and Feedback on the Online Support Resources

The second paper-based survey was completed by final year students directly following their final assessment panel. Of the 23 students enrolled in the cohort, 18 completed the survey, giving a response rate of 78 percent. These students perceived the model as supporting their development of employability skills (EIS Scale post-practicum x = 6.07/7, σ = 0.86). A significant difference was found in the students' employability, as determined by the EIS pre- and post-practicum experiences (z = −2.93396 p = 0.00328; W = 18 where W for N = 18 at p ≤ 0.01 is 27). Of the students who responded (n = 14/18), 79% found that the online resources adequately prepared them for placement when used in conjunction with the face-to-face workshop. Of the remaining three students, one reported the online resources as only supplementary and two reported difficulty accessing these materials.

4.3   The Experiences of Work Site Educators with the Model and the Online Resources

In the final study, all dietitians (n = 50) were invited to complete an online survey if they were from sites that were involved in the university's nutrition and dietetics practicum program in 2017. This invitation was, however, provided indirectly, with only the primary educator at each of the 16 placement sites directly contacted by the university. Ten educators participated in the survey from sites providing placements for 61% of the students (n = 14/23). This did not include internship sites. All sites were located in Australia, and were distributed as follows: Australian Capital Territory (n = 6), NSW (n = 2), Victoria (n = 1) and Northern Territory (n = 1). The sites provided placements across all the critical practice areas mandated by the course accreditation standards including Medical Nutrition Therapy and Food Service Management (n = 6) and Public Health Nutrition (n-4).

Educators had implemented the model as intended, ranking a supportive environment (x = 6.63/7), moderated self-assessment/reflection of competence (x = 6.625/7), and developing future learning goals and strategies (x = 6.50/7) as the most important elements of the reflective practice meeting. Educators perceived the model as supporting students' employability development (EIS x = 5.5/7; σ = 1.0), although some students were less engaged limiting the benefits of the student-driven approach.

The educators reported the online resources as adequately preparing them for placement (satisfaction score x = 7.4; σ = 1.0), identifying readability (n = 3), ease of navigation (n = 3), examples of completed forms (n = 2) and the inclusion of timelines (n = 1) as particularly helpful. Further improvements recommended by the work site educators included addressing access and utilisation issues with the online resources.

Key findings from the post-practicum intervention:

1. This research provides evidence supporting a programmatic system of assessment that incorporates sustainable practices to assist students in their transition to the workforce. Both the final year students and educators reported the model developed students' overall employability skills (EIS educators x = 5.5/7, σ = 1.0; students x = 6.0/7, σ = 0.9). Of the graduates, 94% were employed within 12 months within dietetics roles or related positions, with all agreeing the model had assisted their preparation for the workforce.
2. Educators had implemented the *Consensus Model* as intended by the university. They augmented the students' practicum learning experience by engaging with them in critical dialogue. These reflective practice meetings enabled the students and educators to develop a shared understanding of the professional competency standards, supported them to reflect on their practice, moderated their self-assessments and supported them to develop future goals and strategies.

3. In this research the educators (satisfaction score x = 7.4; σ = 1.0) and students (79%) found the online resources to support the delivery of the post-practicum experiences. Issues, however, with access and utilisation with the online resources were experienced by both groups.

In this section the findings from the evaluation of the second iteration of the *Consensus Model* have been present. In the subsequent section, these findings will be discussed together, in light of the background literature and the findings of the initial evaluation of the *Consensus Model*, to provide a more holistic evaluation of the post-practicum interventions.

5 Discussion

This chapter makes a unique contribution to this book as it offers a curriculum model for achieving the outcome of augmenting student learning through post-practicum interventions.

The *Consensus Model* presented in this work, has used sustainable assessment tasks, sequenced across the course of study, to meet the dual purposes of augmenting practicum learning, while also, developing lifelong learning capabilities. The findings have demonstrated a connection between assessment and post-practicum debriefing, with such experiences enabling students to transform their learning across contexts and participate in employer recruitment practices. This chapter has built on earlier research (Bacon et al., 2018) that describes the development, pilot implementation and evaluation of the *Consensus Model*. Since its development has used an iterative approach. This chapter also present the findings from the evaluation the second iteration of the model.

This research provides evidence that a programmatic assessment model, incorporating sustainable assessment practices implemented post-practicum, can augment students' learning and assist in their transition to the workforce. Both the final year students and educators reported the model helped students to develop employability skills (EIS students x = 6.0/7, σ = 0.9; educators x = 5.5/7, σ = 1.0). Of the graduates, 94% were employed within 12 months in dietetics roles or related positions, with all agreeing the model had assisted their preparation for the workforce. There has been a call within the dietetics profession to challenge the way dietitians are prepared for practice in Australia (Palermo, 2017; Palermo et al., 2017). When faced with the power imbalances of the accreditation process (Ash, Palermo, & Gallegos, 2019), it can be tempting for Universities to perpetuate current practices. This work contributes to the current gap in education research linking innovative teaching practices to graduate workforce outcomes (Morgan, Kelly, et al., 2019).

Higher education students have shown a preference for post-practicum experiences that relate directly to employability (Cain, Le, & Billett, 2019). Similarly, a post-practicum intervention conducted by Clanchy and colleagues in 2016, found

that including activities specially related to employment increased student engagement and overall satisfaction. This research (Study 2) showed a significant difference in students' perceived employability after completion of the *Consensus Model.* Post-practicum learning activities and assessment tasks were deliberately designed within the model to increase students' employability skills and their familiarisation with recruitment practices. The Consensus Model required students to track their development, assessment their learning and demonstrate their achievements against the measurable actions as described in the NCS (DAA, 2015).

A student driven outcome-based assessment approach is less likely to make students feel compelled to emulate the practices of their work site educators and may perhaps encourage more diversity and creative contributions (Palermo, 2017). Accreditation standards have mandated that practicums take place in the critical practice areas of medical nutrition therapy, public health nutrition and food service management (ADC, 2017), with the medical nutrition therapy placements traditionally completed in the hospital setting (Bacon, Williams, Grealish, & Jamieson, 2015). Within these constrains, the *Consensus Model* has still offered students practicums in non-traditional settings and emerging areas of practice, using community and aged care settings for their medical nutrition therapy practicum and diverse settings including, but not limited to, research, industry, sports nutrition, private practice and global health as internships options in Australian and international settings (Table 1).

