



WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING (WIL) ACROSS COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

LEARNING TO EARNING: HIGHER EDUCATION
AND THE CHANGING JOB MARKET

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Higher Education
Quality Council
of Ontario

Informing the Future of Higher Education

**Richard D. Wiggers (HEQCO), Lesley Cooper (WLU), Peggy Sattler &
Julie Peters (Academica), Anne MacLennan (York)**

HEQCO RESEARCH ON WIL

RICHARD D. WIGGERS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESEARCH AND PROGRAMS

HEQCO launched a major project on Work-Integrated Learning in 2009

Phase 1 (2009-10)

Literature Review
Interviews/Focus Groups with WIL Program
Coordinators and Employers
(Final Report – January 2011)

Phase 2 (2010-13)

Algonquin
George Brown
Georgian
Niagara
La Cité collégiale
Sheridan

Laurentian
Ottawa
Waterloo
Western
Windsor
Wilfrid Laurier
York
Carleton

C. Employer Survey

Private & Private Sector
March/April 2012
(Final Report – October 2012)

A. Faculty Survey

April/May 2011
(Final Report – April 2012)

B. Student Survey

March 2012
(Final Report – January 2013)

Phase 3 (2013-14)

Student Follow-Up Survey
(Final Report – January 2014)

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES FOR INSTITUTIONS, STUDENTS AND INDUSTRY?

LESLEY COOPER, ACTING PRINCIPAL/VICE-PRESIDENT, WLU-BRANTFORD

It is essential to begin with an agreed definition

Work integrated learning (WIL) is the intersection and engagement of theoretical and practice learning. The process brings together formal learning with productive work, or theory and practice by constructing one system of knowledge from separate sources. It includes practicums, internships, cooperative education, service learning and international service learning.

(Cooper, Orrell and Bowden 2010).

Stage 1 began in 2009 with an attempt to define the various types of WIL

Systematic Training	Structured Work Experience				Institutional Partnerships	
Workplace as the central place of learning	Familiarization with the world of work within a PSE program				PSE activities/programs to achieve industry or community goals	
Apprenticeships	Field Experience	Mandatory Professional Practice	Co-Op	Internships	Applied Research Projects	Service-learning

There are numerous challenges for PSE hoping to offer WIL

- Teaching and learning and pedagogical strategies to **integrate** work and academic learning
- **Assessment:** formative and summative while being fair, transparent, valid and consistent.
- Ensuring the skills of faculty and staff to manage the **complexity** of WIL, e.g. risk management
- Capacity to sustain and support **partnerships** with employers to secure placements and meet the needs of industry and students.

Teaching and Learning: Working to Learn & Learning to Work

- Teaching is the responsibility of the university
- Hot vs. cold learning
- **Workplaces** have responsibilities for working with students and facilitating learning
- Workplaces also have a unique intentional curriculum that sequences activities from low to high accountability work; enables access to difficult to learn knowledge and provides direct guidance from work-based experts.
- What are the pedagogical strategies for the **integration** of theoretical and work-based knowledge?

Assessment:

The Dangers Of Oversimplification

- Assessment: ad hoc or a formal principled process embedded in the policies of PSE and open to public scrutiny
- Assessment has multiple purposes. What is assessed? What can be assessed? How are workplace practices conducted and interpreted? How do we report this workplace information?
- Assessment in the workplace: a variety of methods but are these guided by principles such as ongoing, formative, use of reflection, feedback and integration of learning.
- How do we interpret students' performance?

Sustaining partnerships for work ready students

- Old cottage industry culture vs. the new PSE enterprise; from unequal and value added to a stakeholder and partnerships approach
- Institutional imperatives:
 - Leadership
 - A vision for the future that involves stakeholders
 - A coherent institutional approach
 - Planning within and beyond the institution
 - Resources and infrastructure
 - Educational policies for effective practice
 - Monitoring contracts and concerns with local organizations
 - Assurance of educational quality

Management of difficulties: A proactive approach

- Risks and difficulties: safety, personal injuries, discrimination, standards of care to consumers, customers, learning in the workplace, learning guides, preparation for learning, university policies
- Policies and procedures for management of difficulties
- Risk management, an audit and the legal framework
- Support for faculty, staff, students and organizations

WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING (WIL) IN ONTARIO'S POSTSECONDARY SECTOR (2010-12)

