

# Professional development needs of the international work-integrated learning community

KARSTEN E. ZEGWAARD<sup>1, 2</sup>

*University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand*

KRISTINA JOHANSSON

*University West, Trollhattan, Sweden*

JUDIE KAY

*RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia*

NORAH MCRAE

*University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Canada*

SONIA FERNS

*Curtin University, Perth, Australia*

KATHARINE HOSKYN

*Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand*

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Many governments are expecting higher education institutions to make strong links between the educational offerings and employability while many employers are demanding graduates with prior workplace or community engagement before entering the workplace. As higher education institutions respond to these challenges, work-integrated learning (WIL) is increasingly seen as a powerful educational approach in developing and empowering work-ready graduates, with many institutions expanding their WIL offerings. With the expansion of WIL, however, comes the need for more staffing to resource the activity. The type of staff vary from practitioners (placement coordinators, field practitioners), teaching staff, researchers, and curricular designers, all of whom require a relevant skills set and knowledge. However, to date, professional development opportunities directly related to WIL have been limited, with most opportunities offered by some national associations providing webinars and workshops. Furthermore, little work has been undertaken to determine the actual professional development needs of WIL staff. Presented here are the findings of an online, international survey of 668 WIL practitioners which explores their perceived professional development needs.

**Keywords:** Professional development, employability, empowering WIL professionals, lifelong learning

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Internationally, work-integrated learning (WIL) has received increasing attention as higher educational institutions attempt to closely align their curricular offerings to employability outcomes (Rowe & Zegwaard, 2017). The drive for this alignment has come from demands by employers, students, and government on the premise that higher education should produce work-ready and employable graduates (Holmes, 2013; Jackson, 2016b). WIL activities, under a variety of names, have long existed at universities through work placement programs, practicum programs (common in teacher education) and cooperative education (common in North America), and was already prevalent at technical institutions through their vocational education offerings. However, over the last 20 years there has been rapid expansion and broadening of the WIL offerings within higher education.

WIL has been recognized as important learning strategy in higher education, where engaging in meaningful practical activities in an authentic context advances students professional understanding and abilities (Cooper, Orrell, & Bowden, 2010), providing opportunity to develop life-long learning skills (Billett & Choy, 2011), discipline specific competencies (Hodges & Burchell, 2003; Zegwaard,

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<sup>1</sup> Corresponding author: Karsten Zegwaard, [karsten.zegwaard@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:karsten.zegwaard@waikato.ac.nz)

<sup>2</sup> Author is Editor-in-Chief of IJWIL. The review was managed by a third party and their review staff to maintain anonymity of reviewers and integrity of the reviewing process

Khoo, Adam, & Peter, 2018), work-readiness (Smith, Ferns, & Russell, 2014), career clarification (Jackson, 2015a; Zegwaard & Coll, 2011), behavioral skills (Jackson, 2012), academic ability (Gomez, Lush, & Clements, 2004; Tanaka & Carlson, 2012), emotional intelligence (Gribble, Ladyshevsky, & Parsons, 2017) and professional identity development (Jackson, 2016a; Zegwaard, Campbell, & Pretti, 2017). The broad review of the literature by Dressler and Keeling (2011) identified a wide range of literature in support of student learning, including academic benefits, personal benefits, career benefits, and skill development benefits. It is, therefore, not surprising that that direct links between WIL and employability outcomes are being made (Jackson, 2013; Universities Australia, 2019; Wilson, 2011) and the practice of WIL is expanding. With these student benefits in mind, WIL practitioners and higher education leaders need to remain mindful that student learning should be central to the WIL educational approach (Henderson & Trede, 2017; Johnston, 2011) with, for example, an emphasis on employability outcomes rather than service-focused employment outcomes (Rowe & Zegwaard, 2017).

At national levels, Australia has rapidly developed WIL to the point that virtually all Australian universities now offer WIL in most, if not all, their undergraduate degree programs, with some universities requiring that all undergraduate students complete at least one WIL subject within their degree program (Patrick et al., 2009). Canada has a long history of cooperative education (co-op; a type of WIL) in higher education that has become deeply entrenched at university level and has a national co-op accreditation program in place (Crichton, 2009; Stirling, Kerr, Banwell, MacPherson, & Heron, 2016). In New Zealand, WIL is increasingly prevalent in a wide range of forms, with high profile in policy, pedagogy and programs of delivery throughout the tertiary education sector (Hoskyn, 2019). Similarly, South Africa continues to expand their university WIL offerings as an important strategy in addressing employability issues within their economy (Winberg, Engel-Hills, Garraway, & Jacobs, 2011). At an institutional level, in 2012 in the US, the University of Cincinnati made completing at least one WIL subject as a compulsory component for all undergraduate students (Cedercreutz et al., 2017), with more than 30,000 student WIL activities per year. In New Zealand in 2018, the University of Waikato also introduced a compulsory WIL subject in all the undergraduate degree programs. In Australia, Macquarie University has invested in an institutional-wide WIL program (Clark, 2017) that is now compulsory for all undergraduate students (8,000 a year), and RMIT University now undertakes 32,000 WIL activities per year, and, furthermore, in 2017 there were 451,263 students who undertook 555,403 WIL experiences across all the universities in Australia (Universities Australia, 2019). In Canada, the University of Waterloo co-op program has grown to over 20,000 co-op placements every year (in addition to students on other WIL experience outside the co-op program) (Andrade, Chopra, Nurlybayev, & Golab, 2018), and WIL experiences are increasingly being offered in postgraduate degrees such as in master degrees at University West, Sweden, and University of Waikato, New Zealand. As large WIL programs become internationally more common, the need to appropriate information management systems to facilitate processes also becomes more important (Koch, 2007).

