Sharing the load: Understanding the roles of academics and host supervisors in work-integrated learning

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Student supervision is a key factor underpinning the success of work-integrated learning programs. Supervisory responsibilities can be shared across a number of stakeholders including university staff and host/workplace supervisors. While there have been attempts to understand the roles played by each of these stakeholders, little research has focused on what each understands about the role of others. University staff and host supervisors (*N*=57) were interviewed about their own role and that of other stakeholders. Findings reveal that while there is reasonable consensus within each stakeholder group about their own roles, perceptions about the roles of others are mismatched in some fundamental areas. There also appear to be intersecting and complementary roles, which remain largely unexplored and accounted for in research and theory to date. This study is unique in bringing together the perceptions of multiple stakeholders to explore ideas about supervision. Implications for theory, practice and future research are discussed. *(Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education, 2016, 17(2), 101-118)*

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Supervision of students, both by the university and at the placement site, is acknowledged as playing a critical role in Work Integrated Learning (WIL) programs (Coll & Eames, 2000; Cooper, Orrell, & Bowden, 2010), and is a key factor underpinning their success (Patrick et al., 2009). It is only one of many roles and responsibilities needed for WIL to flourish, but supervision is the least understood and remains under-theorized and largely under-explored (Hays & Clements, 2011). The term work-integrated learning is used herein to refer to a broad range of experience-based education models and curriculum approaches where students engage with industry and community organizations, for example, service learning, work-based learning, community engagement, cooperative education (Rowe, Mackaway, & Winchester-Seeto, 2012), as well as internships, teacher practicums, clinical placements, engineering sandwich courses, virtual projects, simulations, fieldwork etc.

The roles and responsibilities of host supervisors, academics and students in work integrated learning (WIL) have been researched in some disciplines (e.g., Bray & Nettleton, 2007; Coll & Eames, 2000; Le Maistre, Boudreau, & Paré, 2006) and addressed in recent reports (e.g., Keating, Jeffries, Glaisher, & Milne, 2010; Patrick et al., 2009). In this paper the term host supervisor will be used to refer to anyone responsible for supervising the experience of students who are undertaking a placement or other WIL activity, and includes workplace supervisor, mentor, preceptor and guide. Academic refers to the person within the university tasked with coordinating, managing or organizing the WIL activity, and includes lecturers, educators, teachers, instructors. An extensive literature review of the host supervisor role was undertaken by the authors (Rowe et al., 2012), and informed the development of a conceptual framework identifying four key roles of the host: support, education, administration/managerial and guardianship.

Research in this area is in its infancy, and much is based on studies of single units, from a single discipline, and small sample sizes. The research is complicated by the considerable variation in supervisory practices between universities, within the same university and across disciplines.

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Factors that influence supervisory practices both within the university and placement site include:

- disciplinary traditions (e.g., teaching and nursing have a long placement tradition, whereas arts and computing are relative newcomers);
- type of WIL or placement model (e.g., sandwich courses, internships);
- variation in the number of people supervising students (e.g., nursing may involve a mentor, clinical supervisor and preceptor (Mills, Francis, & Bonner, 2005);
- teacher education may have mentor teachers and school coordinators (Le Cornu, 2010);
- location of supervisors (e.g., onsite, on-campus or a mixture of both); and
- degree of involvement of the supervisor/s with students (Keating et al., 2010).

All these factors impact the expected roles and responsibilities of academics and host supervisors. In some cases the roles are shared across a number of people, and in others a supervisor may have multiple roles, for example, be expected to guide and support, but also make judgments about students performance, and determine their suitability for a profession (Bray & Nettleton, 2007). While there have been attempts to understand all the roles played by each stakeholder, there has been little research into what each stakeholder understands about the role of the others. Previous studies have investigated the perspective of one or two stakeholder groups in isolation (e.g., Richardson et al., 2009), with only a few comparing stakeholder perspectives *inter alia* (DeClou, Peters, & Sattler, 2013; Keating et al., 2010; Levin, Bok, & Evans, 2010). Available evidence suggests there is a disconnect between stakeholder perceptions of the responsibilities and tasks of each stakeholder (Rowe et al., 2012, p. 116; also Keating et al. 2010).

Valuable and meaningful WIL experiences require "a shared understanding of the purpose of the experience and how …different [stakeholder] roles impact on quality" (Patrick et al., 2009, p. 32). Mismatched expectations and disparate views between stakeholders have been reported about the purpose of placements, communication and approaches to supervision (Keating et al., 2010; Patrick et al., 2009; Rowe et al., 2012; Woolf & Yorke, 2010). Such disconnects can lead to misunderstandings and miscommunications, and lost opportunities to enhance student learning (Winchester-Seeto, Rowe, & Mackaway, 2013).

AIMS

This paper builds on the previous work of the authors (Winchester-Seeto et al., 2013) by providing more detail about responsibilities and tasks of the stakeholders involved in WIL (host supervisors, university staff and students). A more comprehensive analysis of interview data capturing the perceptions of the main stakeholders in WIL is presented. Specific aims are to:

- provide a detailed view of the roles of academics and host supervisors in WIL, especially in supervision;
- document the perceptions of academics and host supervisors about what is involved in their own role and that of other stakeholders;
- ascertain the degree to which stakeholder perceptions of each role align or diverge from those of other stakeholders;
- develop a clearer understanding of the ways these roles intersect for effective supervision and any possible disconnects; and
- determine implications for a theoretical model of supervision in WIL.

