

**Policy Title:** Work Integrated Learning

**Policy Owner:** Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)

**Keywords:** Industry/community stakeholder, Work Integrated Learning, WIL, activity, placement

**Policy Code:** PL262

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**1. INTENT:**

The objective of this policy is to establish the parameters and principles governing Work Integrated Learning at Edith Cowan University (ECU or the University).

**2. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE:**

This policy applies to all staff, students and industry/community stakeholders that are involved in the provision of ECU Work Integrated Learning activities.

This policy does NOT apply to activities falling outside of the definition of Work Integrated Learning provided in Section 3. Definitions (below). These are generally:

- a. work experience activities occurring outside the Academic Board approved curriculum;
- b. where a student is placed in or secures paid employment with an industry/community stakeholder that is separate from their Work Integrated Learning activity;
- c. where a student is undertaking workplace or community-based activities, including volunteering activities, that are external to the requirements of their University approved studies.

**3. DEFINITIONS:**

The [University Glossary](#) and the following definitions apply to this policy.

| Term:                          | Definition:  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Close Personal Relationship    | A close personal relationship may involve a friendship, immediate family member or household member, partner, cultural family relationship or financial dependent.   |
| Conflict of Interest           | <p>An actual conflict of interest may arise when an individual's personal or private interests directly affect or impact their University-related activities.</p> <p>A perceived or apparent conflict of interest does not have to be proven. It is sufficient for it to be reasonably believed that an individual's private interests or connections could improperly or unfairly benefit or impact the individual.</p> <p>In the context of Work Integrated Learning, integrity and transparency of assessment is paramount and must be protected from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest.</p>  |
| Distributed Leadership         | A collaborative approach to leadership which draws on expertise from multiple and diverse stakeholders, each of whom have their own expertise and defined area of responsibility underpinning their contribution. The approach is intended to build capacity and support continuous improvement.   |
| Industry/Community Stakeholder | All parties providing professional placements, inclusive of government and specialised stakeholders such as schools, early-years settings and hospitals.   |
| Intimate Personal Relationship | An intimate personal relationship is a relationship which goes beyond the bounds of a platonic or working relationship, regardless of gender.  |
| Third-Party Provider           | A third-party provider is an organisation external from the University, which manages or delivers some aspect of service to the University's internal stakeholders.  |
| Work Integrated Learning       | <p>Work Integrated Learning (WIL) is an umbrella term incorporating experiences that fall within the accredited curriculum and which provide authentic, real-world experiences intentionally designed to allow students to develop relevant skills and knowledge aligned to their chosen area of study. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Entrepreneurial WIL</u><br/>Activities where students develop their own enterprise to address a particular community or business need (or gap).</li> <li>• <u>Field Experience</u><br/>Students experience an environment where they observe and/or participate in the application of</li> </ul> |

| Term: | Definition:  |
|-------|--|
|       | <p>theoretical knowledge and skills in a professional setting, under the supervision of an expert or professional in the field. Examples include study tours, observation, shadowing, field work, industry tours.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Internship, Clinical or Professional Placement (on-campus)</u><br/>Work done in an actual workplace in which the student applies discipline specific knowledge and skills, supervised by an industry professional at a University campus or location.</li> <li>• <u>Internship, Clinical or Professional Placement (off-campus)</u><br/>Work done in an actual workplace in which the student applies discipline specific knowledge and skills, supervised by an industry professional separate from a University campus or location.</li> <li>• <u>Online project or Virtual WIL</u><br/>Work done in a remote or online location where students undertake an activity in collaboration or consultation with an industry partner but do not spend any time or only a very small amount of time in an actual workplace.</li> <li>• <u>Project</u><br/>Students undertake an activity in collaboration or consultation with an industry partner but do not spend any time or only a very small amount of time in an actual workplace.</li> <li>• <u>Service Learning Activities</u><br/>Students undertake work in an off-campus or virtual environment which is focused on the student applying non-technical skills to meet a community need, supervised by an industry or community-based professional.</li> </ul> |

