

WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING (WIL) - Frequently Asked Questions

General information	Comments
What is Work Integrated Learning?	Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) is the term normally used to describe directed or supported educational activities that integrate theoretical learning with its application in the workplace.
Is my council supportive of WIL?	<i>Name of council</i> welcomes an opportunity to provide students with career development opportunities through work placement.
What are the benefits to our organisation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to staff short term projects • Minimise budget expenditure for short term projects • Build future recruitment opportunities of work ready graduates • Fill positions where it is difficult to recruit new staff eg supply shortages • Research, technical data etc being shared with the organisation • Learning opportunity for the organisation in the case of international students • Generate a culture of continuing professional learning amongst staff • To be regarded as an Employer of Choice
What are the benefits to the student?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidate learning with practical application of skills and knowledge • Fulfil curriculum requirements • Introduction to potential employer • Opportunity to integrate with Australian workforce (in the case of international students) • Clarification of career expectations

What are the responsibilities of the organisation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a brief/scoping outline of the opportunities available during a fieldwork placement • Provide appropriate development opportunities for the student in line with course requirements (outlined in the Student Action Plan) • Ensure provisions have been considered in relation to payment, reimbursement, insurance, security, induction, OH&S, • Provide adequate levels of supervision • Provide mentoring and feedback • Ensure computer equipment and other resources are available as required • Provide student evaluation to the institution
What are the responsibilities of the educational organisation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide contact details for ongoing liaison person pre-fieldwork, during and post • Information provided by the educational organisation would include clear roles and responsibilities of all parties including grievance procedures and what to do if any party has concerns. • Ensure students have necessary current documents such as Police Check; Working with Children etc • Provide learning objectives outline-manual ,timelines, confirmation of insurance, guidance to students regarding scope of the placement to assist in selection
What are the responsibilities of the student?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake work in compliance with the organisation's Code of Conduct policies and procedures • Attend work at agreed times and complete tasks according to the requirements of the Student Action Plan/Learning Agreement • Attend regular supervision sessions/contact times • Complete own assessment tasks as required
Who would manage/facilitate the program internally?	The department who identifies the need for student placement will manage and facilitate the program. Initial enquiries may be made through Human Resources who can provide supporting information.

Do we enter into a contract with the student and who is responsible for developing the contract?	Yes, the contract will generally be prepared by the institution.
What is the estimated time required for setting up a placement and managing it?	<p>Set up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 hour meeting with student to establish needs, interests etc • 1 hour department induction • 3 hour corporate induction (optional) <p>Management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 hour formal supervision session/contact time each week <p>Initially, students may need 2-3 weeks to settle in. They become more independent, needing less constant supervision.</p>
How long is the average placement period?	<p>For secondary students, 3-5 days.</p> <p>Social work students 70 days.</p> <p>Social work Masters students, 40-45 days.</p>
Can the placement be part time, full time?	Either part time or full time.
Do we have to pay students?	<p>Secondary students may receive a small payment.</p> <p>Graduates do not get paid in the area of Social Work. Other disciplines may receive payment ie Planning.</p>
Do we have to insure students under Workcover?	Insurance (whether Workcover or private insurance) must always be confirmed with the educational institution to avoid any potential for disputes, as a result of variances which may exist under different contractual or casual agreements.
Are there any other costs to consider?	Aside from payment of students (if applicable) there are minimal costs to consider – (may be oncosts associated with employing someone? check with Finance)
Who are the key contacts from each council?	Learning and Development Officer from the HR Department will be able to assist you

What is the process for engaging students?	<p>The process varies depending on the arrangement. It is important to follow the procedures for each type of placement as identified in the policy document.</p> <p><i>Some University courses have a combined schools approach to fieldwork eg Social Work who routinely try to locate possible fieldwork opportunities and options.</i></p>
What role does HR play in the WIL process if any?	HR will support you in engaging a student and assist with any questions you may have.
Where can I find some case studies of WIL students working in local government?	<p>?</p> <p><i>We have previously had a number of students working across Council in areas of Community Development ,Maternal and Child Health, Child Care,</i></p>
What other options are available if we are interested but do not have resources such as desks, computers etc?	<p>Have you considered engaging a student part time – separate hours to another part time member of staff?</p> <p><i>Students generally require at least a minimum of a desk and space with access to an internet site as some will be able to bring their own laptop but if they are to work within Council they generally need a log in and access to our system.</i></p>
Obtaining a student placement	
How do I identify participating educational institutions?	<p>This will vary as educational institutions may participate for particular areas of study. Check contact for each course</p> <p>You can also contact the schools within the municipality to check</p> <p><i>Most educational institutions will have contact points /key personnel involved in developing and supporting fieldwork components.</i></p>
Who are the key contacts in the educational facility?	As above
When are students available?	<p>Students may be available all year round or at specific times depending on their course requirements. They may be combining study with part time work and the WIL or may be able to fully commit to the WIL</p> <p>Generally students may be most available during the major holiday periods (November-February and June-July)</p> <p><i>This can vary and with some distance education students placements can occur throughout the year.</i></p>