By better understanding the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in WIL, universities and partner organizations will be able to develop more effective supervisory practices to maximize student learning.

METHODS

Participants

Participants were stakeholders in WIL, including university staff (academic and professional, *n*=25), host supervisors (*n*=26) and students (*n*=6). There were 46 females and 11 males, representing a range of disciplines (including arts, business, health sciences, education) within Australian and New Zealand universities, and workplace/community organizations (including commercial, government and non-for-profit).

Interviews and Focus Groups

Ethics approval was sought and granted for the research (reference no. 5201001421). Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted at the researchers university with 18 hosts, nine university staff, and six students (via phone or face-to-face). In addition, one focus group featured four host supervisors, and two more at a national conference, yielded 17 university staff and three host supervisors. Focus groups were used to diversify the participant group. Through the national conference we were able to tap into disciplines, professions and a broader range of host supervisors than those available at the institution where the research was undertaken. Interviews and focus groups were undertaken by the research team, recorded and transcribed. Interview questions, based on the findings of previous work and informed by an extensive literature review (Rowe et al., 2012) aimed to encourage participants to reflect on the roles and responsibilities of host and academic supervisors and students.

Coding

Interview transcripts were coded and analyzed using QSR NVivo 9 software. Each transcript was independently coded by two researchers, with regular meetings to ensure consistency. High level codes for host and academic supervisor role categories (Support, Education, Administration/Managerial and Guardianship) were obtained from the conceptual framework outlined previously (Rowe et al., 2012). However, lower level codes (hereafter referred to as "sub-categories"), for example, communication, educational input, monitoring, were identified through inductive methods of coding as part of a broader thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) (Appendix A). A constant comparative approach (Thorne, 2000) underpinned the sorting of coded material into sub-categories. That is, each code was compared with "others that may be similar or different in order to develop conceptualizations of the possible relations between various pieces of data" (Thorne, 2000, p. 69). Coding was refined over several cycles to create a smaller number of meaningful and distinct sub-categories. Thematic analysis was chosen as the overall approach because of its flexibility, namely its ability to be applied across different theoretical frameworks and epistemological positions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). A flexible approach was needed given the exploratory nature of the study.

Data Analysis

There are two parts to this analysis. First, a source frequency analysis compares the reporting of sub-categories by participant groups (sources in NVivo). Splitting participant groups yields, for example, a hosts view of the academic supervisor roles, or an academic supervisors view of the host roles, as well as participant views of their own roles. Tables, generated using the matrix coding query in NVivo, showed the number of sources (participants) for each group referred to particular sub-categories. Percentages were calculated and displayed in two sets of

bar charts representing host supervisor roles (Figure 1) and academic roles (Figure 2). Due to the small number of student participants, their responses were not included in this part of the analysis. The category of guardianship was seldom mentioned and has also been excluded from the analysis.

Second, segments of transcripts coded for one or more role categories were analyzed via an NVivo word frequency query to determine the 100 most frequently used words. Transcript segments referring to host supervisors were analyzed independently to those referring to academics. The 100 most frequently used words has been used as a proxy to signify the importance of ideas and language used in previous studies (e.g., Bosanquet, Winchester-Seeto, & Rowe, 2010; Winchester-Seeto, Bosanquet, & Rowe, 2012). Words with six or more letters, combined with those of seven or more letters, with 25% similarity yielded the most information. Table 1 lists words unique to either host supervisors or academics; the words were placed into themes to aid understanding, and each use of a word checked to ensure consistency with the theme in which it was placed. As this analysis was on aggregated data, coded transcripts from student interviews were included.

RESULTS

Overall Findings

All findings are based on two assumptions. Firstly, that categories and sub-categories mentioned by more interviewees (sources) are more important or occupy more time than others; and secondly, that the 100 most frequently used words signifies the importance of those ideas in the mind of the interviewees. There is potential bias in the data, as most host supervisors participated in 30 minute interviews, while more university staff were represented in focus groups. Focus group members had less time to contribute data (fewer comments and fewer words overall), thus care must be taken in interpreting small differences between the groups as these may be an artifact. Despite these limitations, there are documented benefits to combining focus group and interview data for purposes of validation (i.e., method triangulation), accessing different types of information (e.g., public/shared knowledge vs. private/personal) and enhancing understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, among others (see Lambert & Loiselle, 2008; Michel, 1999). For the present study, diversification of the participant group via focus groups was used to broaden, and thereby enhance understanding of stakeholder roles.

Overall the largest number of coded words from all participants is about host supervisors, and, not unexpectedly, more host supervisors talk about their own role in all categories than that of academics (Figures 1 and 2). The latter observation could be partially exacerbated by the data bias. This pattern is not matched by university staff who refer frequently to both the roles of academics and host supervisors. The reasons are not clear and may be related to host supervisors knowing very little about the work of academics, or it may reflect variability in the models and practices of WIL, where some host supervisors have very little actual contact with academics. University staff, on the other hand, seem to have a slightly better appreciation overall of the work of host supervisors, mirroring the findings of Levin et al. (2010).

