Festival of Learning Showcase

Facilitator(s): Mrs Sonia Ferns, Project Lead, Work Integrated Learning, Curtin Teaching and Learning

Strategic theme: Equipping graduates for the future

Subject Title: Evidencing unpredictable student outcomes: Assessment in a work integrated learning context

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Brief Description and Abstract for T&L Forum:

Assessment of student outcomes continues to present challenges for higher education institutions with students and graduates consistently rating this as an area requiring improvement. In addition, responsibilities associated with assessment generate significant workload for teaching staff. The design, integrity and quality of an assessment task, coupled with challenges of catering to increasing student diversity and consistent decision making, are topics of ongoing debate and investigation. Assessment plays a pivotal role in student engagement and motivation, and is an important mechanism for validating student outcomes in a competitive and standards-based regulatory environment. The challenges of rigorous, effective and efficient assessment methods are more pronounced in work integrated learning (WIL) focussed curriculum, where student outcomes are unpredictable, volatile and context dependent. Workplace learning encompasses a social construct where behaviours and outcomes are influenced by others, culminating in variable learning experiences that neither the student nor university can regulate. Increasingly, WIL features in institutional strategic plans, yet traditional assessment approaches, policies and expectations continue to present obstacles to implementing innovative assessment profiles. Curriculum continues to be content-driven, with compartmentalised subjects incorporating isolated and disconnected assessments, where a grade is allocated to indicate students’ proficiency. The presentation provides an overview of critical assessment issues in work-integrated learning, and a special issue of the Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education, which highlight the complexity of assessing WIL outcomes. A selection of authors will share their expertise and experience with contemporary assessment issues.

Time/Day: Monday 16 March 215, 12:30 – 1:00pm

Duration: 30 mins

No. of Sessions: One

Venue: Building 300:Room 219

Special Requirements: No special requirements needed