

NAGCAS ALTC Project - **COMMUNIQUE No. 2**, October 2008

Project and Symposium papers available at: <http://www.usq.edu.au/nagcascarrickproject/>

Career Development Learning: maximising the contribution of Work Integrated Learning to the student experience

The NAGCAS ALTC Project update

Project overview

This scoping study is an ALTC funded NAGCAS initiative using applied research strategies to identify effective programs and initiatives that incorporate career development learning into a variety of work integrated learning approaches that involve university, industry and community engagement. The project timeline is from December 2007 to February 2009. The outcomes of the Project will feed into the development of relevant policies, frameworks and resources which will be trialled within the sector, and distributed to support as well as enhance the effectiveness of CDL and WiL programs offered within universities.

Action research summary

- Initial discussions and collaboration with career services personnel at the NAGCAS Conference at University of Wollongong December 2007
- SurveyMonkey questionnaire pilot study with selected career services personnel
- SurveyMonkey questionnaires for stakeholder audiences: university career services; university academics; industry/employers; international sector practitioners.
- Follow up face-to-face and telephone interviews (by project team) with programs identified through survey.
- Case studies — summaries of a number of diverse practice programs developed for consideration at the Symposium
- Discussion paper developed for pre reading by Symposium delegates (and posted on website)
- Leader Symposium papers forwarded to Symposium delegates for pre reading (and posted on website)
- Leader Symposium Powerpoint presentations posted on website
- Project team and leaders debriefing and identification of key issues for Symposium Communique.
- A.G. Watts Synthesis from Symposium posted on website
- Follow up interviews (by project team) with selected academics to review, refine the developed WiL-CDL Principles, model and terminology matrix.
- Forum for students and industry/employer/professional association representatives (Melbourne, 17th October)

Symposium evaluation

Twenty-nine hard copy and 18 electronic evaluations were gathered post event.

Ongoing communication and enhanced efforts to develop and maintain partnerships, especially with industry/employers. The need for creation of more placements was identified

"There are 1,000s of students who take on WIL placements each year. The vast majority of these take place without the involvement of academics, faculties or careers advisors. The debate needs to be about how we can create more placements so that every student undertakes WIL at some stage of their degree. To do this we need to involve all stakeholders."

"To retain a focus on the challenges of forming sustainable partnerships with a variety of participants. This requires particular skills and resources. Frequently relationship building and maintaining is discussed as though it is a given, rather than a challenge."

Summary of post symposium reflections from Prof. A.G.Watts

"The core elements of our discussions seem to me to be three-fold:

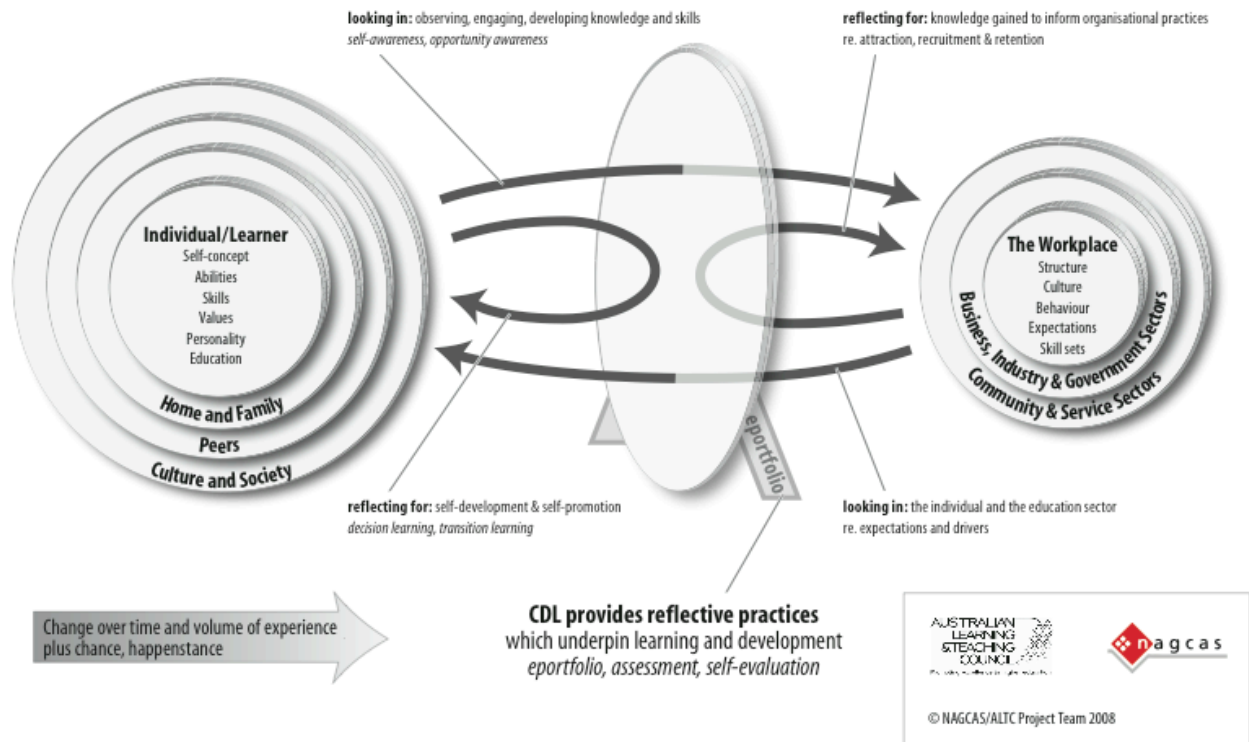
- The elevation of the status of learning and teaching within universities.
- Seeking partnerships with employers and other community resources in constructing learning experiences: this is the essence both of work-integrated learning and of service-learning.

