Work Integrated Learning: A distributed approach to leadership

This Office for Learning and Teaching sponsored project responds to the need for greater understanding of WIL leadership and associated leadership development needs. The resulting WIL Leadership Framework creates a multi-layered representation of the key capabilities of WIL leaders distributed across five domains of activity. Included within the project outcomes are exemplars of WIL leadership practice and descriptions of how the framework can be used as a tool to enhance and develop WIL leadership.

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Key Findings

The following are the key findings of this project, which drew on the opinions of WIL leaders and practitioners in the six partner universities, two of which are dual sector institutions, and on data from industry and partner organisations:

1. WIL leadership occurs in, and is distributed across, diverse roles and settings in tertiary institutions and industry.
2. The distinctive nature and complexity of WIL benefits from the type of shared and collaborative relationships offered by distributed leadership.
3. The challenges WIL leaders face in tertiary institutions, disciplines, and industry are broadly similar.
4. The capabilities required by WIL leaders are similar across tertiary institutions, disciplines, and industry, and can be grouped into five domains: shaping vision and policy; communicating and influencing WIL; creating sustainable WIL relationships to strengthen WIL culture; fostering engagement, expertise and learning in WIL; and driving outcomes that serve the needs of WIL stakeholders.
5. Industry and partner organisations seek enhanced collaboration and support from tertiary institutions in order to implement and maintain effective WIL activity and to build WIL capabilities of staff including supervision.
6. WIL vision and strategic intent are important drivers of WIL practice, irrespective of whether the institution has, or does not have, a formal WIL policy.
7. Resourcing and acknowledging the work of WIL leaders is a recognised need for WIL practitioners in all sectors.

Using the WIL Leadership Framework

WIL Vision Tool
As a visioning tool the Framework can guide and enhance a WIL policy to:
- guide the development of institutional and organisational policy
- develop a shared understanding of WIL and WIL expectations, and
- develop a coordinated and cohesive approach to WIL leadership and good practice.

Leadership Map
As a leadership map the Framework can assess the strengths, challenges and gaps in WIL leadership to:
- provide reflective, evaluative or continuous improvement of WIL practitioners
- guide the curriculum that responds to the training needs of WIL leaders, and
- identify gaps in approaches that enable and enact WIL leadership.

Support Tool
As a support tool the Framework can develop and enhance the leadership capabilities of WIL leaders to:
- build a “how to” guide including quality and risk approaches, for different types of WIL leadership and practice
- leverage industry engagement and interaction by explaining how universities use WIL, and
- identify WIL leadership gaps within an institution or organisation.

WIL Promotional Tool
As a promotional tool the Framework can advance the acceptance and adoption of WIL to:
- create greater institutional and organisational investment in WIL
- enable greater collaboration between institutions and partner organisations, and
- showcase stories of WIL leadership and WIL outcomes.

Position Description Tool
As a position description tool the Framework can shape role statements to:
- develop position descriptions in the recruitment of WIL leaders
- enhance the role descriptions of existing WIL practitioners in universities and industry, and
- contextualise the role descriptions across disciplines to ensure long-lasting use and impact.

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# The Five Domains of WIL Leadership

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Driving organisational and joint industry/university WIL outcomes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>Identify and manage common challenges and risks &lt;br&gt; Promote shared benefits &lt;br&gt; Build, cultivate and maintain capacity and equitable outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Enable</strong></td>
<td><strong>Communicating and influencing WIL</strong> &lt;br&gt; Develop shared understandings about WIL &lt;br&gt; Build sustainable WIL practice through the development of networks and communities of practice &lt;br&gt; Broker and advocate for meaningful WIL outcomes</td>
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<td><strong>Enact</strong></td>
<td><strong>Fostering WIL engagement, expertise and student learning</strong> &lt;br&gt; Build WIL pedagogy, curriculum and expertise &lt;br&gt; Cultivate innovative approaches and quality experiences in WIL &lt;br&gt; Promote WIL scholarship, research and practice</td>
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<td><strong>Enable</strong></td>
<td><strong>Creating and sustaining WIL relationships</strong> &lt;br&gt; Identify and engage with diverse WIL stakeholder networks &lt;br&gt; Collaborate within, across and outside the organisation &lt;br&gt; Nurture relationships to strengthen WIL culture</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Enact</strong></td>
<td><strong>Shaping the WIL Vision</strong> &lt;br&gt; Plan, articulate, influence and advocate strategy &lt;br&gt; Foster WIL culture to achieve equity and quality WIL outcomes &lt;br&gt; Enable change and innovation to respond to emergent trends and wider contexts</td>
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**Universities**
- Develop, and advocate for institutional WIL vision and policy
- Advocate for processes, systems and resources that support WIL
- Enable innovation and change in University-wide WIL strategies
- Foster a culture of WIL activity to drive learning outcomes for and with students
- Foster collective focus and approaches between sectors

**Partners and organisations**
- Develop, and advocate for organisational/sector WIL vision and policy
- Advocate for processes, systems and resources to advance WIL provision
- Enable innovation and change in the provision of WIL
- Ensure appropriate culture to support quality student experiences
- Foster collective focus and approaches between sectors
- Promote WIL as an organisational professional responsibility

[acen.edu.au/WILleadership](acen.edu.au/WILleadership)
The WIL Leadership Framework is a multi-layered representation of WIL leadership capabilities. Each layer presents a slice of leadership practice: the upper layers provide the context and domains of WIL leadership while the lower layers provide the detail and exemplars.

- **WIL Context**
  - The overarching layer of the Framework encompasses the multiple settings and roles that pertain to WIL practice. The lower layers must be interpreted within the context of the institution, organisation or the individual WIL leader.

- **WIL Leadership Domains**
  - The five WIL leadership domains describe the key capabilities that are exhibited by WIL leaders: Shaping the Vision, Creating Relationships, Fostering Engagement, Communicating and Influencing, and Driving Outcomes.

- **WIL Leadership Scope**
  - The scope statements define the key activities undertaken by the WIL leader within that domain. The extent to which each scoping statement is applied is drawn from the WIL context and the role or roles undertaken by the individual leader.

- **WIL Leadership Approaches**
  - The approaches are divided into those that enable the domain scope to be achieved and those that allow the leader to enact that scope. Further divisions in approaches are made to identify activities undertaken by university leaders and those in industry.

- **WIL Leadership Vignettes**
  - The vignettes available on the ACEN website provide exemplars sourced from WIL leaders and practitioners, describing the needs within WIL practice at course and institutional levels which can be addressed by the Framework.