Administration/Managerial Role

The most words overall and largest number of coded comments fitted into the Administration/Managerial role category (Table 1). This may signify the importance attached to this role, the complexity and the amount of time it takes, the visibility of the work, or the knowledge of participants. Alignment of perceptions may stem from the fact that this is where the work of academics and host supervisors intersect the most. The administrative/ managerial

aspects of WIL are well documented in the literature (e.g., Emslie, 2010).

The bar charts show that the biggest disparities apply to placement logistics and managing the experience (Figure 1). Host supervisors clearly do more in relation to paperwork and setting up work spaces, setting expectations and managing deadlines than is indicated by university staff. Hosts on the other hand seem to over emphasize the tasks related to recruitment for university staff, but vastly underestimate their work in relation to student preparation (Figure 2). This finding is interesting, given that student preparation is reported as a key responsibility of academic supervisors in the literature (e.g., Hays & Clements, 2011).

Word frequency analysis points to other differences. The role descriptor for hosts is management versus that of academics being supervision. This suggests subtle differences in emphasis. The focus of the academic role seems to be on relationships with host supervisors, for example, collaboratively, interaction, consultation, and the host role seems to focus on introducing students to the context, for example, giving information, addressing concerns, questions and talking.

Education Role

Assessment and evaluation are mentioned most often by both university staff and host supervisors in the education role of host supervisors, echoing the findings of Spencer (2007). Host supervisors talk about their own role in educational input and ensuring a quality experience much more than university staff, but the biggest disparity is in overseeing student progress (Figure 1). Again, there is closer agreement between the perceptions of university staff and hosts where their roles intersect (e.g., assessment, providing and viewing feedback, and activity design), than with the work done by hosts individually, and somewhat privately with students.

Surprisingly, the work of academics in the education role is scarcely mentioned by hosts and, except for assessment, evaluation, and teaching, is emphasized little by academics (Figure 2). The lack of discussion about the education role by hosts could point to the role being taken for granted, or that much of what academics do in this category is unknown to the host supervisors. This could result in gaps in knowledge and skill development for students, or worse, outright contradiction and confusion.

The number of words about the education role of academics is less than half that for hosts. Although some of this difference may reflect bias in the data, it does demonstrate just how little hosts talk about this role for academics. The role descriptors differ, with mentoring and manager used often for host supervisors, versus advisor used for academics. The main differences occur in the approaches taken. Hosts tend to use meetings, negotiation and training, but with much emphasis on monitoring as reflected by the use of words such as ongoing, progress and together. This aligns with the mentoring style (Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010). Academics, on the other hand emphasize integration (of theory and practice), using discussions and conversation. In particular, academics use terms such as debrief and reflect, which along with scaffolded and clarify may indicate a focus on supporting the student to make overall sense of the experience.

