Work-integrated learning workloads: The realities and responsibilities

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The delivery of work-integrated learning (WIL) courses involves university academic and professional staff in specific duties, many of which are outside of the scope of the traditional categories used by universities to determine equitable workloads for academic and administrative personnel. This paper draws on an investigation in a metropolitan university in Australia and records how it is beginning to arrive at appropriate ways to do this. A survey tool was utilised to identify the specific workload demands on staff who worked with WIL courses. The data provided information that confirmed the complexity of the work and also showed that there was a gap between the reality of the workload and the allocation provided. A number of recommendations have been made as a way forward. Further research is recommended that could include the perspectives of students and organisational supervisors reporting on the level of academic staff member support and supervision. (*Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education, 2011, 12(2), 111-124*)

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INTRODUCTION

Work-integrated learning (WIL) is a relatively new area of the tertiary curriculum that extends across the whole of each Australian university and is becoming increasingly important in higher education institutions internationally. A number of innovative programs have been developed, and many of these are very demanding of staff time; different universities are attempting to resolve the staff workload issues that are evolving in different ways but there have been no published studies on how this is being approached. This brief case study on what is currently happening at Griffith University in Australia may assist in establishing criteria for equity in ongoing debates about workloads elsewhere: its purpose is to provide information for others in the field about a process of change.

In response to needs expressed by students, industry, the general community and the Government agendas, (A C Nielsen Research Services, 2000; Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Business Council of Australia, March 2002; Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), 2009; Department of Education Science and Training, 2005; London Metropolitan University, 2003; National Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services Australia Inc., 2008) Australian universities have been developing new courses based on real experiences of work augmented by observation and reflection on the part of students. Some areas, where professional accreditation procedures were required, already had a substantial organised commitment to work-integrated learning (e.g. medicine, teaching, nursing, social work, education), but many others did not. Previously highly theoretical undergraduate programs are now beginning to focus on how graduates are able to function as active agents in the workplace and most of these new courses draw heavily upon the philosophical underpinnings supplied by educational pragmatists like John Dewey (1938) and Kurt Lewin (1951). These theoretical foundations have been further developed by researchers such as Donald Schön (1983, 1987), David Kolb

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(1984), Malcolm Knowles (1984) and others who emphasise the importance of *praxis* as 'the authentic union of theory and practice' (Freire, 1972).

For the past 15 years, management, staff and unions have also been working to find processes that promote equity and transparency in the allocation of staff workload and ways of acknowledging and rewarding work. Recent national and international investigations have concluded that although universities emphasise the importance of the teaching component of an academic's duties it has been difficult to identify transparent and equitable processes that reward teaching to the same degree as research (Paewai, Meyer, & Houston, 2007; Soliman & Soliman, 1997; The Higher Education Academy, 2009). The Higher Education Academy's (2009) report cited a number of studies that found research was still given higher priority over teaching when considering promotion and career advancement and, in particular, cited Young (2006) and Parker (2008) who both reported that promotion favoured research rather than teaching.

Tight's (2010) and Soliman and Soliman's (1997) studies showed how multiple and increased demands contributed to further diversity and complexity in the work of an academic. Soliman and Soliman noted that these factors, aligned with ambiguous promotion policies and criteria, could easily contribute to stress for staff: insufficient recognition and reward has been identified as one of the major stressors for academics by (Gillespie, Walsh, Winefield, Dua, & Stough, 2001; Winter & Sarros, 2002) and their findings have been confirmed in the work of Paewai, Meyer and Houston (2007).