Such significant expansion of the practice of WIL creates a substantial and growing human resource requirement with the appropriate skills and knowledge to facilitate the WIL process. Facilitating WIL, including relationship building, organizing placements and the assessment of learning during placement, differs significantly from 'typical' taught university programs, that is, people involved with facilitating WIL require a very particular set of skills. However, opportunities to develop these skills through professional development opportunities are, it seems, limited.

### *The Role of National Associations*

Professional development opportunities are developed and offered through a variety of ways. The educational institution may offer professional development opportunities directly to their own staff by either using their staff members or visiting academic staff knowledgeable in this area, and by developing internal communities of practice. However, anecdotally, it seems such professional development opportunities in WIL have been limited at universities.

Relevant national associations have a role to play in regards to providing professional development opportunities to WIL staff and creating opportunities for network building and facilitating opportunities of peer-learning (Crichton, 2009; Hansford & Stonely, 2011; Patrick & Kay, 2011). An important professional development event organized by national associations is the (bi)annual national conference, which often offers pre-conference workshop opportunities (Patrick & Kay, 2011). National associations also offer other opportunities, such as the webinar series introduced by ACEN, and CEWIL Canada (formally CAFCE<sup>3</sup>) who run webinars and broadcast seminar presentations using video facilities. National associations are also important for national advocacy of WIL (Patrick & Kay, 2011). However, not all national associations have the critical mass or resource ability to offer diverse WIL professional development opportunities and engage in national level advocacy. Furthermore, some countries, for example in the Asian region, do not have a national WIL association and need support to develop these (Tanaka, 2019; Zegwaard, 2019). Furthermore, the WACE<sup>4</sup> Board planning day at the WACE International Research Symposium held in Victoria, Canada, 2016, identified the need to enable the next generation of WIL researchers and practitioners. However, in order to do so we need to provide opportunities for the next generation to develop the skills that allow them to become the future leaders in WIL.

Recently, four national associations (ACEN, CEWIL, NZACE, and VILAR<sup>5</sup>) collaborated in creating three online global WIL modules; 1) theories underpinning WIL (to date, offered five times), 2) engaging with employers (offered three times), and 3) quality aspects of WIL (offered once) (Zegwaard et al., 2016). The expressions of interest in these modules exceed the number of available slots. Surveys administered before and after the module offerings indicated a strong interest in a greater selection of professional development opportunities which prompted the survey reported in this paper.

To the best of the authors' knowledge, to date there has not been an international survey undertaken to determine the professional development needs of the WIL community. Therefore, an international survey was undertaken in which all the known WIL/Co-op national associations and the world association were asked to participate. The aim of the survey was to determine the professional development needs, with the intention of disseminating the findings to the national and international community.

### METHODS

SuveyMonkey was used to develop an anonymous online survey consisting of 24 question. Nine questions collected demographic data, seven questions sought information around accessibility to WIL professional development opportunities, seven questions explored the perceived professional development needs, and one open-ended question to capture any other perceptions participants

<sup>3</sup> Canadian Association for Cooperative Education

<sup>4</sup> WACE – World Association for Cooperative Education.

<sup>5</sup> ACEN – Australian Collaborative Education Network, CEWIL – Cooperative Education and Work-Integrated Learning Canada, NZACE – New Zealand Association for Cooperative Education, VILAR – Verksamhetsintegreratlarande (Swedish WIL Association)

wanted to share. The agreement statements used a 10-point Likert scale where, 1 = very difficult and 10 = very easy.

The professional development topics were derived from the de-identified analyzed data from the online global WIL modules feedback forms that participants completed at the end of the module. These participants were from a range of countries (mostly Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and Sweden, with some from South Africa and Asian countries) and employment types. The list was further informed by professional development topics offered by institutions and national associations in addition to the researchers' knowledge of known professional development needs within their national associations. The participants of this survey reported here were also able to provide topics in addition to the provided list of professional development topics.

The survey was distributed using email, facilitated through the national associations using their contact databases. All known WIL national associations (and the World Association; WACE) were approached to take part, of which WACE, ACEN (Australia), CAFCE (now CEWIL Canada), NZACE (New Zealand), SASCE (countries from the southern part of Africa), ASET (UK), JACE (Japan), TACE (Thailand), and VILAR (Sweden)<sup>6</sup> took part.

The survey data was collected between October and December, 2017, with two reminder emails. The true number of potential participants that were invited to take part in the survey was difficult to determine as the associations' contact lists were not shared with the researchers and there were many instances of overlapping contact databases. For example, many WACE members are also members of a national association, and some participants will have appeared on more than one national association's contact database.

Statistical data analysis was completed using Microsoft Excel and open-ended questions were thematically analyzed. Data was analyzed as a global data set as well as separately for each national association that had a significant response rate to the survey.

This research had ethical approval from the University of Waikato, New Zealand (FSEN-2017-8 for global survey and FSEN-2015-5 for global modules).

## RESULTS

### *Demographical Data.*

The total response was 688 completed forms from 21 countries. The bulk of the responses (85%) were from four regions; Australia (38%), Canada (29%), South Africa/Namibia (10%), and the UK (8.0%).