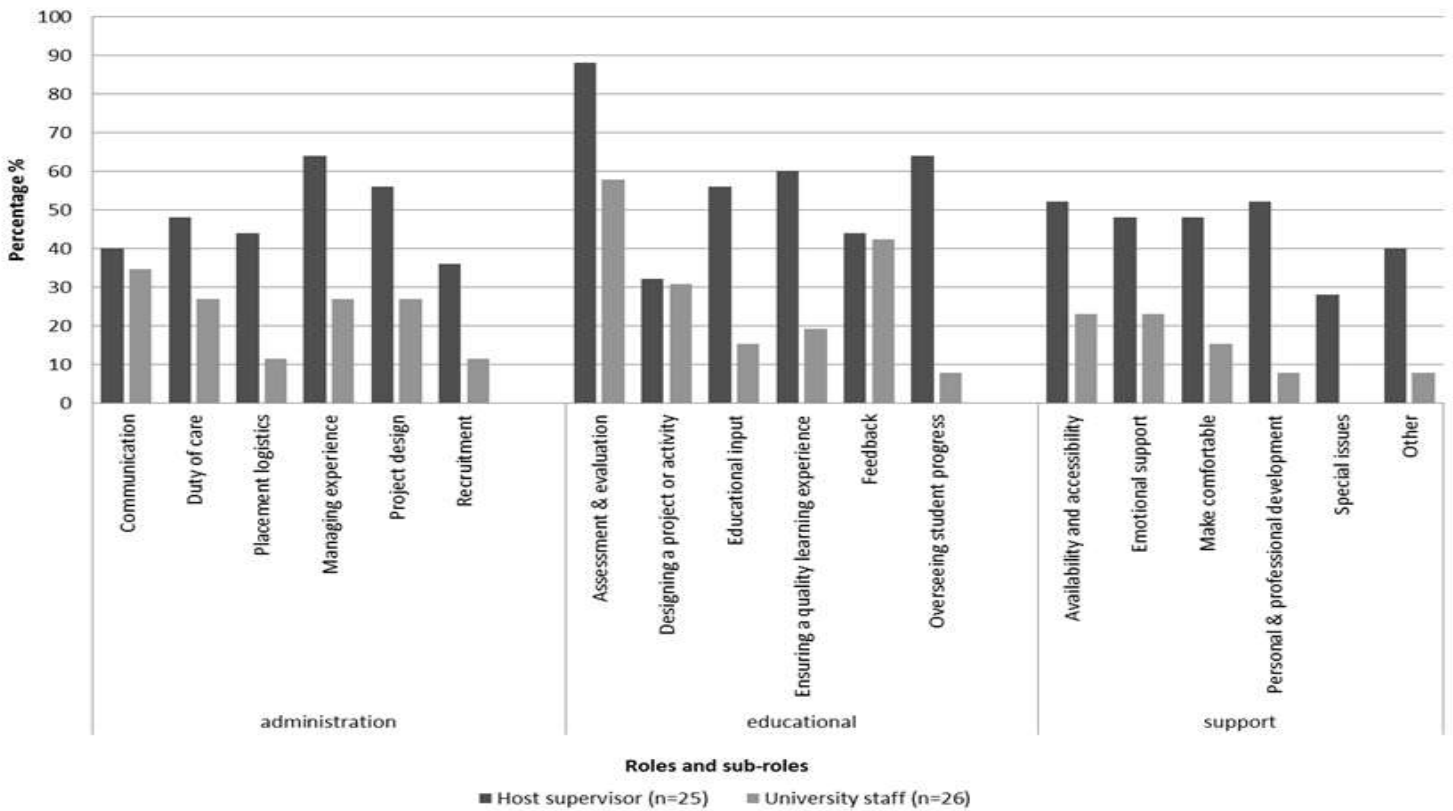

FIGURE 1: Percentage of interview and focus group participants who refer to any aspect of host supervisor roles in WIL; responses of university staff and host supervisors have been separated to enable comparison

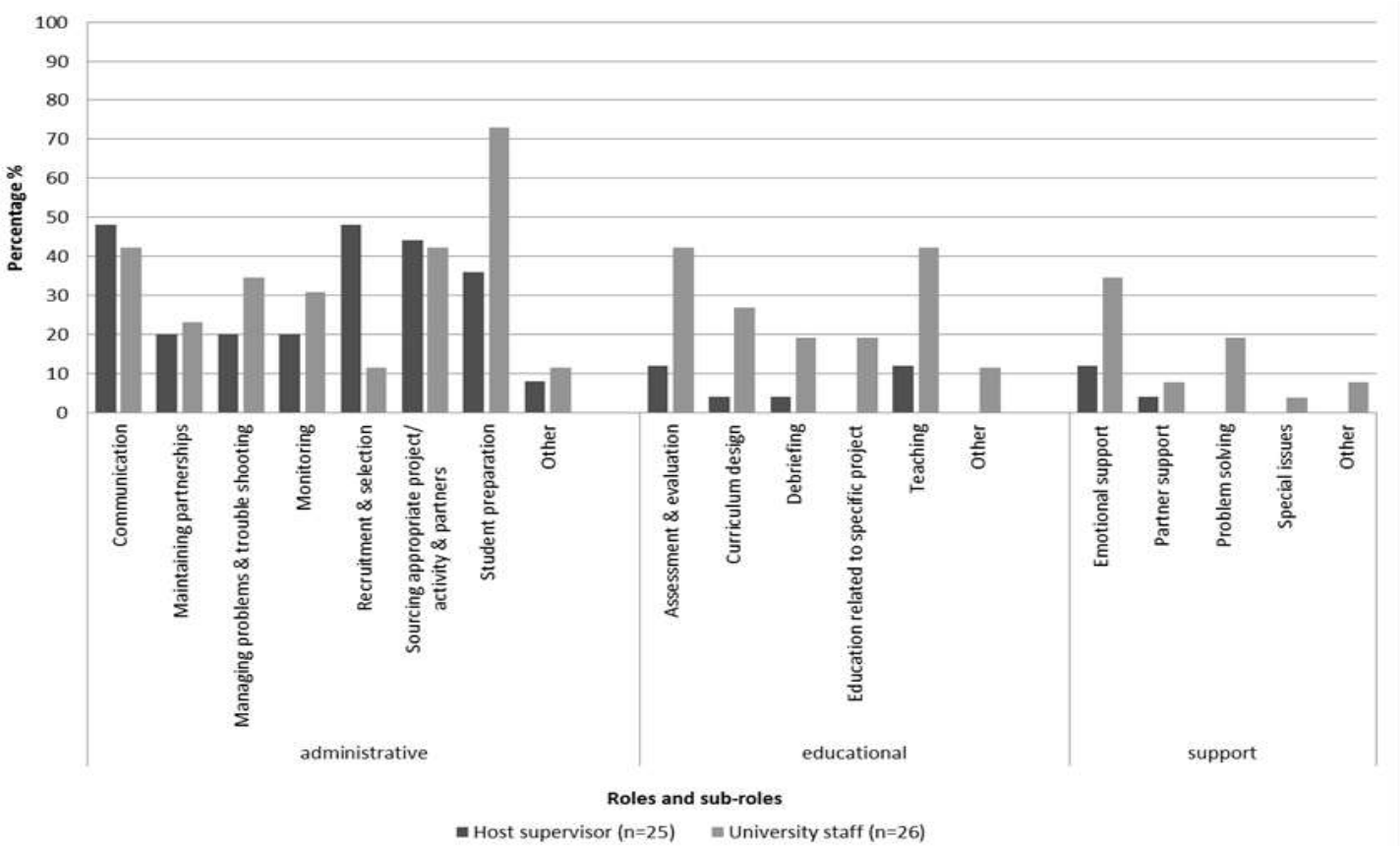

FIGURE 2: Percentage of interview and focus group participants who refer to any aspect of academic supervisor roles in WIL; responses of university staff and host supervisors have been separated to enable comparison.

