

PRISE: An explorative study of a workplace-based work-integrated learning data schema prototype

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Balancing the contextual and universal reporting of workplace-based work-integrated learning (P-WIL) to capture, examine and explain sector-wide impacts, remains an unresolved challenge within Australian Higher Education. To address this, an action-research project was tasked with developing a prototype data schema that groups the typical elements used when describing P-WIL at the local level. This exploratory case study synthesizes findings from our foundational analysis of the literature with initial considerations during the design of a novel model - 'PRISE'. 'PRISE' (an acronym for unit/program-specific data relating to participation in, readiness for, innovation of, satisfaction with, and evaluation of, P-WIL experiences) represents a step-change towards a system capable of capturing granular insights with established big data sets. The study responds to emerging demands for data-driven evidence of effective WIL and contributes to salient discussions on sector-wide impact and quality.

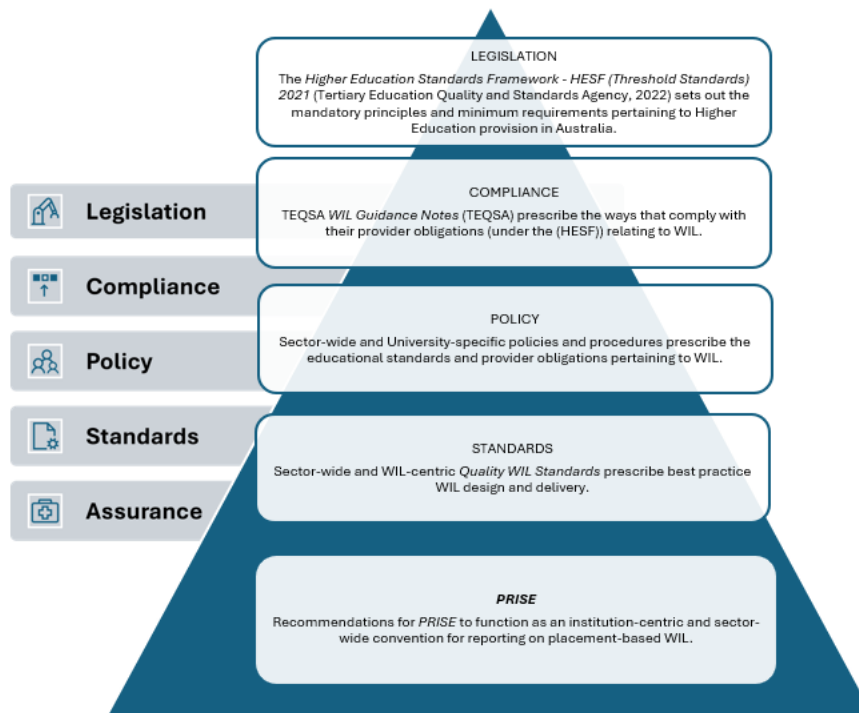
Keywords: Data schema, 'good' WIL, quality WIL, WIL reporting, workplace-based WIL

Australian Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) acknowledge P-WIL's critical role in employability (Ferns & Lilly, 2016; Oliver, 2015), integrating professional practice into curricula to bridge theory with experiential learning (Orrell, 2011; Patrick et al., 2008). P-WIL reporting is a contemporary pragmatic priority for HEI's because of the maturation of P-WIL and the increased need to show impact (Jackson, 2024). There appears to be an opportunity for a standardized data schema for reporting on program-specific elements of the P-WIL models offered across the sector. This finding is informed by the horizon scanning of the regulatory policies and guidelines which are summarized in Figure 1 below. The figure is used here to encapsulate the foundational elements of the quality WIL agenda in Australia, with the addition of a data schema (herein referred to as 'PRISE' - an acronym for the data categories that the researchers in this exploratory case study identified as pithy for grouping common aspects of P-WIL inputs and outcomes).

The inclusion represents the interdependent relationship between the quality WIL standards (Campbell et al., 2019, 2021), supplementary frameworks guiding quality globally (Campbell & Pretti, 2023; Smith et al., 2021; Thomson, 2019), legislative and institutional procedures affecting and supporting the quality of P-WIL, such as the *Guidance Note: Work-Integrated Learning* (Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, 2022) and the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards)* (Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, 2021).

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FIGURE 1: Relationship between higher Education Threshold Standards and organizational policies and procedures relating to WIL (guidance notes; quality standards; and reporting).



