



Queensland University of Technology

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Vignette title and details	<p>Creative Industries Transitions to New Professional Environments Program: ("CI Transitions")</p> <p>Type:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • workplace learning (placements) • service learning (placements with not-for-profit or community organisations) • Creative Industries projects (professional project opportunities for teams of students) • becoming a researcher (research placements and training) <p>Length: fulltime, 6 months or 12 months, students may undertake up to 48 credit points of transitions units</p> <p>Course: undergraduate; Workplace Learning also available to postgraduates</p>
Discipline	All disciplines in Creative Industries faculty: Media & Communication (includes some Advertising and PR), film and TV, Art and Design, Journalism, Music, Creative Writing and Literary Studies, Performance Studies, Communication Design, Fashion, Dance and Arts and Creative Industries Management
Employment sector	multi-sector
Student numbers	200
Optional/compulsory	Optional
Credit bearing	Credit bearing in all Creative Industries degree programs
Assessment	CV and cover letter, placement/project Proposal and Gantt chart, journal, formal analytical report, industry partner assessment. CI Project students are also assessed against internally developed project outcome benchmarks.
Payment	Usually unpaid.
Number of staff involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty Coordinator of CI Transitions program (academic) • CI Transitions program manager (professional staff) • Workplace Learning and Service Learning supervision is supported by one academic staff member per discipline

	(10 academics) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Designer (professional staff) responsible for design and implementation of technical scaffolding for the program • Each Workplace Learning and Service Learning student is supported by a nominated industry partner supervisor. • Each CI Project is supervised by a minimum of 1 academic staff member.
Weblink	public access link under development
Key Words	workplace learning; work-integrated learning; service learning; project-based learning; WIL; IBL

Overview

The Creative Industries Transitions to New Professional Environments program ("CI Transitions") is an innovative suite of units offered as electives to both undergraduate and postgraduate students in QUT's Creative Industries Faculty. It is the first holistic work-integrated learning suite specifically designed to address the diverse and dynamic Creative Industries sector. It comprises four separate units: Workplace Learning, Service Learning, Creative Industries Projects, and Research Pathways. It is an important part of the "real world" experience and education for QUT students. The program is available to postgraduates (Workplace Learning) and to undergraduates who have completed at least two years of their course. The program is offered to all ten disciplines in the faculty; any student may undertake up to 48 credit points (4 single-semester units) of Transitions within her/his degree.

CI Projects and some Workplace and Service Learning placements are advertised to students on the CI Transitions website; applications for these positions are taken on a competitive basis. Many students secure Workplace Learning and Service Learning industry placements on their own by approaching organisations. Students are welcome to undertake placements outside of Australia.

The unit Workplace Learning has been offered by the Creative Industries Faculty for a number of years. In this unit, students undertake placements of either 70 or 150 hours in an industry setting. In 2008, two new units were added to Workplace Learning in order to address the diverse career paths taken by Creative Industries graduates (see next section for further detail). These units are Service Learning, in which students undertake discipline-specific placements within a not-for-profit or community organisation; and Creative Industries Projects, in which students undertake professional projects. A fourth unit, Research Pathways, will be added to the program in semester two 2008: this unit will offer students who are interested in either academic or industry research careers the opportunity to undertake research placements.

Structure of program and Special Features

Challenges

The CI Transitions program has been strategically designed to address several key challenges specific to the Creative Industries sector. Work-integrated learning programs face unique challenges in the creative industries. First, in industrial sectors such as Engineering, Health, and Education, workplace learning practices are a well-established tradition: both faculties and industry partners expect and plan for workplace learning relationships as a matter of course. Workplace learning in the creative industries, however, is not an established tradition, either for creative industries faculties or for many creative industries industrial partners ("Destinations" 1999; Draper & Hitchcock, 2006). Second, the creative industries sector comprises a substantial number of small-to-medium and micro-enterprises, few of which have the resources to devote to developing workplace learning positions, and few of which can accommodate more than one or two students at a time. Third, many positions in the creative industries are project-based, rather than organisation-based: workplace learning positions which may exist one year will not exist the next, once the project has concluded. Fourth, although the creative industries sector is increasingly recognised by governments, there are as yet few national industry peak bodies: for universities trying to build creative industries workplace learning programs, this means that there is no central point through which to contact and build relationships with the sector as a whole. Finally, many CI graduates will never work in traditional careers; they will work in project-based protean careers (Hall, 2004), "boundaryless careers" (Arthur, 1996) and portfolio careers (Cawsey, Deszca & Mazerolle, 1995). In the Creative Industries, it is thus of critical importance that work-integrated programs focus on more than just training students to become employees: they must also focus on developing the employability of students who will undertake project-based careers, research careers, and