In the area of WIL teaching, where expectations are more involved and range well beyond those usually associated with conventional university teaching, this has become an urgent issue. The WIL audits conducted at Flinders University in South Australia identified one of the critical issues facing staff was a lack of equitable rewards and recognition: they noted that this applied to both academics and to administrative personnel (Cooper, Orrell, & Jones, 1999; Smiegel & Harris, 2008). Cooper, Orrell and Bowden (2010) found in their recent work that not much had changed over the past ten years and that it is still the early career academics or those who draw the short straw who are involved. The inaugural Australian Innovative Research Universities (IRU) symposium on WIL in 2008 documented different demands that are associated with WIL pedagogy and promoted principles of workload recognition for the area (Billett, 2008, 30-31 October), and, in their Australia-wide scoping study of WIL, Patrick et al. (2009) found that university management did not appear to have an understanding of the amount of work involved, or of the specific range of skills required by academic and administrative staff. However, the growing body of literature on the need for a diversity of approaches in WIL teaching still pays little attention to the demands increased workloads place upon university staff.

WIL WORKLOADS AT GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY

The current definition of WIL is undergoing revision (Griffith University, 2006a) but it remains clear that the Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) requirements mean, that to qualify as WIL, a course must include a significant directed experience of *working* (Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), 2009) – something quite different to receiving information about work or discussions about the work of others. At Griffith University, the term is

> … used to denote a range of educational activities that integrate theoretical learning with its application in the workplace, community, studio or practice setting, and provide an authentic experience of work or professional practices that typically occur in these settings. (Griffith Work-integrated Learning (GWIL) Working Party, 20 November 2009)

Griffith University is the product of several amalgamations and now offers courses in Medicine, Dentistry and other Health Sciences, as well as in Criminology, Social Work, Teacher Education, Engineering and the Arts and it has been developing courses for the past fifteen years in Faculties where WIL-based offerings did not previously exist (Bates & The Engaging Students in the Workplace (ESiWP) Working Party, 2007; Holmes, 2008). However, a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis conducted in 2006 identified that although a significant WIL skill-base (pedagogical, administrative, and collegial) had been established within the University, this asset was at risk because of the issues of workload recognition and acknowledgement and the high cost of resourcing WIL (Nyland, Groundwater, & The Engaging Students in the Workplace (ESiWP) Working Party, 2006, December). The same report identified workload models as one of the six strategic areas that needed to be developed.

In 2007, instead of responding with a pre-ordinate policy based upon prior analyses of what was deemed to be an academic teaching workload which could have left important assumptions unchallenged, the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) initiated an *investigation* into what constituted a WIL academic workload. This was conducted by the author and members of a working party. Feedback from staff, focus groups and other direct forms of data collection were used and resulted in a report with 17 recommendations covering the areas of:

- workloads – explicit reference to WIL; utilisation of the classification system (refer to Table 2 in this article); opportunity to negotiate additional loading;

- resources – central repository for pedagogical designs demonstrating excellence in WIL; centralised WIL database system; staffing oversight to maintain resources;

- specific staff development – including evidence-based WIL practice and scholarship; auditable WIL outcomes; establishment of a WIL Teaching Category as part of the Excellence in Teaching awards; provision of a mentoring/buddying system for staff new to WIL; appointment at increased level of seniority in recognition of the additional responsibilities; and

- improving scholarship – mentor and develop staff in the creation of evidence-based teaching practice in WIL.

The University's Academic Plan 3, 2008 – 2010 (Griffith University, 2007) included all 17 recommendations as University policy: this ensured that the Deans (Learning and Teaching) had a mandate to ensure that the WIL workload recommendations continued to be developed through collaboration with the Griffith University Work-Integrated Learning (GWIL) Working Party.

In late 2008, a follow-up to the original report was initiated. It was multi-modal in its approach: a detailed analysis was made of Griffith University policy documents, a workloads survey of 20 questions containing both specific and open-ended questions was developed and electronically disseminated to staff (both academic and administrative) who were listed

on a University WIL network list. A case study methodology was then used to ascertain detailed information about what was actually being demanded of staff working in existing programs officially designated by the University as falling under the rubric of WIL.