TABLE 1: Analysis of the 100 most common words from coded sections of interview and focus group transcripts, featuring words unique to describing either the academic or host supervisor role

Supervisor					
Hosts (*n*=10,304)	Academics (*n* =11,449)	Hosts (*n* =12,413)	Academics (*n* =4,905)	Hosts (*n*=8,929)	Academics (*n* =1,947)
Role					
Administration/ Managerial		Education		Support	
Role Descriptor					
management	supervision	mentoring, manager	advisor*	mentor	pastoral
Areas covered					
induction, orientation; background, information, context insurance, responsibility, expect/ed; concerns*, specific	practical, knowledge, deadlines, documents, support, change/changing, issues; unrealistic; welcome	background, setting; direction; competencies; management;	linking, theory; prepare, readiness*, punctuality*; situation, context; negative, aspect, content, example, language*, interact;	background, setting, context, perspective; problem, concern, question, answer, specific, personal; daunting, stress, nervous*; learning, cultural, research; illness, hospital*, disclosed*;	environment*, circumstances*; choose*, decide*, decision*, prioritize*; change*, encountered*; pressure*, progressing*; deadline*, overtime*, requirements* weekend*; disadvantaged*;
Approach					
introducing, initial, started, selection, outline; develop; questions, talking; forward, regular, giving	relationship, assisting*, together collaboratively*, interaction, consultation, flexible; managing, monitor; informed, preparing*, identify finding, making; workshops;	meetings, training; guiding, develop, negotiated, encourage; monitoring, ongoing, progress; opportunity; comments, correct, outline;	conversations, talking; debrief, reflect; clarify, realize; integrated; scaffolded, tailored; advice;	available, comfortable, relationship, regular; discussions, feedback, meetings, explain;	prepare; liaison*, intervention*; nurturing*; flexible*;

* refers to a single source

n refers to total number of words coded in role categories for each supervisor group

Support Role

Between 40–50% of hosts talk about their role in all sub–categories of support, except for special issues (Figure 1). This contrasts with university staff who acknowledge the hosts role in these sub-categories much less, that is, between 0-25%, and only around 10% of university staff refer to the contribution of host supervisors to personal and professional development of students, and to making the student feel comfortable. One area that could produce major problems is the disparity in recognition of the work by hosts related to special issues, for example students with mental illness, or who fall ill during placements.

Perhaps the most perplexing result is the lack of recognition by hosts, of the work academics do in supporting students, and even more puzzling, the lack of comment by university staff. Evidence suggests that students and partners expect universities to provide substantial support to students before, during and sometimes after placements (Levin et al. 2010). Just over 30% of university staff in our study talked about their work in offering emotional support to students and 20% mention problem solving (Figure 2). It is unclear why so few participants mention this category for academics, but it may relate to different models of WIL, variable levels of support offered to students or hosts, different pedagogical approaches, or that some types of projects, activities or placements require more support from the academics than others. The word frequency analysis for the support category should be treated with caution. Few participants talk at all about the role of academics, and of the total number of words coded for support, only 18% refer to academics. Support for hosts features little with either group, despite the fact that much of the WIL literature suggests hosts require support (e.g., Orrell, 2011).

The role descriptors used for hosts and academics highlight some fundamental differences. The word mentor is mostly used with host supervisors, whereas pastoral is used almost exclusively for academics. Host supervisors cover general aspects such as background and perspectives, concerns and problems, along with career, and personal. Although there are few words spoken about academics, it would seem that their work is more around environment and circumstances (both placement related and personal), emotions such as anxiety, confidence, and situations where students may feel confronted. Some of the stories told by academics relate to dealing with emotions that students do not want to reveal to host supervisors.

The approach taken by hosts and academics also differs and is, in some respects, complementary. For hosts the approach centers around building relationships with students, especially in making them feel comfortable and being available, with a stress on terms such as regular and ongoing. There is also some emphasis on providing feedback and guidance. This is consistent with the mentor role. For academics, there seems to be three parts to their role: to prepare students, support students emotionally, by being nurturing and flexible, and finally intervention and liaison with the host where needed.

DISCUSSION

Our findings indicate that while there is reasonable consensus within each stakeholder group about their own roles, perceptions about the roles of others are mismatched in some fundamental areas (Table 2). Consequently, this discussion will focus more on educative and supportive functions within supervision than on administration. There are clearly quite distinct tasks undertaken by host supervisors and academics (Appendix A) but there are also

different emphases in their roles. One obvious difference is the relational focus of each stakeholder. From our data it is apparent that when hosts talk about relationships they mostly mean their relationships with students. For university staff, however, relationships encompass both hosts and students, suggesting a more holistic view. Relationships with hosts are important for smooth functioning of placements, ensuring quality learning for students, and securing future placements (Billett, 2009; Harrison & Felton, 2013). Patrick et al. (2009) suggest that the quality of engagement between WIL stakeholders is important for ensuring continuous improvement in programs. This responsibility currently appears to be largely borne by university staff.

