

## President's Report

### Annual General Meeting November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017



I am very pleased to provide this overview of the key activities and achievements for the period from July 2016. It has been an extremely busy and successful time for ACEN as it continues to grow and provide additional services to ACEN members.

Key achievements during this period include

- Increased focus on the National WIL Strategy and enhanced collaboration with key partners of the strategy that continues to make a significant impact nationally and internationally
- Continued strong membership with 38 Australian universities in 2017, 1628 registered members and over 1880 from Australia and overseas receiving the monthly newsletter.
- Strong State Chapters providing increased opportunities for networking and professional development for members
- Expanded webinar series providing professional development to hundreds of ACEN members
- Continuing support for research and scholarship activities for WIL in Australia by awarding 3 Research grants and one commissioned project
- Supporting students through the ACEN Student Scholarship scheme
- Increased co-operation with national associations globally

The following gives brief overviews of main achievements during the period.

#### Advocacy

ACEN has been very proactive in advocating for WIL nationally over the last 12 months this including:

- Submission to the Review by ATO on Scholarships
- Submission to inform the TEQSA guidance notes on work Integrated learning
- Participation in the consultation for the implementation of the International Education Strategy by the Federal Government
- Continuing discussions with the Canadian association, CAFCE and Canadian Government representatives regarding the strategy and initiatives being implemented through the Trudeau Government
- Presentations in a range of forums NAFEA Conference, Universities Australia Employability Forum WACE conference, IEAA industry Forums
- Representation on the Council of Deans of Science WIL Project Advisory Group.

Additional advocacy has been in collaboration with partners to the National WIL Strategy. ACEN Board members have been extremely active in a range of forums and committees providing expert advice and assisting in shaping the approaches and actions in the National WIL Strategy to ensure it addresses key challenges to WIL in Australia.

The ACEN Board continues to align key strategies with the National WIL Strategy in order to progress as quickly as possible some of the elements of the strategy. As a result a number of projects have been implemented including:

- Involvement in the university Australia working group to provide advice on the National WIL audit
- Involvement in an ATN grant on Innovative WIL Models for SME's
- Professional development activities including ACEN webinars and supporting the Global WIL Modules
- Development of a WIL Agreement template
- Continuing to develop a suite of case studies showcasing WIL practice for the ACEN website

## **Governance**

Following the adoption of a revised Constitution in September, 2016, the Board commenced a consultative process to develop a set of by-laws to guide management of ACEN's five Chapters. Following that process, the agreed by-laws were adopted in August. A key component is the detailing of a bi-annual election process for Chapters, with the first such election being held in October 2017

Ensuring good corporate governance is a key concern and focus of the ACEN Board. In 2017 the ACEN Board has undertaken a self- review canvassing views of all Board members on all aspects of the Board's functioning, responsibilities and accountability. This resulted in a very positive outcome with some suggestions for enhanced performance and additional focus which the Board will work through over coming months.

The Board undertook a planning process to produce a strategic plan aligned to its vision and mission and the Board regularly reviews progress against that plan. Regular meetings between State Chairs aligns activities across the states and facilitates collaboration.

## **WIL Research and scholarship**

Over this period the ACEN Board continued to support scholarship and research into WIL in Australia by awarding three ACEN Research Scholarships of \$10,000 for 2017. Additional activities include:

- Commissioning a research project to identify resources for WIL students
- Supporting the development of the OLT funded WIL Good Practice Guide
- Ongoing support for consultation and dissemination of successful National OLT projects through the ACEN website, meetings and webinars
- Support for Prof Stephen Billet's OLT project: Augmenting Students' Post Practicum Developmental for the Development conference in Feb 2017
- Providing some financial support for the special edition of the Asia Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education.

## **Student Scholarship Scheme**

ACEN has awarded student scholarships since 2011. The ACEN scholarship provides \$1500 for students to undertake a Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) placement in regional or remote parts of Australia. Each year, eight students from across Australia are successful recipients of the scholarship. Due to the high demand for the ACEN scholarships, a rigorous, two-stage selection process is administered.

The 2017 ACEN WIL Scholarship round opened for applications on the 27th March. A total of 342 unique applications were received for stage one. Of the 342 unique scholarship applications, 32 students were shortlisted and invited to submit additional information for the second stage of the application process. Shortlisted applicants were notified with advice to submit a 1000-word account highlighting their career aspirations and the value-add of a regional or remote WIL placement for their employability. Applicants were advised of the criteria used to judge applications to ensure a fair, equitable and evidence-based process. Successful candidates came from six ACEN member institutions with three students enrolled at Deakin University and one student each from Monash, Queensland University of Technology, James Cook University, Curtin University, and University of Sydney.

