

# LEADING WIL: A distributed leadership approach to enhance work integrated learning

**Final Report 2014**

**Griffith University (Lead Institution)**, Central Queensland University,  
Deakin University, RMIT University, University of Western Sydney,  
Victoria University

**Ms Carol-joy Patrick (Lead)**, Dr Wayne Fallon (Deputy Lead),  
Professor Malcolm Campbell, Mr Ian Devenish, Ms Judie Kay, Ms  
Justine Lawson, Ms Leoni Russell, Ms Freny Tayebjee

**Project Manager:** Dr Patricia Cretchley



<http://acen.edu.au/WILleadership/>

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Requests and inquiries concerning these rights should be addressed to:  
Office for Learning and Teaching  
Department of Education

GPO Box 9880  
Location code N255EL10  
Sydney NSW 2001

<[learningandteaching@education.gov.au](mailto:learningandteaching@education.gov.au)>

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# Acknowledgments

This project was initiated by a team from five Australian universities: Griffith University, Central Queensland University, Deakin University, University of Western Sydney and Victoria University.

The team at the inception of the project consisted of: Ms Carol-joy Patrick (Lead), Dr Merrelyn Bates (Co-Lead), Professor Malcolm Campbell, Dr Wayne Fallon, Associate Professor Dale Holt, Associate Professor David Jorgensen, Ms Judie Kay, Professor Dineli Mather, Ms Leoni Russell, Dr Calvin Smith, Ms Freny Tayebjee, Ms Beth Tennent and Dr Ali Green followed by Dr Patricia Cretchley as the project manager.

Over the period of this project, some roles and representation changed. Dr Merrelyn Bates, Co-lead, retired from the project when she retired. Dr Wayne Fallon became the project Deputy Lead.

Ms Judie Kay and Ms Leoni Russell moved to RMIT University which provided the project team with the opportunity to add a sixth university to the project. Victoria University was retained in the study even though it had no additional team members as part of the project.

Associate Professor Dineli Mather and Associate Professor Dale Holt from Deakin University resigned from the project because of employment role changes; however, their excellent contributions in the early phases of the project conception and inception were instrumental in moving the project forward. Associate Professor David Jorgensen and Ms Beth Tennent from Central Queensland University and Dr Calvin Smith from Griffith University also resigned from the project because of retirements. Their contributions were equally valuable in formulating the project concept, its methodology and then the data collection and analysis within their institution. Mr Ian Devenish and Ms Justine Lawson took over as the Central Queensland University project team members.

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- our focus group and workshop facilitators: Margo Couldrey (Lista) and Jennifer Cartmel (Griffith University); and
- our evaluator: Professor Rick Cummings (Murdoch University).

## List of acronyms used

ACEN Australian Collaborative Education Network  
ACER Australian Council for Educational Research  
WIL Work Integrated Learning

## Defining WIL leadership and WIL leaders

Throughout this report frequent reference is made to Work Integrated Learning (WIL) leadership and WIL leaders. WIL leadership refers to the activities that surround the development, promotion, organisation, management and delivery of Work Integrated Learning. This leadership takes place both within higher education institutions and also in workplaces located within industry and community organisations.

WIL leaders, therefore, are practitioners within the higher education sector or within the associated organisations who teach, host, support or employ WIL students and operate in either formal or informal roles to provide formal or informal leadership of Work Integrated Learning. WIL leaders can be, and usually are, drawn from many levels within institutions and organisations and are defined by the activities in which they are engaged rather than by titles such as director, manager or other similar terms.

In this report it has been difficult to provide a sufficiently broad and encompassing term that can describe the group of institutions, organisations, bodies and individuals who support students in Work Integrated Learning. We have tried to use institutions to represent the tertiary education sector that provide WIL opportunities for students within their curriculum. Because universities conducted this project, we sometimes use the term university when discussing a particular aspect of the project research.

For groups external to institutions involved in the delivery of WIL we predominately use the term industry and community organisations although we do recognise that this does not adequately represent the diversity of these external groups. It was therefore necessary to also use the terms employers and partners to highlight particular aspects of this diverse group.

# Executive summary

Work Integrated Learning (WIL) has rapidly expanded as a curriculum approach in Australia in recent decades. This rapid growth has meant tertiary institutions, employers, and the academic and professional staff of those organisations have had to quickly adapt and enhance their skills to ensure quality student learning through a curriculum which relies on shared oversight and direction of the student's learning experiences. This project, in response to an identified need for professional development of WIL staff, developed, trialled and validated a WIL leadership framework and associated suggested uses. The project responded to the need to support WIL leadership capacity building in universities and industry and set out to describe the characteristics of WIL leadership; to develop and test a WIL leadership framework which was underpinned by a distributed leadership approach; and to nurture communities of practice for WIL leaders. For the purpose of this report WIL leaders encompass a range of WIL professional and academic practitioners in universities and staff in industry and community partner organisations who undertake both operational and strategic WIL functions.

The study collected data from WIL leaders, defined as WIL practitioners operating in either formal or informal leadership roles, in six Australian institutions (two of which are dual-sector) across three states and from industry partners in seven broad fields of education: Allied Health, Business and Tourism, Creative Industries, Teacher Education, Engineering, Information Technology and Sciences. The project was premised on leadership being "a distribution of power through the collegial sharing of knowledge, practice and reflection within the social context of the university [and industry organisations]" (Lefoe & Parris, 2008, p. 2). This distributed leadership approach referred to situations when leadership is distributed among multiple actors who support others in achieving organisational goals.

## Findings

This project has seven key findings:

1. WIL leadership occurs in, and is distributed across, diverse roles and settings in tertiary institutions and industry.
2. The distinctive nature and complexity of WIL benefits from the type of shared and collaborative relationships offered by distributed leadership.
3. The challenges WIL leaders face in tertiary institutions, disciplines and industry are broadly similar.
4. The capabilities required by WIL leaders are similar across tertiary institutions, disciplines, and industry, and can be grouped into five domains:
  - **shaping** vision and policy;
  - **communicating** and influencing WIL;
  - **creating** sustainable WIL relationships to strengthen WIL culture;
  - **fostering** engagement, expertise and learning in WIL; and
  - **driving** outcomes that serve the needs of WIL stakeholders.
5. Industry and partner organisations seek enhanced collaboration and support from tertiary institutions in order to implement and maintain effective WIL activity and to build WIL capabilities of staff including supervision.

6. WIL vision and strategic intent are important drivers of WIL practice, irrespective of whether the institution has, or does not have, a formal WIL policy.
7. Resourcing and acknowledging the work of WIL leaders is a recognised need for WIL practitioners in all sectors.

### **Outcomes**

The characterisation of WIL leadership in universities in Australia can be described in ten dimensions: discipline contexts, policy, resourcing, organisational culture, organisational structure and systems, external engagement, staff capability, pedagogy and curriculum, access and equity, and research and scholarship. It was found that these dimensions were consistent across disciplines.

The WIL leadership framework resulting from the project identifies five domains for WIL leadership: *Shaping* the vision; *Creating* and sustaining WIL relationships; *Fostering* WIL engagement, expertise and student learning; *Communicating* and influencing; and *Driving* organisational and joint industry/university outcomes. Following a validation process, which gathered advice, insights and guidance from university and industry WIL leaders and practitioners, advisory and reference groups, facilitators and evaluators, the framework was identified to have multiple purposes, in particular as a:

- support tool;
- WIL vision tool;
- promotional tool;
- leadership map; and
- position description tool.

The project proved to be a catalyst to harness a groundswell of interest at all the member universities. The focus groups, meetings with colleagues and invitations to submit vignettes of good practice all contributed substantially to creating a momentum which resulted in the establishment of communities of practice at three of the six partner universities. From the project's inception, arrangements were made with the Australian Collaborative Education Network (ACEN) to host the project and any subsequent developments, following the project's completion.

### **Deliverables**

The detailed project report, copies of promotional material and the complete WIL leadership framework can be found on the project website:

<http://acen.edu.au/WILleadership/>

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# Chapter 1: Project description

A key issue facing the tertiary education sector is the need for strong Work Integrated Learning (WIL) leadership to ensure the best possible outcomes for university students and staff, and industry and community partner organisations. The increasing emphasis on WIL in both university and employer sectors has created a need to better understand the competencies, capabilities and capacities of WIL leaders. Hence, this project addressed the WIL leadership needs of experienced WIL academic and professional university staff, employers (including workplace supervisors), as well as senior leaders and those responsible for policy development within the university.

The goal of this project was to develop a better understanding of the characteristics of WIL and WIL leadership needs in Australia framed within a context of distributed leadership. The project used a collaborative approach to building this understanding and developed a WIL leadership framework constructed around a distributed leadership approach.

The specific aims were to:

- establish how and where WIL leadership is situated;
- identify the critical challenges to WIL leadership capabilities and structures;
- develop and test the distributive leadership approach to WIL within employer-based individual disciplines;
- develop, trial and validate a framework and guidelines to support WIL leadership capacity building, nationally and internationally; and
- provide a sustainable framework and guidelines through a collaboration with the key national WIL professional association, Australian Collaborative Education Network.