Each layer informs the complex backdrop of the quality WIL agenda in Australia with a comprehensive number of case studies exploring the spectrum of local and large-scale WIL offerings. Many case studies are now pointing to the need for WIL evaluation frames and processes (Cheng et al., 2022; Rowe et al., 2018; Young et al., 2023), invaluable for P-WIL advancement, and yet the data infrastructure constraints are a persistent challenge (Young, McKenzie & Thomas, 2024). This is perhaps why for the most part, the literature speaks largely in an abstract fashion to what we colloquially currently accept is 'good' P-WIL (Johnson et al., 2019; Orrell, 2011; Patrick et al., 2008; Rowe et al., 2012; Smith et al., 2021; Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, 2017; Winchester-Seeto, 2024; Zegwaard et al., 2023). What 'good' WIL might entail is instrumental but needs to be grounded by the role that a data schema (such as 'PRISE') might play in a data-driven approach to P-WIL models across the sector. 'PRISE' is included here to highlight the paucity of a universal approach to reporting on the design and delivery of localized P-WIL activities across educational programs.

Indeed, the Australian National WIL Strategy Universities Australia & Australian Collaborative Education Network [ACEN], 2015) signaled the need for standardized mechanisms to support institutional decision-making, tracking student success, employer benefits, and program outcomes. The continued appetite for improved reporting was reflected during the 2024 WIL Australia Conference, Advancing Quality WIL for Learning & Employability in an Ever-Changing World (ACEN, 2024a). Themes relating to longitudinal studies, AI-driven analytics, and real-time feedback systems), and the conference presentation by McKenzie and Young (2024), *WIL Evaluation: It Is Both What You Know, and Who 'Knows' What, That Matters*, illustrate the importance of data-driven enhancements to current practice. The *Measure of Success Community of Practice* (MOS COP) also signals

institutional commitment toward future standardized reporting systems for and of ‘good’ WIL (ACEN, 2024c). Existing WIL quality standards amidst anticipated refinements to the Quality WIL Framework motioned to include aligned measures of success (WIL Australia, 2025), underscore the collective effort toward formalized mechanisms to capture WIL success.

BACKGROUND –CONTEXT AND APPROACH

An action research study (Ethics approval ID: SEBE-2023-01-MOD01 - “Work Integrated Learning Participatory Action Research Project”) was aligned to a large-scale WIL Evaluation Project (WEP) (Young, McKenzie & Harvey, 2024; Young et al., 2023) and tasked with designing a bespoke WIL Evaluation Framework (WEF). The aim was to design a framework and then measure the effectiveness and the impact of all WIL activities across the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Built Environment (SEBE) at an Australian university. P-WIL is offered by all four discipline areas/Schools within SEBE: Life and Environmental Science; Engineering; Information Technology; and Architecture and Construction Management. The testing of the WEF resulted in the recommendation for the creation of a system to enable P-WIL data to be more readily accessible for evaluation:

- a) Enabling a business as usual (BAU) process to increase sustainability of internal reporting.
- b) Providing a scalable and digestible set of ‘fast facts’ for ‘non-data ‘experts’.

The creation of a data schema became the remit of an action-research project: the “PRISE Project.” The at-pace project accelerated efforts from the WEP toward developing a new system for micro-reporting unit/program-specific P-WIL impacts. Participation in a P-WIL experience (including the placement and the unit), readiness for that P-WIL experience, stakeholder-wide satisfaction reporting related to the experience, the innovations necessary for the quality of that experience, and the process for evaluating the experiences through the lens of employability and employment outcomes form the fundamental categories. The intention of each category is summarized below (see Table 1).

Our faculty-centric grouping of categories commonly associated with quality WIL in Science (Winchester-Seeto, 2019), revealed something of interest to the researchers. Despite the abstract evidence of quality (mostly from case studies of ‘good’ WIL from the literature), the local data to support the quality of our offerings were often obscured by blunt big-data instruments. This prevented reliable and sustainable WIL evaluation (Young, McKenzie & Thomas, 2024; Young et al., 2023).

The project members speculated if there may be value for the sector in the provision of a universal reporting schema capable of including unit-specific micro-data as evidence of P-WIL impact, this became our ultimate mission for the study, to investigate: 1) if there is a need for a new reporting system; and if so 2) does the novel data structure (grouped set of categories) presented in this study, have potential as a universal micro-reporting schema of program-centric P-WIL?

TABLE 1: 'PRISE' prototype (V1.0) - the data categories, descriptors and data types applicable across all stakeholders for data-driven decision making on WIL.

