

Definition of work-integrated learning (WiL)

Background

“**Work-based learning** – A component of a learning programme that focuses on the application of theory in an authentic, work-based context. It addresses specific competences identified for the acquisition of a qualification which relate to the development of skills that will make the learner employable and will assist in developing his/her personal skills. Employer and professional bodies are involved in the assessment of experiential learning, together with academic staff.” (CHE, HEQC 2004a: 26 & 2004b: 37)

South Africa. (2004a). Council for Higher Education, Higher Education Quality Committee. *Criteria for Institutional Audits*. Pretoria: Compress

South Africa. (2004b). Council for Higher Education, Higher Education Quality Committee. *Criteria for Programme Accreditation*. Pretoria.

“Some qualifications will be designed to incorporate periods of required work that integrate with classroom study. Where Work Integrated Learning (WIL) is a structured part of a qualification the volume of learning allocated to WIL should be appropriate to the purpose of the qualification and to the cognitive demands of the learning outcome and assessment criteria contained in the appropriate level descriptors.

It is the responsibility of institutions, which offer programmes requiring WIL credits to place students into WIL programmes. Such programmes must be appropriately structured, properly supervised and assessed.” (DoE 2007: 9)

South Africa. (2007). Department of Education. The *Higher Education Qualifications Framework* (HEQF), Government Notice No 928, gazetted (No. 30353) 5 October 2007 as policy in terms of the Higher Education Act.

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Work-integrated learning (WiL) is one of the teaching and learning components of certain qualifications offered by Unisa, which:

- focuses on theory and practice in relevant authentic, work-based contexts
- is differentiated from laboratory and field practicals or simulations
- is aimed at learning specific competencies that were identified during the overall curriculum design of the integrated learning programme
- relates to the development of employable knowledge, skills and abilities as well as whole person development, interpersonal relations and as a life-long learner
- can only be achieved through the hosting of students by organisations; work-place mentoring and formative and summative assessment together with academic staff
- is ultimately an institutional responsibility, accountable to statutory, professional or vocational bodies

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