The project had the following desired outcomes:

- the identification and analysis of the organisational structures, policy context and characteristics of WIL leadership, including the key challenges faced by WIL leaders in both universities and employer organisations;
- the development of a WIL-specific leadership framework and guidelines to facilitate distributed strategic leadership development in tertiary institutions and workplaces; and
- the nurturing of a strong national and international community of WIL leaders in both tertiary institutions and workplaces.

Questions therefore arose: Who is leading WIL and where are leaders situated in terms of organisational structure? How do these leaders construe their leadership role? How fully understood are the different needs and expectations of those in the university and those in the workplace? What challenges each group and how can these challenges be met? How can university and employer leaders work best to maximise outcomes from limited resources?

## Chapter 2: Need and value for the project

WIL is a response to demonstrable and increasing demands for the tertiary education sector to provide graduates with improved employability skills through an industry relevant curriculum (AC Nielsen Research Services, 2000; Universities Australia, 2008). WIL is recognised for its role in providing “significantly higher engagement and outcomes” over students without WIL (Australian Council for Educational Research [ACER], 2011), which improves retention, supports the social inclusion agenda, and enhances the career development of students (Smith et al., 2009). Hence, attention is needed to develop leadership capability and capacity across the spectrum, from unit or course coordinators to executive staff. Further, as WIL is a collaborative enterprise, it is essential that leadership capacity is also developed in workplace supervisors and relevant workplace managers. WIL leadership capability and capacity building was identified as a need for both institutional and employer sectors in the *WIL Report* (Patrick et al., 2009).

Building a successful WIL program requires a wide range of expertise, and WIL staff consistently report that within the academic institution there appears to be little understanding of the multiple skills required to conduct effective WIL programs (Bates, 2010). Embedding WIL into mainstream curriculum and assessment activities requires strategic leadership at the institutional level, and the success of this collaborative enterprise is also reliant on effective leadership within the workplace.

This project focuses on the leadership of a diverse range of WIL experiences involving authentic real-world engagement with industry and community partners. The project team recognises that WIL experiences can be integrated through a variety of curriculum approaches.

The definition of WIL applied in this project is that used in the *WIL Report* (Patrick et al., 2009, p.9) that defines WIL as “...an umbrella term used for a range of approaches and strategies that integrate theory with the practice of work within a purposefully designed curriculum.” WIL therefore includes placements, projects, fieldwork, simulations, virtual or in-class experiences, and reflections on employment.

WIL leadership is expressed variously across the tertiary education and employment sectors and its complexity is not always fully understood. Commonly, WIL leadership emerges as a dispersed and shared responsibility at many levels and across many areas. The work of this project was premised on leadership being “a distribution of power through the collegial sharing of knowledge, practice and reflection within the social context of the university [or employer organisation]” (Lefoe & Parris, 2008, p. 2). Importantly, therefore, this project is built on the notion that WIL leadership requires a distributed approach. For this project, the interpretation of distributed leadership used to underpin the project directions was that distributed leadership refers to formal or ad hoc arrangements that divide leadership among multiple actors who support others in achieving organisational goals.

Distributed leadership recognises informal, emergent and collective acts of influence as well as those instigated by people in formal positions of authority (Bolden, 2011). Leaders are not always managers and therefore a framework is necessary to recognise the capabilities

exhibited by WIL leaders and how these capabilities might be developed at all levels of the sector, including WIL workplaces.

In this project, leadership was distinguished from management: managers generally focus on monitoring, directing and refining current performance and are usually concerned with hierarchy, equilibrium and control. Leaders, on the other hand, in formal or informal roles, establish the path to be followed and bring others with them as goals are achieved.

A study of best practice in WIL (Orrell, 2011) recognises three essential elements – institutional, educational and partnership – for successful WIL. At the institutional level, a clearly articulated and shared vision of WIL within the university, including a shared understanding of its purposes and expectations, is required. This would include the distinctive and complementary roles that the institution and workplace have in shaping and supporting student learning. Educational elements require support and integration in curriculum development and institutional strategic plans. Partnership elements must develop robust and mature relationships between universities and placement providers and ensure that both university and host-organisation supervisory staff are provided with activities to develop their leadership capabilities. The study concluded that there is a need for scholarship on leadership and management at the higher institutional levels.

It is imperative that there is greater understanding about what effective WIL leadership entails so that resources are harnessed optimally and more students can experience authentic WIL experiences through real-world engagement with employers. The main purpose of this project was to build a coherent and systematic framework of leadership capability at all levels within an institution, including WIL management.

## Chapter 3: Characterising WIL leadership

The project drew upon the expertise of more than 100 experienced Work Integrated Learning (WIL) leaders from across six Australian universities and their WIL industry and partner organisations. The study focused on seven broad fields of education: Allied Health, Business and Tourism, Creative Industries, Teacher Education, Engineering, IT and Sciences. Each university concentrated on a specific field of education and collected data from both university staff and partners across that field of education. This single focus on just one field of education per university allowed comments from university WIL leaders and employers to be aligned. It is interesting to note, however, that the different fields of education produced very similar outcomes and that the discipline context did not impact on the findings.

Each of the universities exhibited a strong commitment to WIL, both in terms of its integration into curriculum and in the role that central support areas have in managing, overseeing or providing advice and support around WIL. A range of industry partners also provided data for the project. Typically these people were leaders within the organisation and/or workplace supervisors of students. The project's partnership with ACEN was seen as valuable in recognising a collaborative, national perspective of WIL and WIL leadership.

### **WIL leadership in universities**

In addition to the project team, forty-seven university leaders of WIL in six Australian universities contributed data across the seven broad fields of education via focus groups and individual interviews. The WIL leaders included university leaders, academics and professional and general staff. The fields of education were selected to allow the project to consider whether different WIL contexts have differing leadership needs or challenges.

Three core activities were conducted in each of the partner universities. Facilitated focus groups and interviews drew out from a range of formal and informal university WIL leaders the challenges, enablers, competencies and capabilities, and the development needs that were seen as important. The project team, as representative WIL leaders within their universities, undertook a reflective activity that examined the structure, characteristics, behaviours and directions of WIL within the partner universities and how these were being led. A final facilitated workshop in each university evaluated the WIL leadership framework constructed from the initial project data set and provided an understanding of the possible uses of the framework.

Ten broad areas of responsibility, identified as being crucial to WIL leaders, emerged from the data. These areas were:

- policy;
- resourcing;
- institutional culture;
- institutional structures and systems;
- external engagement;
- staff capabilities and development;
- pedagogy and curriculum;
- access and equity;

- research and scholarship; and
- partner organisational culture and systems.

Notably, the data identified that collaboration around WIL appeared to stem from two wider perceptions:

- Sharing and collaboration is the pragmatic way to achieve efficiencies in the facilitation of WIL.
- Participating in WIL networks and communities of practice enable staff to build their WIL knowledge and expertise.

The findings drawn from these observations identified important and indicative approaches to WIL leadership. The data identified key challenges to WIL leaders, key strategies for enabling WIL and its leadership in both strategic and operational areas, and the capacities, competencies and capabilities needed by existing and emerging WIL leaders. This data was validated by inviting responses on the key findings by email, or online, from WIL leaders in the six partner universities and from the project's reference and advisory groups.

### **WIL leadership in industry and partner organisations**

Industry and partner organisations with experience of supporting WIL students were invited to contribute views via an anonymous national online survey. The survey included questions similar to those asked of university staff in the initial focus groups and interviews. Fifty-five employers representing diverse organisations contributed to the primary data. The industry and partner organisations were drawn from the same fields of education as the university WIL leaders.

Several key themes emerged from this data collected from industry and partner organisations. The dominant themes identified by these organisations were:

- WIL enables organisations to have access to students thereby identifying future employees.
- Operational and resourcing issues impact heavily on the ability of organisations to offer WIL.
- The suitability of student skills and attributes are important factors for industry and their level of engagement in WIL.

These key issues were identified as both enablers *and* barriers to involvement in WIL. This was similar to the university data where the same issues were often identified as both enablers and barriers depending on the outcomes afforded the institution. Factors relating to engagement between industry and universities around WIL comprised the second tier of themes in this study.

While the findings reveal that some organisations are well resourced, organised and skilled in their management of WIL, the data highlights a general need for better resourcing and support for WIL. The responses of WIL leaders in these organisations point in particular to the potential value of universities engaging organisations by providing:

- clear information about WIL;
- streamlined processes for engaging and communicating with host organisations;

- resources to support staff who manage WIL in organisations; and
- student preparation prior to WIL and monitoring of student progress while undertaking WIL.

These findings point to the potential value to universities of providing wider and increased support and collaboration with organisations in the management and leadership of WIL, to build WIL outcomes for all stakeholders.