- Involving students actively in such learning experiences, and including explicit attention to processes designed to inform, support and enrich their aspirations and goals: this is the essence of career development learning, and it is what such learning distinctively brings to the table.”

Resources being developed

1. Draft Visual Model v7

CDL & WiL: Looking from both sides of the two-way mirror



The two-way mirror concept illustrates how CDL provides the capacity for the individual to learn and develop before, during and after their workplace experiences, in a lifelong context.

2. Development of Draft Principles - enhancing the value of CDL-WiL experiences for students

Developed for consultation (resulting from Symposium delegate recommendations).

1. Career Development Learning (CDL) is student centred requiring active student engagement. By including CDL elements, work integrated and experiential learning ensures that the student is placed at the centre of the learning process and/or activity, ensuring greater engagement.

2. Lifelong – broader concept of CDL

Career development learning involves awareness of the many different life roles across the lifespan that requires active involvement by individuals in decisions related to ongoing life transitions

3. The core purpose of WiL and CDL is learning through reflective practices

Career development learning, being focused on student needs, requires reflection. Work integrated learning that includes CDL elements ensures reflective practices that maximize the experience.

4. All learning experiences are important for CDL and WiL

All learning experiences and contexts are important and relevant for effective CDL and WiL programs, academic and formal learning within a university as well as informal and experiential learning in the workplace and community are equally important.

5. WiL and CDL — a cross-disciplinary approach available within and outside the curriculum

CDL and WiL needs to incorporate cross-disciplinary approaches within or external to the formal curriculum as WiL/CDL addresses life and work transitions, citizenship, workplace requirements, and socioeconomic human capital.

6. Effective partnerships between stakeholders enhances experiences and effective practices

Effective partnerships between stakeholders, from formal and informal institutions with commonly accepted principles, will enable learning to occur in all aspects of life, contexts and experiences, in and outside the curriculum.

7. Language and terminology

a) Effective practice, implementation and partnerships across sectors requires commonly accepted and agreed language and terminology

b) Clear definitions of what CDL is, and how it is integral to WiL experiences should be developed with agreement from all stakeholders

8. Flexibility

Provision of (or access to) flexible models, processes and programs will ensure that CDL and WiLearning can occur in a broad range of contexts and be adapted for the needs of the relevant educational institutions, industries and stakeholders.

9. Valued — validation

a) Learning and outcomes from CDL and WiL programs must be valued by relevant stakeholders by approaches and attitudes

b) CDL-WiL experiences and outcomes need to be recognized and validated by institutions if students are to be provided with equal opportunities for broad educational experiences.

10. Mutual benefit and reciprocity — CDL and WiL programs should benefit all participants

Although CDL is student centred, all programs can and should provide benefits for all stakeholders involved in the program.

Further discussions and consultations will take place to review and refine these draft Principles

3. Draft Resource terminology matrix

As discussions and consultation progressed it became obvious that definitions and terminology were a major stumbling block when communicating across sectors.

A draft terminology matrix has been developed to identify more accessible language appropriate to the Watts 4 stage model of CDL (the DOTS model).

A CDL-WiL resource

A CDL-WiL resource is to be developed for this initial scoping phase of the project (Stage 1). The need for a fully developed and comprehensive web-based/ digital resource was considered essential for a future project. ALTC will be presented with Expressions of Interest for future funding to maintain work on CDL-WiL resources (Stages 2 & 3).

Ongoing activities of the NAGCAS ALTC Project include as outlined in the initial communique:

1. Development of models, tools and resources which will support all stakeholders in the development of effective practices
2. Staging of a forum where larger numbers of students and employer representatives provide feedback. The Forum date: 17th October (Melbourne)

Recommendations to government: strengthening of the funding base to support the sector — to be addressed at conclusion of the scoping project (February 2009)

The NAGCAS Carrick Project Leaders Team includes: Sally Brooks (RMIT), Peter McIlveen (USQ); Peter Torjul (Flinders); Joanne Tyler (Monash); and Martin Smith (Wollongong)

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