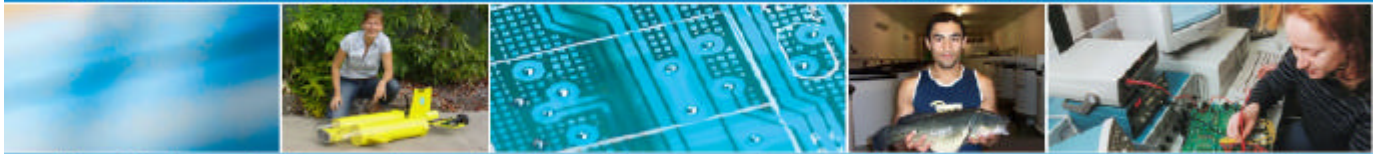


CARRICK INSTITUTE : DISCIPLINE BASED INITIATIVES



Work Integrated Learning : A national framework for initiatives to support best practice

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Vignette title and details	Industry-Based Learning (IBL) Full time, 6 month or 12 month Cross university
Discipline	Multiple Disciplines
Employment sector	Multi-sector
Student numbers	550+ across university
Optional/compulsory	Optional
Credit bearing	Students receive credit recognition for their participation in the Industry-Based Learning (IBL) program on their final transcript.
Assessment	Although there are variations most IBL students are required prepare a formal report, present to faculty and/or industry, and undertake a self assess against an internally developed learning benchmark.
Payment	Paid (usually 70% of graduate income), tax free scholarships (\$28,000 – \$32, 000)
Number of staff involved	Although there are variations in each faculty there is usually a Director of Industry Liaison (academic) plus IBL Manager (Professional Staff) in each faculty. Supervision is supported by discipline academics within the faculty and a nominated industry supervisor.
Weblink	http://www.swinburne.edu.au/hed/ccu/ibl/
Key Words	Multi-discipline; IBL; assessment; e-portfolio; curriculum

Overview

Industry-Based Learning (IBL) at Swinburne is a program for undergraduate students. Swinburne has been specialising in IBL since 1963 starting in the Engineering Department; it is the longest running IBL program in Australia. All six faculties at Swinburne offer either IBL or Industry Placement (IP) programs.

Students usually have the option to undertake an IBL placement in their penultimate year having completed at least two or three years of their course. The selection process is usually competitive and those that apply may not gain a placement. Students are required to register with their faculty and apply for positions as they are advertised.

Structure of program

Tradition, time and successful modelling have guided the development of the Industry-Based Learning (IBL) program at Swinburne. IBL has a long history at Swinburne starting in 1963 in the Engineering Department. It is the longest running Industry-Based Learning program in Australia. Swinburne places more than 550 students from over 30 degree programs into Industry-Based Learning placements each year. Most years we have over 350 businesses participate in the program. All six faculties at Swinburne offer either Industry-Based Learning (IBL) or Industry Placement (IP) programs to their undergraduate students.

Because of the longevity of the program, the university has had a long time to refine its processes and practices. The skills and knowledge built by enthusiasts in the early days has provided a strong base for growth. Internal communication, sharing of resources and informal mentoring of new staff is common practice. Teaching staff across the university know about the program and proactively promote it to their students. The local Melbourne community are also well aware of the program, often supporting it in hard times. Many alumni now provide placements for students because of their successful involvement in student days.

The University has spent considerable time clearly identifying and articulating the benefits for both employers:

- access enthusiastic and skilled undergraduates
- evaluate potential employees
- have tasks professionally completed in a cost-effective way
- create a flexible work environment to enable current employees to take on special projects.
- bring fresh energy, new ideas and perspectives to the organisation
- contribute to the training of emerging professionals
- access University resources and programs

and students:

- gain valuable workplace experience relevant to their field of study
- develop career opportunities and explore career options
- apply theory learned in the classroom to real work situations
- develop practical workplace skills
- earn while they learn
- gain insight into how organisations operate
- clarify career aspirations
- build valuable contacts within industry.

Special features

Perhaps the greatest achievement in this program is in the multidisciplinary, transferability of the IBL program model to different disciplines. Swinburne's extended involvement in IBL has led to the establishment of a highly refined University infrastructure which covers such things as accreditation, selection, supervision, documentation, relationship management, scholarships and legal requirements.

Perhaps the most remarkable things about this particular program is Swinburne does not deliver undergraduate courses in disciplines such as nursing, education and allied health that require a professional practicum component. Swinburne has been able to develop the IBL program in non-traditional areas such as humanities, design, film and television, life sciences and in a variety of business related areas.

The success of the program is most definitely grounded in the development of workable, long term relationships with employers which are based on mutual trust and respect. These relationships are maintained by a network of very experienced and committed professional and academic staff.

Future work

As a priority over the next five years the University will need to work with current employer and industry partners to establish more mature and mutually beneficial relationships. The University is keen to identify and support employers who are capable of, and committed to, engaging with students in the professional learning process.

We would like to develop the concept of the workplace as an authentic learning environment. To achieve this, far higher levels of mutual obligation, professional supervision, and diversification in learning and assessment would need to be established. It would also require a significant paradigm shift by all parties concerned and greater strategic planning, university wide commitment, curriculum renewal and targeted resources.

Current curriculum would need to be reviewed and developed on an ongoing basis with a closer alignment of the workplace context. Swinburne is committed to identifying and building capability and capacity in academics, professional staff and workplace personnel.

Future relationships will also need to be resilient enough to cope with fluctuations in student and employer demand and changing economic trends. Issues surrounding skill shortages, student uptake and identification and articulation of graduate capabilities will need to be addressed.

Swinburne is currently undertaking a major project – Integrating Professional Placements – into the curriculum build of Swinburne's well established model for IBL. It seeks to develop, coordinate and link a wider range of professional placement opportunities more firmly into the curriculum. We hope that future students will be able to undertake a placement in industry while still working towards credits in their principle degree.

Future work focuses on reviewing the potential of student ePortfolios for recording and assessing student's achievements in the IBL program and, identifying how multidisciplinary team placements can be incorporated into a workplace learning environment.