### **Narratives of WIL leadership**

Each member of the project team undertook a reflective analysis of their institution which considered the nature and evolution of WIL organisation, policy and leadership. This analysis was aligned to the ten areas of responsibility identified by the university WIL leaders. The key themes were synthesised to provide an understanding of the synergies and variations in the contemporary status of WIL leadership in Australian universities.

The institutional narratives show:

- There was great variation in the area of policy across the universities ranging from no official policy but significant WIL activity to official standalone policy but considerable challenge in implementation.
- While some of the participating universities had limited centralised approaches to WIL resourcing, all noted the degree to which WIL implementation was seriously underestimated and/or under resourced.
- With the exception of one university that had a continuing strong WIL culture across the institution, there were pockets of practice that meant that the supportive WIL culture was driven at a faculty, school or even course level.
- Participating universities noted a silo mentality when commenting on organisational structures. However, there was an increasing awareness that a more centralised support approach was needed for there to be shared practices and equitable outcomes.
- Three universities noted that there was top-level strategic engagement with community and industry but for others, specific WIL engagement rested locally, with individuals, schools or faculties.
- There was a lack of explicit professional development activities for staff engaged in leading WIL in their institutions that focused specifically on WIL leadership. However, many universities indicated that the required staff capabilities were high and were developed on the job.
- There was considerable variation among universities with some having specific courses, assessments and accompanying campus (and/or online) support for WIL, while in others there was a notable challenge around developing assessments that evidenced learning through WIL.
- Access to WIL by students was mixed across universities and disciplines with some disciplines such as engineering and education providing all students with access, while others provide WIL as an elective or through a competitive process.
- The need for research and scholarship expressed by WIL leaders was not matched by an equivalent institutional commitment, with some institutions leaving research and scholarship to individuals and/or undervaluing WIL scholarship in comparison to discipline-based scholarship.

### **Development and validation of the WIL leadership framework**

The WIL leadership framework (described in Chapter 5) was developed from the key themes in the data described above. Five domains of WIL leadership emerged, and trials and validation of their scope was undertaken via five institutionally-based focus groups in the partner universities. Following consultation, these focus groups replaced the master classes that were initially proposed for this purpose. In addition, feedback on the framework model was invited from a wide range of stakeholders, including the project's reference group and advisors, industry leaders and all members of the ACEN Executive.

## Chapter 4: Key findings

WIL leadership is often enacted in the absence of, or despite, a hierarchical structure because of the dedicated approach taken by WIL leaders. The distributed support context of WIL practitioners across roles and settings means that WIL leadership develops from need and purpose rather than by appointment. Therefore, to develop the culture and practice of WIL, leaders must lead by working collaboratively across their organisation, between organisations, and out into their communities.

The following are the key findings of this project, which drew on the opinions of WIL leaders and practitioners in the six partner universities, two of which are dual-sector institutions, and on data from industry and partner organisations:

1. WIL leadership occurs in, and is distributed across, diverse roles and settings in tertiary institutions and industry.
2. The distinctive nature and complexity of WIL benefits from the type of shared and collaborative relationships offered by distributed leadership.
3. The challenges WIL leaders face in tertiary institutions, disciplines and industry are broadly similar.
4. The capabilities required by WIL leaders are similar across tertiary institutions, disciplines and industry, and can be grouped into five domains:
  - **shaping** vision and policy;
  - **communicating** and influencing WIL;
  - **creating** sustainable WIL relationships to strengthen WIL culture;
  - **fostering** engagement, expertise and learning in WIL; and
  - **driving** outcomes that serve the needs of WIL stakeholders.
5. Industry and partner organisations seek enhanced collaboration and support from tertiary institutions in order to implement and maintain effective WIL activity and to build WIL capabilities of staff including supervision.
6. WIL vision and strategic intent are important drivers of WIL practice, irrespective of whether the institution has, or does not have, a formal WIL policy.
7. Resourcing and acknowledging the work of WIL leaders is a recognised need for WIL practitioners in all sectors.

Along with these findings, the project reconfirmed a number of existing perspectives around WIL and WIL leadership (Patrick et al., 2009). This project reconfirmed:

- the critical importance of strong leadership in WIL in achieving good WIL outcomes in the sectors;
- the power of an integrated whole-of-organisation approach;
- the importance of grassroots commitment which has generated an upsurge and renewed interest in understanding and developing WIL leadership; and
- the challenges and barriers that need to be overcome in the delivery of WIL in both industry and educational sectors.

The framework conceptualises how leadership can be enabled and enacted at a practical and strategic level at institutional, employer, industry or professional group or indeed at a national level and identifies suggested approaches. It is our understanding that this is the first time that this has been done internationally. It provides Australia with a unique

advantage going forward in developing WIL to maximise impact for Australian graduates and the economy.

The findings of this project, including the WIL leadership framework, afford the opportunity to:

- **implement** deliberate and intentional strategies to build WIL leadership capacity and capability and drive change;
- **inform** the development of resources to enhance WIL outcomes;
- **focus** on key areas for future research and development;
- **provide** a framework that recognises and develops the leadership of WIL staff;
- **implement** a holistic approach rather than a piecemeal approach to WIL in both institutions and WIL partners; and
- **inform** and **build** strategies to develop stronger collaboration between institutions and WIL partners.

## Chapter 5: Outcomes

The project's three intended outcomes – a characterisation of WIL leadership, a multi-dimensional framework of capabilities and the nurturing of a community of WIL leaders – were achieved and are encapsulated within and through the use of the WIL leadership framework. The framework is described in detail on the website:

<http://acen.edu.au/WILLeadership/>

### **Characterisation of WIL leadership**

The characterisation of WIL leadership has been described in Chapter 3. The data that led to the conceptualisation of the framework provided a rich source of information for a contemporary view of WIL leadership. WIL leadership in universities can be described in ten dimensions: discipline contexts, policy, resourcing, organisational culture, organisational structure and systems, external engagement, staff capability, pedagogy and curriculum, access and equity, and research and scholarship.

In disparate discipline contexts, WIL may be operationalised differently. Teacher Education and Nursing, for example, have quite formalised structures built around, and linked to, professional learning and accreditation requirements. Science, on the other hand, has a less formalised structure, and in many cases WIL exists as an elective for students. However, this project found very little difference between disciplines when considering the capabilities of WIL leaders.

In regard to policy and resourcing, WIL was found to operate in universities that had formal and centralised policy and support and also those that did not have such policies and support. What was interesting, however, was that WIL leaders from both types of institutions desired formal and centralised policy around WIL. Two views were postulated to explain this. First, WIL leaders are looking for formal and centralised policy to provide institutional support for their work and to legitimise the development of WIL in universities. Second, WIL leaders are seeking support to develop and consolidate the relationships they have with WIL partners and organisations. An important factor in both of these views is the implication that with centralised policy often come a variety of resourcing demands. WIL leaders in all universities studied were able to secure some resourcing, but all universities considered that they needed more.

The remaining dimensions relate to the ability of WIL leaders to shape and work with institutional direction and build and sustain external relationships.

Two aspects were identified as being crucial in developing WIL leadership within an organisation:

- **Staff capability**, particularly in the areas of learning design, embedding employability skills within the curriculum and creating meaningful opportunities for all, was identified as a key professional skill set of WIL leaders.
- **Research and scholarship** around WIL supported the need of WIL leaders to innovate and use innovation in an evidenced-based application of WIL concepts.

## The WIL leadership framework

The WIL leadership framework (Figure 1 and detailed further in Appendix A) is a conceptualisation of how WIL leadership can be enabled and enacted. The five domains of WIL leadership draw together and describe the key capabilities evidenced by WIL leaders across both university and employer settings. The distributed nature of WIL leaders across these settings and the many WIL roles that sit within universities and partner organisations emphasise the requirement to blend distributed leadership into the framework. It is not that WIL leaders consciously use a distributed leadership approach, but that leadership is distributed across the many roles and settings in which WIL occurs.

Within the WIL context, a number of factors define the roles and settings for WIL. These factors provide a spectrum of perspectives which must be considered within the WIL context to build a shared understanding and include:

- the balance between WIL in universities and WIL in industry;
- WIL delivery in both large and small industry and community partner organisations;
- WIL practice in universities, disciplines and organisations with a long history of engaging WIL, compared to those that have adopted WIL as a more recent initiative;
- the level of organisational focus on WIL, including policy augmentation, resource allocation, pedagogical development and structural support for WIL; and
- the role descriptions and responsibilities of WIL practitioners and leaders, including professional/academic responsibilities and in university/industry settings.



Figure 1: The five domains of WIL leadership

The domain Shaping the WIL Vision is aligned to other leadership models (McInnis, Ramsden & Maconachie, 2012) and appears in the centre of the framework because it links together the other four domains. To shape the WIL vision, WIL leaders must create relationships, communicate and influence, foster engagement and drive outcomes. The other domains, therefore, feed from and feed into the Shaping domain.

