

Policy number	P45	Version	4
Approved by ABG on	1 February 2024	Scheduled review date	February 2029

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide the framework, principles and processes to support and embed work-integrated learning into the curriculum of postgraduate coursework at the National Institute of Organisation Dynamics Australia (NIODA).

2. Scope

This policy applies to staff and students in postgraduate coursework, and industry partners, professional and community organisations involved in the work-integrated learning at NIODA.

3. Policy Statement

Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) is an umbrella term for a range of approaches and strategies that integrate systems psychodynamic theory with the practice of work within a purposefully designed curriculum (as provided in *The WIL Report* by Carol-Joy (Patrick, C. et.al. 2009).

NIODA recognises the many benefits to offering work-integrated learning as an integral and integrated part of the curriculum. NIODA sees work-integrated learning as a purposeful, organised, supervised and assessed educational activity requirement for the completion of a course that integrates theoretical learning with its applications in the workplace.

Specifically, NIODA believes that work-integrated learning offers students the following benefits:

- in accordance with NIODA Graduate Attribute aspirations, develops and reinforces relevance of the course to life goals beyond achievement of a NIODA qualification
- assists in developing new professional/workplace skills as students experiment with applying theoretical concepts and new methods in the workplace
- provides experiential contexts for the development and application of conceptual knowledge and so reinforces learning
- enables the creation of new knowledge through the application of existing knowledge to new problems
- enhances the reciprocal flow of knowledge and its application between NIODA and the workplaces or community settings in which students apply their learning
- promotes engagement between NIODA and employers and
- improves professional/workplace opportunities for students.

The pedagogical structuring of learning experiences that comprise work-integrated learning at NIODA recognises and utilises contributions from both academic and practice settings. It intentionally integrates the learning arising in both settings to realise the knowledge and skills students need to achieve mastery in applied systems psychodynamics.

4. General Principles

4.1. In every subject, students engage in authentic or near-authentic experiences of professional service or workplace practice either in their own 'back-at-work' situation or in another organisation. Work with other organisations includes activities such as:

- workplace observation of a place of work (or of a meeting such as a local government council meeting) other than their own place of work

- taking the role of consultant in a one-to-one role analysis consultation
 - working as a student consultant on a five-day project with a 'client' organisation
 - participation in a five-day institutional simulation-like conference – the Group Relations Conference
 - carrying out a small research project in an organisation as part of a group assignment.
- 4.2. Work-Integrated Learning activities are formally assessed towards the award of a grade. This assessment occurs either through class presentation or written assignments.
- 4.3. There is an intentional integration between theory and practice, including, where applicable, the structured application of broad disciplinary knowledge or theory in the practice setting.
- 4.4. Students are informed about their personal and professional responsibilities during Work-Integrated Learning activities conducted in professional/work settings.
- 4.5. The work-integrated learning is closely monitored and supported by the subject teacher who has assigned the work-based learning task.
- 4.6. The responsibilities and mutual expectations of the student, academic teacher and workplace personnel involved in the learning assignment and the intended learning outcomes are clearly articulated and agreed; and where appropriate, the agreement is formalised in writing (See attached example of a letter of agreement).
- 4.7. Work-Integrated Learning activities are undertaken in accordance with requirements relevant to NIODA's and the client's workplace health and safety policies, and any other requirements of the jurisdiction in which the client operates.

5. Procedures

5.1. Industry / Community Engagement

NIODA engage with local organisations, alumni and members of the broader community of practice to build and maintain the three way relationships (NIODA/teacher – student – workplace client) that serve to optimise successful work-integrated learning.

Since NIODA's students are work-experienced professionals and part of the experience of Work-Integrated Learning is learning how to take up personal authority and role in the application of systems psychodynamic principles and theory, for the most part, students make their own arrangements for the identification of sites and for negotiating entry for the work. The exceptions to this are the one-to-one role analysis and the five-day consulting project. For both of these, the subject coordinator and teaching staff identify clients and match students with clients. For all Work-Integrated Learning activities, teaching staff are available to support the entry process.