What is the process for student selection by the educational facility?	? <i>Organisations offering a placement opportunity generally submit an outline of what can be offered as learning opportunities that are then displayed on selection boards or circulated top students to select their choice of 3 for eg.</i>
How do I know that the student has the skills we require?	The educational institution will match prospective students with the placement. You will need to be very specific about the skills you need as detailed in the project outline. You can also interview the prospective student. <i>Discussion can occur with the liaison person from the Educational organisation prior to the student being informed of the allocation of a placement.</i>
Who determines whether a prospective student is appropriate?	You do. You have the right to interview the student before starting the placement if you wish and confirm they have the skills to undertake the tasks you are asking. <i>Generally this is a shared process as there is an opportunity once allocation is in place to arrange an interview at the fieldwork agency with the student to clarify if both feel they have made the right selection.</i>
What resources e.g. supervision, budget, do I need?	There will need to be a supervisor allocated at the beginning of the student placement who is clear on the objectives of the placement and will dedicate the time to ensure the experience is meaningful and productive for both the student and the council. When considering a paid placement, the manager will need to ensure they can fund the position from their budget.
Will we meet any professional/technical requirements for supervision?	The university should confirm the qualifications or requirements of the supervisor in their agreement letter. If they don't refer to this, ask the question and clarify, before signing the agreement. <i>Yes ,some courses require the supervisor to have certain professional qualifications and experience of 2 yrs post graduation.</i>
Are students subject to the same conditions as employees e.g. police checks?	Your council will have a list of positions or areas where a police check and/or a working with children check is required. Refer to the list and consult your HR department to confirm. <i>Yes –usually arranged by the educational organisation prior to student commencing fieldwork.</i>

Managing student placement	
What should a student induction process involve?	<p>The induction should cover the essential and legislated requirements for new employees (such as OHS requirements). For secondary student work experience, there is usually only the need to provide an orientation to the organisation and building. Longer placements will require further information. The student is a potential future employee and the induction is their first experience of the council as an employer.</p> <p><i>Organisation orientation as well as more specific orientation as per their role during their fieldwork</i></p>
Will I be involved in the assessment process?	<p>With some placements, the institution will require the workplace supervisor to assess the student's work (especially if credit points are applicable to the placement). The workplace agreement should specify the supervisor's role in the placement. If not, check with the student/institution prior to agreement.</p> <p><i>Field educator is responsible for recommending a pass if competencies as set out by the University have been achieved.</i></p>
Who is responsible for monitoring attendance and performance?	<p>As the workplace supervisor, you should be monitoring the performance of the student in a similar way to how you would monitor the performance of any of your employees. You need to agree with the student how you will manage non-attendance, but the generic procedure is for the student to contact their institution if they are not attending the workplace, and the institution will then contact you.</p> <p><i>Field Educator</i></p>
How do I assist students to achieve their outcomes?	<p>You should develop a plan that details what the student is required to do, how they will work, and how you will monitor the placement. Agree on the student's goals at the beginning and build in review periods (may be weekly) to ensure you both allow time to review progress along the way.</p> <p><i>Students often need to complete a specific learning plan in the orientation phase of their placement-the Educational organisation usually sends them with a manual outlining what will be included in learning plan. Fieldwork educator assists student to set these objectives within this Council setting and then during the fieldwork the student and fieldwork educator will review and evaluate at established intervals.</i></p>
Will there be a predetermined plan as to what the duties will be while the student is on placement?	<p>Where the placement forms part of the tertiary curriculum, there will usually be a plan or set of requirements provided by the institution. If not, you should create a plan with the student so that you are both clear of the objectives and of what needs to be achieved.</p>

	<i>Yes there needs to be some initial contracted parameters and goals negotiated with the student and the educational organisation usually receives a copy of this initial contract.</i>
Do students receive credit points for their placements?	<p>If the student's placement forms part of their curriculum, they will usually receive credit points following a successful completion (tertiary students). The Work Integrated Learning Agreement may specify the credit points allocated. If not, ask the question of the student/institution prior to commencement.</p> <p><i>Fieldwork is usually an enrolled and fully credited subject and for many a requirement of their course.</i></p>
Are there any considerations regarding intellectual property?	<p>Follow the same process that you would for any employee with regard to the signing of the Code of Conduct, Confidentiality Agreement or any other workplace requirement to ensure the student is aware of their obligations regarding intellectual property and confidentiality.</p> <p><i>This is usually clarified in the Educational Organisation manual-intellectual property usually belongs to the Fieldwork agency/organisation unless specifically University approved research that has undergone Ethics approval</i></p>
Who do I contact if there is a problem with the placement?	<p>You will need to contact the institution (secondary school, TAFE or university).</p> <p><i>Each Educational organisation has a liaison contact specified at start of placement negotiations.</i></p>

Note: Blue comments are additional comments added by social work areas for consideration. Each council will review to determine relevance for inclusion.