#### 4. POLICY CONTENT:

##### Governance and Due Diligence

- 4.1. Edith Cowan University (ECU or the University) applies a Distributed Leadership approach to Work Integrated Learning. The Distributed Leadership approach includes:

- a. clearly identifiable Work Integrated Learning areas located within Schools;
  - b. a centralised co-ordination support area located in Student Life acting as a clearinghouse for the gathering and distribution of relevant tools and information including directing enquiries relating to Work Integrated Learning to the most appropriate School or support area within the University; and
  - c. support areas, such as risk and legal, working with and predominantly through the centralised co-ordination support area to ensure Work Integrated Learning is underpinned by specialised information and advice.
- 4.2. The University recognises there is no single approach to the delivery of Work Integrated Learning that meets the needs of all Schools, courses and units. It is the responsibility of Schools to ensure the approach taken is fit-for-purpose without compromise to quality student experiences and learning outcomes, and without duplication of the core business of accredited courses.
- 4.3. Each School is responsible for ensuring its Work Integrated Learning area is resourced with appropriately skilled staff and has established and documented processes to consistently manage the School's Work Integrated Learning program and to operationalise this policy.
- 4.4. Each School must maintain a University approved database that:
- a. enables Commonwealth and other mandatory and required reports to be produced efficiently and rapidly; and
  - b. ensures accurate information is available on where students are placed and for what period of time; and
  - c. ensures students and industry/community stakeholders can be contacted efficiently and without avoidable delays; and
  - d. allows for the documentation of identified issues and matters relating to Work Integrated Learning activities and/or hosts that require consideration ahead of proceeding with future placements or activities.
- 4.5. The centralised co-ordination support area is responsible for ensuring information and tools that underpin and assist in the delivery of quality Work Integrated Learning are sourced, centrally stored and made available to Schools.
- 4.6. The centralised co-ordination support area will not be responsible for establishing Work Integrated Learning activities or undertaking day-to-day administrative tasks associated with Work Integrated Learning in Schools.
- 4.7. All Work Integrated Learning data, information and records will be stored in an approved records management system in accordance with the University's [Records Management policy](#).
- 4.8. Work Integrated Learning activities must align with guidance provided by the Fair Work Commission with respect to work experience and internships and be consistent with all applicable legislative requirements.

- 4.9. Where a Work Integrated Learning activity is being delivered outside of Australia, arrangements must conform with local employment and workplace legislation, and safety of the student must be prioritised.
- 4.10. It is the responsibility of the University through the relevant School to assess the safety and suitability of, and approve, all Work Integrated Learning activities prior to their commencement. At a minimum the following is expected:
- a. Where reasonable and practicable a Work Integrated Learning agreement will be established. The agreement must be approved on behalf of the University in accordance with [University Delegations](#) and stored in a University approved repository.
  - b. Activities not covered by a University approved agreement must undergo a risk assessment and general suitability review, which, at a minimum, considers both the nature of the activity and the host, and gives consideration to whether the extent of insurance coverage needs to be confirmed. Activities of this nature must only be approved to proceed if it is reasonably believed a safe and quality learning experience will be achieved.
  - c. Industry/community stakeholders must be clearly informed of, and provided with, reasonable assistance to prepare for their roles and responsibilities during delivery of a Work Integrated Learning activity.
  - d. Students must acknowledge understanding and acceptance of their roles and responsibilities whilst participating in a Work Integrated Learning activity.
  - e. Students must be advised of insurance coverage as well as who to contact in the event of an emergency, including Occupational Health and Safety related incidents or identified hazards.
- 4.11. The University will make available a generic induction package covering expected workplace baseline knowledge including Occupational Safety and Health, and information on identification and prevention of bullying and harassment. Schools may determine if and when the package will be provided to students for completion; however, where it is reasonably believed a Work Integrated Learning activity will not include an induction, Schools must ensure students complete the University provided induction package prior to commencing the Work Integrated Learning activity.
- 4.12. The University, Schools and students have a shared responsibility for ensuring students have the capacity to safely and professionally undertake a Work Integrated Learning activity, including:
- a. being emotionally, behaviourally and ethically prepared for the demands of a placement; and
  - b. having an ability to meet all professional requirements and capabilities, and placement specific expectations; and
  - c. being able to consistently apply the principles defined in the [Student Code of Conduct](#).
- 4.13. When considering capacity to safely and/or competently undertake a Work Integrated Learning activity, a range of factors should be considered in relation to the context of course inherent requirements, and academic requirements for the Work Integrated Learning activity including:

- a. physical or mental health;
  - b. interpersonal skills;
  - c. demonstrated ability to behave in a manner which aligns with relevant professional ethical requirements or behavioural expectations;
  - d. demonstrated ability to self-regulate and present in a professional manner;
  - e. ability to demonstrate the University's values and contribute positively to the University's reputation.
- 4.14. Where a student reasonably suspects they may not have the capacity to safely and/or competently commence or continue a Work Integrated Learning activity, they must declare this concern without delay to the relevant contact person within their School.
- 4.15. Where the University or School reasonably believes a student does not have the capacity to safely and/or competently undertake a Work Integrated Learning activity, or it is reasonably believed that allowing the Work Integrated Learning activity to progress may place the student, industry/community stakeholders or community at risk, the University will not allow the Work Integrated Learning activity to commence or continue. Concerns about student capacity to safely and/or competently undertake Work Integrated Learning requirements may be addressed through course inherent requirements and/or in accordance with the [Fitness to Study](#) policy.
- 4.16. Where the University or Schools becomes aware of an issue or matter occurring within a Work Integrated Learning activity that is outside the control of the student undertaking the activity, and, which could reasonably be believed to place the outcome of the activity, and/or the health and wellbeing of the student at risk, the Work Integrated Learning area in the relevant School will:
- a. Inform the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education);
  - b. act without avoidable delay to remove the student from the activity;
  - c. determine what actions can be taken to ensure the student is not adversely impacted by the need to remove them from the activity; and
  - d. ensure the issue or matter is recorded in the relevant University approved database.
- 4.17. Critical incidents arising during a Work Integrated Learning activity will be handled in accordance with the University's [Critical Incident Management policy](#).
- 4.18. Where a Third-Party Provider assists in the identification and establishment of a Work Integrated Learning activity the Third-Party Provider must, at a minimum, be aware of and able to achieve the level of quality and safety outlined within this policy.

### **Curriculum Design of a Work Integrated Learning Activity**

- 4.19. Work Integrated Learning related curriculum design will be intentional, systematic and undertaken in accordance with the [Curriculum Design Policy](#) and associated procedures. Activities must be scaffolded across the course and aligned with course and unit learning outcomes.

- 4.20. Work Integrated Learning activities must be assessable in accordance with the University's [Assessment, Examination and Moderation procedures](#).
- 4.21. As far as reasonable and practicable, Work Integrated Learning curriculum will be developed in collaboration with industry/community stakeholders to solidify the link between theoretical and contemporary practical learning experiences. Where applicable, this will be aligned to the requirements of professional registration and accrediting bodies.
- 4.22. Work Integrated Learning activities will be scaffolded to include student preparation prior to commencement, supervision and monitoring of progress during the activity with explicit feedback mechanisms in place, and evaluation/debriefing following completion.
- 4.23. Consistent with applicable legislative requirements, reasonable adjustments will be made to Work Integrated Learning activities to allow for the differing needs and abilities of students, including equity and inclusion considerations, yet without compromising any applicable professional accreditation, course inherent requirements or other academic requirements.
- 4.24. Schools may offer different types of Work Integrated Learning activities within the same or similar courses or units provided they can reasonably be demonstrated to result in equivalent quality student experiences and learning outcomes.