5.2. Preparation for Work-Integrated Learning

In the preparation for Work-Integrated Learning there are three key components:

Preparatory component - prior to work activity where:

- objectives, intentions and approaches are established
- work activity learning outcomes and assessment methods are set
- students are informed of the inherent requirements of the activity.

Work based component - the work activity where the:

- approach is applied in practice
- outcomes are observed, evaluated and reflected upon.

Retrospective component - follows the work based assignment where there is:

- debriefing and reflective learning on the work activity
- formalised assessment
- an opportunity to provide feedback (as three-way communication).

How each of these components is built into the subject is the responsibility of each subject teacher with the support and sign off of the Course Lead.

5.3. Management of Work Integrated Learning

For short duration work-integrated learning activities, such as workplace observation, students make their own arrangements with a site for observation. They are provided with a copy of a letter from the subject coordinator when it is required (See appendix 1).

For the five-day consulting assignment, the subject coordinator and teaching staff are responsible for sourcing clients and work in collaboration with the students to match student consulting teams with client projects. A letter of agreement is sent to the 'client' participant (see sample letter attached in appendix 2). Confirmation of the agreement by email from the 'client' is acceptable. NIODA maintains good links with its alumni and past clients who, combined, represent a large 'pool' of prospective 'clients' for these short-duration placements.

For the one-to-one role consultation assignment, the subject coordinator and teaching staff create a pool of possible 'clients' to match student consultants. Care is taken to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest in this matching process. Once the consultation is agreed and negotiated between the student consultant and the client, a letter of agreement is sent to the 'client'. Confirmation of the agreement by email from the 'client' is acceptable.

With each of these work-integrated learning activities, the supervision and support takes place back in the classroom when time is allocated for students to report back, debrief and process the learning. Due to the short duration of each of these activities and the experience and maturity of students, there is no on site placement visit by the teacher. Part of the learning is for students to manage themselves on work placement independently. However, should either the teacher or the student have any concerns about any aspect of the welfare or safety of a student participating in work-integrated learning activities, both student and teacher may initiate a one-to-one meeting to address any concerns.

In third year, students carry out a substantial piece of work-based participatory action research. To ensure the appropriate management of the project, students, in consultation with their action research project supervisor, are responsible for:

- finding an organisational research partner and negotiating entry
- completing an Ethics Application for low-risk social research
- interacting with the sponsor of the project in the research organisation to agree the scope, mode/s, duration and activities to be undertaken for the research.
- providing a written Research Proposal for the research that is approved by the research organisation sponsor and the research supervisor
- providing a Plain Language Statement for participants
- obtaining signed Consent Forms from all participants

- leading the research activities
- reflecting and debriefing with the research supervisor, small learning groups and the class as a whole.

Students are encouraged by the subject teacher to work in small research teams for their action research, creating the opportunity for peer review. Students also receive significant support and guidance from an action research project supervisor.

5.4. Quality Assurance

This *Work-Integrated Learning Policy* and its implementation are monitored, evaluated and improved through NIODA's quality management process (see Quality Assurance Policy).

5.5. Risk Management

NIODA manages risk for the work-integrated learning placements through:

- work done in class preparing students for work-integrated learning activities
- providing ample allocation of class time for students to reflect upon the learning experience
- availability of teaching staff for any additional support that a student may require during work-integrated learning activities
- careful selection of 'clients' for work-integrated learning activities. Generally, these are people who have had prior experience of working with applied systems psychodynamic approaches to organisational role consultation, consultation or research projects. In addition, 'client' organisations must have appropriate workplace health and safety policies and practices.
- availability of teaching staff should the 'client' have any concerns.
- following up with 'client' volunteers for feedback on their experience so it can be fed into the quality review process.

5.6. Conflict of Interest

If there is any risk that a student has a conflict of interest in relation to working with a 'client' or research organisation, then they must declare this so that it can be managed.