The WIL leadership framework is a multi-layered representation of WIL leadership capabilities. Each layer presents a slice of leadership practice: the upper layers provide the context and domains of WIL leadership while the lower layers provide the detail and exemplars. The domains are situated within the WIL leadership context. Each domain is then layered into the domain scope, indicative approaches that enable and enact WIL, and exemplars of practice through vignettes. These layers are shown in Figure 2. Layer 3, the WIL Leadership Scope, is described in Figure 3 and highlights the outcomes that the research shows exemplify WIL leadership.

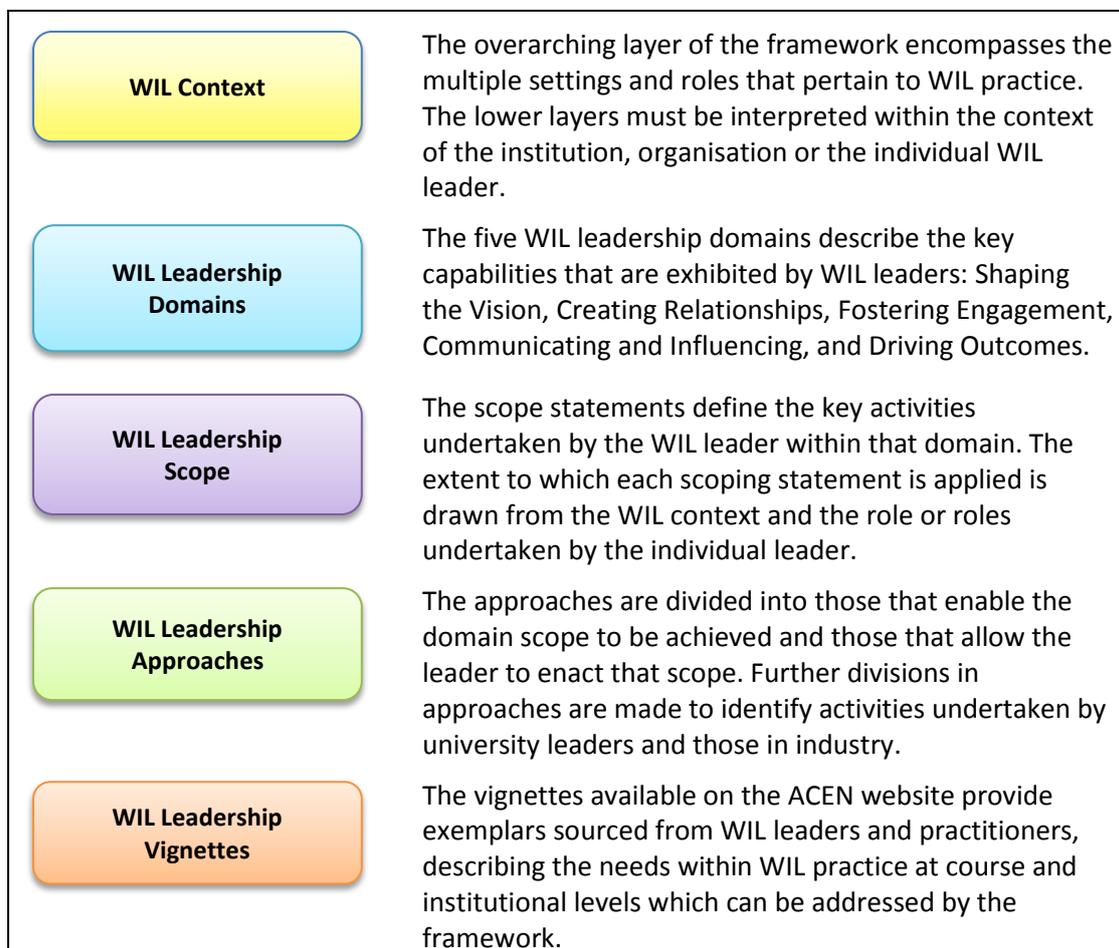


Figure 2: The layers of the WIL leadership framework

<b>Shaping the vision</b>
a. Plan, articulate, influence and advocate strategy b. Foster WIL culture to achieve equity and quality WIL outcomes c. Enable change and innovation to respond to emergent trends and wider contexts
<b>Creating and sustaining WIL relationships</b>
a. Identify and engage with diverse WIL stakeholder networks b. Collaborate within, across and outside the organisation c. Nurture relationships to strengthen WIL culture
<b>Fostering WIL engagement, expertise and student learning</b>
a. Build WIL pedagogy, curriculum and expertise b. Cultivate innovative approaches and quality experiences in WIL c. Promote WIL scholarship, research and practice
<b>Communicating and influencing WIL</b>
a. Develop shared understandings about WIL b. Build sustainable WIL practice through the development of networks and communities of practice c. Broker and advocate for meaningful WIL outcomes
<b>Driving organisational and joint industry/university outcomes</b>
a. Identify and manage common challenges and risks b. Promote shared benefits c. Build, cultivate and maintain capacity and equitable outcomes

Figure 3: The scope of each WIL leadership domain

This layered approach leads to a framework that can be used to support WIL leaders in both universities and industry and community organisations in a number of ways, such as a:

- **visioning tool** whereby institutions without a WIL policy might be guided to establish a culture of WIL knowledge and practice. As a visioning tool the framework can guide and enhance a WIL policy to
  - guide the development of institutional and organisational policy
  - develop a shared understanding of WIL and WIL expectations, and
  - develop a coordinated and cohesive approach to WIL leadership and good practice.
- **leadership map** whereby the framework is used as a checklist to assess the strengths, challenges and gaps in the leadership of WIL across an organisation. As a leadership map the framework can assess the strengths, challenges and gaps in WIL leadership to
  - provide reflective, evaluative or continuous improvement of WIL practitioners
  - guide the curriculum that responds to the training needs of WIL leaders, and
  - identify gaps in approaches that enable and enact WIL leadership.
- **support tool** to assist the development of, and enhance, the leadership capabilities of current and future WIL practitioners. As a support tool the framework can develop and enhance the leadership capabilities of WIL leaders to
  - build a how-to guide including quality and risk approaches, for different types of WIL leadership and practice

- leverage industry engagement and interaction by explaining how universities use WIL, and
- identify WIL leadership gaps within an institution or organisation.
- **promotional tool**, particularly as a vehicle for showcasing stories of WIL leadership across institutions and organisations. The use of the framework as a promotional tool can advance the acceptance and adoption of WIL. Ideas in this category include using the framework to
  - create greater institutional and organisational investment in WIL
  - enable greater collaboration between institutions and partner organisations, and
  - showcase stories of WIL leadership and WIL outcomes.
- **position description** whereby the domain scope, in particular, describes the key selection criteria and/or typical duties of a WIL leader. Using the tool in this way, institutions and organisations can
  - develop position descriptions in the recruitment of WIL leaders
  - enhance the role descriptions of existing WIL practitioners in universities and industry, and
  - contextualise the role descriptions across disciplines to ensure long-lasting use and impact.

Within universities, WIL leadership capabilities were shown to occur at both strategic and operational levels. These range from shaping WIL vision within the university to fostering WIL expertise and scholarship. In addition there were identified capabilities pertaining to leadership more generally, such as communicating and influencing, achieving mutual and organisational outcomes and creating and sustaining relationships, though it should be noted that the focus on mutuality and relationships could also mark these capabilities as specific to WIL leaders.

Some capabilities similar to those identified within universities were evident across employer and partner organisations. The partner organisations that provided data to this study cited the breadth of WIL leadership capability and skills as a major factor in leading WIL within their organisations. Issues such as interpersonal and staff management skills were highlighted along with the need to work closely with the university, promote a culture of WIL within the organisation and support staff who manage WIL. Additional capabilities identified for WIL leaders included problem solving, strategic thinking and emotional intelligence. For some employer organisations the awareness of, and due diligence for, the needs of both the organisation and the student were important WIL leader capabilities.

### **The nurturing of a WIL Community of Practice**

The project proved to be a catalyst to harness a groundswell of interest at all the member universities. The focus groups, meetings with colleagues and invitations to submit vignettes of good practice all contributed substantially to creating a momentum which resulted in the establishment of new communities of practice at three of the six partner universities, an increased focus on WIL in the curriculum, valuable sharing of information between the partner universities and the identification of a number of distributed leaders in WIL.

The WIL leadership framework has already proved to be an effective vehicle for bringing

staff within a university together as a community of practice. As the dissemination of the project outcomes continues, and as the framework becomes embedded into the culture of a broader group of institutions and their industry and community partners, more communities of practice will develop and hopefully flourish. The five suggested uses of the framework will continue to drive these communities of practice, particularly its use as a leadership tool. Using the WIL leadership framework to design curriculum and deliver professional development for existing or prospective WIL leaders will be central to expanding these communities of practice into networks of effective distributed WIL leadership.

## Chapter 6: Impact and value to the sectors

The predominant, overarching significance of the project is its identification of the five domains for leading WIL. By deconstructing WIL leadership into these interconnected elements of the WIL leadership framework, the project offers potential for developing contextually relevant strategic and operational initiatives to optimise WIL across both the tertiary education and industry sectors. At a more instrumental level, the project has articulated the specific uses to be made of the framework: it can act as a support tool, a WIL vision tool, a promotional tool, a leadership map and as a guide to develop position descriptions for WIL leaders. This gives the framework genuine, real-world significance in the practice of WIL and WIL leadership capacity building.