## **Global Engagement**

ACEN's profile and role in WIL internationally has continued to grow over the period with the following activities:

- Facilitating a delegation from the Namibian Government exploring WIL developments in Australia
- Collaboration through the delivery of Global WIL Modules with NZACE, VILAR, CAFCE
- Attendance at the WACE Board in Chiang Mai in June 2017
- Attendance at the NZACE National Conference, Queenstown
- Active involvement of ACEN Board members on the WACE International research committee

In June 2017 a subcommittee of the World Association Board (WACE) for national associations was established with a representative nominated to represent the seven national associations (Canada, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Sweden, Thailand, South Africa and Australia) on the executive committee of WACE. Judie Kay was nominated to represent the seven countries on the WACE Executive Committee.

The ACEN Board and State Chapters regularly

### **Professional Development**

This year we have received the feedback report from the successful 2016 ACEN National Conference held at Macquarie University with a Research Symposium at University of Western Sydney. This feedback was used to inform the planning for the next conference which will be held in Brisbane in October 2018. A special edition of the Asia Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education from selected papers from the conference with Anna Rowe as Guest editor was released this year.

In addition to the State based events, ACEN offered to ACEN members a series of nine webinars on a range of topics which continue to be very well supported. This demonstrates both the growth in WIL across the country and the continued need for professional development for WIL professional and academic staff which ACEN will continue to address.

In 2017 the collaboration with WIL Associations in three other countries New Zealand (NZACE) Sweden (VILNAR) and Canada (CAFCE) with ACEN continued by offering an additional module on Industry engagement as well as another offering of the Global Perspectives in WIL focused on WIL learning theory. ACEN members were again the largest group of participants in these modules. In collaboration with the Global WIL Modules group, the national associations and WACE a survey to determine professional development needs of WIL staff is being implemented.

## **State Chapter Reports**

The following reports outline the key activities of the ACEN State chapters during the period

### **ACEN WA**

Each of the five universities in Western Australia are members of ACEN and all are currently represented on the WA Chapter Committee. The aim is to extend the Committee's membership from seven to eight members, with the option to co-opt an additional two members if needed to ensure there is representation from all five institutions following the forthcoming chapter election.

The Chapter continues to contribute to and be involved in WIL at a national and international level. The WA Chapter Committee have been active in their attendance of relevant events with the Chapter Chair attending the NZACE conference in Queenstown, New Zealand in April 2017 and both the Chapter Chair and Board Representative attending the WACE Conference in Chiang Mai, Thailand in June 2017. Committee members have been successful in securing external funding (ATN and AFAANZ) on employability/WIL-focused research projects.

Three events were organised by the Chapter this year:

1. Research symposium: This was held in February 2017 and organised in a similar fashion to the national ACEN research symposium. Participants worked in small groups to develop research grant proposals aligned with the ACEN grant themes for 2017. Over 40 members attended the event and at least four of the eight groups were known to have submitted an ACEN research grant submission.

2. Workshop on innovative WIL models: This was conducted as part of the WA Teaching and Learning Forum 2017 and there were approximately 20 participants. The focus was on identifying and discussing innovative

models of WIL which are/could be implemented in our curriculum and which differ from the traditional work placement/practicum format.

3. Workshop on promoting student agency: ACEN WA continued its collaboration with HERDSA though co-hosting a workshop facilitated by Professor Stephen Billett on promoting agency among students undertaking Work-Integrated Learning. The workshop was held in August 2017 and was attended by in excess of 50 ACEN/HERDSA members.

Planning for next year's events has been postponed until the new Chapter Committee is in place but the Committee is keen to ensure that events meet the needs of all members, including both academics and professional members of staff. Suggested events are as follows:

- Research Symposium: To be run in a similar format to last year and to be held in February/March 2018. Again, the focus of the symposium will be developing potential research projects around the themes identified for the 2018 ACEN research grants.
- Teaching and learning workshop: One suggested topic is 'embedding resilience in the curriculum' given there is a local member who is a recipient of an ATN grant focused on this area.
- Seminar/workshop focused on the administrative processes associated with WIL: Suggested topics are risk management, assigning students to placement opportunities, and managing partnership agreements.

The Chapter Committee currently meets face-to-face on a quarterly basis. There has been discussion around adding brief (30 minute) monthly teleconference meetings to this meeting schedule. A final decision will be made on this – and teleconference dates established for 2018 – by the incoming Chapter Committee members. We look forward to another year of strengthening collaboration among the member universities to help drive ACEN's mission and goals and to improve the experience of our students.