Label	Category	Description & Intention	Data type & Examples
<i>P</i>	Participation	Numerical information to provide background and context.	Quantitative E.g. Student enrolments; # units; # intervention types within the model; # and types of stakeholders involved.
<i>R</i>	Readiness	Descriptive and numerical data to provide insights into the preparedness of all stakeholders enabling engagement in the activity.	Mixed method E.g. Self-reporting perceptions of readiness from participants; # and type of preparation interventions included within the model.
<i>I</i>	Innovation	Description of the overall activity highlighting the novel (what is new or 'atypical') and including the intended purpose to provide an understanding of the aim and proposed outcomes.	Qualitative. E.g. Case studies; reviews and reflections; practitioner and researcher motivations, expectations, and learnings.
<i>S</i>	Satisfaction	Feedback mechanism to provide a summary of the level of satisfaction from stakeholders, and the negative/positive contribution of the intervention as a predictor of future stakeholder engagement.	Mixed method E.g. Surveys (qual and quant); interviews/focus groups; observational studies; unit & social media discussion forums; unit performance metrics; placement outcomes; open feedback channels (i.e. emails).
<i>E</i>	Evaluation:	Articulation of the scope of the evaluation a. formative (ongoing) or b. summative (one-off assessment), with a focus on Quality Assurance (QA)—ensuring goals are met, and/or Quality Improvement (QI)—driving enhancements for a data-driven decision-making process to provide insights and optimize broader employability goals and outcomes.	Mixed method & WIL Evaluation Framework. E.g. The indicators of success, relating to a program's effectiveness, with the aim of establishing next steps for informed, evidence-based decisions. Qual and quant data on stakeholder perceptions of employability learning gains; employment outcomes.

To address this, the data schema is best explained as what 'PRISE' is not - it is not designed to judge, analyze and determine the benefits of P-WIL, that is the role of WIL evaluation (Marlow et al., 2021; McKenzie & Young, 2024; Rowe et al., 2018; Smith, 2012; Venville et al., 2018; Young et al., 2023). It is not an evaluation framework – it includes evaluation via the 'E' category to signal the next steps of the possible uses of the data after the data collection; the 'E' in 'PRISE' functions as a next-step prompt going beyond data capture, to that of evaluation (i.e. type, purpose, scope: formative (ongoing) or summative (one-off assessment)). So, while evaluation is not the remit of 'PRISE' it is however the remit of 'PRISE' to provide a sensible way of gathering the fast facts that are typically needed when addressing quality standards (Winchester-Seeto, 2024; Zegwaard & Pretti, 2023) and how those indicators may determine 'good' P-WIL (Johnson et al., 2019). As 'PRISE' is not an evaluation

framework (despite the “E-Evaluation” category), it speaks only to data-driven processes that can lead to evidence-based insights for optimized outcomes. This distinction is vital, as discovered during the SEBE WIL evaluation study (Young, McKenzie & Thomas, 2024), wherein there was a noticeable lack of consensus on what should/could be reported on. It was discovered that ‘PRISE’ illuminated what could be unpacked via aligned mechanisms (i.e. universal standards, indicators and measures for P-WIL success). Nor does ‘PRISE’ aim to re-configure the WIL items as part of the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS) – these successfully provide big data insights into graduate outcomes for sector-wide collection and reporting on aggregated national data for both WIL participation and impact (ACEN, 2023; Jackson, 2024).

However, because the schema is primarily intended to gather local level data, it assists in the provision of consistent data for future measuring of what matters most for the course-faculty-institution. Unlike large-scale sector-wide data collection systems such as the Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS), which in 2023 involved 126 institutions, 116,250 completed surveys, and achieved a 38.7% response rate for specific timeframes (QILT Quality Indicators for Learning & Teaching, 2024), this prototype operates at a smaller, more targeted scale for internal institutional reporting. The framework enables individual institutions, or even single courses/units, to collect and analyze relevant data at any given time. It incorporates external factors that may be relevant at the unit level, particularly those relating to labor market conditions and further study pathways. The approach focuses on student readiness, skill development, employability, and satisfaction during their course experience rather than graduate satisfaction measured 4-6 months post-completion, specifically examining these factors within the P-WIL context as distinct from, though sometimes overlapping with, graduate employment outcomes.

To reiterate, while ‘PRISE’ is not an evaluation framework, the framing contributes significantly to the foundational elements that we claim are worthy of inclusion for how we might collectively begin to uniformly measure our contextual nuances of P-WIL, thus contributing to the abstract reporting of success(es) (Johnson et al., 2019). The prototype contributes to ongoing discussions by providing a structured framework for articulating the detailed, localized experiences of P-WIL within the broader established evidence base on WIL's sector-wide impacts. It contributes to a complex reporting landscape (Venville et al., 2018)) that is not yet homogenous.

The purpose of ‘PRISE’ therefore is to present a prototype for providing the sector with an additional and distinguishable set of categories for evidencing unit and course-wide inputs, outcomes, and impact, that speak to the GOS. It provides an opportunity to leverage existing mechanisms to feed into a layered sector-wide approach to improved reporting. We assert that the sector is primed, perhaps even overdue, for the trial of a proof-of-concept data schema capable of denoting universal categories intrinsic to and meaningful for P-WIL unit-specific offerings across HEI's. We caution that a step-change must enable the showcasing of the localized (program-specific innovations leading to institutional competitive advantage) balanced with the sector-wide principles and guidelines for P-WIL. If the assumption is correct, that there is a growing urgency to make sense of ‘good’ P-WIL and its relationship to agreed indicators and measures of success, then attending to the data process gap, by addressing how to define what needs to be reported on, is essential.