In broad terms, the project has reconfirmed the critical importance of effective WIL leadership in achieving good WIL outcomes for universities and industry. It has also highlighted the significance of collaboration in the design and delivery of WIL and the need for an integrated whole-of-organisation approach, notably requiring high-level institutional as well as grassroots commitment. The project's distributed approach provides insights into how WIL leadership needs to be as much institutionally enabled as it is operationally enacted. This is significant for its contrast with a conventional managerialist approach to leadership elsewhere in the tertiary education sector.

The project has also brought together and synergised the university and industry contexts of WIL and, while in some ways vastly different, there is strong evidence in the data about the similarities in the challenges and barriers experienced within each sector. This offers further scope for collaborative and distributed approaches to future cross-sector joint initiatives on the design, development and leadership of WIL.

Further indication of the impact of the project can be taken from the WIL-related developments that have occurred in some of the partner universities during the course of the project's final evaluation phase. The initial focus groups and interviews and the later framework evaluation workshops conducted in these institutions have led in many cases to an upsurge of interest in WIL. This has included the development of, or renewed interest in, discipline-based and even cross-discipline communities of practice, as well as cross-institutional dialogues and collaborations on the practice of WIL. The project's impact can also be understood in terms of a broader interest in a distributed approach to WIL leadership beyond the partner universities, as evidenced by the invited and refereed presentations of the framework at national and international conferences and symposia during 2012, 2013 and 2014.

This suggests that the WIL leadership framework holds some genuine interest for the tertiary education and industry sectors and, given that interest, it is likely that the real impact of the project cannot be fully understood until after the framework has been adopted and scrutinised by WIL leaders and practitioners and analysed in the context of future institutional and industry practice.

## Chapter 7: Issues and challenges

Many of the issues and challenges surrounding the adoption of the WIL leadership framework or relating to the outcomes of the project can be attributed to the complexity of the pedagogy and delivery of WIL. This complexity arises because WIL spans discipline boundaries, organisational boundaries and relies on the sustained development of relationships between institutions and partner organisations.

The many forms of WIL are well accounted for in the literature (Patrick et al., 2009, and Cooper et al., 2010) and in practice, so as a structure that seeks to accommodate and build the skills and capabilities of WIL leaders, the framework can have application in a multitude of different arenas and for many different agendas. This can present a challenge for any institution or practitioner's variable uses of the WIL leadership framework at different points in time, or even across disparate university disciplines. The resolution of this challenge relies on how an individual WIL leader, or a network of WIL leaders, can use the framework layers to derive solutions that best fit the circumstances.

As distributed approaches to leadership practice are more recently being introduced in conventional tertiary education administration and management, previous studies that contemplate democratic approaches in the sector (Jones et al., 2012, p 67) have drawn attention to issues surrounding institutional readiness for such postmodern attitudes to leadership. The adoption of the WIL leadership framework will therefore require some measure of institutional readiness in universities. This preparedness relies on the institutions' acceptance that WIL leadership needs to be distributed across many roles and settings and cannot be subsumed into a hierarchical structure because of the complexity of the delivery. While WIL leaders in universities can impact on, and make use of, this institutional readiness, it is less clear that WIL leaders in partner organisations can have the same kind of impact.

Some appreciation of the framework's issues and challenges can be taken from the focus group discussions when refining the framework. In these discussions, three persistent issues were raised, and in all cases these reflected some misunderstanding about the framework's intent.

First, some participants felt challenged by the distributed leadership model and how it would work in practice. While the capabilities of WIL leaders as expressed by the five domains were acknowledged and accepted, participants tried to overlay these onto role descriptions and management structures. In most cases, these issues can be seen to emanate from a leadership perspective that presupposes conventional notions of leadership, which is based on position and power.

Second, other participants queried where the framework would sit in a university's strategic agenda, which suggested the framework could play a prescriptive role in strategic activity. One interpretation of this view is that WIL leaders need to understand more about the Shaping the WIL Vision domain and how they can influence the strategic agenda rather than simply being reactive.

Third, comments from the focus group participants indicated that usage by partners would be variable, with larger organisations being more likely to adopt the framework.

The final iteration of the framework addressed these misunderstandings in four main ways.

- First, guidelines were developed to emphasise the centrality of skills and capabilities across roles and to highlight the framework as describing indicative approaches to enable and enact WIL leadership.
- Second, the indicative approaches are described in accompanying vignettes, which were derived from WIL leaders.
- Third, on advice from the validation focus groups, the graphic representation of the framework was altered to locate Shaping the WIL vision at the centre to reflect its primacy and its interconnections with the other domains.
- Finally, the development of the contextual layer reflected the fact that leadership was distributed across many roles and settings and therefore WIL leaders from many levels can derive meaning from the framework.

The final framework is important for both large and small organisations, as it describes the capabilities of WIL leaders, not the roles performed by staff.

While the findings reveal that some employer and partner organisations are well resourced, organised and skilled in their management of WIL, this study highlights the need for even better resourcing and support for WIL. This is particularly relevant for WIL leadership as well as where WIL has long been a professional requirement. The responses of WIL Leaders in these organisations point, in particular, to the potential value of universities engaging with organisations by communicating clear information about:

- WIL and its purpose;
- the learning outcomes required by WIL and the organisation's role in these outcomes;
- university timelines, processes and expectations; and
- resources to enable staff to better prepare students and monitor their progress during WIL.

A key challenge will be to engage with industry and community organisations and peak bodies to promote the framework and highlight its potential uses.

## Chapter 8: Insights and future directions

The outcomes of this project suggest an appetite in the tertiary education sector for the benefits of a distributed approach to WIL leadership, and investigation of the challenges and obstacles of adopting the framework in all sectors appears to be an obvious focus for future study.

The project also highlighted the two most cited issues related to WIL across all universities: first, the recognition that WIL is resource intensive and must be resourced with attention to the particular requirements of WIL design and delivery; and second, the need for the articulation of an institutional policy for WIL, whether as a stand-alone document or embedded in a broader instrument. These offer scope as variables to be studied in the context of the future adoption of the framework.

Industry and community partner organisations also indicated that the lack of resources was the biggest obstacle to growing WIL. This referred primarily to issues such as workload, time and a lack of space and equipment. At the university level, however, a lack of resources primarily referred to a workload issue, where due recognition is frequently not given to the actual involvement of staff time and expertise in WIL, often because the nature of the learning is not classroom based as is more conventionally the case. Adoption of the framework enables a more nuanced understanding of WIL leadership and practice, and future investigations of the framework's adoption in practice could explore any changes to institutional perception of the workload implications of WIL leadership and practice.

The WIL leadership framework has been identified to have multiple purposes: it can act as a support tool, a WIL vision tool, a promotional tool and a leadership map. The scrutiny and analysis of the framework in these contexts have the potential to add to its practical significance and could therefore suggest an important direction for future research.

It is anticipated that the WIL framework will be used for a number of purposes, including as a visioning tool and a reference resource, primarily by the tertiary education sector but also by industry and community partner organisations. It would be particularly valuable to conduct a follow-up study to investigate the actual usage of the framework as a tool, to enable the project team to improve and refine for broader implementation.

Other valuable future research leading from this project includes investigations on:

- the characteristics of distributed leaders in WIL, including the characteristics of distributed leaders and whether they are recognised as leaders of WIL within their institutions or organisations;
- the resourcing of WIL and whether it has been identified as a major issue at institutions and if it is being addressed;
- whether more institutions and organisations have developed policies on WIL, what types of policies are generated, and the possibility of these being shared nationally or internationally; and
- the applicability of the framework internationally.