Denise Jackson,  
State Chair, WA  
October 2017

### **ACEN VIC / TAS**

2017 was a productive and engaging year for the Vic-Tas branch thanks primarily to the very dedicated and active group of members who put in a lot of considered thought and hours: Rachael Baron (Latrobe); Lea Campbell (Melbourne); Chris Gonsalvez (Monash); Rachael Hains-Wesson (Swinburne – to whom we said farewell as she headed to USydney); Friederika Kaider (Deakin); Sonja Kiernan and Jo Van Son (Victoria); Annette Marlow (UTasmania); Joanne Matthews (Federation); Kelly McDermott (LaTrobe who took time out for maternity leave); and Leoni Russell (RMIT). A special thanks also to Sheree Keech (UTasmania) for all her assistance in designing and producing the flyers for our workshops. This highly functioning committee now has a representation from most of the universities in Victoria and Tasmania and is drawing participation from all the universities at our events.

### **Highlights of 2017**

The committee organised, hosted and presented in a series of successful workshops and mini-conference which were well-attended and positively-received including:

- A workshop on WIL and Social Media – for student learning, communication and managing students which saw 80 representatives for Victorian and Tasmanian universities (plus a few interstate) participate face-to-face or online. (March 16th).
- A joint workshop with the National Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (NAGCAS) on Developing Employability skills within the Curriculum: where WIL and careers education come together, attended by 50 participants (May 25th).
- A joint mini-conference between HERDSA (Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia) and ACEN: Rekindled - Driving Outcomes: Curriculum transformation and 21st century

challenges which was comprised of synoptic presentations from HERDSA's conference and round tables on WIL topics hosted by ACEN. Approximately 150 participants registered. (26th September)

- Two workshops on Service Learning and WIL, one hosted by LaTrobe University featuring speakers from the Goethe Institute, Germany; LaTrobe University and Griffith University was attended by almost 40 participants and the second, hosted by Melbourne University and led by Carol Joy Patrick from Griffith was an experiential forum in which approximately 20 participants engaged in hands-on exercises. (18th October).
- A WIL Research practicum is planned for November 8 aimed specifically at assisting and mentoring ACEN Vic-Tas members in preparing papers, posters and presentations for the 2018 ACEN Conference.

### **Initiatives:**

To streamline operational effectiveness and efficiency the committee introduced a number of initiatives including:

- Developing an itemised checklist for organising and conducting workshops
- Preparing guidelines for presentations aimed at promoting greater analysis and a more evidence-based approach to topics
- Designing and developing a Certificate of Appreciation for presenters.

### **National Board Matters**

The committee discussed, contributed to and/or participated in issues raised by the National Board including:

- Nominating Chris Gonsalvez as the Victorian-Tasmanian state representative on the Board
- Participating in governance training arranged by Board and other national webinars
- Providing feedback and input into the Constitution and By-laws review
- Calling for a national Calendar of Events so that state events are able to be coordinated around the dates of national events.

### **State Matters**

The committee discussed and took action on a number of local matters, key of which were:

- Being represented on the Victorian Working Group on International Student Employability (VicWISE) which is collaboration between the International Student Advisory Network of Australia (ISANA), National Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (NAGCAS), Council of International Students Australia (CISA), as well as the Victorian State Government and the City of Melbourne by Rachael Baron and Chris Gonsalvez.
- Conducting a successful election which saw all office bearer positions filled and a committee of 12 being elected representing a broad spread of Victorian and Tasmanian universities.

Friederika Kaider,  
Retiring State Chair  
October 2017

### **ACT/NSW**

2016 was a big year for NSW with the successful hosting of the ACEN Annual Conference and Research Symposium at Macquarie University and Western Sydney University. A record number of attendees and sponsors kept the NSW state chapter busy throughout most of the year in contributing to the sub-committees in the planning, lead up and delivery of these important ACEN events.

Also in 2016 the chapter launched a state based newsletter with the purpose of facilitating and increasing intra-state and NSW/ACT institutional communication and collaboration; connecting with ACEN NSW/ACT members for the purpose of increasing their sense of belonging to the chapter and participation in NSW/ACT events; and also to facilitate the scholarship of WIL and raise profiles of chapter members through the dissemination of research from NSW/ACT. The newsletter is distributed quarterly and has continued to gather

momentum into 2017 with contributions from non-Committee member institutions and solid openings and email forwarding.