Of the respondents, 88% were employed fulltime and 83% were at a university (with 12% at another educational institution type, mostly polytechnic/technical institution), and 5% were in industry or governmental authorities. Just over half (55%) had formal qualifications in educational studies. The population was predominantly female and had a diverse age distribution (Table 1 presents international level data - national level data are presented in Appendix A).

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<sup>6</sup> SACE - South African Association for Cooperative Education, ASET - Association for Sandwich Education and Training, JACE - Japan Association for Cooperative Education, TACE - Thailand Association for Cooperative Education.

TABLE 1: Demographic data of the total responses ( $n=688$ )

Attribute	Component	Proportion (%)
Gender	Male	25
	Female	74
	Other	0.3
Age	20-29	5.5
	30-39	23.5
	40-49	28.5
	50-59	30.7
	60-69	10.9
	>70	0.9
Employment type (more than one type could be selected)	Placement coordinator	28
	Lecturer	24
	Director/manager	22
	Administrator	12
	Faculty	10
	Career counsellor	9
	Researcher	9
	Senior manager	8
	Educational consultant	6
	Tutor	3
Other*	19	

\* Other employment types provided by participants mostly consisted of term selection that further defined 'director/manager' or added terms to what was a lecturer or faculty appointment.

#### *Access to Professional Developments Opportunities*

Participants indicated that most (87%) were from a country which had a national WIL association, however, some participants from countries with a prominent WIL association indicated 'no' to this answer probably arising from confusion that the national association used the term 'Cooperative Education' rather than WIL. Most participants (69%) indicated that they had the opportunity to undertake WIL professional development through their national association (Table 2 presents international level data - national level data are presented in Appendix B). Just over half indicated that they had undertaken a WIL professional development opportunity and half indicated that their university offered such opportunities.

TABLE 2: Access to a WIL relevant peer support group and professional development opportunities

Statement	Component	Proportion (%)
Do you have a mentor or a peer-support group knowledgeable in WIL?	Yes, mentor/peer-group very knowledgeable about WIL	59
	Yes, but with only limited knowledge	14
	Yes, but we seldom discuss WIL	6
	No	21
Have you had professional development specific to Wil before?	Yes	60
	No	40
Does your workplace offer professional development opportunities in WIL?	Yes	51
	No	49

Most participants indicated that their institutions were strongly supportive of them undertaking professional development, however, respondents also indicated that access to WIL professional development opportunities were only moderate. There was greater interest in credit-bearing professional development rather than non-credit bearing (Table 3 presents international level data - national level data are presented in Appendix B).

TABLE 3: Level of perceived need, support, and type of professional development

Statement	Mean Likert (1 = strongly disagree, 10 = strongly agree)	Standard deviation
How supportive do you feel your workplace would be of you undertaking professional development in WIL?	8.21	2.129
To what extend do you feel you need professional development in WIL	6.81	2.323
To what extend do you feel you have easy access to WIL professional development opportunities?	6.23	2.334
Would you like to take a NON-credit bearing certificate in WIL?	6.35	2.934
Would you like to take a credit bearing certificate in WIL?	7.26	2.460

### *Professional Development Needs*

Participants were asked to indicate the topics for which they believed they needed professional development for (general professional development needs). In a separate question, participants were asked to indicate the top three professional development needs (pressing professional development needs) (Table 4, national level data shown in Appendices C and D). The data is presented as combined global data and separated for each country with a response rate greater than 15).

The survey provided opportunity for participant to offer alternative professional development suggestions, where 33 participants offered a range of topics. The most common alternative topics offered by participants clustered broadly around the theme best described as 'inclusivity and culture',

for example, inclusive practice of WIL, indigenous connections, cultural intelligence, cultural awareness, and working with international students. Other suggestions loosely clustered around 'best practice', such as ethical practice of WIL, emotional intelligence, virtual WIL, WIL for academic staff, systems for WIL, reflective writing, and non-placement WIL, in addition to topics already covered in the list provided, comments indicating they have no additional topics, and two comments indicating the participant had no professional development need.

TABLE 4: Responses to professional development topics, where participants were free to select any number of topics (general professional development needs) and only their top three choices (pressing professional development needs). National level data is presented in Appendices C and D.

	General professional development need		Pressing professional development needs	
	%	order	%	order
Evaluating the quality and impact of WIL	60	1	25	1
Designing learning outcomes for WIL and enhancing student learning	53	2	24	2
Curricular design and mapping WIL activities to learning outcomes	53	3	23	3
Engaging with industry/workplaces	50	4	19	4
Assessment design	48	5	16	6
Enabling effective student reflection	47	6	17	5
Leadership in WIL	45	7	15	8
Communicating and marketing WIL to students and employers	41	8	15	7
Engaging effectively with students	41	9	11	11
Knowledge on different forms of WIL	39	10	10	14
Internationalization of WIL	39	11	13	9
Engaging effectively with faculty/academic staff	39	12	9	17
Educational theories underpinning WIL	38	13	12	10
Learning contracts and workplace agreements design	35	14	6	23
Health & Safety, risks, and legal requirements when engaging with WIL	35	15	10	13
How to best match students to workplaces	35	16	9	15
Administrational design for WIL programs (tracking information)	33	17	8	20
Governance of WIL	32	18	9	16
Setting up a WIL course	31	19	10	12
Research design	30	20	8	19
Providing feedback on assessments	30	21	4	24
Publishing research	30	22	9	18
Managing WIL staff	29	23	6	22
Research data analysis	26	24	7	21
Other:	5	25	1	25

The size of the WIL community in the US is significant, however, as the US national association did not take part in the survey, the US data in this study consists of only 28 respondents who were likely captured through the WACE membership list. These US participants are likely to be advanced in their career, having developed an international profile that necessitated membership to the international association, therefore, these respondents will not be representative of the wider US WIL community.