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## Appendix A: The WIL leadership framework domains

Domain	<b>Shaping</b> the WIL Vision
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Plan, articulate, influence and advocate strategy</li> <li>b. Foster WIL culture to achieve equity and quality WIL outcomes</li> <li>c. Enable change and innovation to respond to emergent trends and wider contexts</li> </ul>
Enable	<p><b>Universities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop, and advocate for institutional WIL vision and policy</li> <li>▪ Advocate for processes, systems and resources that support WIL</li> <li>▪ Enable innovation and change in University-wide WIL strategies</li> <li>▪ Foster a culture of WIL activity to drive learning outcomes for and with students</li> <li>▪ Foster collective focus and approaches between sectors</li> </ul> <p><b>Partners and organisations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop, and advocate for organisational/sector WIL vision and policy</li> <li>▪ Advocate for processes, systems and resources to advance WIL provision</li> <li>▪ Enable innovation and change in the provision of WIL</li> <li>▪ Ensure appropriate culture to support quality student experiences</li> <li>▪ Foster collective focus and approaches between sectors</li> <li>▪ Promote WIL as an organisational professional responsibility</li> </ul>
Enact	<p><b>Universities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inform, influence and effect WIL vision and change</li> </ul> <p><b>Partners and organisations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inform and effect vision and change in WIL practice</li> </ul>

Domain	<b>Creating</b> and sustaining WIL relationships
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identify and engage with diverse WIL stakeholder networks</li> <li>b. Collaborate within, across and outside the organisation</li> <li>c. Nurture relationships to strengthen WIL culture</li> </ul>
Enable	<p><b>Universities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Foster external engagement plans and frameworks for WIL</li> <li>▪ Encourage and support staff to operate in wider contexts</li> <li>▪ Develop sustainable relationships with WIL partners</li> <li>▪ Foster and maintain professional networks</li> </ul> <p><b>Partners and organisations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Foster engagement with WIL university staff</li> <li>▪ Encourage and support staff to operate in learning contexts</li> <li>▪ Develop sustainable relationships with university WIL staff</li> </ul>
Enact	<p><b>Universities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Create and harness stakeholder and WIL provider networks</li> <li>▪ Collaborate internally and externally to maintain WIL partnerships</li> <li>▪ Maintain currency of professional practices, to guide activities</li> <li>▪ Mentor staff to operate in wider contexts</li> </ul> <p><b>Partners and organisations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Work collaboratively with university networks</li> <li>▪ Work collaboratively with university WIL partners to ensure mutually beneficial outcomes</li> <li>▪ Accommodate and be mindful of constraints and contexts</li> <li>▪ Mentor staff to operate in learning contexts</li> </ul>

Domain	<b>Fostering</b> WIL engagement, expertise and student learning
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Build WIL pedagogy, curriculum and expertise</li> <li>b. Cultivate innovative approaches and quality experiences in WIL</li> <li>c. Promote WIL scholarship, research and practice</li> </ul>
Enable	<p><b>Universities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Build WIL collaboration, capability and capacity across the institution</li> <li>▪ Provide support to build WIL capability and capacity within WIL partner organisations</li> <li>▪ Reward and recognise innovation, research and scholarship in WIL pedagogy</li> <li>▪ Partner with organisations in the research and evaluation of WIL</li> <li>▪ Facilitate dissemination of WIL outcomes</li> <li>▪ Foster the mentoring of students</li> </ul> <p><b>Partners and organisations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Build WIL capability and capacity across the organisation</li> <li>▪ Collaborate with universities to build WIL expertise</li> <li>▪ Partner with Universities in the research and evaluation of WIL</li> <li>▪ Foster the mentoring of students</li> </ul>
Enact	<p><b>Universities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify and facilitate innovation and good practice</li> <li>▪ Enable WIL professional development</li> <li>▪ Participate in WIL scholarship and research</li> </ul> <p><b>Partners and organisations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify and facilitate innovation and good practice</li> <li>▪ Enable WIL professional development</li> <li>▪ Actively engage in WIL scholarship and research</li> </ul>

Domain	<b>Communicating</b> and influencing WIL
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Develop shared understandings about WIL</li> <li>b. Build sustainable WIL practice through the development of networks and communities of practice</li> <li>c. Broker and advocate for meaningful WIL outcomes</li> </ul>
Enable	<p><b>Universities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Champion, profile and promote WIL internally and externally</li> <li>▪ Disseminate initiatives and outcomes internally and externally</li> <li>▪ Create appropriate channels and utilise them effectively, productively and constructively in different organisational contexts</li> </ul> <p><b>Partners and organisations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Champion, profile and promote WIL internally and externally</li> <li>▪ Disseminate WIL initiatives and outcomes across the organisation</li> <li>▪ Create appropriate channels and utilise them effectively, productively and constructively in different organisational contexts</li> </ul>
Enact	<p><b>Universities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Showcase and profile WIL outcomes to students, staff and WIL partners</li> <li>▪ Negotiate and navigate WIL challenges and barriers</li> <li>▪ Seek and take opportunities to shape WIL experiences for students</li> <li>▪ Identify and build appropriate local and external networks and communities of practice</li> </ul> <p><b>Partners and organisations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Showcase and profile WIL outcomes organisationally</li> <li>▪ Provide appropriate opportunities for WIL experiences for and with students</li> </ul>

Domain	<b>Driving</b> organisational and joint industry/university WIL outcomes
Scope	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identify and manage common challenges and risks</li> <li>b. Promote shared benefits</li> <li>c. Build, cultivate and maintain capacity and equitable outcomes</li> </ol>
Enable	<p><b>Universities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Resource WIL appropriately.</li> <li>▪ Establish systems for collecting evidence and evaluating WIL outcomes</li> <li>▪ Identify and communicate agreed expectations and targets</li> <li>▪ Negotiate and manage obstacles and challenges associated with WIL</li> <li>▪ Facilitate staff collaboration to achieve WIL outcomes</li> <li>▪ Recognise WIL contributions in workload models and career paths</li> </ul> <p><b>Partners and organisations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Resource WIL appropriately.</li> <li>▪ Establish systems for collecting evidence and evaluating WIL outcomes</li> <li>▪ Facilitate staff to achieve outcomes for students</li> <li>▪ Encourage and recognise expertise in WIL supervision</li> </ul>
Enact	<p><b>Universities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Negotiate, develop and implement actions to achieve agreed WIL outcomes</li> <li>▪ Manage workload for WIL staff</li> <li>▪ Actively seek evidence for strategic WIL decision making</li> <li>▪ Manage access to WIL for diverse groups</li> <li>▪ Facilitate development of employability skills through diverse on-campus WIL activities</li> </ul> <p><b>Partners and organisations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Negotiate, develop and implement flexible plans to achieve agreed WIL outcomes</li> <li>▪ Actively seek evidence for strategic organisational WIL decision making</li> <li>▪ Manage WIL access for diverse groups of students</li> <li>▪ Engage in diverse on-campus WIL activities</li> <li>▪ Facilitate learning and the development of employability skills in students</li> </ul>

# Appendix B: The project team, advisors and reference group

## **The WIL leadership project team**

- Ms Carol-joy Patrick (Lead, Griffith University)
- Dr Wayne Fallon (Deputy Lead, University of Western Sydney)
- Professor Malcolm Campbell (Deakin University)
- Mr Ian Devenish (Central Queensland University)
- Ms Judie Kay (RMIT University)
- Ms Justine Lawson (Central Queensland University)
- Ms Leoni Russell (RMIT University)
- Ms Freny Tayebjee (University of Western Sydney)
- Project Manager: Dr Patricia Cretchley (Griffith University)

## **Contributors for some periods**

- Dr Merrelyn Bates (Co-Lead until retirement) (Griffith University)
- Associate Professor Dale Holt (Deakin University)
- Associate Professor David Jorgensen (Central Queensland University)
- Professor Dineli Mather (Deakin University)
- Dr Calvin Smith (Griffith University)
- Ms Beth Tennent (Central Queensland University)

## **Project advisors**

- Jennifer Cartmel (Facilitator and Advisor) (Griffith University)
- The ACEN Executive (Australian Collaborative Education Network)
- Professor Sandra Jones (RMIT University)
- Professor Geoff Scott (UWS)

## **Focus Group Facilitator:**

- Margo Couldrey (Lista)

## **Evaluator:**

- Professor Rick Cummings (Murdoch University)

## Project reference group

Name	Affiliation/Role
Dr Nathan Cassidy	Senior Policy Officer, Universities Australia Australian universities perspective
Associate Professor Cheryl Cates	University of Cincinnati, and Editor of the <i>Journal of Cooperative Education and Internships</i> International perspective: USA
Malcolm Farrow	CEO, Professions Australia Industry perspective
Professor Ian Goulter	President Emeritus & Executive Committee, World Association for Cooperative Education (WACE) former Vice Chancellor, Charles Sturt University International and institutional perspectives
Katharine Hoskyn	Chair, New Zealand Association for Cooperative Education International perspective: New Zealand
Kristina Johansson	VILAR Network, Sweden International perspective: Sweden
Associate Dean Sue Jones	Curtin University leader of the ALTC Fieldwork Leaders Project Australian higher education perspective
Jenny Lambert	Director of Employment, Education & Training Australian Chamber of Commerce & Industry Industry perspective
Megan Lily	Director, Education and Training, Australian Industry Group Industry perspective
Norah Mc Rae	President, CAFCE (Canada), Board member, World Association for Cooperative Education (WACE) International perspective: Canada
Professor Jan Orrell	Educational Consultant and WIL expert Professor, Flinders University Australian higher education perspective
Ben Reeves	CEO, Australian Association of Graduate Employers Industry perspective
Associate Prof Heather Smigiel	National Executive, ACEN Director of the Centre for University Teaching, Flinders University National perspective

# Appendix C: Research Instruments for Industry WIL Partners

## **B1: FIRST SURVEY OF INDUSTRY WIL PARTNERS**

Your views on leading Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) for university students

This survey is part of a Commonwealth Government-funded project to investigate the leadership styles and processes, for universities and industry and community organisations, that support the best possible outcomes for work-integrated learning (WIL) of university students. A consortium of six universities is working on the project – Griffith University is the project leader, with Central Queensland University, Deakin University, RMIT University, University of Western Sydney and Victoria University.