The precise nature of a Faculty or School workload document that takes into account the particular needs of WIL programs still seems to be emerging at Griffith University as does the kind of detail that needs to be specified, and this is likely to continue while guiding principles are still being formulated. It should be noted that Barrett and Barrett's (2007) research showed that workload models documenting "…the full range of work have the greatest possibility of creating equitable solutions [but that] …too much detail in a tight model caused staff to make unrealistically fine-grained comparisons" (p. 476). Paewai et al., (2007) reported in their study that if a model was to be effective it needed to provide the opportunity for staff to become much more aware of the tasks and the time required to complete them. Barrett and Barrett's (2010) more recent paper highlighted the importance of genuine dialogical engagement between management and staff so that the specific discipline workload demands are considered. WIL appears to be an area particularly prone to inconsistencies because it has been difficult to quantify accurately student (and industry supervisor) contact and the administrative responsibilities associated with negotiating industry placements. Criteria and formulae for tasks deemed as inherent in academic workloads across the board are discussed in the workload literature, but issues specific to WIL are still not addressed, and complex areas of administrative, pastoral, and individual tutorial responsibility seem often to be either ignored or given inappropriate weightings when their importance is being considered by line managers. Consequently, internal policy documents from Australian universities (e.g. Curtin University, 2002; Griffith University, 2006b; Victoria University, 2009) tend to review time demands for preparing, lecturing, giving repeat classes and so on, but then apply formulae that do not take into account the nature of work-integrated learning where content cannot be delivered in traditional ways. This is the first time the detailed duties and areas of responsibility have been canvassed for what is essentially a new set of teaching methodologies that often extend to activities beyond those usually associated with traditional university teaching.

WIL WORKLOAD: A SURVEY OF ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Table 1 provides the basic relevant details of the 49 staff members (32 academics and 17 administrative), representing 56 per cent of those known to be involved in WIL delivery at Griffith University, who responded to the survey.

TABLE 1
Demographic details

	Academic staff		Administrative staff	
Male		10		3
Female		22		14
Position held	Sessional lecturer	1	HO4	3
	Associate lecturer	2	HO5	11
	lecturer	17	HO6	2
	Senior lecturer	7	Position not indicated	1
	Associate professor	2		
	professor	3		

Over half of the academic positions (53%) were held by staff at Level B (lecturer) while nearly 65 per cent of the administrative staff who responded held a position at HO5 level, receiving a salary of between AUD 49–55.5K. The dominant gender in both the academic and administrative work roles was female (academics 69%and administrative staff 82%). This compares with the University's averages of 45 per cent for academic staff and 69 per cent for administrative staff (Griffith University, 2009). This accords with Cooper and Orrell's (1999, p. 2) research at Flinders University which also found that the staff who became involved with WIL were more likely to be female and that it was unusual for these academics to have 'high profile roles' or to have appointments at senior levels. Todd, Madill, Shaw and Bown's (2008) more recent study in the UK showed that the teaching workload of female academics generally was significantly different to that of their male colleagues; they tended to have either a higher marking workload or were more involved in their teaching preparation and delivery. This impacted on their promotion opportunities: excellence in research was the major criterion for career progression but the female staff involved claimed that the time available to them for research was extremely limited. This was consistent with comments from the participants in this survey who claimed that the WIL commitments in their workload left little time for research and scholarship.

ROLE OF ACADEMIC STAFF

The spread of task categories associated with work directly concerned with the delivery of WIL based courses is identified in Table 2 and includes two of the three workload distribution categories accepted across the University: teaching and service; the other workload category of research is placed at the end of the list as a given responsibility for all academics and as such also applies to WIL academics. For the purposes of identifying the workload associated with WIL courses, two other categories identify the non-traditional activities that are essential for WIL course delivery – 'Management' and 'Unique to WIL'. Frequently management and administration can be a component aligned with the work associated with teaching, but in WIL, there is an increase of this work because of its links with:

- the compliance requirements for professional associations;

- the rigour required in service agreements with organisational partners;

- the assurance of confidentiality and ethical behaviour;

- the assignment of intellectual property;

- the work associated with processes of marketing, promotion of WIL, and membership of industry reference groups; and

- the compliance with all the legislative requirements impacting on both the educational provider as well as the industry provider.