5.7. Student Requirements

Students participating in work-integrated learning are required to:

- act in accordance with both NIODA's and the 'client' organisation's ethical guidelines, respecting confidentiality and intellectual property issues
- comply with workplace health and safety requirements
- take responsibility for learning by participating fully in the learning process and undertaking all learning opportunities provided
- ensure they can create a quiet space with minimal, or no, interruptions when working online
- communicate with the subject teacher and notify them of any problems that arise
- ensure that all attendance and assessment requirements for the unit are satisfactorily completed.

Where a student fails to comply with these obligations they may be:

- removed from a work-integrated learning placement and/or
- not awarded a grade for that part of the unit or course.

5.8. Insurance

NIODA maintains an Insurance Policy covering Student Personal Accident and Public Liability for enrolled students undertaking unpaid work in work-integrated learning placements.

6. Responsibilities

The Academic Board of Governance is responsible for oversight of this policy.

The Master's Course Lead is responsible for having oversight of the review and development of this policy.

Subject teachers and students are responsible for the implementation of this policy and for providing feedback for the review of this policy.

7. Related Documents

Quality Assurance Policy

Risk Management Policy

Ethics Guidelines

Course Development and Review Policy

Reference

Patrick, C. et al (2008). *The WIL Report*. Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, QLD

Appendix 1

Sample Letter Workplace Observation



Date

Dear

Students of the NIODA postgraduate course in Leadership and Management (Organisation Dynamics) are required to observe a group in operation for one to two hours as a part of their first year subjects.

The sole purpose of the observation is to assist the students in furthering understanding of group behaviour and its relation to the task/s the group is undertaking. As it is not a consultancy exercise it is not anticipated that the students will provide feedback to the group.

The students will write about their experience in an assessment piece. This will be confidential to the student and the staff member assessing the essay. Class discussion will also occur about the observation. Confidentiality is a normal expectation of all classroom discussions.

We thank you for supporting our students' learning.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "WHarding". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'H' and 'g'.

Dr Wendy Harding,
Dean, NIODA

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Appendix 2

Sample Letter Short Consultancy



Date

Dear

Thank you for agreeing to work with NIODA students of the postgraduate course in Leadership and Management (Organisation Dynamics).

The consultancy is a part of the first year subject, Systems Psychodynamics Consulting in which groups of up to five students undertake a small consulting assignment in an organisation over a five-day period. The scheduled dates for this subject are _____.

In brief, the process is as follows:

- You will be asked by the students to specify a presenting issue or dilemma. The issue needs to be something within the realm of organisation behaviour/management (i.e. not a specialist, technical issue) that is real, yet graspable within the limited time available. The emphasis is on process consultation which involves helping organisation members consider the assumptions that have contributed to this issue and the challenge of changing organisational practices to achieve a different outcome. The aim is to have a real yet brief consultancy opportunity.
- You will be required to release staff involved in the issue to be available to meet with students on Monday afternoon and as negotiated over the following three days.
- The students alternate between the client and the classroom, this may be onsite or virtual. They have about 2.5 days (Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday) to work with the client and the same amount of time as 'students' in the classroom exploring how they are using their prior learning to tackle the issue.
- During a final meeting with you and others involved in the project, the students will present their findings and, if appropriate, any recommendations.

While students are working with you, they have the following obligations:

- To act in accordance with both NIODA's and your organisation's ethical guidelines, respecting confidentiality and intellectual property issues
- To comply with your workplace health and safety requirements
- Take responsibility for learning by participating fully in the consultancy process and undertaking all the consulting activities as agreed between you and the student consulting group
- On those occasions when working virtually, to work in quiet and private locations where they will not be interrupted during consultations
- Share findings with you and others involved in the consultancy in a professional and sensitive manner.

Each consulting team will have up to five students from the course. There will be three or four consulting teams, each working with a different organisation during the week. While professional confidentiality is

emphasised and maintained, students learn a great deal from comparing their efforts by sharing broad themes and findings.

For the client organisation, there is the possibility of receiving some new thinking and ideas in exchange for your time.

Please find attached the outline for the subject the students are undertaking. Please feel free to contact me with any concerns or questions that you may have.

If you are happy with the process as described above, your agreement to proceed by return email will be confirmation of this arrangement.

Kind regards,

Subject Teacher name

Phone number and email address