TABLE 2: Major areas of difference in role recognition of host and academic supervisors

Host supervisor work that is under recognized	Academics work that is under recognized
• placement logistics • managing the overall experience • educational input • ensuring a quality learning experience • overseeing student progress • students personal/professional development • making students feel comfortable • support for special issues	• preparing students for the experience • curriculum design • debriefing • providing emotional support • problem solving for special issues

Practical Implications

The different titles for each group provide clues to their particular foci and have implications for the way in which supervisory practices are conceptualized and enacted in WIL. Host supervisors are referred to as managers (admin role) and mentors (education and support roles), whereas academics are referred to as supervisors (admin role), advisors (education role), and providing pastoral support (support role). These titles taken with the other data further accentuate the different emphases of each group. Hays and Clements (2011) make the point that for some hosts "it appears that duty of care and workplace performance management take centre stage, with learning taking a secondary role" (p. 5). They go on to suggest that while there are a number of drivers, this is exacerbated as "workplace supervisors may possess few teaching and assessment skills" (2011, p. 5). But, as shown in our study, host supervisors do contribute to student learning, and this is largely under recognized by academics. In particular, their contribution involves teaching or training in specific skills, acting as a role model and mentor, and providing ongoing feedback. Our study supports the observations of Coll et al. (2011) that pedagogies used by host supervisors are "more informal in nature and consist[ed] of inductions and one-on-one mentoring" (p. 31).

Boud and Costly (2007) make a case for using the term advisor for academics, as they argue that the skills required by WIL take staff "beyond their familiar teaching role" (p. 120) and

into a "wider and sometimes more facilitative role" (p.123). Academics in our study talk about developing student reflection skills because, as Correia and Bleicher (2008) argue, it is a "skill that can assist students in making sense of their learning experience" (p. 41). Reflection is also a significant "avenue for applying and integrating theory to the practice" (Harvey, Coulson, Mackaway, & Winchester-Seeto, 2010, p. 144). The terms linking and integrated feature highly in the interviews with academics; for example: "linking what projects they are doing or what are current issues in their workplace to the theory" (university staff member no. 16). It seems that academics are expected to be primarily responsible for bridging the theory the practice gap (Coll et al., 2011) and our study shows that academics are cognizant of this need.

Our research shows that support roles undertaken by academics and hosts are complex and multi-faceted, with different and often complementary duties. The term mentor, identifies a particular approach commonly adopted by the hosts. One host supervisor (no. 17) compared the mentoring role to like being a spar partner, and with the following key responsibilities: "to manage, guide, teach or train, to successfully complete the at-hand task or tasks…to be there to support the student to make sure that he or she is on track to achieve results and complete the tasks at hand". Mentoring is used widely in WIL literature, to describe "someone who supports, nurtures, or acts as an advocate or intermediary - for the newcomer" (Le Maistre et al., 2006, p. 351). These responsibilities are similar to those identified in our study.

Le Maistre et al. (2006) further note "[the] dual role [of mentor and evaluator] is not a problem when the student is doing well or when there is a match between the styles and personalities of the student and the supervisor" (p. 351). However, "when the students progress is unsatisfactory, there is a potential for confrontation and stress" (2006, p. 351). The academics pastoral role is needed here to support the student (and host) to deal with conflict and difference (Balandin, Lincoln, Sen, Wilkins, & Trembath, 2007; Grant & McKenna, 2003). Mentoring in WIL thus involves ongoing guidance and monitoring, whereas the pastoral role, played by academics, is mostly enacted when things go wrong, and in particular specific incidents and crises.

The pastoral role used to describe academics was to manage anything that goes wrong on the students behalf, such as when they [the student] become sick or there is some trauma. One host supervisor commented that they relied on academics to provide emotional support to students, especially when they "don't have the time or [are] unable to help in some way". Also, as noted by one of the interviewed university staff members (no. 16), students "might feel more comfortable coming to someone from the university environment, than bringing up an issue in the workplace environment". In addition to managing special issues, university staff were also responsible for "making sure the student feels supported out there because they often need somebody to talk to about what's happening out in the industry and how they're progressing" (university staff member no. 9).

Context specific and personality factors may also influence who provides student support. Le Maistre (2006) ascribes the term nurturing to hosts, whereas in our data it is more closely associated with academics (p. 346). This differing use of the term suggests that perhaps students actively choose which supervisor they approach for support. Our data lends some support to this idea, with students reporting a diverse range of reasons for receiving and seeking support and in deciding who to seek it from. Access and availability, knowledge and personality are some reasons students cited for seeking support from hosts, whereas

seeking answers to more complex questions and needing someone to talk to when things were going wrong were reasons for approaching academics. Surprisingly, few studies have explored how the roles of hosts and academics work together to support students (the study by Carson & Carnwell, 2007, is an exception).