PEGGY SATTLER & JULIE PETERS, ACADEMICA GROUP

WIL Surveys: Methodology

- **Graduating Student Survey**
 - Online survey conducted in spring of 2012
 - 11,015 students from 14 participating institutions
 - 22.4% response rate
- **Faculty Survey**
 - Online survey conducted in spring of 2011
 - 3,624 faculty from 13 participating institutions
 - 19.9% response rate
- **Employer Survey**
 - Telephone survey conducted in spring of 2012
 - 3,369 randomly selected Ontario businesses, stratified by sector and size
 - 9.6% response rate and 42.7% cooperation rate
 - Margin of error +/-2%

Findings:

WIL motivations & benefits

- **Student Perceptions**

- Students choose WIL to gain practical work experience and enhance CVs
- High levels of satisfaction across all types of WIL
- Close to half of non-WIL students would choose WIL if they could do PSE over again (43% college and 48% university)

- **Faculty Perceptions**

- WIL offers many benefits to both students and institutions
- Strong personal belief in value of WIL (95% college and 84% university)
- Support varies by gender, employment status, participation in WIL as students, and experience teaching WIL, and years of other employment experience
- Faculty support for expanding WIL (56% college and 44% university) or maintaining current levels (24% college and 25% university)

- **Employer Perceptions**

- Single main reason to participate in WIL is to develop workforce skills (25%) and pre-screen potential new hires (22%)
- Single main reason to plan WIL in the future is to pre-screen potential new hires (19%) and to give back to the community (18%)

Findings:

WIL challenges & barriers

- **Student Perceptions**

- Challenges for WIL students include lack of pay, not enough preparation, time demands, theory/skills not relevant, and unexpected costs
- Barriers for non-WIL students include delays in program completion, costs involved, and finding suitable placements

- **Faculty Perceptions**

- Challenges for WIL faculty include finding quality placements and finding enough placements
- Faculty concerns that WIL perpetuates a business model for PSE and may divert funding from programs less suited to WIL

- **Employer Perceptions**

- Single main reason for NOT participating in WIL is lack of suitable work (35%) and staff time to train/supervise (11%)
- Single main reason for NO LONGER participating in WIL is lack of suitable work (22%), economic pressures (17%), and students without the right skills (14%)
- Single main challenge for WIL employers is staff time to train/supervise (14%), and lack of soft skills in WIL students (13%)

Impact on PSE & labour market

- **Student Perceptions**
 - WIL students more satisfied with PSE
 - Positive impact of WIL on perceived learning outcomes, employability skills, personal development, civic beliefs, and self-efficacy
 - Planned follow-up survey will assess labour market outcomes
- **Faculty Perceptions**
 - Diverse range of classroom activities used to connect learning with the real world
 - Many WIL-related tasks performed by WIL faculty in addition to regular duties
 - Most WIL faculty do not feel supported by their institution to engage in WIL activities
- **Employer Perceptions**
 - Majority of Ontario employers who hired in last two years employed at least one grad of WIL program
 - WIL grads earned higher average starting salaries across all credentials, but similar skill ratings
 - WIL employers much more likely to hire, and 82% hired a worksite WIL student