This is further evidenced by the older average age (54.6 years vs 47.2), long involvement with WIL, even gender distribution (typical of the older age bracket), and high proportion of PhD/EdD qualified (54%) participants in the US cohort. As the US data was not representative of the US WIL community, no further analysis was completed on this cohort.

## DISCUSSION

### *International Community Demographic Distribution and Trends*

The survey results provided valuable insight to the international WIL community's demographics. The international WIL community was made up of 74% female, 25% male, and 1% other, which was a similar gender distribution as observed for the primary teaching sector for most OECD countries (OECD, 2016). There is an indication that the proportion of female members in the international WIL community may increase in the future because the younger age brackets had a greater proportion of females than the older age brackets (20-29 years old = 80% female, 50-70+ years old = 64% female). When gender was compared with job position type, the proportional distribution was similar for all genders across all the position types, with a slightly higher proportion of females in placement coordinator roles (30% of all females vs 22% of all males) and with a marginally greater proportion of males in research (8% of all females vs 10% of all males) and senior management roles (7% of all females vs 11% of all males). For all job position types the greatest total proportion was female, ranging 66-80% female within each job position type.

The age distribution within the WIL community presents as a bell-curve distribution, with an average age across the international WIL community of 47.2 years. Assuming a working life for a university graduate begins at about 25 and ends at about 65 years, the midpoint would be 45 years. However, midpoint will not be the same as average age of the working population due to the baby boomer bulge at the older age range (Magnus, 2009). The even bell-curve distribution, however, was not represented in all regions, with the UK WIL community skewed to a younger age (average age of 42.1 years) and New Zealand WIL community skewed to an older age (average age of 53.0 years).

### *Level of Experience*

Participants were asked how many years they have been involved with WIL, which provided an international average of 9.4 years with similar averages for each of the regions (averages of 8 to 12 years) but with great variability within each region. The average number of years involved with WIL increased with age, however, even for the 60-69 year old age group the average number of years of experience was only 14.5 years (considering a 35-45 year career span for this age group). This data strongly indicates that professional staff transition into a WIL career from a previous career path outside WIL. Furthermore, as an established field, an average number of years of experience of 9.4 years suggests that the WIL community is still developing depth of WIL experience, highlighting a potential need for relevant and quality professional development targeting the WIL community. This view is in part supported by the moderate rankings of the professional development need of 'leadership in WIL' (7<sup>th</sup> in general need) and 'knowledge of different forms of WIL' (10<sup>th</sup> in general need). However, the data would also suggest that the experience and skill range of the community would be diverse, with staff engaged in WIL bringing diverse experiences and skills to the WIL community.

Further investigation of the highest level of qualification indicates a well-educated WIL community, with 96% having at least a bachelor degree. Most (62%) of the WIL community also held a post graduate qualification, with 37% holding a master degree and 25% a doctorate such as a PhD/EdD. When



analyzed by each age group, the younger age brackets highest qualification was predominately a bachelor degree (54%), which steadily decreased by age to 15%, while simultaneously the highest qualification of doctorate steadily increased from 0% to 44%. However, the proportion of those with the highest qualification of master degree was fairly consistent across all age groups (29% to 39%). Such findings suggests that the community members are often engaged in upskilling through completing post graduate studies later in their career, perhaps as their career shifts into WIL, and is an indication of a community seeking professional development opportunities.

The highest level of qualification (PhD/EdD) of the WIL community, however, was not evenly distributed across the countries where, for example, Canada had only 5% of its members with PhD/EdDs (however, 44% with a master degree) while Australia had 37% of its members with PhD/EdDs (however, 24% with a master degree).

#### *Perceived Need for Professional Development*

Participants indicated that they perceived a moderate need for professional development in WIL (Likert 6.81 out of 10), with 60% indicating that they had already undertaken professional development in WIL. This suggests that some members of the WIL community either felt their professional development needs are being adequately met or they perceive they do not have any specific professional development needs. The perceived need for professional development was generally similar across all regions, except for the South African WIL community which indicated a higher perceived need and a much lower rate of participation in professional development (29% compared to 60% global average). Related to these needs and participation rate, the South African WIL community also indicated that most (66%) did not have access to a WIL support group or mentor, suggesting that many within this community are working in isolation or in poorly supported roles. This evidence strongly indicates a pressing need for developing professional development opportunities for the South African community. Conversely, the well-established Canadian WIL community indicated a strong participation rate with WIL professional development (70%), the highest response to feeling supported by the workplace to undertake professional development (8.64 out of 10), as well as the highest response to having a WIL support group or mentor in their workplace, however, they still indicated a the second strongest response to needing further professional development (7.07 out of 10). The Canadian context highlights that professional development needs are ongoing needs even when well-established structures are in place, and fits with the lifelong learning notion familiar to many WIL educators (Billett & Choy, 2011).