The work included under the heading 'Unique to WIL' has tended to be invisible to Heads of Schools and Faculties and this has led to serious underestimations of what is required of staff members. Some of the tasks included here may be the responsibility of administrative staff and some WIL staff are fortunate to have this support but many do not and, as a result,

academics are usually responsible for tasks that could be considered administrative in other programs.

TABLE 2
Work-integrated learning workload categories of academics

WIL Workload Elements	Teaching	Management	Service	Unique to WIL
Course design, including professional accreditation compliance	✓	✓		Professional accreditation and compliance
Workshops (for preparation, during WIL, and for assessment)	✓			Non-credit bearing prior to placement
Lectures	✓			
Tutorials	✓			
Management of individual WIL contracts between student, university, industry partner and issues of confidentiality and intellectual property	✓	✓		Individual WIL service agreements and learning contracts of students
Assessment	✓	✓		Continuous contact and industry-based assessment
Recruitment, induction and maintenance of industry partnership, including membership of professional association and committees		✓	✓	Continuous promotion, marketing, building collaborative relationships and remaining aware of employment trends
Industry supervisor training	✓			Workshops and training
Student induction into industry	✓			Professional literacy and code of conduct
Placement counselling (student and the industry supervisor) - at risk - career - employment	✓	✓	✓	Appropriate interventions when students evidence difficulty
Directed student learning visits and monitoring of student learning in the workplace - Rural - South East Queensland - International	✓		✓	Monitoring of individual student progress (according to DEEWR)
Leadership internal and external to substantive position			✓	
Event management		✓	✓	Relationship building and marketing processes

OH&S, IP, Risk Management & Insurance	✓	✓	Compliance of students
Supervision/mentoring of WIL professional and administrative staff, and team management	✓		
Research: Grant applications, conference presentations, and development of refereed publications			

The academic teaching of a WIL course demands a range of activities because the teaching is *contextualised*. The academic can be providing teaching not only for the students but frequently for the organisational supervisors. The emphasis on the WIL experience being an *educational* experience mandates the academic to ensure that an acceptable level of opportunity for learning is provided within the organisational setting, thus giving the academic a second student group: the supervisors. Much of the student contact occurs on an individual level, or in small rather than large groups. Bridging the gap between the theory taught within an academic classroom and the experiential learning from work practices usually involves processes of reflection, and this technique, including differentiating between 'reflection-on-action' and 'reflection-in-action', as a developed skill of the 'reflective practitioner' (Schön, 1983, 1987), may also need to be taught to the supervisors as well as to the students.

Identifying, supporting, and assisting students who evidence difficulty while on placement frequently involves the WIL academic as part of the resolution process. The range of reasons for a placement difficulty can reach beyond the usual needs of a classroom-based or flexible teaching situation and can include time-immediate requirements, uncertainties related to future action, personal and professional issues, and issues associated with workplace supervision. In each situation, the academic is teaching problem-solving and other strategies on an individual basis specific to the presenting situation. In these circumstances, the academic is also frequently required to provide a high level of support in the interactions with the placement supervisor as this is critical to the ongoing relationships, and the reputation of the educational institution and the program.

Other components of the WIL teaching load, which are not usually associated with the traditional academic workload, includes the provision of discipline-specific career advice and the development of professional literacy. The WIL academic is frequently identified as an expert by both students and colleagues and, as a result, is a first point of contact to provide individual discipline-specific career advice and behavioural and professional dress expectations. Overall, class contact hours, when taken at face value, do not truly reflect the time spent on these WIL teaching activities and only when they are taken in tandem with the list of other duties, including the administrative and management load, do they reflect the full teaching commitment.