Institutional recommendations

For Faculty

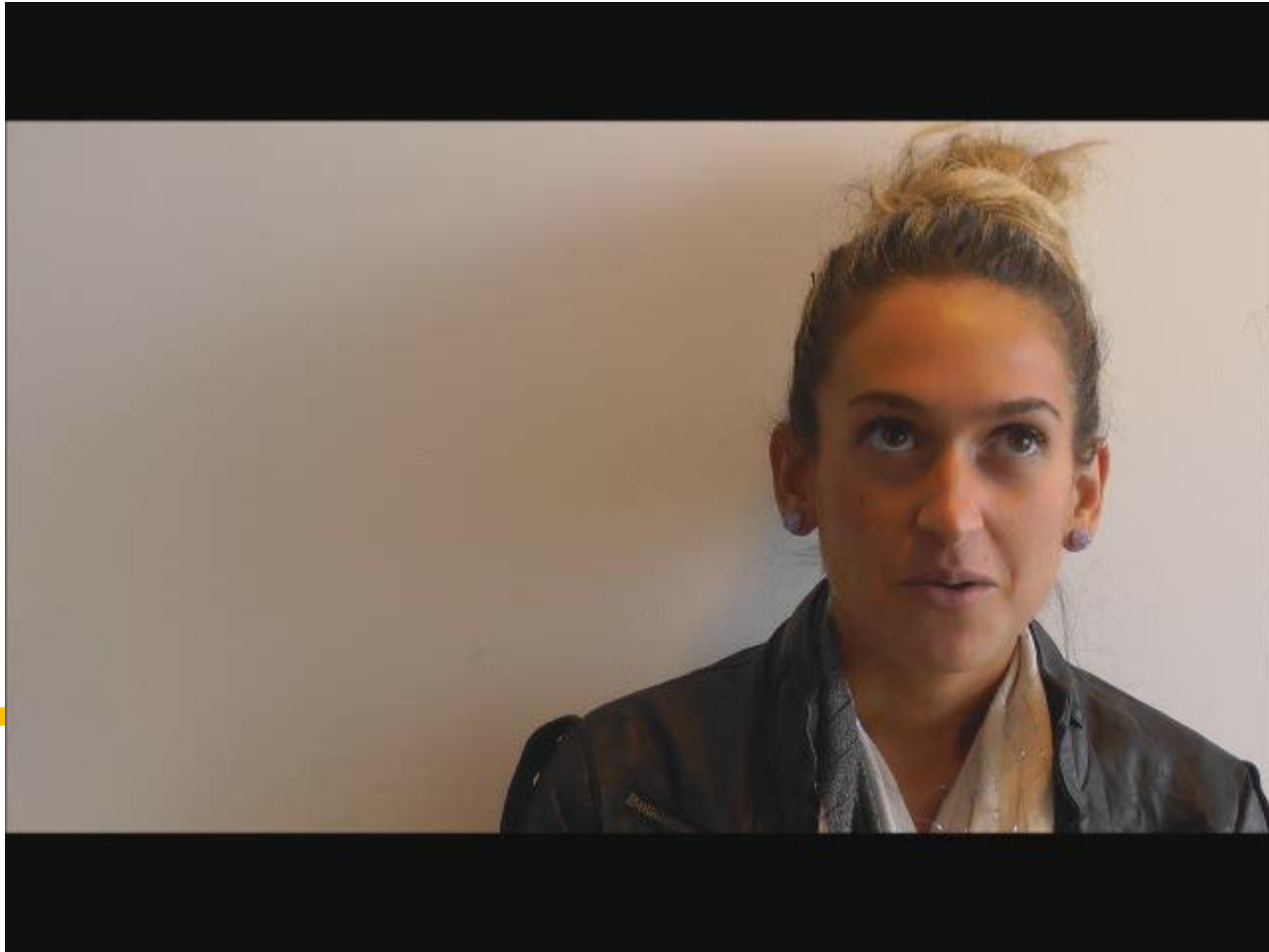
- Institutional recognition for WIL activities
- Faculty PD on WIL curriculum development and assessment
- Stronger communication with employers/partners to identify potential WIL hosts
- Administrative supports for all forms of WIL (not just co-op)

For Employers

- More information about range of WIL options, student skill sets, criteria for “suitable” work
- Consistent WIL terminology
- Increased placement flexibility (timing and length)
- Simplified student recruitment and selection processes
- Assistance with paperwork
- Training and support for student supervision and assessment
- Regular, ongoing communication before and after the placement
- Provincial coordination (standardized institutional procedures, centralized employer database)

DREAMS TO REALITY: STUDENT CAREER AND WORK EXPECTATIONS IN THE COMMUNICATIONS STUDIES FIELD EXPERIENCE AT YORK UNIVERSITY

ANNE F. MACLENNAN, DEPT. OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES, YORK UNIVERSITY



Thank You!

Richard Dominic Wiggers

Executive Director, Research and Programs
Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO)

1 Yonge Street, Toronto
Phone: (416) 212-3881
rwiggers@heqco.ca

Peggy Sattler

Director, Policy Studies
Academica Group Inc.
Phone: (519) 433-8302

London, Ontario
peggy@academicagroup.com

Julie Peters

Senior Policy Analyst
Academica Group Inc.
Phone: (519) 433-8302

London, Ontario
julie@academicagroup.com

Lesley Cooper

Acting Principal, Vice-President
Wilfrid Laurier University
Brantford Campus

Phone: (519) 756-8228, Ext. 5616
lesleycooper@wlu.ca

Anne MacLennan

Department of Communication Studies
Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies,
York-Ryerson Joint Graduate Program in
Communication & Culture,
Faculty of Graduate Studies
York University

4700 Keele Street, Toronto, Ontario
Phone: (416) 736-2100, Ext. 33857
amaclenn@yorku.ca