The WIL community preferred professional development opportunities that were offered part-time (3 hours a week) and either online or blended online- face-to-face contact, reflecting that 88% of members of the community are in full-time employment. The South African community had a greater preference for part-time block courses than other regions, which may reflect their greater pressing perceived need for professional development and limited opportunities. All regions had a stronger preference for a credit-bearing qualification/recognition of completing the professional development rather than a non-credit form of recognition.

#### *Professional Development Areas*

Participants were asked to indicate the topics where they perceived they had professional development needs, with the first question allowing participants to indicate as many topics as they wished (general perceived need; Table 4) and then to select only their top three perceived needs (most pressing needs; Table 5). The order of greatest perceived needs follow similar patterns for both tables, however,

'learning contracts and workplace agreements' was ranked significantly higher for general perceived need (14<sup>th</sup>) than for pressing perceived need (23<sup>rd</sup>).

The highest rated need was 'evaluating the quality and impact of WIL' which, given the changes in the higher education sector for many countries, was perhaps not surprising. With the increasing focus on employability, WIL has received significant attention (Jackson, 2013, 2015b; Rowe & Zegwaard, 2017) which raises the importance to evidence the effectiveness of WIL. Effective ways of measuring the impact of WIL has proved difficult to establish and the need for developing quality assurance standards has been raised (Smith et al., 2014).

The top six most pressing needs can be broadly themed around student learning (i.e., learning outcomes, curricular design, reflective learning, and assessment). Given that WIL as an education approach is complex (multiple stakeholders, multiple off-campus locations, variety in student activities), and students are both learners and a pivotal stakeholder within the complex relationships, it is encouraging to see that the community wants to continue upskilling particular skills and knowledge to enable effective student learning.

Interestingly, 'health and safety, risk, and legal requirements' was rated around midpoint, with both New Zealand and the South African region rating it the lowest need for professional development. WIL has been identified as a learning activity with inherent legal, ethical, and physical risks that are difficult to manage (Cameron, 2018; Cameron, Dodds, & Mclean, 2019) where, coupled with the recent strengthening of health and safety laws in many countries, there are significant legal responsibilities placed on the educational institutions on ensuring the safety and wellbeing of students. For example, in response to some significant high profile tragic events, New Zealand recently substantially revised its health and safety legislation (New Zealand Government, 2016) to clarify and strengthen the legal responsibility of all individuals in the workplace (owners, managers, workers, and visitors), including that of any entity (e.g., university) that required an individual (e.g., student) to be in another workplace (e.g., work placement). However, it is concerning that, in this example, the New Zealand WIL community rated health and safety as the lowest professional development need, especially since the understanding of the legal requirements of organizations and, in particular, the understanding of these requirements by individuals within these organizations are generally poor (Vicker, Smallbone, & Baldock, 2005; Walls, Pidgeon, Weyman, & Horlick-Jones, 2010). Albeit, the New Zealand example may be extreme, this underlying concern will likely be true for all regions.

Three of the 24 professional development topics were research focused (research design, data analysis, and publishing), all of which rated low. However, the demographic data showed that the WIL community was diverse, drawing together a range of different types of job positions. When the community was asked to describe their job type (being able to select as many as appropriate), only 9% of the community described themselves as 'researcher', however, this does not align with that 25% described themselves as 'lecturer' and 10% as 'faculty' because each position typically includes an active research requirement within the role. The perceived need for professional development around research capabilities was higher when the data was filtered for only those who identified as researcher, lecturer and/or faculty. This cohort rated the professional development needs for 'research design', 'research data analysis', and 'publishing research' as 13%, 9.6%, and 18%, respectively, twice as high as those who do not identify as lecturer, faculty, or researcher, suggesting that the researcher/academic/faculty cohort may require professional development needs especially targeted for them with a focus of developing research capabilities, especially publishing research. The South African region, however, provided a much stronger response than other countries for the need of

professional development on publishing research (46% as general need and 15% as pressing need) when only 7% of this community identified themselves as researchers and 41% as lecturers/faculty. Considering the relatively low ranking in this region of needs for other research topics (research design and data analysis) and the relatively high ranking for 'evaluating the quality and impact of WIL', it suggests the South African region has greater needs for professional development around career development and WIL program validation than other regions.

The topics of evaluating WIL, designing learning outcomes, and curricular design recorded the highest levels of interest in general and were also perceived as the greatest need of development (ranking top three in both ratings). Aside from 'engaging with employers', the top six in both rankings appear to cluster around a theme of enabling student learning. Even when individual countries deviated in the top six from the global mean, it tended to be on student focused topics, for example, South African region included matching of students, UK included engaging with students (Sweden included understanding theories of learning, however, that likely reflects sample bias as 38% of this cohort identified as researchers). Perhaps this was not surprising, as the primary focus of WIL is student learning when they engage in WIL, while the effective capturing of the learning in the diverse nature of WIL experiences remains a difficult challenge (Ferns & Zegwaard, 2014). The high rating of 'engaging with employers' will be reflective of the pivotal contribution of employers providing WIL learning opportunities for students and the largest cohort of placement coordinators (28%) that is part of the WIL community.

## CONCLUSION

The international WIL professional development survey was the first comprehensive international survey conducted to determine the professional development needs for the WIL community. The survey has provided valuable insight of the demographical nature of the international WIL community and potential future trends. It also has highlighted areas of greatest perceived need for professional development and general needs for professional development. It is the researchers' intentions that this information will inform the national associations and the world association informed decision making in regards professional development needs for their national WIL communities.