METHODS

This study takes an action-research approach (Cornish et al., 2023) and continues a decade of action-research involving WIL champions to expand WIL (Young et al., 2017, 2022). Findings from these studies revealed practitioners and researchers experience blockages when navigating the complex

reporting landscape (as supported in the study by Venville et al., 2018). Findings from the action-research revealed that gaining timely data on employability outcomes and learning impacts during each academic year in which the P-WIL units are offered, is a challenge. There is also a challenge of transparency and repeatability to compare data (P-WIL benchmarking). The sorts of rich granularized unit-specific data, which was sought to tell lived experiences of impact, were difficult to navigate and thus tended to be discarded because it may have been deemed statistically insignificant, even if the thread to GOS outcome data could be traced.

The exploratory intent of this study notes an emerging value for holistic reporting - a mechanism for maneuvering backwards and forwards from the GOS data to tell each program/courses. The researcher's lived experience of P-WIL and P-WIL reporting (and its challenges as described above) was used in this study to complement a re-examination of the literature necessitating a curation of a nebulous range of studies to unpack how implicit and explicit standards are expressed. Horizon scanning was fitting for identifying categories likely to resonate as appropriate, without predetermining the schema. WIL quality studies were used to scaffold (rather than undertake an exhaustive review), of the broader reporting needs across the sector (see Figure 1).

This foundational analysis of the literature was governed by the following questions:

1. What does the faculty want/need to know about our P-WIL offerings?
2. What does a foundational review of the literature on P-WIL tend to report on (themes and gaps)?
3. Does the literature (see R2) and the internal investigations (see R1) offer any insights for the sector?

We hypothesized that a) in the absence of universal practice for unit-specific P-WIL reporting, and b) in the presence of an appetite for data-driven evidence (ACEN, 2023; Zegwaard & Pretti, 2023), there was an opportunity for process enhancements.

As our methodology was deliberately exploratory (neither the literature review or testing were exhaustive), 'PRISE' presents an indicative data taxonomy flexible enough to springboard discussions on 'good' WIL practice (Zegwaard & Pretti, 2023), for quality assurance processes (Campbell et al., 2019, 2021), without positioning 'PRISE' as a prescriptive solution, but rather as a feedforward mechanism to contribute to emerging trends in data-driven WIL models.

RESULTS

The Five Categories of 'PRISE'

The explorative study, teasing out the likely credibility of 'PRISE' referred to the literature to ascertain if there were indications to support that the five categories (found to be of benefit to the faculty), might be of benefit to the sector. Here, a micro-scoping of the literature indicated that the baseline elements of 'P, R, I, S, E', were useful for demonstrating recognizable categories typically found in qualitative and quantitative data-driven evidence frames for addressing the effectiveness of P-WIL.

P – Participation Category

This category is largely a matter of quantifying 'past' action of stakeholder participation (ACEN, 2023). Within the 'PRISE' schema, the 'P' data represents mostly top-level enrolment data. The interesting finding from the investigation into the literature looking for evidence of the need for a 'P' category for

P-WIL reporting, was that participation (student enrolment data and host engagement data) tended to be reported mostly as background/context for practice-based discipline and program specific case studies (Rampersad & Jarvis, 2013). The studies use participation to tell the story of engagement, but also readiness, innovation and satisfaction, are often attributed and aligned to employability agendas (ACEN, 2023). The literature review found that case studies often discuss (analyze) the success of a program by including participation in P-WIL. These studies also often carve the data into subcategories, often including demographic breakdowns. Citation examples of this approach include (ACEN, 2023). It is also commonplace for larger sector wide studies and final reports such as the Universities Australia (2019) *WIL in Universities Final Report*, to include similar enrolment statistics. As an example of participation data, this report discusses the 2017 landscape for WIL, with 451,263 students (representing $\frac{1}{3}$ of enrolled university students) being involved in WIL and of those, 43% had at least one P-WIL experience.

What was determined from this review was that program-centric and research-specific factors were often correlated to demonstrate contextual outcomes, impact and success via arguments relating to breadth and reach of P-WIL engagement, with quantifiable justifications pertaining to scalability, stakeholder interest and therefore improved strategic targets for market segments (i.e. increased equity and access to P-WIL overall). It was also noted that it was rare for published case studies to not include 'P' data.

We determine that the 'P' category, commonly used for quantifying the scope of engagement (participant activity) and used to situate the outcomes of the P-WIL activity, is a well-established means for sharing 'good' P-WIL, or even barriers to it, and as such, any future data schema would be best placed to include this category.

