

Key Principles for Work-Based Learning in Higher Education

- 1. Partnerships.** A learning agreement or contract is negotiated between stakeholders usually an HEI, student and employer. Each party understands and respects their roles, responsibilities and expectations in developing professional practice capabilities that are underpinned by academic learning.
- 2. Course Design.** The external organisation is a partner with the HEI and the student in the planning of learning activities. The curriculum is responsive to the needs of the workplace supported by academic knowledge.
- 3. Pedagogical Approaches.** Appropriate training and support should be provided for HEI staff and other stakeholders to bring academic scholarship to professional practice that includes experiential, reflective and authentic approaches.
- 4. Assessment.** Learning outcomes that fulfil academic level criteria, go beyond disciplinary knowledge and meet the knowledge and capability requirements of work. These can be based upon generic often inter and transdisciplinary knowledge.
- 5. Quality Assured.** Academically informed development of the HEI's work-based curriculum in each subject area are validated with quality procedures in place, and continued evaluation and review e.g. a WBL Framework, involving all Schools/Faculties of the Institution.
- 6. Institutional policy.** HEIs need to have a focussed policy on WBL that is integrated and coherent with study programmes, contribute to their learning objectives, and their learning and teaching strategy.
- 7. Infrastructure and Procedural Developments.** HEIs and employers/stakeholders are to use appropriate records and administrative systems, procedures and models.
- 8. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).** HEIs recognise high-level experiential learning and certificated courses for awarding HEI credit. The process of critical reflection and evidence of learning determines the level and volume of credit. The credits may be incorporated into the HEI award or acknowledged in some way by the HEI as an attribute of employability.
- 9. University-Business Co-operation.** HEIs align some learning outcomes to organisational objectives. A development team can help HEIs increase awareness of employer needs and assist employers in the understanding of higher education, especially academic goals and level criteria.
- 10. Higher Education Apprenticeships.** HEIs facilitate a work-role for the student with required 'on and off-the-job' learning where Employer and HEI are collectively responsible for delivery. The criteria for awarding a degree obtained via apprenticeship are defined by the HEI in collaboration with employers.
- 11. Employer In-House Training.** HEIs undertake to award university credit to a training programme often by enhancing the training with university-level education and recognising it as a short credit-bearing course.
- 12. Quality provision with partners.** All stakeholders are engaged and contributing to the overall WBL quality standards and quality assurance procedures.