The pilot evaluation showed that overall key stakeholders (students and work site educators) reported the *Consensus Model* as likely to assist students in their preparation for the workforce, as illustrated by the following quote from a practice educator, "*It's a very well-rounded assessment and it's very much preparing them into the working world. You're going for your interview panel. It's almost like going for an interview itself. Then you've got your internship, so it really is just that consolidating everything ready for the workforce* (Bacon et al., 2018, p. 10). In this enquiry, these students – now graduates, showed a consistent response (Study 1). They agreed that the sustainable assessment practices increased their familiarisation with the professional competency standards; developed self-assessment and life-long learning practices; and required their articulation of relevant capabilities in a form appropriate for future employers. In particular, the graduates acknowledged the benefits of the critical dialogue in the reflective practice meetings, the e-portfolio and the panel interview. While work site educators participating in the second iteration of the model (Study 3) agreed that overall that the model helped students to develop employability skills (EIS educators x = 5.5/7, σ = 1.0), they also identified variation in students' level of engagement. Further support may be required for some students, pre-practicum, to improve their preparedness and engagement with the learning activities and assessment practices used in the reflective practice meetings, specifically, their capability to clearly articulate their understanding of the competency standards and their learning needs.

In the pilot evaluation, the qualitative data from key stakeholders suggested that some work site educators focused more on summative assessment of student performance than assessment *for* learning (Bacon et al., 2018). Consistent with a programmatic approach to assessment (Palermo et al., 2017), the high stakes judgement of student competence is based on a longitudinal body of evidence, from a variety of sources, assessed by multiple experienced educators. In the *Consensus Model* the focus of the critical conversation is on assessment *for* learning (Bacon et al., 2018). In the second iteration of the model, the findings showed that the educators, who completed the survey, were implementing the sustainable assessment tasks as intended (*Study 2*); augmenting the students' practicum learning by engaging with them in critical dialogue about their experiences. This post-practicum activity was well aligned with the preliminary research conducted by Cain, Le and Billett (2019) that showed students prefer activities led by educators where feedback is given on their performance relevant to occupational standards. It should be noted that sustainable assessment practices have a dual purpose, meeting the student's future learning needs [self-assessment, the learning process, learning transformation], without compromising the course requirement to provide final summative assessment of competence (Boud, 2010). While the work site educators' focus during the reflective practice meetings is on assessment *for* learning, their judgements of the students' performance (as documented in the Global Assessment Form see Table 1) are highly valued by the assessment panel and provide a key source of evidence in determining a student's readiness for practice.

In practicum-based assessment, credibility lies more with the assessment processes and users, than with the assessment instruments (van der Vleuten et al., 2017), hence the training of both students and work site educators is paramount. While the university provides regular professional development opportunities for work site educators, these are often attended by those who are committed to the practicum assessment practices and competent with their implementation. The challenge is to reach those who are not yet inducted into these practices. Online resources can supplement the professional development provided for work site educators and the delivery of effective post-practicum interventions. Online delivery of placement resources transcends geographically and time constraints and has been shown to be more accessible to work site educators in rural or community-based settings (Huckstadt & Hayes, 2005). In this research, work site educators (satisfaction score x = 7.4; σ = 1.0) and students (79%) reported that the online resources provided were supportive to the delivery of the post-practicum experiences. Issues of access and utilisation, however, still remained a challenge for some educators and require further attention.

This research explores the perceptions of key stakeholders who supported the *Consensus Model*. Data triangulation and the iterative process increases the credibility and defensibility of this research. Research on the perceptions of employers of graduate dietitians who participated in the model could provide

further evidence. This research provides quantitative data demonstrating work-ready graduate outcomes (Study 1), and a significant difference in perceived employability skills for students' post-practicum (Study 2). These results while supportive of the dietetics course, cannot be attributed solely to the *Consensus Model* due to the study design. Results from Study 3 should be interpreted with caution due to the low response rate.

While these findings support this case study example of programmatic assessment and sustainable assessment practices, these results cannot be generalised. Supported by the Community of Practice for Dietetics Educators (Palermo, 2017), there is a movement towards programmatic assessment approaches in dietetics (Bacon et al., 2018; Jamieson et al. 2017; Palermo et al., 2017), and hence a national study of dietetic programs with programmatic assessment models would provide stronger evidence. Currently, there may be a lack of understanding of programmatic assessment by some health professionals and accrediting bodies. Time and further education will help to engage all relevant stakeholders and for other health professions to embrace and understand this approach.

6   Conclusion

This chapter provides a curriculum model for achieving the outcome of augmenting student learning through post-practicum interventions. It describes a competency-based system of assessment that gives students responsibility for their learning and assessment, acknowledging workplace assessments subjectivity and providing a continuum of learning across a whole course of study. This system of assessment sequences planned learning experiences and post-practicum debriefing, strategically enabling students to augment their placement learning, while at the same time developing lifelong learning capabilities. As a part of this process, students take part in authentic assessment tasks that align with employer recruitment practices.

This model demonstrates a connection between assessment, learning and post-practicum debriefing. Through critical dialogue with their educators, within both their practicums and assessment unit students: (1) take responsibility for their own learning; (2) develop a shared mental model of performance expectations; (3) moderate their self-assessments; (4) focus on assessment 'for' learning, strategically targeting future learning experiences; and (5) transform their learning across contexts. This chapter provides evidence demonstrating how sustainable outcome-based assessment practices, incorporated into a system of assessment, can augment post-practicum learning experiences and assist students in their transition to the workforce.

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Part III
Post-practicum Interventions and Practices in Prospect

This part comprises a concluding chapter that seeks to capture the contributions of a range of projects described and discussed in the second part. It initially collates, summarizes, and synthesizes the contributions of the projects and then proposes and predicts how such interventions might be advanced in the future.

