

CASE STUDY: WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING

The Issue: Arts programs across the sector invariably offer some form of work integrated learning opportunity. The project team found that there were 2 main types of work integrated learning opportunities that are becoming increasingly common: Internships and Service Learning Programs. This case study explores examples of each type

Internships

All students can do an internship at **Bond University** which the university organises. For example International Relations students may do an internship with Aus Trade in Paris or Washington. Students may find their own internship but it must be sanctioned by the university. Internships are usually a semester long. Some are located internationally, others are in Australia. If a student goes overseas they may do a research topic at the same time. If they do their internship locally, they may continue with their study either full time or part time. The structure of the internship is dependent on the host organisation. Internships are worth the same credit points as a typical unit (10 credit points). Students must have a GPA of 2.5 (on a four point scale) to be eligible to apply. Students must also meet with an academic advisor and have completed some pre-requisites study before applying (pre-requisites will vary depending on the internship).

The **Australian National University** runs the Australian National Internship Program, which is open to students from all faculties. The program places students with government departments, working with parliamentarians, and working with NGOs. Course credit is given for internships.

At **Deakin University**, the Faculty of Arts has an External Work Officer who is responsible for placing students. In some disciplines, the department is responsible for finding the placement location. The student is interviewed in the application process so that the faculty knows that they have the commitment and skills to cope with the placement. Some internship programs require a certain level of academic achievement. The internships usually last one semester. The number of credits gained during an internship is dependent on the extent of work involved in it, in some instances, an internship is worth double the credit points of a standard unit.

Service Learning Programs

Through institutional links between the **University of Notre Dame** and NGOs such as CARATAS which are involved with projects within 3rd world, students are able to engage in service learning programs abroad e.g. students going to Uganda might work on projects related to their study such as AIDs, water management and rehabilitation with child soldiers. Units in BA that might deal with such issues attract students. Students engaged in these programs are required to complete an extra contact hour as part of their study. Academic staff lead the group on the study abroad scheme. While their travel expenses are paid, academics do this as part of a commitment to making students active citizens in the world. Staff bring the passions as the institution attracts those interested in these areas

In addition, the **University of Notre Dame** has strong links with indigenous communities in northern states. Students work with local youth in community activities in these communities, some for academic credit and some not. All students are actively encouraged to be actively involved in social justice programs. This involvement can be tracked in their later lives and can be argued to have greatly benefited later careers.

The **Australian Catholic University** has a compulsory unit: *ARTS232 Volunteer Experience*. In this unit, students in the Bachelor of Arts program are required to complete a Volunteer Experience unit to meet graduation requirements. This unit does not incur any HECS liability or fees. Volunteer Experience requires the completion of a total of 15 days service to a community organisation usually completed by the end of 2nd year.

In 2009, **University of Tasmania** will be offering a new unit - the Leadership Unit. It will be taught through the Faculty of Arts but it will be open to students from across the university. It will be a stand alone academic unit but students may choose to add 60 hours of volunteering and then they will receive an additional university award upon graduation.

The Bachelor of Arts program at **Griffith University** has recently undergone a major review and restructure to ensure that students emerge with an area of focused expertise and real-world experience in social enterprises to prepare them for the work force. BA students will spend half of their second and third year studies in one area - history, literature, social science, journalism and media, film and screen, cultural industries or a language. The students will also complete one course every semester in the social enterprise stream where they will choose an organisation to investigate, develop contacts and work with on socially beneficial projects.

Disclaimer: The information described above emerged from interviews, discussions and observation of publicly available materials during the BA Scoping Project which commenced in March 2007 and concluded in August 2008. As a result, the practices described in this case study may not reflect current practices or institutional policy. They are a reflection of the understanding at the time the scoping project was in progress.



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