R – Readiness Category

This category is concerned with stakeholder (i.e. student, host and staff) preparations for active involvement in P-WIL. It encompasses activities designed to develop readiness as well as the perceptions of confidence, and by inference, readiness to engage in the P-WIL activity. The 'R' category is a key element of the guiding principles of the quality WIL framework (Campbell et al., 2019, 2021), particularly in the 'before' placement section. The literature review found that case studies that detail the impacts of P-WIL experiences often reference the structure of the before-during-after of placement for optimizing student learning (Billett, 2011; Campbell et al., 2019, 2021). The 'R' needs to relate to the student preparedness for the placement activity (Bennett, 2018; Cranmer, 2006), as well as a readiness to engage in the learning and assessment of the unit. From a student perspective, an increased awareness of professional self through embedded cycles of reflective practice functions as an example of readiness data. Placement preparation activities, not just within the WIL unit, but across the student's study, can function as a further indicator of readiness for professional engagement during the placement experience. Student engagement in these activities, and their confidence levels, is intended to support reporting of readiness for P-WIL.

Novel to P-WIL reporting but much needed for a stakeholder-wide data schema, 'PRISE' also includes considerations of host/supervisor and university staff readiness, that we suggest could be framed as a level of confidence to engage in the provision of both formal and work-based learning (Matsoso & Benedict, 2020; Winchester-Seeto et al., 2016). Studies that discuss hosts' perceptions and requirements for work-ready students (Gardner & Perry, 2023) pertaining to the journey toward the career-ready graduate during the P-WIL experience (Zegwaard & Pretti, 2023), provide an evidence based for the

inclusion of host considerations in the reporting of P-WIL. This could include not just the activities relating to the enabling of hosts to engage in P-WIL (Ferns et al., 2016), but also the levels of confidence for co-created learning (Ruskin & Bilous, 2020, 2021). Similarly uncharted, are staff perceptions (Ruskin & Bilous, 2020, 2021) relating to their confidence for co-creation of theory-with-practice authentic work-related tasks. Fewer studies address staff readiness, but those that do (Dean et al., 2023; Jackson & Dean, 2023) tease out that importance of enabling and recognizing how staff can effectively engage, with greater confidence (Young et al., 2023) in this future proofing of students is a vital node of reporting.

The 'R' category deliberately excludes the reporting of the curriculum interventions aimed at developing graduate readiness for employment - that which follows placement (Winchester-Seeto & Rowe, 2023) – this is the domain of the 'E' category. In summary 'R' is intended to capture descriptive and numerical data specifically for the reporting of placement and placement unit readiness (note: this can include capability building activities, willingness and confidence levels of the students, hosts and staff alike, to engage in placement activities). Mixed-method self-reporting perceptions of readiness from participants as well as the number and types of preparation interventions included within the P-WIL model are intended to be reported in this category.

I – Innovation Category

Given the pursuit of innovation in WIL is steadfast, the reporting of it needs to be inextricably connected to innovation appropriate for the program and the institution (and therefore the stakeholders they serve). This category is therefore largely a matter of quality enhancement, wherein strategic endeavors inspire revisions to procedures and practices to spearhead innovation and to celebrate success. A grounding study supporting the rationale for this category stems from the study by (Zegwaard & Rowe, 2019) who had already critically examined innovations in WIL. Investigations into P-WIL innovation (Kay et al., 2019) helped to untangle how P-WIL innovation might be reported. It was found that innovation is acknowledged in diverse ways but is always attributed as an enabler of WIL growth across HEI's (Universities Australia, 2019). For example, a unit may opt to embed student self-assessments that align with career development learning, if there is a need within work-integrated learning activities to sharpen students' development of their professional identity. The caveat being that an intervention of this type is not mandatory but could be value-add. It could be a novel means for addressing barriers associated with large agendas like employability and the celebration of related successes (Smith & Worsfold, 2014).

There is a breadth of approaches to reporting on innovation, but as innovation is fundamental to P-WIL in HE, we argue that it is critical to bring innovation reporting into the schema. WIL guides provide the why, how to, and what to include when innovating, for achieving 'good' practice WIL (Cooper et al., 2010; Ferns et al., 2014). Numerous studies detail how to design innovative WIL curricula and assessment (Lasen et al., 2018) including frameworks to support best practice (Ajjawi et al., 2021; Ferns & Zegwaard, 2014; Ferns et al., 2025; Hodges, 2011; Kaider et al., 2017; Rowe & Winchester-Seeto, 2021; Smith et al., 2016), as well as pedagogies for enhanced outcomes (Billett, 2015; Rowe et al., 2023; Zegwaard & Pretti, 2023).