The Educational Worth of Post-practicum Processes and Contributions and in Prospect

Denise Jackson, Janice Orrell, Faith Valencia-Forrester, and Stephen Billett

1 Augmenting Higher Education Students' Workplace Experiences

Globally, providing higher education students with workplace experiences has become increasingly common and, particularly, in countries with advanced industrial economies. Arrangements that earlier characterised niche approaches, such as the cooperative education movement in North America (Grubb & Badway, 1998) and elsewhere (Eames & Coll, 2010), the sandwich approach in United Kingdom and those with a work-based approach (Evans, 2001; Roodhouse, 2007) have now become mainstream. Once restricted to occupations that had specific and regulated performance requirements (e.g. medicine, nursing, teaching), the need for higher education students to have workplace experiences has become universal. This situation has seemingly arisen as the importance of graduate employability has become a central issue for universities, students and governments (Billett, 2015; Cooper, Orrell, & Bowden, 2010). Commensurate with growing state and personal investment in higher education has come enhanced expectations that this investment will lead to employment aligned

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with the focus, level and duration of higher education programs. Consequently, there has become a growing demand from students in all kinds of university programs to have access to workplace experiences as part of their university studies, and for these experiences to be effectively integrated into their degree programs (Patrick et al., 2008). Given the personal and institutional (i.e. education institution and workplace) investment in these experiences, how best they can be optimised has become an educational priority (Billett, 2011; Cooper et al., 2010; Orrell, 2011). As proposed earlier in this edited volume, this concern to optimise these experiences appears premised on four factors (Billett & Valencia-Forrester, 2020).

Firstly, all educational sectors are seeking workplace experiences for their students to either make them aware of the requirements of the world-of-work or preparation for specific occupations. As a result, securing work placements and practicums for higher education students has become increasingly difficult given the demands being made on workplaces by universities as well as vocational education colleges and high schools for their students to access these experiences.

Secondly, often, the available workplace experiences are not of the kind and duration that are sufficient to assist to develop the kinds of employability capacities for which they are being sought by higher education programs. Whereas there are accepted practices and funded arrangements to provide rich and supportive experiences within teaching hospitals to support students in medical, nursing, other healthcare discipline and also in schools to support student teachers, such infrastructure is less available in other sectors that do not have traditions of support and access to funding. Given financial constraints and resource limitations, it is highly unlikely that the kinds of support available in healthcare and education can possibly be extended across the entire range of disciplines that prepare graduates for specific occupations. Hence, alternative approaches to providing support and guidance are required.

Thirdly, providing experiences and supporting the kinds of student learning intended by higher education institutions may not be a priority or a possibility even for many of those workplaces with traditions of support and is a far lower priority in many others. The imperatives of workplaces are focused on the goods and services they generate, and these are their overwhelming priorities. In so far as students' requirements for workplace experiences can be aligned with what ordinarily occurs within workplaces, their needs can be met. However, with the demands for performance in both public and private sector workplaces, increasingly the provision of experiences outside of those that are central to workplace imperatives are unlikely to be provided. For instance, it is often reported that hospitals are unable to provide the specific kinds of experiences desired by nursing and medical faculties.

Fourthly, there is a growing expectation that universities will provide all students with these kinds of experiences and that students will directly benefit from them in ways that promote their employability. Indeed, some universities have practicum experiences as a central element of their marketing to attract students who are increasingly concerned about securing employable educational outcomes by the time they graduate (Cain, Le, & Billett, 2019). As the costs to individuals and the debts they incur to participate in higher education gains a growing emphasis that relates directly to employment, so the expectations increase that such outcomes will be realised. Unsurprisingly, there is a growing emphasis and expectation now on

educational provisions that prepare students to be employable upon graduation. This includes being 'ready' to make the transition from higher education to work practices as smooth and as effective as possible. That is, universities are taking up the responsibility to promote graduates' employability: to develop graduates' ability to secure employment, to be effective in employment and to provide the basis for sustaining and advancing their employment. Achieving this outcome is, of course, problematic, because until they are employed, it is difficult to know the kind of requirements for the specific circumstances of their employment. Nevertheless, providing workplace experiences and integrating them into the course content holds the prospect of assisting graduates to make that transition.

It follows then from these four sets of factors that there is a growing emphasis within tertiary education (i.e. higher and vocational education) on providing experiences that assist graduates' employability. The intention in focusing on augmenting workplace experiences through post-practicum interventions is aligned with the goal of promoting that employability. As noted in the introductory chapters, providing workplace experiences for students is insufficient, these experiences need to be mediated to optimise their educational potential and to direct the learning that arises from them to the kinds of education goals that will assist graduates' employability. Thus, the projects that are reported in this volume all sought to augment, extend or optimise students work experiences through post-practicum interventions that were directed to specific educational purposes. Here, the aim is to draw out findings from these projects and, collectively, identify the contributions that arise from these studies in ways that focus on improving student learning experiences and graduate capability outcomes.

2 The Post-practicum Interventions: Purposes and Practices

The 13 projects described and discussed in the contributions to this volume spanned a diverse range of disciplines, such as pharmacy, psychology, business, physiotherapy, education, occupational therapy and journalism. However, they focused on quite distinct kinds of educational purposes and adopted a range of practices, which are worthy of a brief overview.

2.1 *Educational Purposes*

There are a range of educational purposes to be achieved through integrating and augmenting students' workplace experience within the overall course of study. In these projects, some focused on broader educational purposes, such as developing occupational identity and capacities in their assessment, whilst others focused on more specific purposes. For instance, Edgar, Sutherland, and Connaughton (2020) provide experiences that would make students aware and ready for the requirements

of physiotherapy work beyond graduation, through the provision of targeted experiences. Gribble and Netto (2020) identify and validate the means by which students could critically appraise their own and others' practice with the intention to improve graduates' effectiveness as occupational therapists. Heck, Grainger, Simon, Willis, and Smith (2020) are concerned to provide a framework for teachers to, similarly, appraise their own and others' practices as teachers with a focus on improving their self-efficacy and capacity to address novel challenges that they might face in classrooms. Following this trend, Murray, Roiko, Sebar, and Rogers (2020) focus on promoting professional identity and efficacy in healthcare students through fostering critical self-appraisal of their experiences as well as peer appraisal of students' experiences. Similarly, Palesy and Levett-Jones (2020) focus on developing professional dispositions within cohorts of student nurses. As with those above, there was often an implied concern about students readiness to face the challenges of practice. This was evident also in Wake's (2020) focus on resilience for journalism students who might be find themselves in confronting situations and, the evidence suggests that there may be little support for them in, or from, their workplaces. In a different, but also broad focus, Patrick and Webb (2020) seek to generate student efficacy through promoting a work ethic as well as a focus on service with the intention of being broadly applicable across a range of occupations.