### **Student Sourced Work Integrated Learning Activities**

- 4.25. The University reserves the right to determine when a Work Integrated Learning activity can be sourced by a student and whether a proposed student sourced activity will be approved to proceed.
- 4.26. Schools that allow students to source their own Work Integrated Learning activities will identify a position or area within the School to be responsible and accountable for:
  - a. ensuring students understand the minimum level of quality and learning outcomes required for a proposed Work Integrated Learning activity to be approved; and
  - b. reviewing and formally approving Work Integrated Learning activities proposed by students before commencement of the activity; and
  - c. ensuring students understand and are complying with this policy.
- 4.27. Work Integrated Learning activities proposed by students that could reasonably be believed to be impacted by a Conflict of Interest will not be approved. This may include where a student has a Close Personal Relationship or Intimate Personal Relationship with a person who can reasonably be believed to have influence over their assessment outcome.
- 4.28. Decisions made by a School not to approve a Work Integrated Learning activity proposed by a student will be final and the student will be required to identify an alternative activity that meets the quality and safety expectation of the University and aligns with this policy.

### **Student Experience**

- 4.29. Prior to enrolling in a course or unit, students must be provided with sufficient information to make an informed decision about their willingness and ability to meet all Work Integrated Learning requirements. At a minimum, students will be informed of the following:
- a. The minimum expected amount of time that must be invested in completion of Work Integrated Learning activities;
  - b. Anticipated costs that will be borne by the student to enable their participation in Work Integrated Learning activities such as parking, travel and the purchase of suitable clothing or protective equipment;
  - c. The potential or anticipated need for the student to participate in the activity in a full-time capacity, attend the activity on weekends and/or after-hours, or the likelihood of being required to undertake shift work;
  - d. The potential or anticipated need for the student to travel or temporarily re-locate in order to secure a suitable activity;
  - e. Any requirement or likely requirement for students to undertake security clearances including Working With Children Checks or police clearance checks;
  - f. Any immunisations required or likely to be required;
  - g. Work Integrated Learning units are an accredited unit within the curriculum and attract the same fees as other units within accredited courses;
  - h. Some Work Integrated Learning activities are requirements for professional accreditation. Students who enrol in a course without taking this into account, and who prove unable to meet the inherent requirements of the course will not be able to graduate and will not be able to have their fees refunded.
- 4.30. The University will, to the extent that is reasonable and practicable, accommodate cultural and religious observances and dress code. Students must be aware that situations may arise where the nature or location of the Work Integrated Learning activity, or the policies and rules of the industry/community stakeholder, are such that accommodations are not possible or appropriate.
- a. As far as reasonable and practicable, the University will ensure students are made aware of courses or units where cultural or religious accommodations have not always been possible or appropriate.
  - b. Students with mandatory cultural or religious observances or dress code must inform the University of their individual circumstances and discuss the possibility and appropriateness of accommodations prior to enrolling in a course or unit where Work Integrated Learning is a requirement of the course or unit.
- 4.31. Prior to commencing a Work Integrated Learning activity, students will be provided with sufficient information to allow preparation and readiness for full engagement in the activity. In addition to health and safety matters, this would reasonably be expected to include:
- a. identifying how the activity contributes to overarching learning outcomes;
  - b. establishment of personal learning and development goals;
  - c. guidance on undertaking evaluation and self-assessment; and
  - d. understanding of workplace rights including those relating to inclusion and diversity.



- 4.32. In accordance with the type of Work Integrated Learning activity being undertaken, students participating in Work Integrated Learning are required to:
- act in accordance with the [Student Code of Conduct](#) and the University's [Fitness to Study](#) policy.
  - successfully complete any relevant and required orientation and induction;
  - ensure timely compliance with workplace health and safety requirements and any other workplace or professional ethical guidelines;
  - take responsibility for learning by participating fully in the learning process and undertaking all learning opportunities provided;
  - proactively communicate with Work Integrated Learning placement supervisors, engage in communication with the University and notify the University of any problems that arise; and
  - ensure all attendance and assessment requirements are satisfactorily completed.
- 4.33. Where a student does not comply with the obligations outlined above, the University may, subject to and in accordance with the applicable provisions of the [Admission, Enrolment and Academic Progress Rules](#), the [General Misconduct Rules \(Students\)](#) and the [Fitness to Study](#) policy:
- remove the student from the Work Integrated Learning activity;
  - where the non-compliance results in the non-achievement of the relevant learning outcome(s) for the Work Integrated Learning activity, award a grade that results in a fail for that unit, part of the unit, or course, in accordance with the [Assessment](#) policy and [Assessment, Examination and Moderation](#) procedures; and/or
  - take action to exclude the student from future Work Integrated Learning activities.