Literature supports that innovation is more common to P-WIL than is realized, and as such must be accounted for in a P-WIL data schema but also contribute to iterative enhancements to 'good' P-WIL. Including studies that test innovative practices, and those that deliberately consider new models to expand upon existing WIL types (Kay et al., 2019; Zegwaard & Pretti, 2023), those that support iterative

transformation of P-WIL norms (Rowe et al., 2023) would be insightful. The category would enable contextual celebrations of program-centric evidence bases for P-WIL, that when reported, convey the significant contributions of P-WIL practitioners, made possible because of their drive, expertise and scholarly approach to innovation.

S – Satisfaction Category

This category is largely self-explanatory and is concerned with the exploration of if and how stakeholders (students, industry/community partners and staff) report being satisfied with the P-WIL experience. Seemingly self-explanatory, the category is indeed nuanced and complex. The micro-scoping literature review for this category found that most case studies on P-WIL comment on the need to satisfy and find benefits for stakeholders, but the way in which this is reported can vary. The reporting tends to be a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods, commonly with surveys using Likert scales and interviews/focus groups. Participant reflections from focus groups and case studies, that provide tangible lived experiences pertaining to the activity.

The case studies showcased on the ACEN website (ACEN, 2024b) reveal the extent to which the sector refers to (directly and indirectly) the satisfaction of stakeholders. Some of these studies explicitly point to an important data source for the student aspect of this category - the GOS, which is critical for orienting student satisfaction as a sector-wide measure and can be taken into consideration as a part of a broader conception of the satisfaction category. Unpacking student satisfaction is likely to involve investigations into the functions and satisfaction levels of other stakeholders (universities and host organizations) with, to and for the student to uncover student satisfaction (Smith & Worsfold, 2014). This category also explores pivotal roles university staff play in student satisfaction, as well as the satisfaction levels of the staff themselves involved in WIL (Young et al., 2017) emphasize the need for support and recognition for overall stakeholder satisfaction (and the successful implementation of WIL). Bates (2010, 2011) explored the perspectives of university staff on WIL programs, finding that clear role definitions and institutional support were key factors influencing their satisfaction and engagement in WIL activities. Research from Jackson and Dean (2023) also examined how faculty perceptions of placements vary depending on institutional support, with those involved in well-funded programs reporting higher levels of engagement and satisfaction. We note that university staff perspectives, whilst less commonly studied, are a vital aspect of 'good' P-WIL reporting. Regardless of which stakeholder segment is investigated, or the method and methodology used, the ability for the sector to report on stakeholder satisfaction is necessary. More needs to be known about what stakeholders perceive (thought) about readiness to engage in P-WIL, and what they achieved (outcomes) and what they perceive now (think), as elements of contributing to satisfaction.

Without a universal evidence-base for reporting of 'good P-WIL models' (Zegwaard et al., 2023), and without improved parameters for reporting on agreed essential P-WIL components (Ferns et al., 2025), cases for more or enhanced P-WIL become difficult to enable. For example, studies focused on the employer perspective reveal a lack of transparency about what WIL entails and how to engage with it effectively (Bennett, 2018; Jackson et al., 2017), so beyond very basic participation data, how can satisfaction be gleaned? From the academic perspective, satisfaction reporting of and for P-WIL can be lost if a lack of clarity (Young et al., 2017; Zegwaard & Pretti, 2023) on what P-WIL can and cannot do, remains. More research has been conducted with student satisfaction highlighting students' need for greater clarity, especially around the learning design and intended academic outcomes when participating in a P-WIL experience (Boud et al., 2020). Lack of understanding of processes and even data related to notions of limited access to suitable placements experiences (Bennett, 2018; Jackson &

Bridgstock, 2021; Jackson et al., 2017), leading to a reticence to engage, or a low level of ‘readiness’ for placement (Billett, 2011; Jackson, 2019; Young, McKenzie & Thomas, 2024) show the complexity associated with reporting on satisfaction, but one nevertheless that needs to be addressed as the sector responds to the *Australian Universities Accord Final Report* (Department of Education, 2024) and increasing P-WIL as a vehicle for future-proofing students for the unknown workforces.

The cautionary note is that satisfaction is a difficult data category that requires expert data analyses to ensure that the evidence base is valid and reliable. Nevertheless, as this study is concerned with designing a category for enabling high-level, digestible ‘fast facts’ relating to stakeholder satisfaction, the notion of ‘overall satisfaction’ with the P-WIL activity (a common reporting technique in the literature), appears to be sensible. For example, drawing data across student self-report of satisfaction in teaching, learning and course activity and outcome can inform an overall lens towards the educational experience. The literature review revealed that despite the data challenges, satisfaction is, and needs to continue to be, a bedrock of existing P-WIL quality reporting.