Some projects have more specific educational purposes. Antwertinger, Larkin, Lau, O'Connor, and Santos (2020) are concerned about developing students' ability to utilise and benefit from feedback. In addition, the initiative was concerned that students should gain appreciation of the role of feedback and how it can be used to support their efficacy and resilience, including their capacity to respond constructively to negative feedback. Boag-Hodgson, Cole, and Jones (2020) develop and validate an instrument to assist provide valid assessments of students' practice learning based on occupational expectations. Their intention is that the instrument could be developed across a series of placements. Valencia-Forrester (2020) uses a group debrief process that specifically focuses on developing informed or wise practice, by highlighting and discussing instances of those practices that were evident in journalism students' placement in major events. Hains-Wesson and Ji (2020) focus on developing team-based work capacities using projects and assessments to develop collaborative capacities for business students. Jackson and Trede (2020) focus on developing the capacities for self-authorship through explicitly engaging students in processes that seek to reconcile personal and professional dispositions.

Through this array of educational purposes selected as the imperatives for the projects there are both broader and more specific focuses. It is noteworthy that the imperatives selected by these educators have some similarities. There is a clear focus on student readiness, assisting them develop and sustain the occupational identity as they engage in work activities and assessments and there are concerns about occupational competence and capacity building are underpinned by strong dispositional elements such as self-appraisal, professional identity, self-efficacy and resilience.

2.2   *Educational Interventions*

There was also a range of interventions selected by the project teams, as shaped by their specific imperatives. Some of the projects implemented a post-workplace learning workshop or debrief session where students undertook small group activities to critically appraise their experiences. The foci of these activities differed but they aimed to engage and enhance the students critical thinking and peer learning, as directed to enhancing aspects of student employability, such as self-authorship (Jackson & Trede, 2020), professional identity (Edgar et al., 2020; Heck et al., 2020; Murray et al., 2020), resilience (Valencia-Forrester, 2020; Wake, 2020), and seeking, giving and receiving feedback (Antwertinger et al., 2020; Boag-Hodgson et al. 2020). Some used 'informal' learning circles where students were placed into small groups and encouraged to share and discussed their experiences in relation to a specific topic (Jackson & Trede, 2020; Murray et al., 2020). Most interventions took place in a face-to-face environment with only a limited number of exceptions that implemented online modules and reflective activities.

Other projects adopted more of an individual-based approach and their post-practicum intervention encouraged students to critically appraise their workplace experience through a survey (e.g. Heck et al., 2020; Murray et al., 2020) or interview (Bacon, Kellett, Ting Chan, & Yong, 2020; Hains-Wesson & Ji, 2020). There were also projects that focused on trialling and/or developing an effective reflective or evaluative tool for future use and wider dissemination. For example, Boag-Hodgson et al. (2020). consulted with key stakeholders to develop a competency assessment tool to gauge workplace performance and improvements over time, while Gribble and Netto (2020) encouraged students to experiment with three different forms of reflective practice (i.e. written, video, artistic) and evaluate their preferred format to inform their future use. As well as implementing, trialling and evaluating a range of different individualised activities, collectively, these interventions encouraged students to consider diverse aspects of their workplace learning experience, as well as evaluate certain capabilities related to their employability.

Irrespective of the individual versus group approach, some of the projects recognised the opportunity presented by the post-practicum intervention to evaluate the transformative impact of the workplace learning experience. Some evaluated the intervention with a pre- and post-capability assessment to evaluate learning gain (e.g. Hains-Wesson & Ji, 2020), while others implemented a one-time post-intervention evaluation (e.g. Boag-Hodgson et al., 2020). There was also a mix in terms of the structure and timing of the interventions. Most projects chose to implement their intervention(s) towards or at the end of the workplace learning experience while some combined this with interventions while students were in the workplace. There were several projects whose students took part in multiple placements, allowing their students' learning during the intervention to inform their future campus-based and workplace learning. Many projects, occured in disciplines in which workplace-based experiences are usually elective and also often include a capstone experience in the course structure. Often, these capstone experiences are

for final year students who have undertaken WIL and do not subsequently return to the workplace as part of their university studies.

Some of the interventions were embedded as compulsory elements of courses and course requirements, whereas others were voluntary activities for which WIL students were encouraged to participate. Approximately two-thirds of the projects embedded the intervention into teaching and learning within the curriculum, while the remainder were implemented on an extra-curricular and voluntary basis, although assigned to a specific academic unit of study. Three of the interventions were embedded into assessment activities. In terms of the facilitation of the interventions, all were led by educators with three of the projects involving collaborative engagement of external or industry partners in the delivery of interventions. Only three of the projects were conducted online and these were implemented as a mix of both face-to-face and online interventions.

So, these 13 projects have quite a range of educational purposes. Although much and many of them are associated with core issues of student readiness to participate in the selected occupations, they represent a range of educational interventions to augment students' work experiences, and their modes of implementation also vary. All this is helpful as it provides a stronger platform to identify challenges, valuing and outcomes of post-practicum interventions. It is these qualities that are now discussed.

3   Challenges with Post-practicum Interventions

Identifying challenges associated with the implementation and enactment of these educational interventions is important to inform how practice might progress in the future. For instance, in the first phase of the study (Billett, Newton, Rogers, & Noble, 2019) from which these projects comprise the second, the issue of student engagement was pervasive and ubiquitous. That is, students were reported as being reluctant, cautious or even 'time jealous' in their engagement with these educational interventions. This was reported as being the case even when the students found value or worth in the interventions (Cardell & Bialocerkowski, 2019). Here, in this second phase projects, issues of student engagement were again found to be central. Several project leaders observed difficulties with students understanding the value and importance of the targeted capability or practice in post-practicum activities. For example, students fail to understand the critical importance of giving and using feedback, instead considering feedback as 'telling'.

