

Augmenting Students' Learning for Employability Through Post-Practicum Educational Processes

This project investigated and trialled a range of approaches to enhance higher education students' employability through post-practicum interventions. That is, utilising and integrating their workplace experiences in ways directed to achieving specific educational outcomes associated with graduate employability. Identified across two phases of projects, the first 14 in healthcare and the second 28 in other disciplines were ways that post-practicum interventions could be used to achieve specific educational outcomes. A range of considerations for planning and enacting such interventions were also identified.

understanding more fully the requirements of occupations in practice.

understanding something of the diversity of circumstances and situational-specific requirements of that practice.

making informed judgements about preferred occupational pathways, including specialisms.

THE POTENTIAL OUTCOMES for augmenting students' learning post-practicum include:

developing understandings, practices and values that can be applied to other circumstances where the occupational knowledge is enacted.

generating students' personal practices as active and focused learners.

CHALLENGES for implementing post-practicum interventions include:

- whether these interventions should be mandatory or voluntary;
- securing student engagement;
- whether intervention should be student-led or facilitated by others, such as teachers.
- the structuring of experiences to promote engagement and focused interactions; and
- strategies for promoting student engagement.

The project generated the following DELIVERABLES:

- A review of literature about post practicum interventions;
- Findings from a student survey about student needs and preferences.
- Trialling and evaluating post-practicum strategies.
- Journal articles.
- Two books from each of the two rounds of project.
- Broad engagement by higher education institutions and teachers.

The PROJECT'S FINDINGS include:

- Being clear about the kind of educational outcomes intended to be achieved and aligning particular interventions with those outcomes.
- The need for these interventions to be planned and carefully enacted, and integrated into the overall curriculum for the education program.
- The importance of understanding students' preferences and engaging them in the process they can engage effortfully, with interest, and in confidence with peers.
- Having educational processes that draw on students' experiences and allow them to share, compare and contrast those experiences disciplines.
- The importance of pressing students to be active and strategic learners in their placements and positioning them as the key constructors of knowledge (i.e. their learning);
- Enacting processes in which students feel safe to share, compare critically appraise their own and others' experiences.
- Acknowledging that contemporary students are 'time jealous' and the demands of extensive practicums and interventions associated with them need to be demonstrably worthwhile when designing and enacting programs.
- Teacherly competence for preparing and engaging students, and augmenting their work experiences through post-practicum interventions can optimise educational provisions, promote employability beyond graduation and provide bases for being active learners across working life.



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Support for this publication has been provided by the Australian Government Department of Education. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the Australian Government Department of Education.