E – Evaluation Category

The ‘E’ is concerned with the beyond of P-WIL data in and of itself. It is concerned with the process via which each HEI decides are the significant contributions and connections between employability learning activities, learning gains, and employment outcomes. As critical as these insights are to quality WIL, it is not the place of a data schema to report on judgements made about P-WIL, that is the remit of evaluation (Young et al., 2023). It is our view that a data schema should not make judgements but rather provide a frame for what is best mined and curated for local analyses leading to further critique on the types and levels of effectiveness as a result of what was intended, what was sought and what was found. We prefer that the notion of effectiveness become a consideration when matters of quality are determined (Young, McKenzie & Thomas, 2024).

Nevertheless, as the role P-WIL is oft assigned as a vehicle for advancing student employability (Oliver, 2015), and given the slipperiness of the nomenclature associated with employability and employment concepts (Cheng et al., 2022), it was determined that this category needed to shine a light on the rhetorical five guiding questions of evaluation to address P-WIL effectiveness (Young et al., 2023). The program-centric value attributed to the data retrieved via ‘P’, ‘R’, ‘I’, ‘S’ is affected by the ‘E’ methods (Young, McKenzie & Thomas, 2024). As such this final category flags the process of reporting, rather than the products to report on.

‘E’ includes employability and employment markers, grounded by Yorke’s definition of employability (Yorke, 2006). It suggests for the inclusion of students’ scaffolded employability journey via employability learning gain data (Young, McKenzie & Thomas, 2024). It advises that employment reporting, that harnesses the complexity of data relating to dynamic labor markets (Jackson, 2019) remain in frame. For example, if a program’s intention is to enable work-ready graduates, data (from the GOS) is useful when mixed-method qualitative and quantitative student placement outcomes data is used to triangulate curriculum insights with exogenous factors (i.e. labor markets). Here publicly available forms of GOS data (e.g. QILT Quality Indicators for Learning & Teaching., 2024), with local data on iterative student employability skill development (Oliver, 2015), via an evaluation framework, bring greater meaning to the WIL items.

Reporting on course-wide employability learning gains, perceived post-graduation qualification data, perceived preparedness for work, often described in the literature as work-readiness (Jackson, 2019), correlated to the WIL items and employment destination data, and supplemented by employment

outcome findings, i.e. as per studies using GOS data (Jackson, 2015, 2019, 2024), would bring a new dimension to the GOS. Including local participation, readiness, satisfaction, and innovation data within a fit for purpose evaluation, is suggested if expanding our field for reporting on quality is valued.

IMPLICATIONS

Despite the timing limitations associated with the at-pace internal project (September 2023 - December 2023) affecting the scope of study, the proof of concept contributes to the exploration of the rhetorical question: 'What do we know about P-WIL?' Our answer was, and still is, not enough. We argue it is too early in the piece for the sector to land on exact categories, but that a taxonomy like 'PRISE' (version 1), promises to add depth and breadth to the WIL quality agenda, particularly via cross-institutional collaboration to ensure applicability across contexts.

PRISE promises to be a useful proof of concept for sector-wide consideration to ascertain baseline categories predicated to contribute to the reporting of 'good' P-WIL. To this end, we note the value of the prototype in its next form - PRISE 2.0:

- a) As a universal process supporting the internal business-as-usual regulation of performance measures and metrics fit for purpose to P-WIL, beyond the scope of the TEQSA WIL guidance notes (Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, 2022; Young et al., 2023)
- b) To supplement Australian case studies relating to quality WIL standards as a cornerstone for framing P-WIL reporting (Campbell et al., 2019, 2021).
- c) To marry standards to the prescription of a set of indicators capable of measuring outcomes, successes and impacts of WIL (Campbell & Pretti, 2023).
- d) For collective agreement on what constitutes the baseline measures of 'good' in P-WIL.
- e) To strengthen the use of internal data findings on P-WIL programs and the WIL items in the GOS (Jackson, 2015, 2016, 2019, 2024).
- f) To address the data types and the survey tools best placed to capture 'fast facts' data for reliable measurement of P-WIL performance and impact (Venville et al., 2018).
- g) As part of a systemic approach providing practitioners, policy makers and researchers with insights for WIL evaluation needed to be shared for timely decision making (Young et al., 2023).

The 'out of scope' elements of this exploratory study (despite being limitations of the study) are shared here to frame what is critical for further studies, and demarcate possible inclusions for a future national review:

- A full scoping of the literature for existing and additional/different reporting categories.
- An expansive meta-study of indicators of 'good WIL', measures of success; publicly accessible reports and impact studies detailing local and international WIL programs; including regulatory reports relating to the assurance of WIL.
- Reliability testing of each category (for all three key stakeholder groups)
- Opportunities for case study comparative analyses (across willing HEI's and possible ethics).
- Sector-wide CoP contributions to the next iteration of the prototype for sector-wide applicability.
- Alignment to 'good' P-WIL guidelines, policy and procedures and functioning as a supplement to revised quality WIL frameworks and measures of success
- Consideration of P-WIL schema for future benchmarking processes (and/or WIL evaluation)
- Consideration of a national P-WIL data framework, providing a standardized yet flexible model for reporting.