Goodyear (2014) observes simply that "supervision facilitates supervisee learning" and goes on to provide an overview of the learning mechanisms and processes of supervision, including role modeling, direct instruction, feedback, critical reflection (p. 83). We concur with this observation, and these mechanisms and processes are certainly evident in our study. However, we further contend that in WIL much of the learning also requires emotional and other support as the student faces new, unfamiliar and potentially confronting experiences. This requires additional input by both supervisors.

Theoretical Implications

Most theoretical models of WIL tend to focus on the learning processes that occur within professional contexts, and do not explicitly address supervision. Of those that do, the most common are: master/apprentice (e.g., Coll et al., 2011; Gale & Jackson, 1997), mentoring (e.g., Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010; Smith-Ruig, 2014) and novice to expert/situated learning (e.g., Lave & Wenger, 1991). None of these, however, fully explore the complexities involved in supervision. Although we acknowledge that the learning processes may be different in these models, in the master/apprentice and mentoring models there is a clearly recognized supervisory relationship between the host supervisor and student. However, in many types of WIL there is an additional parallel supervisory relationship between the academic and student that is not included in these theoretical models. In the novice to expert/communities of practice model there are also others members of the community who may contribute to the learning. Although the role of the academic is not explicitly considered, they may be part of this larger community. In practice, as demonstrated in our study, hosts and academics do work together, particularly around administrative activities but this is not addressed in any of the theoretical models.

Our research has demonstrated that there are a number of different, but complementary and intersecting roles played by host and academic supervisors. The work of these two players can significantly assist the student to gain a more holistic and integrated understanding of their experience, rather than it being an event isolated from the rest of their education. For instance academics help students to develop skills in structured reflection, which in turn enables them make sense of the overall experience, whilst hosts are more concerned with fostering and monitoring day to day progress. Hosts provide more in the way of professional development and academics concentrate on integration of theory and practice. Consideration of complementary roles and how these can work to foster learning and benefit students, needs to be incorporated in any theory of supervision in WIL.

In the past, models of WIL were largely based around the use of placements, in which the academic often played little or no role. This has changed in recent years, as WIL has become further embedded in curriculum and there is a culture of increasing accountability in universities. These factors require a greater role for academics. Increased student numbers and interest in WIL has caused competition for placements and greater concerns about socially inclusive practice, which has led to exploration of different alternative models of WIL (Orrell, 2011; Patrick et al., 2009), for example, live case studies, community projects, studio/lab work etc. where students undertake authentic real world projects on campus

under the supervision of an academic (Rowe et al., 2012). In these circumstances, some of the roles of the host are subsumed by the academic, for example, teaching specific skills, professional development, day to day monitoring of the project etc.

Theoretical models of learning for WIL have largely overlooked the roles of academics, and are thus insufficient to explain learning in this space. In particular, this concerns the different but complementary roles of host and academic supervisors and how they intersect. Failure to account for this element of supervision in WIL, has the potential to undermine our understanding of student learning. The new circumstances influencing and changing the traditional practice of WIL call for the development of new theories of supervision which acknowledge the role of the academic, account for the complementary, intersecting and fluid roles of host and academic supervisors, and foster development of solutions to the questions associated with the practical implementation of WIL.

CONCLUSION

It is clear from our findings that university staff and host supervisors have limited understanding of the roles and tasks undertaken by each other in the fundamentally important areas of education and student support. The isolation of host supervisors is particularly evident and may be exacerbated by some models of WIL, where contact between the host and academic is concentrated on administrative aspects of placements, especially if students are expected to find their own. This situation gives some cause for concern as there are potentially quite serious consequences for individual students (e.g., students experiencing health issues or accidents whilst on placement), but also because of missed opportunities to maximize student learning. There are also potential consequences for building successful, long-term relationships between universities and partner organizations if there are misunderstandings or mismatched expectations. Anecdotal evidence suggests that institutions face financial and other pressures which may affect the quantity and quality of academic supervision able to be offered to students.

The complementary roles of host and academic supervisors has also been highlighted and explored in this study. Better understanding how this complementarity works is vital to ensuring a positive learning experience for students. There is clearly a need for hosts and academics to work more closely together and to develop strategies to promote closer cooperation and communication. The initiative will most likely need to be taken by universities to determine how best to support and exploit the complementary roles, including further research in this area.

WIL is increasingly recognized by universities as a highly effective way of teaching, particularly the development of students employability skills. However, it is also quite an expensive endeavor, especially when the time of academics and host supervisors is taken into account. Failure to extract maximum benefit for student learning then, involves financial costs, but can also ultimately incur a social cost to the community with lost opportunities for students to learn.