Edgar and colleagues (Edgar et al., 2020) advocated the importance of embedding interventions and overcome apathy and better engage students. Adding to this approach, Hains-Wesson and Ji (2020) asserted that encouraging students to lead, manage and shape the post-practicum intervention themselves with their peers elicits the highest engagement outcomes. This focus on student engagement is important as it emphasises the quality of outcomes likely to occur from effortful commitment to enhancing their learning. Billett et al. (2019) highlighted the

importance of strategically engaging students when they found that healthcare students preferred facilitator-led activities, rather than those in which there was peer to peer leadership. The importance of an expert facilitator was supported by Wake (2020) who found that the moderation role of an expert in guiding listening circle conversations was welcomed by students and meant that students could be directed to access support networks.

However, some of the challenges noted in the chapters relate to the topic of the intervention, rather than implementing the intervention itself. In psychology, where students undertake multiple placements, it was noted that students need to understand their level of attainment across successive placements in order to manage and regulate their learning (Antwertinger et al., 2020). This project found that it was difficult to implement an intervention and explore development without the same standards linking performance on successive placements. Another frequently noted challenge was students' inability to relate their practicum experiences to their own employability, and in turn to articulate their achievment to industry in recruitment processes. Hains-Wesson and Ji (2020) recognised the lack of support and guidance for educators in making choices regarding how to design post-practicum interventions that will better connect education and work. In a related challenge, they observed the difficulties their students experienced in presenting ideas verbally and the challenges posed by students' perceptions of undertaking teamwork activities as part of post-experience initiatives. Jackson and Trede (2020) found that students did not always capture their deliberations, concerns and emotions during the workshop. They interpret this as students either not following the reflective activity processes or perhaps being uncomfortable in sharing their emotions with others. Further, they found that students whose workplace learning was somewhat limited in terms of access to relevant and challenging work, found it more difficult to engage in worthwhile discussion and sharing of experiences. This suggests the importance of student having experiences that allow them to share them and critically appraise not only what they have experienced, but also other students' experiences. In these ways, there are a series of challenges to make the integration and augmentation of these learning experiences effective. This then leads to the question of whether these are ultimately worthwhile educational experiences and should be promoted and advanced within higher education institutions.

4   Worth of Post-practicum Interventions

The worth of the post-practicum intervention was supported by most project teams. They often observed how most students responded positively to the intervention, finding it helpful for connecting the targeted aspect of their employability with future work. Palesy and Levett-Jones (2020) when reporting on the value of interventions across multiple practicums noted they promoted positive changes to students' clinical practice, career progression and increased confidence. As noted, Antwertinger et al. (2020) found that the worth of these interventions was

particularly apparent among students with multiple placements as they could use their learning iteratively between the experiences in workplaces, the interventions in the education situation when they returned to workplaces. Some of the projects noted a change in student attitude and behaviour as a result of the intervention and the importance of the intervention for giving students dedicated time to process their experiences on placement (Heck et al., 2020; Murray et al., 2020; Valencia-Forrester, 2020; Wake, 2020).

Consistent with many others who strongly advocate that students should engage in a critical appraisal of their experience or reflection as a foundational element of effective work integrated education (Billett et al., 2019; Smith, 2012), the quality of the post-practicum intervention is quite salient in encouraging or promoting students' engagement in that kind of activity. In different ways and forms, critical appraisal or reflective activity was widely reported across the projects. Valencia-Forrester (2020), in her implementation of a university-led work integrated education event included a group reflective debrief. She found the debrief activity to be critical for students to gain a greater contextual understanding of the activities in which they had been engaged and its links and association to the journalism course and journalism practices. Similarly, Murray et al. (2020) found the learning circles were critical for confronting dysfunctional or defensive behaviours that may otherwise prevent students from realising the full potential of the placement experience in relation to role transition. Significantly, the projects found that these kinds of experiences press students into considering issues that they might otherwise not have wanted to engage. However, the process of engaging students in critical appraisals is important, and not all are as welcomed or deemed to be as effective as others. Despite the widely recognised value of reflection, Gribble and Netto's (2020) intervention was driven by the mode of reflection commonly used in university education (i.e. a written form) and this was not always well aligned with critically appraising the professional practice they have just encountered. Their intervention recognised that universities need to provide multiple modes to cater for diverse learning needs and preferences particularly in relation to reflection. They found that students prefer verbal reflective format as it is easier for reflecting on emotional responses and aligned better to reflection in their industry setting (healthcare). This finding is similar to what (Levett-Jones, Courtney-Pratt, & Govind, 2019) found in the earlier phase of this project. That is, by using oral-based approaches to articulate their clinical reasoning, student nurses were able to practice and develop capacities associated with their professional practice through these post-practicum interventions.

There was some evidence that these post-practicum interventions could lead to adaptable outcomes. Some interventions, for instance, were recognised as important for encouraging students to connect 'theory with practice', by encouraging them to consider what they had experienced and learnt in their work placements and identify the conceptual premises that would allow them to adapt and apply in different ways and contexts than what they had experienced during the practicums (Antwertinger et al., 2020). Other interventions also prompted students to consider and share moments of conflict and unforeseen incidents which challenged them while in the

workplace. Sharing of these encounters and situations may better equip these students to deal with similar circumstances in the future and prepare them for their transition to the workplace (Gribble & Netto, 2020; Jackson & Trede, 2020; Murray et al., 2020; Valencia-Forrester, 2020). More to this, Jackson and Trede (2020) noted the congruence amongst students' experiences prompted vibrant and engaged discussions during their post-practicum workshop. Many of them had experienced reactions that were negative (e.g. tension, uncertainty, frustration etc) and students welcomed the opportunity to share these and hear that others experienced similar issues. Through that sharing, they came to understand that these issues were not their fault or a personal issue, but rather a consequence of practice. Again, this finding is similar to earlier work in which Forde and Meadows (2011) found that the opportunity of journalism students to discuss their experiences permitted them to understand some of the practices within media workplaces that cause individuals to be dissatisfied and frustrated with their practicum experiences.