The survey seeks your views of the contributions to be made by industry, employer and community partners in managing and leading work-integrated learning placements and projects with universities for the benefit of university students. The data will help the Project Team to develop strategies and resources to support leaders of WIL to enhance the outcomes for students and employers.

Work-integrated learning is ‘an umbrella term used for a range of approaches and strategies that integrate theory with the practice of work within a purposefully designed curriculum’, and can include placements, project-base fieldwork, virtual or in-class experiences, reflections on employment or simulations.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and because you are not asked to provide your identity or that of your organisation, your responses will remain anonymous. Your choice to complete the survey or not will not affect your relationship with any of the researchers or any of the universities involved in the project. The research team will not be able to identify which data is yours. While the study’s findings may be disseminated in various ways including in reports, conference proceedings or journal articles, no identifying information about respondents will be published.

For further information about the project or this survey, contact the project leader Carol-joy Patrick ([cj.patrick@griffith.edu.au](mailto:cj.patrick@griffith.edu.au); ph 07 3382 1134).

The survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Ethical approval for this research has been gained through Griffith University’s Ethics Committee. Griffith University conducts research in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. If you have any concerns or complaints concerning the ethical conduct of the research, please contact the Senior Manager, Research Ethics and Integrity on 07 3735 5585 or [research-ethics@griffith.edu.au](mailto:research-ethics@griffith.edu.au).

1. Please estimate the number of employees in your Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is your role in your Organisation? Job title or role: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Where is your Organisation located?

- A Rural
- B Regional
- C Metropolitan

4. Sector or type of Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Industry Sector

Choose from ANZSIC list: \_\_\_\_\_

6. What do you believe are the major benefits to your organisation of partnering with a university to provide Work Integrated Learning opportunities for students?

To clarify, Work Integrated Learning (WIL) refers to any student experience that integrates theory with the practice of work within a purposefully designed curriculum. It can include placements, projects, project-based fieldwork, virtual or in-class experiences, simulation, or reflections about employment.

Please tick all that apply.

- A. Access to enthusiastic and motivated students
- B. Access to new ideas
- C. Efficient and cost-effective means of recruiting graduates
- D. Forging links with tertiary institutions
- E. Contributing to your profession / industry
- F. Cost-effective way to complete projects
- G. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

7. The States/Territory in which your organisation engages students in work-integrated learning (WIL) activities?

- A. QLD
- B. NSW
- C. VIC
- D. SA
- E. WA
- F. Tasmania
- G. ACT
- H. Northern Territory

8. Type/s of Work Integrated Learning activity offered.

Tick all that fit your organisation.

- A. Paid (where the student is paid to be on placement with your organisation)
- B. Unpaid (where the student receives no payment for their activities or time with your organisation)

9. Level/s of study of your WIL students.

Tick all that fit your organisation.

- A. Undergraduate prior to final year
- B. Final year undergraduate
- C. Postgraduate
- D. Not sure

10. Types of Work Integrated Learning opportunities your organisation hosts.

Tick all that fit your organisation.

- A. Apprenticeships / traineeships
- B. Practicums / Clinical / Professional placements
- C. Cooperative education
- D. Internships
- E. Projects (on or off campus)
- F. Service learning (voluntary activities not for profit)
- G. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- H. Not sure

11. Elaborating on the above, please briefly describe the nature and duration of the WIL experiences or projects that your organisation supports. \_\_\_\_\_

12. Your number of years of experience leading or managing Work Integrated Learning in Industry or Employer organisations: \_\_\_\_\_

13. What are the different levels and areas (HR, Team Leaders, etc.) of the positions of the people in your organisation who organise and manage Work Integrated Learning experiences for students? \_\_\_\_\_

This includes those leading the learning experience and those organising the placements or contacts. Note that we are not asking for people's names.

14. If you offer placement of some kind within your organisation, how is a Work Integrated Learning student / internship / placement organised and managed in your organisation?  
\_\_\_\_\_

This includes how the prior contact with students is managed from your side, how students who arrive are organised and how their contribution is managed.

15. How do staff involved in WIL in your organisation share the WIL leadership, or do they work alone? \_\_\_\_\_

For example, is there a network of experienced leaders in your organisation, who confer about WIL, and help staff who are newcomers to managing WIL, or are there other strategies to share WIL leadership expertise?

16. What are the key factors in your organisation or partner university that make it possible for your organisation to be involved in WIL? (E.g. policy, culture, leadership, professional requirement, commitment of individuals, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

For each factor you list, please note whether it refers to your organisation, or to the partner university.

17. What are the factors in your organisation or partner university that most HINDER your organisation's involvement in WIL or make it difficult? (E.g. policy, culture, leadership, professional requirement, commitment of individuals, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Please note for each factor you list, whether it refers to your organisation, or to the partner university.

18. What do you believe are the key capabilities required of those who are responsible for leading the placement, supervision and/or management of WIL students or activities connected with your organisation?

Please select only the three most important, in your view.

- A. Advocacy
- B. Strategic thinking
- C. Problem solving
- D. Communication skills
- E. Mentoring / coaching
- F. Negotiation
- G. Risk management and mitigation
- H. Time management
- I. Emotional intelligence
- J. Conflict resolution
- K. Managing others
- L. Self awareness

19. How could staff involved in WIL at all levels of your organisation develop their capabilities to become industry leaders in Work Integrated Learning?

Please provide a few sentences or dot points. \_\_\_\_\_

20. Do you have further comments you would like to add relevant to the Leadership of WIL experiences for students, either in your organisation or elsewhere? \_\_\_\_\_

- I understand that submitting my responses to this survey means that I consent to contributing to this research, and am happy for my (de-identified) data to be used in the analysis and/or dissemination of this Project's findings.
- I understand that this survey is voluntary.
- I understand the risks (if any) involved in participation in this research.
- I understand the anticipated benefits of participating.
- I understand that if I have any additional questions I can contact the research team.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent for participation at any time without explanation or consequences.
- I understand that I can contact the Manager, Research Ethics, Office for Research, Bray Centre, Nathan Campus, Griffith University on 3735 5585 (or [research-ethics@griffith.edu.au](mailto:research-ethics@griffith.edu.au)) if I have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the project.
- I understand that the study's findings will be disseminated via reports, conferences and WIL forums, and published in appropriate journals.

I agree to participate in the project and understand that by completing the survey I am consenting to participate.

## **B2: SECOND SURVEY OF INDUSTRY PARTNERS, TO VALIDATE THE EMERGING FINDINGS**

### Work Integrated Learning (WIL) in Partner Organisations

As a specialist who commits time and effort to managing student placements or projects in your organisation, you are invited to provide feedback about the themes emerging from the Work Integrated Learning Leadership Project.

This invitation stems from your experience and expertise in leading and managing work integrated learning (WIL) experiences for tertiary students, providing them with experiences to help them to develop work-related skills in the creative industries sector.

WIL is a term used to describe the range of experiences that integrate students' theoretical learning with the world of work. You may be more familiar with terms such as industry project, placement or internship.

This important project is developing strategies and resources to assist staff who find themselves leading and managing WIL in the future.

It is being undertaken by 6 universities (RMIT, Griffith, Deakin, University of Western Sydney, Central Queensland, Victoria University) and involves drawing on the expert knowledge of staff in partner employer organisations, and in universities, to improve the leadership capabilities of WIL leaders in both workplace and university settings. This work is endorsed by the national body, ACEN, and funded by the Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching.

Findings on the barriers, enablers, key competencies and strategies for development are emerging from the data already collected from employers.

**Ten Key Enablers** of Work Integrated Learning in partner organisations have emerged thus far; three lying beyond the organisation's control, six lying within the organisation's domain, and one lying within the responsibility of both the university and its partner organisation.

**Ten Key Barriers** to Work Integrated Learning in partner organisations have emerged. Four of these are beyond the control of the organisation, but the remainder lie within its domain.

**WIL Leadership capabilities:** Among the capabilities that respondents selected as being in the top five, communication and mentoring/coaching skills were most frequently noted. General staff management skills (like time management, managing others, emotional intelligence and problem-solving) were next most often noted.

**Thirteen strategies emerged for developing WIL Leadership capability**, eight lying fully within the organisation's control, and five in areas where university collaboration should assist.

The key findings in these four areas are represented in the table below.

Your input on the findings to date would be most welcome and appreciated. Any information you provide will contribute valuable information to support WIL leaders both nationally and internationally. It will be stored and analysed anonymously.