Determining the reliability of the categories and the long-term viability of a 'new' schema integrated with national benchmarking and quality assurance processes, is critical if cross-sector institutional comparability of WIL effectiveness is useful for measuring P-WIL successes. While 'PRISE,' as a proof of concept, has current limitations, it does provoke for a step change in what to, and how to, universally report on P-WIL within the nascent quality WIL discourse.

CONCLUSION

'PRISE' offers a prototype for the foundations of a standardized convention for reporting on the contextual elements of P-WIL experiences for possible universal reporting of the common permutations of 'good' P-WIL. As the reporting categories are designed to be dialed up or down, the schema is adaptable to all HEI contexts. This study, which identified a need for a data schema (such as PRISE) as a resource for local level reporting, is suggestive of the sector-wide appetite for continued enhancements to the quality WIL agenda and the evaluation of it (Young et al., 2023). It speaks to the steps before the application of standards (Campbell et al., 2019), the incorporation of indicators of success and instruments/tools to undergo evaluations (Young, McKenzie & Thomas, 2024) to measure 'good' WIL. We reiterate, our response to our rhetorical question: 'what do we know about P-WIL?'. Not enough. It highlights the need to measure the 'right things' to drive and evaluate the growing breadth of depth of P-WIL (Jackson, 2019; Zegwaard & Pretti, 2023). Despite not having an answer, there is a need for a systematic and transparent systemic approach to sector-wide reporting on the local lived experiences of the P-WIL – a sensible collective mechanism for universal accountability to capture the existing dedication to, and responsibility for, quality P-WIL.

It is our hope that this study sparks interest in the need for broader sector consultation involving targeted discussions firstly about the demands of and for a data schema (of some shape and form), propelling action-plans for a systematic literature review, along with testing of program-specific, institutional-sensitive and sector-agnostic baseline P-WIL reporting. We claim that PRISE presents an opportunity to pepper the mechanism into existing governance, reporting frames and policies related to P-WIL (including quality discussions that fall under the jurisdiction of TEQSA and HEI's more generally). It is our hope that PRISE induces broader conversations around appropriate standards and indicators of successful approaches to WIL, that will future proof 'good' P-WIL. In short, it offers the sector an 'in principle' starting position for standardizing P-WIL reporting.

Acknowledgement

We wish to thank the PRISE Project team members who took part in the project, but not this aspect of the research, and the staff who contributed to the provision of data as well as the user testing phases of the schema. We would also like to thank the faculty for in-kind support and funding for the project.

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About the Journal

The International Journal of Work-Integrated Learning (IJWIL) publishes double-blind peer-reviewed original research and topical issues related to Work-Integrated Learning (WIL). IJWIL first published in 2000 under the name of Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education (APJCE).

In this Journal, WIL is defined as:

An educational approach involving three parties – the student, educational institution, and an external stakeholder – consisting of authentic work-focused experiences as an intentional component of the curriculum. Students learn through active engagement in purposeful work tasks, which enable the integration of theory with meaningful practice that is relevant to the students' discipline of study and/or professional development (Zegwaard et al., 2023, p. 38).*

Examples of practice include off-campus workplace immersion activities such as work placements, internships, practicum, service learning, and cooperative education (co-op), and on-campus activities such as work-related projects/competitions, entrepreneurship, student-led enterprise, student consultancies, etc. WIL is related to, and overlaps with, the fields of experiential learning, work-based learning, and vocational education and training.

The Journal's aim is to enable specialists working in WIL to disseminate research findings and share knowledge to the benefit of institutions, students, WIL practitioners, curricular designers, and researchers. The Journal encourages quality research and explorative critical discussion that leads to the advancement of quality practices, development of further understanding of WIL, and promote further research.

The Journal is financially supported by the Work-Integrated Learning New Zealand (WILNZ; www.wilnz.nz), WACE (www.waceinc.org), WIL Australia (www.acen.edu.au), and the University of Waikato (www.waikato.ac.nz).

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Types of manuscripts sought by IJWIL are primarily in two forms: 1) *research publications* describing research into aspects of WIL and, 2) *topical discussion* articles that review relevant literature and provide critical explorative discussion around a topical issue. The journal will, on occasions, consider good 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 including recommendations.

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Reference

Zegwaard, K. E., Pretti, T. J., Rowe, A. D., & Ferns, S. J. (2023). Defining work-integrated learning. In K. E. Zegwaard & T. J. Pretti (Eds.), *The Routledge international handbook of work-integrated learning* (3rd ed., pp. 29-48). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003156420-4>

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ISSN: 2538-1032

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