### **Supervisor Support**

- 4.34. Taking into account the context of the type of Work Integrated learning activity being undertaken, Schools will ensure Work Integrated Learning supervisors are provided with an appropriate level of support which may include:
- information pertinent to the relevant student;
  - suggestions or guidance regarding activities and tasks that may be suited to the student's individual learning and development requirements; and
  - information regarding assessment requirements.

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

- 4.35. The University will identify opportunities for engagement, and be proactive in establishing collaborative relationships with local, national and international communities and stakeholders as a means of optimising successful Work Integrated Learning outcomes.
- 4.36. As far as reasonable and practicable, Work Integrated Learning activities will be designed to provide benefit to all stakeholders including students, the broader community, the industry/community stakeholder and the University.

- 4.37. The University and/or Schools will implement processes and practices for acknowledging the important contribution made to the Work Integrated Learning program by industry/community stakeholders.

## **5. ACCOUNTABILITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) is the Policy Owner and has overall responsibility for the content of this policy and its operation.

Members of the University community reasonably understood to be involved in the Distributed Leadership approach to Work Integrated Learning are responsible for working collaboratively to operationalise the policy and proactively contribute to the successful delivery of a quality Work Integrated Learning program.

The Work Integrated Learning centralised co-ordination support area is the primary contact point for enquiries relating to the overarching strategic operation of Work Integrated Learning.

School based Work Integrated Learning areas are the primary contact point for enquiries specific to the day-to-day administration of Work Integrated Learning within the School.

## **6. RELATED DOCUMENTS:**

### **Legislation**

*Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth);  
Equal Opportunity Act (1984) (WA);  
Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth);  
Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2010 (WA);  
Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth);  
Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984 (WA);  
Working With Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004 (WA).*

### **Statutes and Rules**

[Statute 22 - Student Conduct](#)  
[Admission, Enrolment and Academic Progress Rules](#)  
[Academic Misconduct Rules \(Students\)](#)  
[General Misconduct Rules \(Students\)](#)

### **Policies**

[Assessment policy](#)  
[Critical Incident Management policy](#)  
[Curriculum Design Policy](#)  
[Delegations](#)  
[Fitness to Study](#)

[Health and Safety policy](#)  
[Integrated Risk Management policy](#)  
[Privacy policy](#)  
[Records Management policy](#)  
[Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment](#)  
[Student Code of Conduct](#)

**Operational documents and resources**

[Assessment, Examination and Moderation procedures](#)  
[Fitness to Study procedures](#)

**7. CONTACT INFORMATION:**

For queries relating to this document please contact:

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Policy Owner          | Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)                              |
| All Enquiries Contact | Work Integrated Learning centralised co-ordination support area |
| Telephone:            | 6304 6690   |
| Email address:        | <a href="mailto:r.ekberg@ecu.edu.au">r.ekberg@ecu.edu.au</a>    |

**8. APPROVAL HISTORY:**

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Policy approved by:         | Vice Chancellor   |
| Date policy first approved: | 13 May 2015   |
| Date last modified:         | March 2021  |
| Revision history:           | AB EXEC 03/15<br><br>February 2018 – Minor amendments to Position Titles and Unit/Centre titles<br><br>March 2021 – The refreshed draft contemporises the University’s WIL policy position and ensures alignment with the Australian Collaborative Education Network (ACEN) <a href="#">WIL Leadership Framework</a> and ACEN <a href="#">WIL Quality Framework</a> |
| Next revision due:          | March 2024  |
| HPCM file reference:        | SUB/57410   |