1. Enablers of WIL, for Employer organisations:

The question was: *"What are the key factors in your organisation or partner university, that make it possible for your organisation to be involved in WIL? (E.g. policy, culture, leadership, professional requirement, commitment of individuals, etc.)"*

**Ten Key Enablers emerged from the data. To what extent is each an Enabler of WIL in your organisation or experience? 0=Not at all; 4=Very Much**

	<b>Response on a 5-point scale</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1	The proximity of a university with program/s of study aligned to the organisation's needs.					
1.2	WIL being a requirement of the professional accrediting body, within a program of study					
1.3	Student suitability: quality, attitudes, enthusiasm					
1.4	Collaboration between university and the organisation					
1.5	Enabling culture and policies in the employer organisation					
1.6	Suitable work-experience projects and activities in the organisation					
1.7	The availability in the organisation of committed and quality mentors for students					
1.8	Other personnel in the organisation helping to arrange and support WIL placements					
1.9	Opportunities for the organisation to identify future employees					
1.10	Resourcing some projects cheaply for the organisation					

We'd appreciate you noting any additional Enablers of WIL, in your view, here.

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If you have any comments on the Enablers listed, feel free to offer them here.

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2. Barriers to WIL for Employer organisations:

The question was: " *What are the factors in your organisation or partner university that most HINDER your organisation's involvement in WIL or make it difficult? (E.g. policy, culture, leadership, professional requirement, commitment of individuals, etc.)*"

**Ten Key Barriers emerged from the data. To what extent is each of these a Barrier for WIL in your organisation or experience? 0=Not at all; 4=Very Much**

	<b>Response on a 5-point scale</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1	Distance from a university					
2.2	Not enough participating students					
2.3	University bureaucracy and systems					
2.4	Student unsuitability: inexperience, weak English, poor motivation					
2.5	Lack of commitment to WIL from management in the organisation					
2.6	Policy barriers in the organisation					
2.7	Lack of staff willing to take on WIL mentoring in the organisation					
2.8	Limited projects/activities suitable for WIL students in the organisation					
2.9	Lack of WIL professional development for staff in the organisation					
2.10	Other resourcing issues in the employer organisation: workload, time, space, equipment, other costs					

We'd appreciate you noting, here, any additional Barriers of WIL, in your view.

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If you have any comments on the Barriers listed, feel free to offer them here.

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How easy or difficult is it for your organisation to offer students WIL placements?

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3. Key Capabilities needed to manage WIL

The question was: *"What do you believe are the key capabilities required of those who are responsible for leading the placement, supervision and/or management of WIL students or activities connected with your organisation?"*

The capabilities that respondents selected or offered are listed below.

**Kindly note which capabilities you regard as the FIVE MOST IMPORTANT for those who manage WIL. (Please mark JUST FIVE.)**

Communications skills		Time management		Managing others		Mentoring/coaching	
Advocacy		Conflict resolution		Self awareness		Negotiation	
Emotional intelligence		Strategic thinking		Risk management and mitigation		Problem solving	
Team work		Understanding of the business in which the students are being placed		Considering both the organisation's and student's perspectives		Maintaining good connections with the students' university supervisors	

If any key capabilities are missing from the above list, in your view, kindly add them here.

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If you have any comments on the capabilities listed, feel free to offer them here.

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4. Proposed strategies for developing WIL capabilities among staff in the organisation  
 The question was: "How could staff involved in WIL at all levels of your organisation develop their capabilities to become industry leaders in work-integrated learning? Please provide a few sentences or dot points."

The thirteen strategies that emerged are listed below. In your view,

- (1) To what extent would each develop WIL Leadership in your organisation, if implemented?
- (2) How viable would this strategy be for your organisation to implement?

Use 0=Not at all helpful/viable through to 4=Very helpful/viable

	Please use the first row to indicate whether a strategy would be helpful (H).	H	0	1	2	3	4
	Please use the second row to indicate whether a strategy would be viable in your context. (V)	V	0	1	2	3	4
4.1	Engage WIL advocates in the employer organisation to lead and manage WIL	H					
		V					
4.2	Recognise the particular needs of different WIL staff	H					
		V					
4.3	Provide development opportunities for staff to enhance their WIL skills	H					
		V					
4.4	Allow staff opportunity and time to mentor students appropriately	H					
		V					
4.5	Promote collaboration and communication across WIL staff in the employer organisation	H					
		V					
4.6	Raise the profile of WIL in the employer organisation	H					
		V					
4.7	Disseminate WIL information, successes, opportunities	H					
		V					
4.8	Include employer WIL staff in planning in the organisation	H					
		V					
4.9	Facilitate ongoing mutual University-Employer support	H					
		V					
4.10	Provide WIL information and professional development	H					
		V					
4.11	Ensure careful choice and/or design of WIL activities and projects	H					
		V					
4.12	Facilitate frank student-mentor communication	H					
		V					
4.13	Offer ongoing mentorship of students by staff in the employer organisation	H					
		V					

Kindly add any further strategies you feel would be helpful for your Organisation.

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If you have any comments on the Strategies listed, feel free to offer them here.

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Thank you for your interest and feedback!

# Appendix D: Research Instruments for University WIL Leaders

## **C1: INITIAL FOCUS GROUP INSTRUMENTS**

**Leading WIL: Distributed leadership approach to enhance Work-Integrated Learning**  
This project aims to draw on the expert knowledge of university staff, employers and industry partners to improve the university sector's capacity to produce capable, work-ready graduates by enhancing the leadership capabilities of WIL leaders in both the workplace and university settings.

### **Focus Group Objectives**

The aim of the Focus Group is to understand the competencies, capacities and capabilities required of leaders of work-integrated learning (WIL) in both the university and workplace settings. The discussion will also aim to identify the challenges facing WIL leaders and ways to overcome these challenges.

Work-integrated learning is 'an umbrella term used for a range of approaches and strategies that integrate theory with the practice of work within a purposefully designed curriculum' (Patrick et al., 2009), and can include placements, project-based fieldwork, virtual or in-class experiences, reflections on employment or simulations.

Distributed Leadership refers to situations when leadership is said to be distributed among multiple actors who support others in achieving organisational goals. In some ways similar to shared or dispersed leadership, Distributed Leadership exists in relationships, and it recognises informal, emergent and collective acts of influence as well as those instigated by people in formal positions of authority.

Leadership can be distinguished from management. Managers are generally thought to focus mostly on monitoring, directing and refining current performance. So management is usually concerned with hierarchy, equilibrium and control. The term leadership, on the other hand, is used to describe what certain individuals do to assist others in achieving organisational goals, and in creating the future and adapting to new demands, often under conditions of change. Leadership has been associated with dynamism, vibrancy and to some extent charisma. Leaders are not always managers.

### **Focus Group Questions**

1. What are the key challenges (e.g., cultural, policy and practice) you face in your work on WIL? How do you think these might be overcome?
2. What are the enablers for your work with WIL (e.g., cultural, policy and practice)? How can these enablers be deployed for best impact?
3. What are the key competencies, capacities and capabilities required of WIL leaders?
4. How might WIL practitioners at all levels of the organisation develop their leadership capabilities?

## **C2: FRAMEWORK VALIDATION FOCUS GROUP, AUGUST 2013**

### **The Focus Group Questions:**

1. Does the Framework ring true for you in your current practice of WIL and/or do you think it would ring true for your aspirational view of WIL?
2. Does the Framework accurately reflect key WIL leadership activities and strategic and operational activities?
3. How could a WIL leader use the Framework?

### **Advance information:**

Thank you for agreeing to participate at a Workshop and Focus Group discussion on WIL (Work Integrated Learning) Leadership.

#### **What is the WIL Leadership Project?**

- National project – funded by OLT (2012–2013)
- Project Aims:
  - To conduct an overview of WIL leadership, identifying structures and challenges
  - To construct a WIL-specific distributed leadership framework which facilitates the development of WIL leadership
  - To build a national and international community of practice
  - Project team: Griffith, UWS, Deakin, RMIT, VU, CQU
  - Discipline areas: Business, Education, Engineering, Health, Information Technology and Science, Creative Arts

#### **Purpose of the Focus Group:**

To invite your input on the draft Framework and on ways the Framework can be used to inform and strengthen WIL practice and outcomes.

The draft framework is on pages 2–7 of this document.

#### **Before the Focus Group:**

Could you please send us your responses to three questions in advance of the Focus Group?

1. Does the Framework ring true for you in your current practice of WIL and/or do you think it would ring true for your aspirational view of WIL?
2. Does the Framework accurately reflect key WIL leadership activities and strategic and operational activities?
3. How could a WIL leader use the Framework?

All responses will be greatly appreciated – whether it is just a couple of sentences, dot points or a lengthy reply.

Please email your responses to Pat Cretchley at [p.cretchley@griffith.edu.au](mailto:p.cretchley@griffith.edu.au) by COB on Wednesday, 31 July 2013.

#### **Focus Group Facilitator: Margo Couldrey**

Margo runs her own consultancy company, Lista Consulting, specialising in policy analysis and evaluation, strategy development, regulatory reform and stakeholder engagement and has been providing expert advice since 2005 in relation to a number of Council of Australian Government (COAG) reforms, including the creation of a national licensing system for key occupations and harmonisation of mine safety legislation. She has significant experience advising on vocational education and training (VET) system policy and practice from an industry perspective and working at the interface between government and industry.