Heck et al. (2020) highlighted the worth of these interventions for the educators, as well as students. They noted how educators have gained insights through engaging with the collective experience of the students and across a range of practice teaching contexts which provided rich analogies and examples for theory-practice connections when delivering course content. So, it seems that their post-practicum interventions are likely to be perceived as educationally worthwhile when utilised in ways that engage students in activities that are central to their immediate concerns. Moreover, projected plans for employment can be more easily aligned with the occupational practice for which they are being prepared.

These deliberate post-practicum interventions have the potential to address some of the difficult aspects of preparing students for professional practice and seeking to make their transition to practice as smooth as possible. The ability of these interventions to assist students to align their conceptual understandings (i.e. theory) with what is occurring within the occupational practice provides a vehicle to develop a level of understanding that can assist them adapt and utilise that knowledge in circumstances other than those in which they were initially learned. This of course is very important, educationally, for several reasons. Firstly, one of the first challenges the students will confront is applying what they have learnt in the program to their first job. Most likely, that job and the circumstances in which it is enacted will be different to that which they have encountered in their practicums. So, the ability to not be constrained by what they have initially experienced, and to have understandings which can extend the reach of what they have learnt to other circumstances, is an important initial step into paid work and effective practice. Moreover, as the kind of activities that they will engage with will most likely be different and more demanding than those in which they engage in their practicum, their capacity to apply their professional knowledge will be premised upon having the ability to adapt to those circumstances. Then, there is the important goal of learning across working life that is most likely to be supported by these kinds of understandings. Hence, anything that educational provisions can do to develop principle-based understandings that permit the adaption of what has been learnt in the practicum and educational settings to other circumstances, is worthwhile.

It is also noteworthy that many of the students' concerns are associated with their sense of self, evolving capacities and nascent identity as an occupational practitioner. It is these concerns that have been the focus of many of the intended purposes of the post-practicum interventions selected for the projects. Again, these are often difficult and confronting outcomes to achieve and, are unlikely to be met by didactic presentations and reading of text, although these may help. Instead, the opportunity for sharing, comparing and critically appraising experiences provides means for students to develop insights, tolerance and resilience for what they encounter and for what they might find professionally and personally confronting. The important point here is that these intra-personal and inter-personal educational outcomes are often very difficult to articulate and achieve. Therefore, if these post-practicum interventions can assist address them, there is the potential for achieving significant educational benefits.

Finally, it is worthwhile noting that whilst only a small number of projects involved industry partners in their intervention (Edgar et al., 2020; Hains-Wesson & Ji, 2020; Valencia-Forrester, 2020), the value of this connection was strongly advocated by one project as a means of enhancing authenticity and improving student engagement. Making this connection aligns with a wider recognition of the value of industry and educator collaboration in the design and delivery of higher education programs – particularly work-integrated learning – for preparing students for future careers (Smith, Ferns, & Russell, 2014). These collaborations, however, do present challenges. Industry may be reluctant or unable to participate due to time and resource constraints. There also may be an inability to identify projects that are meaningful for all stakeholders, and there are concerns with the level of administration and risk management processes (Department of Industry, 2014; Jackson, Rowbottom, Ferns, & McLaren, 2017). So, beyond the immediate experiences and learning of students, there is the potential for connections with industry partners that will inform and shape the qualities of experiences that students have within higher education institutions. When these connections are developed in ways that are collaborative and offer benefits that make worthwhile contributions to education programs and workplaces, then they are the basis for mature and productive engagements of the kind that are central to education provisions that respect, utilise and integrate education and the workplace experiences.

All this points to a set of broader implications for the ways in which post-practicum experiences can support the quality of students experiences and assist in guiding how students come to reconcile, utilise and direct what they have learnt in both the formal education and workplace settings towards attaining both their personal and occupational goals.

5   Implications for Broader Education

Industry desires graduates to be active and competent practitioners, who have the capacity to perform effectively, which includes the ability to respond to new challenges and to critically appraise and adapt to new circumstance. From the projects discussed here, there is some evidence that post-practicum interventions provide a valuable opportunity for students to engage in reflection, with the support of educators and industry partners, to better prepare them for their transition to the workplace. The projects highlighted the value of deliberately designing interventions that engage students with diverse learning styles. They also affirmed that assessment and evaluation can be designed to contribute to critical reflection on the practicum experiences and learning.

These various projects highlighted the importance of fostering student agency to fully engage with post-practicum interventions, along with the other initiatives and activities designed to enhance students' employability. Embedding post-practicum interventions into the curriculum, including assessment activities, may encourage students to be proactive with respect to not only taking part in the intervention, but also relating their experiences and outcomes to enhance their own employability. In particular, the interventions may serve as an important connection between students' workplace learning and their awareness of their own capabilities and achievements and articulating these two key stakeholders, including prospective employers. Also important was the need to engage not only students, but also industry in both the design and implementation of post-practicum learning. Involving industry may serve to foster students' perceptions of the authenticity of the activities as well as the relevance to their future careers and, as a result, enhance students' engagement in the post-practicum programs.

5.1   Post-practicum Intervention: Augmenting Students' Workplace Learning Experiences

In the first phase of projects (Billett et al., 2019), all of which were conducted in the healthcare sector, four key factors were identified arising from the findings of those projects that were salient for shaping the effectiveness of post-practicum interventions. These were:

- students' readiness to engage in these interventions
- managing student engagement
- considerations about both voluntary and compulsory activities
- having a safe social and psychological environment in students can share and compare their experiences.

To appraise the salience of these four factors, each of these factors is now considered briefly to advance understanding of how considerations for implementing post-practicum interventions might progress in the future.