The interconnectedness of the teaching and service roles sometimes makes the clear delineation of WIL responsibilities into traditional academic workload categories difficult. Paewai et al (2007) demonstrated clearly that student advising and supervision could be either teaching or service depending on the situation. Patrick et al. (2009) showed that university staff who worked consistently in WIL developed personal and professional credibility with employer and professional groups, and that this in turn had a direct link to

the learning experience of the students. The 371 university staff who contributed to their national scoping study highlighted the multiple roles of WIL work, which included teaching, administration and leadership, with additional duties associated with "adequate preparation and appropriate supervision and mentoring arrangements…" (p. 11). Patrick et al. (2009) further recognised that:

> Preparation was…much more than just identifying and arranging work placements. [It included]…planning the pathway through the placement, identifying and managing the diversity of pathways post-placement, and building options and understanding [in both the student and the workplace supervisor] right at the start. (p. 14).

WIL is an experiential pedagogy that requires students to be able to reflect on their experiences in the workplace if they are to have a deep learning experience (Ramsden, 1992; Schön, 1983, 1987). For this to occur, it is important that students are able to "participate responsibly in [and] actively engage in the learning process" (Rogers, 1969, pp. 157-166) and to take responsibility for their own learning. The ability of the student to integrate the experiential demands of action in the workplace with the theoretical concepts learnt at university is the central ability that is the focus of the WIL academic's teaching (Bates, 2008). Teaching becomes more the management of learning experiences and assisting students to process those experiences through reflection than simply the delivery of content, and individual contact is essential because different students have different experiences.

Academic staff reported that staff workloads increased when the courses catered for international students, students with special needs or students who are at risk. Patrick et al. (2009) noted that both academic and administrative staff had additional responsibilities not only for the students but also for the organisations and supervisors who required extra support for the teaching role they had taken on. They also showed that overseas placements were "…resource intensive, requiring international job recruitment, special placement agreements and compliance with international laws" and again, that this was in need of recognition (Patrick, et al., 2009, pp. 25-26). They argued that when academics or administrative staff are given responsibility for such students, this increased workload needs to be acknowledged and allowed for in their allocation. There is also a clear duty of care when students are completing university requirements off campus and the WIL offering also requires academic and administrative staff to be involved in appropriate risk management processes and in supporting the preparation of both students and supervisory staff for contingencies that may arise. All of this places additional demands on staff and is as an extra demand on human resources (Orrell, Cooper, & Jones, 1999).

The survey shows risk management to be an important part of the WIL workload. The issue of risk mitigation in WIL covers both Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) and reputational risks. OH&S issues associated with campus teaching are quite different to those associated with individual workplaces and specific contexts, and this aspect of student OH&S is currently being further investigated so that the specific needs of WIL students and their workplace environments are recognised in University policy. What is not often considered, but is none-the-less part of the WIL staff workload, is the issue of risk associated with maintenance of the reputation of the University and each of its WIL programs in the wider community. A poorly resourced and poorly managed WIL program can have a significant, long-lasting negative impact on the reputation of the University in the very sectors in which its graduates are seeking employment.

ROLE OF ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

The WIL activities reported by administrative staff have been summarised in Table 3. The survey results provided additional data on the different types of student contact made by administrative staff (including significant contact made in class time) and the number of hours involved. The same basic workload categories are used for the administrative staff, not to claim that they are teachers, but to illustrate the fact that their work is integral to the course delivery, (i.e. its teaching).

TABLE 3
Work-integrated learning workload categories of administrative staff

WIL Workload Elements	Student Support	Administration	Service	Unique to WIL
Correspondence and associated administrative duties		✓		A range of tasks for WIL management
Database management, maintain records		✓		Details of all participants, including project and payment details
Relationship development, management, maintenance & enhancement			✓	Delegated from academics
Management of individual WIL contracts & placement agreements (University, industry partner)	✓	✓		Due diligence
Membership of committees (internal and external)			✓	Continuous marketing and collaborative relationships
Student induction into industry	✓			Behavioural expectations
Placement counselling – student - eligibility - at risk - career - employment	✓	✓	✓	Appropriate interventions when students evidence difficulty or question career future
Student preparation, including interviewing students, workshops and monitoring of student learning in the workplace	✓		✓	Accessible point of call for students
Event management			✓	Relationship building and marketing processes
OH&S, IP, Risk Management & Insurance		✓	✓	Compliance with operational requirements
Assist Academic Convenor in academic planning		✓		