Early 2017 saw us hosting a very successful two part Forum in February; *Unpacking co-curricular options: WIL for International Students & TEQSA Guidance Notes: WIL*. The first session focused on the increasing number of WIL related co-curricular activities preparing international students for more formal WIL experiences and employment. Ranging from competitions, placements, one off events, group projects and mentoring, these different models are challenging the boundaries of WIL and providing genuine opportunities for international students to develop their employability skills and gain career confidence. The session held a panel representing industry, WIL facilitators/practitioners and students to discuss the 'who, what how and why' of co-curricular activities followed by an interactive 'unpacking discussion' of how these different models can best support international students based on resources, student cohort and objectives. Resulting from this session was a blog to continue this important dialogue <http://acennswactchapter.blogspot.com.au/>

For the second session of the Forum, TEQSA Guidance Notes: WIL a TEQSA representative provided a presentation on the new guidelines including a broad overview and the scope of evidence required for compliance. The presentation was followed by a Q & A session. Both sessions were very successful and well attended.

Sarah Fletcher  
Chapter Chair  
Nov 2017

## **ACEN SA / NT**

### **Highlights**

ACEN SA/NT held three tri-institutional events for UniSA, Flinders and Adelaide university colleagues:

- Enhancing Workplace Learning Through Mobile Technology - Franziska Trede – 10 people
- From theory to practice: Equipping and enabling Australia's educators to embed employability across higher education - Dawn Bennet – 18 people
- 10 WIL risks and what you can do about them - Craig Cameron -36 people

ACEN SA/NT has a growing profile in SA as the local touchpoint for WIL due to TEQSA emphasis on WIL Placements. Our focus is to still broaden Chapter membership across the 3 institutions

### **Plans**

To hold at least one webinar in 2018

Dale Wache  
Chapter chair SA/ NT  
November 2017

## **ACEN Q**

Highlights included a seminar in April, to which 60 or so delegates attended from across the State, winning the ACEN2018 Conference for Brisbane, WACE and GIC attendance by a number of Queensland practitioners, and submission of a book chapter by Alan Blackman for University of Auckland compilation and publication. Members agreed to the adoption of a revised Constitution and the adoption of new Chapter By-Laws. The Chapter also notes and applauds ACEN's continued financial strength and its growing credibility as the nation's peak industry body for WIL.

Key challenges ahead include increasing TEQSA emphasis on quality assurance for WIL placements: domestic and international, ACEN 2018 Conference organisation, and broadening Chapter membership to the whole State, not just the south-eastern corner.

The new QLD Chapter committee is meeting for the first time on Friday 1st December. One of our main tasks is to re-establish connections across Queensland. We are all currently working on different tasks for the

ACEN 2018 Conference WIL: Creating Connections, Building Futures, being held in Brisbane on 4th & 5th October. The new committee looks forward to working together for the future of the Queensland WIL community.

Alan Blackman,  
Chair ACEN Q,  
November 2017

## ACEN Board

Once again I would like to thank all members of the current ACEN Board for their continuing support and contribution to ACEN activities during this period. I would like to particularly thank Dino Willox as chair of the Finance and Audit committee and Alan Blackman for undertaking the role of Secretary during this period.

Many thanks to the State Chairs for their contribution over the period; Denise Jackson, Esther May, Fredericka Kaider, Sarah Fletcher and Alan Blackman and to all member of the state chapters. I would like to thank Board members, Chris Gonsalvez Sonia Ferns, Jude Smith, Dino Willox, Franziska Trede, Wayne Fallon, Rachael Hains-Wesson, and Denise Jackson

I would also especially like to thank Rachael Hains-Wesson, Wayne Fallon and Esther May who are retiring from the ACEN Board at this AGM for their significant contribution at both State and National levels.

Many thanks again to our incredible administrator Don MacDowall who continues to provide the ACEN Board and ACEN members with, as always, exceptional organisational and administrative support over this period.

### ACEN Board as at AGM 2017

Name	Portfolio
Ms Judie Kay, RMIT University	President
Dr Wayne Fallon, Western Sydney University	NSW/ACT Representative, Student Scholarships
Professor Esther May, University of South Australia	SA/NT Representative, Communication and Membership
Assoc Prof Alan Blackman, Griffith University	Company Secretary and Qld Representative, Finance and Audit
Ms Sonia Ferns, Curtin University	Chair, Student Scholarships and WA Representative
Dr Rachael Hains-Wesson, University of Sydney	Research Scholarship and Professional Learning
Mrs Jude Smith, Queensland University of Technology	Chair, Research, Scholarship and Professional Learning
Assoc Professor Franziska Trede, Charles Sturt University	
Chris Gonsalvez, Monash University	Vic Tas Representative
Dr Dino Willox, The University of Queensland	Finance and Audit
Assoc Professor, Denise Jackson Edith Cowan University	Communication and Membership