5.1.1 Students' Readiness to Engage in These Interventions

Learner readiness refers to the degree by which what learners know, can do and value allows them to engage with new experiences and learn effectively from them. That is, the extent and qualities of their conceptual, procedural and dispositional knowledge that are helpful in how they can construe and construct knowledge from that which they currently possess. Whilst some theories of readiness are associated with developmental stages, more broadly, the existing capacities of individuals will shape the degree by which they can construct knowledge from what they experience. Moreover, and of essence, this process is likely to be person-dependent in some ways. That is, students, like all kinds of other learners, will bring their person – particular configurations of conceptual, procedural and dispositional knowledge to the experiences that they encounter. Their readiness shapes both what they experience and the process of experiencing, which leads to change in what they know, can do and value. There is evidence of student readiness being a salient concern in these studies. For instance, Antwertinger et al. (2020) found that many of their students (and supervisors) fail to understand the value and the processes for giving and using feedback. Consequently, because of this, they report that students fail to actively seek feedback and to use it effectively. What these authors suggest is that, for feedback to be effective, students need a positive mindset and resilience to deal with it positively. However, as with Noble et al. (2019) project in the first phase of this teaching grant, Antwertinger et al. (2020) found that students' attitude to feedback changed as a result of the workshop from uncertain and anxious to understanding feedback as a tool for learning. This finding emphasises that student readiness to learn effectively can be supported through specific interventions directed towards the kind of experiences they are likely to encounter in the program of study.

Preparing students to be ready for their employment beyond graduation was reinforced in the findings from Edgar et al (2020) project that concluded students did not know how to relate their practicum experiences to the specifics of a job application. That is, they were unsure about how their experiences related to the field of practice and what might be expected of them by those who might be interviewing them for jobs within healthcare. Aligned with this concern is that the experiences in higher education institutions may not lead to the kinds of capacities that are required for work. For instance, Hains-Wesson and Ji (2020) found that many of their students have difficulty presenting ideas verbally and communicating personally and professionally through appropriate written and oral forms. Because of this, these authors advised of the importance of understanding and accommodating students' perspectives regarding challenges and obstacles they might encounter in undertaking team-based activities as part of post-experience initiatives.

Heck et al. (2020) also identified a different kind of issue of readiness that needs to be considered in efforts to optimise post-practicum experiences. Because of students' specialised undergraduate studies, previous work experience and family responsibilities, they found that postgraduate students were different from undergraduate teacher education students and how they came to experience teaching practicums and discussions around them. Yet, despite these differences, these authors note that little is known about their distinctive learning needs and how they best can be utilised and optimised in post-practicum events. These differences may extend also to how students view and engage in their practicum activities. Murray et al. (2020) noted that the extent of medical students' prior experience in placements impacted on how they rated their personal capacities and skills and is central to how they engage in and learn through placement experiences. In terms of the practicum experiences itself, Wake (2020) advises that interns and junior staff in journalism workplaces are the most vulnerable people in most news organisations. They are not only subject to intense competition for work, but also, while covering stories, have experiences that are highly confronting and have significant personal impacts. She makes this point that this personal impact occurs in the context of an industry in which it is largely unknown, and seen to be ill-advised, for staff to be comfortable about reporting such impacts. These projects have illustrated that these ways of preparing students, making them ready for work placements and developing their ability to reconcile their experiences stands as an important educational consideration. These set of concerns also leads to how students' expectation about and engagement in practicums might best be managed.

5.1.2   Managing Student Engagement and Learning

Much of the focus of these projects has been about engaging students in activities from which they will learn and through post-practicum interventions that aim to promote specific learning outcomes and address or overcome potentially unhelpful, perilous or confronting learning. So, beyond readiness is a concern about how students learning can be mediated to be as effective as possible. Within these projects there has been much evidence to suggest that interventions are able to achieve these kinds of outcomes. For instance, Antwertinger et al. (2020) report that students from across a number of disciplines responded positively to the workshop on feedback as it was perceived by them to be helpful in understanding their role in the feedback process and the workshop provided the tool for how they could seek, use and learn feedback. This feedback was reported as being especially helpful where students had multiple placements as they could use the information in subsequently placements. That is, this approach positioned them to be active participants in the feedback process, in which they could be confident in seeking and securing feedback to assist them reconcile those experiences across different placements. Edgar et al. (2020) also reported that students wanted assessment feedback on their workplace performance; and then based on that information make choices about how this influenced their career options and selecting specialisations and, thereby, became a focus on identifying how their

engagement in and feedback from work experiences could increase employability. Arising from this project was the need for tools for both supervisors and students to engage in and secure appropriate feedback and, aligned with this, a mechanism by which they could assess and appraise their levels of attainment towards being effective in nursing practice and how this could develop across their five placements.

A similar concern to support student engagement and expectations was reported by Boag-Hodgson et al. (2020) who also articulated the need for a tool that could be used by student supervisors across multiple placements to assist organise and guide student experiences and provide the basis for assessing their attainments and progress across a series of placements. Understandably, they proposed that this tool would lead to productive educational partnerships between students and supervisors. Valencia-Forrester's (2020) findings also emphasised the importance of engagements amongst students and with supervisors after practicum experiences. In particular, she proposes that debriefings are essential. Those debriefings should be structured in a way that explicitly engage students in drawing out what they have learned from those experiences because otherwise it may not be obvious or clear to students what they have learnt through those practicums. Her goal here is not just short-term resolution of experiences but leading to the development of capacities that will be helpful for these journalism students when they come to practice their occupation. In particular, she proposed group-based post-practicum debriefing using a 'wise practice' framework, which assists students explicitly address and be conscious of contextual factors and contributions provided by experiences of practice that can assist, both in the short and long-term, and further develop capacities associated with effective journalistic practice. Gribble and Netto (2020) also concluded that post-practicum experiences linked to occupational practice are likely to be more effective, than those associated with educational institutions processes and outcomes. Here, they found that student preference for a verbal reflective format was linked to how nurses work practices and engagements progress in healthcare settings. Added here was that the verbalisation of emotions was more effective than representing them in written formats. Hence, they were requesting processes whose efficacy was founded in they use and translation to health care practice.

Considerations of engagement in authentic experiences was also emphasised in Heck et al. (2020) study in which postgraduate teacher education students reported they learned more from participating in professional activities than in observational activities and they began to develop a sense of mastery of necessary skills and resilience as they continued through subsequent practicum experiences. This perspective emphasises the importance of authenticity and active engagement. Once more, it is worth mentioning the observations made in Hains-Wesson and Ji's (2020) chapter that actions by educators in encouraging students to lead, manage and shape the experiences for themselves and their peers elicits the highest engagement outcomes.