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## APPENDIX A: Demographic information of the sampling cohorts.

	World	Australia	Canada	New Zealand	SASCE*	Sweden	UK	US	Other (12 countries)
Number of responses	688	258	202	36	71	16	55	28	22
Gender (%)									
Male	25	18	23	31	39	56	18	50	45
Female	74	81	77	69	61	44	82	50	55
Other	0.3	0.4	0.5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Age (%)									
<20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
20-29	5	3	6	0	7	0	20	0	0
30-39	24	23	30	6	25	31	20	11	14
40-49	28	31	26	36	25	19	29	17	36
50-59	31	29	30	31	35	44	31	43	18
60-69	11	13	6	28	7	6	0	21	32
>70	1	1.6	0.5	0	0	0	0	7	0
Mean age**	47.2	48.1	45.2	53.0	46.0	47.5	42.1	54.6	51.8
Mean years involved with WIL	9.4	8.0	10.5	10.4	10.0	9.6	7.5	14.4	11.9
Extend of employment (%)									
Full-time	88	79	96	92	89	93	87	93	95
Part-time	9	16	1	8	7	0	13	0	5
Other	3	5	3	0	4	7	0	7	0
Type(s) of employment (***)									
Placement coordinator	28	29	35	25	13	0	44	21	5
Lecturer	24	34	5	50	37	31	22	11	23
Director/manager	22	16	30	17	23	5	20	20	27
Administrator	12	9	12	8	13	0	13	36	18
Faculty	10	11	7	6	4	6	6	39	27
Career counsellor	9	7	17	6	0	6	11	11	5
Researcher	9	11	3	19	7	38	4	11	14
Senior manager	8	7	7	11	16	6	9	0	18
Educational consultant	6	7	6	0	1	0	6	7	14
Tutor	3	4	0	6	1	6	9	0	0
Other:	19	16	27	17	16	25	15	21	5
Level of qualification (%)									
Sub-university	4	5	4	8	4	0	5	0	0
Bachelor	22	17	39	3	14	0	29	4	0
PGDip/masters/MPhil	47	40	50	64	56	67	51	39	36
PhD/Edd	25	37	5	25	18	33	15	54	64

\* In this cohort, SASCE is made up of South Africa (n=59), Namibia (n=11), and one other African country (n=1)

\*\* mean age was calculated assuming even distribution within the age categories

\*\*\* participants could choose more than one (total exceeds more than 100%)

## APPENDIX B: Participants views on their professional development opportunities and support

	World	Australia	Canada	New Zealand	SASCE	Sweden	UK	US	Other (12 countries)
Do you have a mentor of a peer-support group knowledgeable in WIL? (%)									
Yes, very knowledgeable about WIL	59	63	63	57	16	63	51	16	17
Yes, but with only limited knowledge	14	8	15	19	5	0	15	5	13
Yes, but we seldom discuss WIL	6	4	6	3	13	13	0	13	30
No	21	23	16	22	66	25	34	66	39
Have you had professional development specific to WIL before? (%)									
Yes	60	63	70	50	29	69	62	71	32
No	40	37	30	50	71	31	38	29	68
Does your workplace offer professional development opportunities in WIL? (%)									
Yes	51	50	55	36	59	88	33	50	55
No	49	50	45	64	41	12	67	50	45
How supportive do you feel your workplace would be of you undertaking professional development in WIL?									
To what extend do you feel you need professional development in WIL	6.81	6.64	7.07	6.25	7.46	7.25	6.62	5.70	6.77
To what extend do you feel you have easy access to WIL professional development opportunities?	6.23	6.00	6.66	5.19	5.39	7.31	6.51	7.56	5.77
Would you like to take a NON-credit bearing certificate in WIL?	6.35	5.92	7.07	5.25	6.80	6.31	6.85	5.49	4.95
Would you like to take a credit-bearing certificate in WIL?	7.26	7.36	7.30	5.61	8.46	7.38	8.19	4.50	5.32
What delivery format what would work best for you in your current work context? (%) **									
Online course	50	48	58	39	49	33	45	43	36
Online discussion groups	23	20	33	8	4	6	16	36	14
Webinars	36	31	56	10	13	11	27	36	14
Face-to-face (in person) teaching	29	26	31	11	27	22	31	25	41
Blended (in person and online)	60	61	56	23	56	50	71	61	50
Other:	1	1	1	1	1	6	0	0	0
Thinking about the time commitment, what would work best for you? (%) **									
Block course, full-time***	13	13	9	11	25	22	11	11	18
Block-course, part-time****	17	15	15	11	32	22	15	7	14
1 day a week	19	18	21	13	18	17	29	11	14
5 hours a week	14	14	12	16	13	0	22	14	23
3 hours a week	40	45	47	32	10	33	45	39	14
1 hour a week	24	22	31	18	15	6	16	46	27
Other:	6	6	8	13	3	0	0	0	5

\* Likert scale of 1-10, where 1 – strongly disagree and 10 = strongly agree

\*\* Participants can select more than one within these cluster of questions

\*\*\* e.g., 2 weeks full-time.

\*\*\*\* e.g., 10-15 hours per week for 2 months

APPENDIX C: Responses where participants were free to select any number of professional development topics (i.e., general need).