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APPENDIX A: Role categories and sub-categories for host and academic supervisors

Host supervisor	Academic supervisor
Administrative/managerial role	
Communication	*Communication*
Inform university of student issues	Provide information to students/hosts on expectations
Ongoing feedback to university	Provide feedback to hosts on student progress
Regular communication and feedback with student	Check in on students
Prevention of problems	Be available to host/student to deal with issues
Recruitment and selection	*Recruitment and selection*
Advise university of requirements and opportunities for student interns	Matching student (interests, skills) to host organization
Selection process, e.g., interviews	Ensure project meaningful for student and beneficial for host
Duty of care	*Student preparation*
Orientation/induction to organization/specific context, e.g., health/safety	Pre-placement meetings, e.g., code of conduct, CV writing
Key people in organization	Setting and managing expectations
Managing the experience	*Managing problems and trouble shooting*
Setting expectations/roles, e.g., learning contract	Trouble shooing problems and intervening when needed (host/student)
Managing deadlines, timely completion	Undertake at-risk assessment/visit
Problem students	
Logistics of placement	*Monitoring*
Work requirements, workspace and requisites	Monitor student/host during placement
Paperwork	Site visits, phone calls, Skype etc.
Project design and logistics	*Sourcing project, activity and partners*
Provide a meaningful experience to students	Negotiate contract, deadlines
Scoping and negotiating projects	Ensure project/activity aligns with learning outcomes
	Connect students with range of options for partners
	Maintaining relationships
	Review placement to identify concerns/future opportunities
	Provide feedback to partners for quality assurance/enhancement
	Organize partner events
Support role	
Emotional support	*Emotional support*
Mentoring students	Pastoral care of students, e.g., first point of call for students with issues
Being flexible	Advise partners of potentially sensitive activities for particular students
Special issues	*Special issues*
Support students with particular issues, e.g., mental illness	Support students at risk

Host supervisor	Academic supervisor
Availability and accessibility	*Partner support*
Ongoing supervision of student, e.g., regular meetings	Support partners
Being available and accessible to students	
Make comfortable	*Problem solving*
Make student feel comfortable in workplace	Support students experiencing difficulties, e.g., making deadlines
Ease students negative emotions, e.g., anxiety	
Personal and professional development	
Mentor students, e.g., career advice	
Introduce students to expectations of the profession	

Educational role	
Assessment and evaluation	*Assessment and evaluation*
Input to university on student performance for assessment	Setting assessment tasks/criteria
Complete evaluation/assessment form for university	Allocating final grade
Provide formal feedback to student on performance	Provision of academic feedback to student
Designing project or activity	*Curriculum design*
Ensure activity meets required learning outcomes	Curriculum design and development
Negotiate project in negotiation with students/ academics	
Educational input	*Teaching*
Teach specific skills	Facilitate pre-activity workshops/tutorials re: transition to professional life/job-readiness
Provide additional training/materials to link course	Teach generic skills (e.g., team work), link theory to practice
Answer student questions	
Ensuring a quality learning experience	*Education related to specific project*
Act as role model/mentor to students and guide learning	Provide academic assistance to students on specific aspects of activity
Identify specific skills students need to develop	
Provide meaningful work	
Feedback	*Debriefing*
Provide regular feedback on student progress/performance	Facilitating student reflection on their experience/learning
	Integrating theory and practice
Overseeing student progress	
Ensure students are on track	
Provide students with a variety of work	

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About the Journal

The Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education publishes peer-reviewed original research, topical issues, and best practice articles from throughout the world dealing with Cooperative Education (Co-op) and Work-Integrated Learning/Education (WIL).

In this Journal, Co-op/WIL is defined as an educational approach that uses relevant work-based projects that form an integrated and assessed part of an academic program of study (e.g., work placements, internships, practicum). These programs should have clear linkages with, or add to, the knowledge and skill base of the academic program. These programs can be described by a variety of names, such as cooperative and work-integrated education, work-based learning, workplace learning, professional training, industry-based learning, engaged industry learning, career and technical education, internships, experiential education, experiential learning, vocational education and training, fieldwork education, and service learning.

The Journal's main aim is to allow specialists working in these areas to disseminate their findings and share their knowledge for the benefit of institutions, co-op/WIL practitioners, and researchers. The Journal desires to encourage quality research and explorative critical discussion that will lead to the advancement of effective practices, development of further understanding of co-op/WIL, and promote further research.

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Typically, authors receive the reviewers' comments about 1.5 months after the submission of the manuscript. The Journal uses a constructive process for review and preparation of the manuscript, and encourages its reviewers to give supportive and extensive feedback on the requirements for improving the manuscript as well as guidance on how to make the amendments.

If the manuscript is deemed acceptable for publication, and reviewers' comments have been satisfactorily addressed, the manuscript is prepared for publication by the Copy Editor. The Copy Editor may correspond with the authors to check details, if required. Final publication is by discretion of the Editor-in-Chief. Final published form of the manuscript is via the Journal website (www.apjce.org), authors will be notified and sent a PDF copy of the final manuscript. There is no charge for publishing in APJCE and the Journal allows free open access for its readers.

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The Journal does also accept *best practice* papers but only if it present a unique or innovative practice of a Co-op/WIL program that is likely to be of interest to the broader Co-op/WIL community. The Journal also accepts a limited number of *Book Reviews* of relevant and recently published books.

Research reports should contain; an introduction that describes relevant literature and sets the context of the inquiry, a description and justification for the methodology employed, a description of the research findings-tabulated as appropriate, a discussion of the importance of the findings including their significance for practitioners, and a conclusion preferably incorporating suggestions for further research.

Topical discussion articles should contain a clear statement of the topic or issue under discussion, reference to relevant literature, critical discussion of the importance of the issues, and implications for other researchers and practitioners.

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