Abstract

For many years, emphasis has been placed on the production of ‘work ready’ graduates competent in their disciplinary field and able to cope in a changing work environment. Universities are being placed under increasing pressure to produce employable graduates with governments making public funding for universities contingent upon demonstrable graduate outcomes. This has resulted in universities offering their undergraduate students in commerce and business the opportunity to gain good business acumen and real world experience by undertaking Work Integrated Learning (WIL) as part of their learning.

This paper proposes a three stage model to effectively embed WIL into undergraduate accounting and business programs. Through careful planning, implementation and assessments in three accounting/business courses in the WIL framework, students are encouraged to build essential knowledge and skills. They learn that to be successful in the working environment, they will need to be equipped with not only technical skills but transferable generic skills like communication, teamwork, problem-solving and the ability to network in a variety of workplace situations.

This program seeks to narrow the expectations gap between industry and academia and students and supports the development of graduates who can respond to changing economic circumstances and are employable, adaptable and positive contributors in the workplace.

Keywords: Work Integrated Learning, Framework, Graduate skills, Attributes, Accounting