	World n=688		Australia n=258		Canada n=202		New Zealand n=36		South African Society* n=71		Sweden n= 16		UK n=55		US n=28		Other** n=22	
	%	order	%	order	%	order	%	order	%	order	%	order	%	order	%	order	%	order
Evaluating the quality and impact of WIL	60	1	68	1	58	4	55	3	45	4	44	4	65	2	50	5	25	9
Designing learning outcomes for WIL and enhancing student learning	53	2	50	3	62	1	55	2	38	9	50	3	53	6	46	6	29	6
Curricular design and mapping WIL activities to learning outcomes	53	3	48	4	62	3	58	1	41	6	39	6	47	9	61	2	46	1
Engaging with industry/workplaces	50	4	53	2	51	7	42	6	38	10	33	8	67	1	36	8	39	2
Assessment design	48	5	45	6	54	5	39	7	48	1	17	12	51	8	61	1	25	8
Enabling effective student reflection	47	6	39	9	62	2	42	5	41	7	17	13	53	7	54	3	18	12
Leadership in WIL	45	7	47	5	48	9	47	4	38	11	22	11	47	12	36	10	29	7
Communicating and marketing WIL to students and employers	41	8	41	8	46	11	32	14	38	12	6	21	55	5	36	9	18	15
Engaging effectively with students	41	9	38	11	50	8	29	19	30	21	17	16	60	3	32	12	18	14
Knowledge on different forms of WIL	39	10	34	16	46	10	29	18	42	5	50	2	38	15	36	11	32	4
Internationalization of WIL	39	11	43	7	38	15	29	17	31	19	17	15	45	14	32	15	36	3
Engaging effectively with faculty/academic staff	39	12	33	18	52	6	34	12	25	22	11	19	56	4	32	13	4	24
Educational theories underpinning WIL	38	13	35	13	41	13	37	11	39	8	56	1	45	13	21	20	11	22
Learning contracts and workplace agreements design	35	14	36	12	35	17	39	10	31	18	17	14	47	10	32	14	11	23
Health & Safety, risks, and legal requirements when engaging with WIL	35	15	38	10	43	12	24	24	15	24	11	20	47	11	11	23	14	20
How to best match students to workplaces	35	16	34	15	32	20	34	13	46	2	11	17	38	17	29	18	32	5
Administrational design for WIL programs (tracking information)	33	17	34	17	35	18	39	9	32	16	11	18	36	18	21	21	14	19
Governance of WIL	32	18	35	14	31	21	39	8	32	15	6	22	36	19	18	22	14	18
Setting up a WIL course	31	19	26	21	33	19	29	20	34	14	33	9	38	16	32	16	21	10
Research design	30	20	31	19	27	22	32	16	35	13	39	7	22	24	39	7	18	16
Providing feedback on assessments	30	21	25	24	39	14	26	22	32	17	6	23	29	21	29	19	18	13
Publishing research	30	22	31	20	20	24	26	23	46	3	39	5	24	22	54	4	18	17
Managing WIL staff	29	23	26	22	36	16	32	15	31	20	6	24	33	20	11	24	21	11
Research data analysis	26	24	26	23	27	23	29	21	25	23	33	10	24	23	32	17	14	21
Other:	5	25	7	25	5	25	0	25	1	25	0	25	2	25	7	25	0	25

\* The South African Association for Cooperative Education respondents consisted of South Africa (n=59), Namibia (n=11), and one other African country (n=1)

\*\* 12 countries made up 'Other', predominately countries in Asia.



APPENDIX D: Responses where participants could select only their top three professional development topics (i.e., pressing need).

	World n=688		Australia n=258		Canada n=202		New Zealand n=36		South African Society* n=71		Sweden n= 16		UK n=55		US n=28		Other** n=22	
	%	order	%	order	%	order	%	order	%	order	%	order	%	order	%	order	%	order
Evaluating the quality and impact of WIL	25	1	29	1	23	3	32	1	20	4	22	5	24	4	11	9	18	6
Designing learning outcomes for WIL and enhancing student learning	24	2	21	4	30	1	21	3	25	1	28	1	18	7	25	5	14	8
Curricular design and mapping WIL activities to learning outcomes	23	3	19	5	26	2	29	2	24	2	17	8	25	3	25	1	25	1
Engaging with industry/workplaces	19	4	21	3	18	5	21	4	10	14	22	7	25	2	18	6	18	4
Enabling effective student reflection	17	5	15	8	23	4	16	5	14	9	0	20	11	11	25	3	11	11
Assessment design	16	6	21	2	9	14	8	16	17	5	11	11	9	14	25	2	18	5
Communicating and marketing WIL to students and employers	15	7	16	7	16	6	11	13	17	6	6	18	20	5	11	10	7	15
Leadership in WIL	15	8	16	6	15	7	11	9	14	10	0	19	16	9	7	14	14	9
Internationalization of WIL	13	9	14	9	12	10	8	18	8	16	6	13	20	6	11	12	25	2
Educational theories underpinning WIL	12	10	13	10	10	13	11	11	13	12	22	4	11	12	11	13	7	17
Engaging effectively with students	11	11	9	16	12	12	3	22	6	21	6	14	27	1	11	11	11	12
Setting up a WIL course	10	12	8	18	9	15	5	19	17	7	28	3	9	15	18	7	7	14
Health & Safety, risks, and legal requirements when engaging with WIL	10	13	11	12	14	8	3	24	3	24	6	17	15	10	4	23	4	21
Knowledge on different forms of WIL	10	14	7	19	12	11	3	21	13	11	28	2	5	20	4	19	11	10
How to best match students to workplaces	9	15	9	13	5	21	13	8	21	3	0	21	4	21	7	16	21	3
Governance of WIL	9	16	11	11	8	17	13	6	10	15	0	23	4	23	4	22	0	22
Engaging effectively with faculty/academic staff	9	17	5	20	13	9	11	12	6	22	6	16	16	8	4	20	0	24
Publishing research	9	18	9	15	1	24	11	15	15	8	11	9	11	13	25	4	11	13
Research design	8	19	9	14	4	23	8	17	7	17	22	6	7	19	14	8	18	7
Administrational design for WIL programs (tracking information)	8	20	9	17	7	18	13	7	11	13	0	22	4	22	7	17	4	20
Research data analysis	7	21	5	21	8	16	11	14	7	19	11	10	7	18	7	15	7	16
Managing WIL staff	6	22	5	23	6	20	3	20	7	18	11	12	9	16	7	18	4	18
Learning contracts and workplace agreements design	6	23	5	22	7	19	11	10	4	23	6	15	7	17	0	25	0	23
Providing feedback on assessments	4	24	5	24	4	22	3	23	6	20	0	24	0	24	4	21	4	19
Other:	1	25	2	25	0.2	25	0	25	1	25	0	25	0	25	4	24	0	25