Jackson and Trede (2020) noted that students' engagement in collaborative processes appeared to encourage students to reflect on and share their experiences in developing self-authorship during their workplace experience. It successfully prompted students to consider how they may further develop this as they prepare for their transition to the workplace. They noted that when the experience was

organised, this provided the opportunity for students to engage in vibrant discussions because many of them had experiences that were similar. Also, because many were conscious of their negative reactions during times of conflict in the workplace (tension, uncertainty, frustration etc) they welcomed the opportunity to share these and hear that others experienced similar responses. All of this merely underpins the obvious fact that, as Murray et al. (2020) explicitly state, placement can be demanding and stressful for students and they need help to manage these demands and stressors. These authors also noted that students' sense of self arose from how they experienced and negotiated those encounters, which, if unsatisfactory, had an impact upon ratings of confidence. They concluded that placement supervisors need to encourage students to trust the experience, the learning process and redefine what they might construe as failure. Consistent with all of this is Palesy and Levett-Jones' (2020) finding that while students view favourably both written and interactive reflective activities, they prefer the face-to-face format of the Clinician Peer Exchange Groups(CPEGs). Quite profoundly, students reported that these interventions promoted positive changes to clinical practice, career progression and increased confidence. In preparation for another occupation that can be turbulent (i.e. journalism) Wake (2020) reported that the use of listening circles was judged to be valuable by students and staff. Students found the listening circles interesting and worthwhile, enabling them to incorporate some of the learnings/strategies from the discussions into their future internship work. Yet, as in other areas and experiences, students wanted the process moderated by an academic or facilitator, rather than an entirely peer led process.

All of this suggests that supporting student aspirations, guiding their learning and intervening in situations in which they may not learn without support and direction is likely to be helpful in securing employability related outcomes for these students. This support also has the potential to assist with students' well-being in situations and educational experiences that might otherwise lead to negative or unsatisfactory outcomes.

5.1.3   Having a Safe Social and Psychological Environment in Students Can Share and Compare Their Experiences

As has been presented and elaborated above, students often reported a desire to engage with peers when discussing their experiences in workplace and, never more so when those experiences have been confronting in some ways. The opportunity to share, compare and contrast experiences when students found them confronting serves a range of purposes. These include students being able to appraise whether it was just their experience that was confronting/difficult/humiliating or whether others had encountered such experiences. Certainly, earlier studies indicated that the opportunity to engage with peers, overall, is viewed as being helpful. However, this is not universally the case. There is much about revealing experiences that can be confronting and possibly isolating or risking deepening concern is that students

might have. For example, a student might discover that they were the only one who had such a negative experience?

If students have made mistakes or participated in errors, they may well not want to share that within a social environment unless they felt confident about trusting that confidentiality would be maintained. For instance, in the earlier studies, Cardell and Bialocerkowski (2019) engage students in a process that went from individual, small group to whole class sharing. That is, students firstly shared with just one other person, before then progressing to share their experience with a small group. Finally, there was a sharing across the entire class group. One of the rationales for such an approach is that students might want to share some experience with another person whom they trusted, but not a small group and certainly not a larger gathering were their confidences might be violated. So, organising a social environment in which students can feel confident that their experiences will not be exploited or abused and only shared within limits that they find permissible is likely to be helpful. For instance, Jackson and Trede (2020) found that students sometimes did not record their emotions on the provided butcher paper during the huddle workshops. This could be interpreted as either not following the activity instructions or not feeling comfortable in sharing their emotions. Certainly, there is a risk that confidences might be betrayed in larger groups. Also, in the earlier studies Harrison, Molloy, Bearman, Ting, and Leech (2019) noted that medical students were comfortable in sharing their experiences, including potential errors or mistakes they have made in small groups, but were reluctant to share experiences more widely with large numbers of students. In a very competitive field like medical education, students, whilst wanting and perhaps needing to share their experiences with others, also need to be cautious about how their disclosures might be used.

Perhaps, the most clear principle here is that it is the role and prerogative of the educator to assume that some students will want to be assured about the maintenance of confidentiality in small group process work and that, as a starting point, being discreet and confidential is a premise for these groups to progress. As a starting point it is important to put in place arrangements and established practices that will ensure that the environments in which this information is shared is socially and psychologically secure. All this is central to respecting students, their confidentiality and their right to be discreet with their sharing and appraisals of experiences.

6   In Conclusion

The suite of projects described above and synthesised in this chapter illuminate the value of post-practicum interventions in assisting students to be more aware of their development of their professional identity, professional behaviour, self-efficacy and confidence, as well as actually aid their development. Professional identity and professional socialisation are widely considered pivotal elements of students' preparedness for their future careers (Holmes, 2013; Jackson, 2016). This is particularly important for international students or those of low socio-economic status who are

often less professionally connected and, therefore, have relatively less exposure to, and consideration of, professional environments. These students need to be prepared for understanding workplace etiquette, familiarisation with codes of conduct, and managing potential misalignment between personal and professional values. Self-efficacy and confidence are also important for all students' effective transition to the workplace, and their ability to enact acquired capabilities flexibly and across different contexts (Open Universities, 2019). From these projects, student readiness is an important consideration. Therefore, preparation for effective experiences are likely to be a necessary consideration in the use of post-practicum interventions. Through this approach, the prospects for aligning authentic work practices with post-practicum learning activities are likely to be optimised. It is also noted that helpful, wise and critical feedback and reflection is a critical element for transformational learning that can achieve through well-conceived and implemented post-practicum experiences.

Finally, across these contributions there is a strong argument for peer -based learning experiences organised by, and enacted through, supervisor facilitation. Peer engagement can be a great leveller in understanding workplace behaviour and expectations. Diverse employment options can be brought into the classroom and important learning outcomes secured from critically reflective discussions based on the wide range of students' workplace experiences.

Therefore, it is intended that the individual and collective findings of these projects will provide some different models and approaches from practice, for others to reflect on, adapt, trial with and for their own students and circumstances. Hopefully, as a result the project described in this publication will help disseminate and deliver the kinds of outcomes that students want, and likely need, to enhance their employability upon graduation.

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