Although administrative staff are employed in tasks usually associated with administration (including designing and publishing course handbooks, developing promotional material, creating and managing budgets, and database management), the total WIL workload for administrative staff includes numerous tasks that encompass listening to student problems and dealing with issues that would otherwise involve time-consuming work for an academic staff member. They worked either as part of a team responsible for a large number of students, or as individuals providing assistance to academics teaching discrete specialised courses, usually with a smaller number of students. Responses highlighted how similar some of their tasks were to those tasks undertaken by academic staff. The survey demonstrated that these staff members are frequently the key and first point of contact for WIL-related activities, and that although academic staff are required to solve problems when difficulties arise during the placement, usually the administrative staff member is the only person available. As one administrative staff member commented: "It is important that when an issue arises that a University person can be contacted immediately, not three days later."

Administrative staff were also in the frontline of those responsible for maintaining the relationships with organisations which are industry partners in WIL courses. The administrative staff member is a key person for the transfer of information to all partners in the WIL relationship. On average, staff reported having three to four hours of such contact per week and for some this extended to representing the University at industry networking functions and occasional site visits (1.5-2 hours per visit). Recently, the administrative staff in the Education Faculty have been solely responsible for arranging 'market days'; they were also part of the planning committee for a WIL specific two-day conference.

There was general agreement that the additional workload involved in WIL course delivery was still a problem, particularly in the newer and more specialised areas. A number of administrative staff have been required to engage in assisting academic staff as an extra duty. But when assistance is provided in a piece-meal manner, it can degenerate into crisis management and the sustainability of the WIL offering can be compromised. Similarly, the fact that there are no back-up or succession plans for illness or leave means that the work is often unnecessarily stressful. All academic staff emphasised the benefits of the support they did receive and the pressing need for ongoing administrative coordination with organisations and individuals.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

WIL-based courses that meet the DEEWR guidelines can take a number of different forms and need to meet the learning needs of students while being tailored to specific workplaces. The case study presented here provided evidence that WIL courses have a different approach to teaching because the learning is highly contextualised and individual across more than one stakeholder student. Although the WIL teaching task incorporates less direct content delivery and more planning, negotiating, organising, facilitating, and modelling than traditional tertiary teaching, it is based on a pedagogic model that emphasises real-world experience and subsequent reflection rather than the absorption of pre-digested knowledge. Such courses require more staff-student contact than many others and carry an additional administrative load associated with the placement process, the individual teaching required, and the need for staff to spend time working off-campus. Both academic and administrative staff are involved in this range of tasks which is required for efficacious student learning. If WIL educational processes are to be effective, responsibilities and workload allocations need

to be adjusted and categories developed so that appropriate weightings can be given to previously unacknowledged demands of course delivery.

From the data presented in the full study, it was possible to analyse the WIL workload of 12 academics against their individual Faculty Workload allocation; this showed "that without exception the additional workload imposed by the nature of the teaching had been significantly underestimated by the Heads of School" (Bates, 2010, p. 6). Having identified that fact, it is also important to state that in both the 2007 and the 2009 investigations, staff emphasised their genuine commitment and enjoyment in their work for WIL. Staff were able to articulate that they "chose to continue to work in this area even though it could disadvantage them within the system of academic tenure and promotion" (Bates, 2010, p. 6). Certainly, some staff were indicating that they were reaching a point where they wanted to either change subject responsibilities or change administrative positions and this "appeared to be related to 'burnout', lack of support, and the degree of responsibility that this work holds" (Bates, 2010, p. 6).