\* The South African Association for Cooperative Education respondents consisted of South Africa (n=59), Namibia (n=11), and one other African country (n=1)

\*\* 12 countries made up 'Other', predominately countries in Asia.

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<sup>1</sup> Papers included in this IJWIL Special Issue are based on selected presentations and manuscripts from the research symposium's refereed proceedings. All manuscripts were expanded and modified to meet IJWIL requirements followed by double-blind reviewed by the IJWIL editorial board, and then amended before being accepted to be published in IJWIL.





## About the Journal

The International Journal of Work-Integrated Learning (IJWIL) publishes double-blind peer-reviewed original research and topical issues dealing with Work-Integrated Learning (WIL). IJWIL first published in 2000 under the name of Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education (APJCE). Since then the readership and authorship has become more international and terminology usage in the literature has favored the broader term of WIL. In response to these changes, the journal name was changed to the International Journal of Work-Integrated Learning in 2018.

In this Journal, WIL is defined as "*an educational approach that uses relevant work-based experiences to allow students to integrate theory with the meaningful practice of work as an intentional component of the curriculum*". Examples of such practice includes work placements, work-terms, internships, practicum, cooperative education (Co-op), fieldwork, work-related projects/competitions, service learning, entrepreneurships, student-led enterprise, applied projects, simulations (including virtual WIL), etc. WIL shares similar aims and underpinning theories of learning as the fields of experiential learning, work-based learning, and vocational education and training, however, each of these fields are seen as separate fields.

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

## Types of Manuscripts Sought by the Journal

Types of manuscripts sought by IJWIL is primarily of two forms; 1) *research publications* describing research into aspects of work-integrated learning and, 2) *topical discussion* articles that review relevant literature and provide critical explorative discussion around a topical issue. The journal will, on occasions, consider best practice submissions.

*Research publications* should contain; an introduction that describes relevant literature and sets the context of the inquiry. A detailed 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 to current established literature, implications for practitioners and researchers, whilst remaining mindful of the limitations of the data. And a conclusion preferably including suggestions for further research.

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

*Best practice and program description* papers. On occasions, the Journal also seeks manuscripts describing a practice of WIL as an example of best practice, however, only if it presents a particularly unique or innovative practice or is situated in an unusual context. There must be a clear contribution of new knowledge to the established literature. Manuscripts describing what is essentially 'typical', 'common' or 'known' practices will be encouraged to rewrite the focus of the manuscript to a significant educational issue or will be encouraged to publish their work via another avenue that seeks such content.

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Prof. Joy Higgs Charles Sturt University, Australia  
Ms. Katharine Hoskyn Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand  
Dr. Sharleen Howison Otago Polytechnic, New Zealand  
Dr. Nancy Johnston Simon Fraser University, Canada  
Dr. Mark Lay University of Waikato, New Zealand  
Prof. Andy Martin Massey University, New Zealand  
Ms. Susan McCurdy University of Waikato, New Zealand  
Dr. Norah McRae University of Victoria, Canada  
Dr. Keri Moore Southern Cross University, Australia  
Prof. Beverly Oliver Deakin University, Australia  
Dr. Laura Rook University of Wollongong, Australia  
Assoc. Prof. Philip Rose Hannam University, South Korea  
Dr. David Skelton Eastern Institute of Technology, New Zealand  
Prof. Heather Smigiel Flinders University, Australia  
Dr. Calvin Smith Brisbane Workplace Mediations, Australia  
Dr. Raymond Smith Griffith University, Australia  
Assoc. Prof. Judith Smith Queensland University of Technology, Australia  
Prof. Yasushi Tanaka Kyoto Sangyo University, Japan  
Prof. Neil Taylor University of New England, Australia  
Assoc. Prof. Franziska Trede Charles Sturt University, Australia  
Ms. Genevieve Watson Elysium Associates Pty, Australia  
Dr. Nick Wempe Primary Industry Training Organization, New Zealand  
Dr. Marius L. Wessels Tshwane University of Technology, South Africa  
Dr. Theresa Winchester-Seeto University of New South Wales, Australia