careers in which they are “embedded” in other organisations (such as working as a graphic designer for a bank, or working in PR for a not-for-profit organisation).

For this reason, the CI Transitions program comprises four distinct work-integrated learning units:

- **Workplace Learning:** students undertake industry placements of 70-150 hours. Workplace Learning provides students with the experience of being an employee.
- **Service Learning:** students undertake industry placements of 70-150 hours in a not-for-profit or community organisation. Students must practise their discipline-specific skills in the placement, thus gaining the experience of working in a consultant, or an “embedded” capacity. They also learn about corporate citizenship, and value-based careers.
- **CI Project:** students work in teams to complete professional projects. Students learn about project management, and also gain experience in project-based employment.
- **Research Pathways:** students undertake some classroom research training then undertake research placements with either members of the Faculty’s academic staff, or with industry partners. Students learn about the diversity of research careers in the Creative Industries, as well as preparing for Honours if they wish to pursue academic careers.

The benefits to employers and to the university are the anticipated ones: employers can trial potential employees, form relationships with the faculty and the university, offer a variety of types of learning opportunity, learn about university developments and ideas, and access motivated and usually unpaid workers. The university builds and maintains its engagement profile, maintains the currency and industry relevance of its offerings, provides its students with “real world” education and experiences, builds its profile as a producer of high-calibre graduates, and assists students in the transition from university to careers.

Students benefit from the program for the anticipated reasons, for example, apply theory and academic ideas to industry practice, build industry networks, gain a CV entry, develop professional confidence. Students in the CI Transitions program also benefit from the range of work-integrated learning options offered: they can trial not only up to four different organisations, but also up to four different career types. This is a particularly strong and unique aspect of the program.

Future work

Because the CI Transitions program is still in its first year as a comprehensive program, a number of improvements are planned.

First, the program will be adapted and amended in line with evaluative feedback gained from all three stakeholder groups—students, industry partners, and university staff. This iterative cycle of improvement is already in place: feedback from earlier iterations of Workplace Learning informed the design and the creation of Service Learning, CI Projects, and Research Pathways. The appointment of a program Manager will significantly enhance this process, as a key facet of this position is industry liaison and support.

Second, recent research found that in looking at the homepages of each of Australia’s 39 universities, an industry partner could easily find online links to Work-integrated learning programs at only 8. This demonstrates the need for a well-designed Industry Partners’ Portal to the program, particularly for a program which involves nearly as many industry partners as it does students. By mid-2008, the CI Transitions program will launch its online Work-Integrated Learning Industry Partners Portal on the faculty’s home page: this Portal will not only provide full program information, but also a dynamic form into which industry partners can enter placement and project descriptions. Importantly, based on substantially industry research, no aspect of this site will be password-protected (for details of industry partner Portal design research, see:

Collis, C., and D. Seeto (Forthcoming, 2008). “Web-based Industry Partner Portals to University Workplace Learning Programs: Implementation and Design Issues.” *Proceedings of EDMEDIA: World Conference of Educational Multimedia, Hypermedia, and Telecommunications*, 6 April 2008, Vienna.

Some of the research and development of the CI Transitions program is taking place within the auspices of a university-wide Priority Project grant; the program will thus be visible and available as a model at an institutional level.

The program has secured substantial cohort placements with several major organisations; we plan to develop more such placement opportunities.