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Assessment practices in work-integrated learning

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Background

- Been involved with WIL 20+ years
- University of Waikato introduced compulsory WIL for all undergraduate degrees
- Two broad forms
 - Placement WIL
 - Non-placement WIL (work-related projects)
- Must have an external stakeholder involved
 - Employer
 - Client
 - Community
 - Researcher
- Very diverse practices on delivery and assessment

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Assessment design

- Assessment must align to the intended learning outcomes
- Assessment must align the student activities
 - Authentic assessment
 - Allow for different contexts
- Assessments spread out over time
 - Student can track if they are doing well (or not)
- Using different assessment approaches
- Clear instructions and expectations
 - Purpose of this assessment
 - How it will be graded
- Refine instructions every year
 - Eliminate common students' mistakes
- Must provide students with plenty of constructive feedback
 - Assessment without feedback is not assessment for learning
- Achievable
 - Students on work placement may be working full time
- Grading: rubric, guide/schedule, by 'feel'



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- Performance-based
 - Work/task performance
 - Skill tests
 - Observations (e.g., classroom observations)
- Reflective tasks
 - Reflective essays
 - Reflective report
 - Journaling
 - Dairies
 - Learning goal settings and reflection (co-design)
 - Career statements (current and future directions)
- Portfolio
 - Compilation of evidences
 - Portfolio approach is best across the whole degree
- Work-related
 - Health and safety assessments
 - Technical reports (co-design)
 - Consultation reports (co-design)
 - Oral presentations (co-design)
 - A product (co-design)

Types of Assessment

Weightings

- 100% work performance
- 100% assessments
 - Work performance is 0% weighted feedback
- 50:50 work performance, assessment
- <50 : >50 work performance, assessment
 - E.g., 25% work performance, 75% assessments

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Example: Work placements (30pts – double paper)

- **Workplace health and safety (5%)**
 - Template. Risk assessment, evidence of induction
- **Placement brief (5%)**
 - Template. Scope of placement, key contacts
- **Setting of learning goals (0%)**
 - Technical, behavioural/professional, knowledge. 2 goals for each using SMART
- **Reflection on applying a taught concept in the workplace (20%)**
 - E.g., a principle, set of knowledge, lab tests
- **Reflecting on learning goals (10%)**
 - Progress to achieving learning goals
- **LinkedIn update (5%)**
 - Need to see evidence of a bigger network, work history updated
- **Technical report (30%)**
 - Technical writing with a focus on the work done, not reflection of learning
- **Work performance (25%)**
 - Completed by the workplace supervisor



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Example: non-work placement WIL

Vary significantly. A mix of group and individual assignments

- **Planning assignment (group, 5%)**
 - Template. Project name, scope, purpose, timeline, measures of success, resource needs, deliverables
- **Midpoint update (individual, 5%)**
 - Template. Update on progress on timeline and deliverables. How the team is functioning
- **Reflection assignment (individual, 20%)**
 - Identify 1 technical skill and 1 behavioural skill learnt and explain. Reflect on teamwork
- **Oral presentation (group, 20%)**
 - Of the work completed, recommendation. Content similar to final report.
- **Final report (group, 20%)**
- **Professional engagement (group and individual, 30%)**
 - 15% peer assessment (individual), 15% external stakeholder (group)



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Example: non-work placement WIL variant

- Oral presentation (33%)
- Final report (33%)
- Professional engagement (33%)



Strengths

- Simple
- Interlinked assessment, easier for the student
- Reduced assessor workload

Weaknesses

- Not comprehensive
- Mostly end of WIL assessment
 - Students can't track learning progress
 - Easy to fail
- Heavy on technical outcomes
- Light on reflective learning and professional identity development

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Example: Multidisciplinary projects (The Impact Lab)

Structure

- Multidisciplinary projects, based around the UN SDG
- Multidisciplinary teams
- Centrally run
- Two modes of delivery
- Individual group projects
 - Each group has their own project
 - Project is well defined
 - Likely each project has a different stakeholder
- Competition mode
 - One problem proposition
 - One stakeholder
 - Many possible outcomes/solution
 - Best outcome/solution wins

Assessment

- Professional profile (individual, 15%)
 - CV, cover letter, LinkedIn
- Project plan (group, 15%)
- Midpoint update (individual, 15%)
- Oral presentation (group, 20%)
- Final report (group, 25%)
- Project contribution (individual, 10%)



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Other assessment approaches



- Industry overview assignment
 - Overview of the organisation, the sector nationally, competitors, etc.
- Reflection around an event
 - A success or failure (or both)
- Career statements
- Updated CVs
- Journalling
 - Common
 - Labour intensive
- Placement report with personal reflection
 - Could also include industry overview
 - Often written in the first person
 - Often becomes a 50% report and 50% work performance
- Portfolios
 - Common. Use portfolio software (e.g., PebblePad)
 - Best across a whole degree
- Oral presentations
 - Create an Industry Day
- Assessment during site visits
 - Preliminary work performance, presentation, knowledge tests

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- Variation between work performance evaluations
 - Moderating
 - Rubrics
- Grading reflection
 - Looking for sensible reasoning and understanding
- Grading workload
 - Some are workload heavy (e.g., journaling)
 - Must provide plenty of feedback
- Technical report not technical
 - Students writing reflections rather than technical content
- AI
 - Ensure assessment is directly linked to context and events

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Resources

International Journal of Work-Integrated Learning (www.ijwil.org), 2014 special issue on assessment

Brentnall, J., Judd, B., Raymond, J., & Ashcroft, E. (2023). Learner assessment in work-integrated learning. In K. E. Zegwaard & T. J. Pretti (Eds.), *The Routledge international handbook of work-integrated learning* (3rd ed., pp. 473-491). Routledge.

Ajjawi, R., Tai, J., Jorre de St Jorre, T., & Johnson, L. (2022). Authentic assessment design for work-integrated learning. In S. J. Ferns, A. D. Rowe, & K. E. Zegwaard (Eds.), *Advances in research, theory and practice in work-integrated learning: Enhancing employability for a sustainable future* (pp. 37-46). Routledge.

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Hodges, D. (2011). The assessment of learning in cooperative and work-integrated education. In R. K. Coll & K. E. Zegwaard (Eds.), *International handbook for cooperative and work-integrated education: International perspectives of theory, research and practice* (2nd ed., pp. 53-62). World Association for Cooperative Education.

Bosco, A. M., & Ferns, S. (2014). Embedding of authentic assessment in work-integrated learning curriculum. *International Journal of Work-Integrated Learning*, 15(4), 281-290.

Bloom's taxonomy – many publications around this



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Any Questions?



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