The final report to the Griffith University made a number of recommendations and their implementation is being overseen by the GWIL Working Party and reported back to the DVC(A). The recommendations included the additional specific identification of WIL in a number of policy documents. Further recommendations focussed on the development of resources to promote the recognition of the alternative nature of the workload. This included focussed advice around promotion and career development for WIL staff, the continuation of a WIL award for both professional and academic staff in the internal Excellence in Teaching award, the establishment of a mentoring system for staff new to WIL, and the promotion of staff involvement in the Graduate Certificate in Higher Education and its Professional Development Modules for WIL. The material presented here in Tables 2 and 3 is also available for all staff as a tool for individual negotiation of their workloads with their Heads of School.

It is acknowledged that this is an initial investigation into this specific area of workload and further research is required in order to establish a valid data source – particularly if sustained change is to occur. As students and organisational supervisors are central to WIL, future research could take account of their perspectives. It is expected that the data from these WIL partners can validate the workload demands of academic and administrative staff. With this validation and acknowledgement of the workload, universities will be able to continue to collaborate for an efficient use of resources and management of WIL workloads across the contexts.

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ABOUT THE JOURNAL

The Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative education (APJCE) arose from a desire to produce an international forum for discussion of cooperative education, or work integrated learning (WIL), issues for practitioners in the Asia-Pacific region and is intended to provide a mechanism for the dissemination of research, best practice and innovation in work-integrated learning. The journal maintains close links to the biennial Asia-Pacific regional conferences conducted by the World Association for Cooperative Education. In recognition of international trends in information technology, APJCE is produced solely in electronic form. Published papers are available as PDF files from the website, and manuscript submission, reviewing and publication is electronically based. In 2010, Australian Research Council (ARC), which administers the Excellence in Research (ERA) ranking system, awarded APJCE a 'B' ERA ranking (top 10-20%).

Cooperative education/WIL in the journal is taken to be work-based learning in which the time spent in the workplace forms an integrated part of an academic program of study. More specifically, cooperative education/WIL can be described as a strategy of applied learning which is a structured program, developed and supervised either by an educational institution in collaboration with an employer or industry grouping, or by an employer or industry grouping in collaboration with an educational institution. An essential feature is that relevant, productive work is conducted as an integral part of a student's regular program, and the final assessment contains a work-based component. Cooperative education/WIL programs are commonly highly structured and possess formal (academic and employer) supervision and assessment. The work is productive, in that the student undertakes meaningful work that has economic value or definable benefit to the employer. The work should have clear linkages with, or add to, the knowledge and skill base of the academic program.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONTRIBUTORS

The editorial board welcomes contributions from authors with an interest in cooperative education/WIL. Manuscripts should comprise reports of relevant research, or essays that discuss innovative programs, reviews of literature, or other matters of interest to researchers or practitioners. Manuscripts should be written in a formal, scholarly manner and avoid the use of sexist or other terminology that reinforces stereotypes. The excessive use of abbreviations and acronyms should be avoided. All manuscripts are reviewed by two members of the editorial board. APJCE is produced in web-only form and published articles are available as PDF files accessible from the website http://www.apjce.org.

Research reports should contain; an introduction that describes relevant literature and sets the context of the inquiry, a description and justification for the methodology employed, a description of the research findings-tabulated as appropriate, a discussion of the importance of the findings including their significance for practitioners, and a conclusion preferably incorporating suggestions for further research. Essays should contain a clear statement of the topic or issue under discussion, reference to, and discussion of, relevant literature, and a discussion of the importance of the topic for other researchers and practitioners. The final manuscript for both research reports and essay articles should include an abstract (word limit 300 words), and a list of keywords, one of which should be the national context for the study.

Manuscripts and cover sheets (available from the website) should be forwarded electronically to the Editor-in-Chief. In order to ensure integrity of the review process authors' names should not appear on manuscripts. Manuscripts should be between 3,000 and 5,000 words, include pagination, be double-spaced with ample margins in times new-roman 12-point font and follow the style of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association in citations, referencing, tables and figures (see also, http://www.apa.org/journals/faq.html). The intended location of figures and diagrams, provided separately as high-quality files (e.g., JPG, TIFF or PICT), should be indicated in the manuscript. Figure and table captions, listed on a separate page at the end of the document, should be clear and concise and be understood without reference to the text.