

Collaborative, tripartite alliance: Leveraging student capability to produce industry-ready solutions

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The facilitation of an effective work integrated learning (WIL) program which can be evaluated in terms of the “work readiness” of students once they complete their studies and enter the workforce, poses a number of challenges. In 2015 MercyCare embarked on a program to engage with multiple, complementary units at Edith Cowan University resulting in the development of a prototype document management system, aligned with a strategic objective being undertaken by MercyCare. The embedding of a MercyCare staff member in the student’s learning and development program produces effective outcomes through continued knowledge sharing and collaboration. This collaborative arrangement resulted in the employment of a WIL student at MercyCare to continue to contribute to the ongoing initiatives in the organisation, which highlights an effective WIL model to produce mutually beneficial outcomes. Stage one of the process involved collaborative teams of students undertaking a capstone unit from the Master of Project Management and Master of Management Information Systems engaging with MercyCare and the Project Management Office (PMO), to determine project requirements and systems architectures, and to plan and scope the project deliverables to achieve the desired outcomes. The final stage of the process involved the placement of the WIL student in a support position aligned with the original course work undertaken. This offered a range of evaluative opportunities to determine overall skills capabilities which measured unit outcomes against student’s on-the-job performance. Evidence of the effectiveness of the WIL exercise, including the final development of an effective, prototype which conformed to MercyCare’s existing technical architecture and business needs, evaluating the technical competencies, interpersonal and documentation skills of students displayed throughout the WIL process; and assessing a WIL student’s capabilities and skills after employment at MeryCare, will be presented.